

Bogitini shines as Green advocate

Women are at the forefront of promoting environmental conservation around the world and local academic Lia Bogitini is a strong advocate of protecting our surroundings for the future generation.

The Assistant Lecturer in Environmental Science at Fiji National University (FNU) is passionate about this cause and regularly organises green initiatives at Natabua Campus, Lautoka to educate staff and students regarding the importance of caring for the environment and stopping pollution.



Environment Champion and advocate, Lia Bogitini.

According to the Kadavu native, women who are seen as key agents of change in society need to play an equal role in assisting with the promotion and protection of environment. She said sometimes due to gender, women's views or input unfortunately gets sidelined.

"We need to close the gender gap in the environmental arena, so that we can immensely gain in conservation, biodiversity and address the climate change issues," she said.

Bogitini believes women's contribution to environment challenges must be acknowledged especially their knowledge on natural resources and environment.

"When we women are empowered then more robust, equitable and sustainable strategies can be mapped out to maintain a good balance between humans and earth's resources," said Bogitini.

From an early age Bogitini has been passionate about protecting the environment and its inhabitants.

"I always admired and appreciated the nature and my love for environment further blossomed in high school, as my school was in the middle of a beautiful

dakua forest, which I would stare up at from my classroom window," said the former Adi Cakobau School student.

She attributes her success to her parents who have been instrumental in instilling the values of loving and protecting the environment from a young age. Bogitini said her father played a key role in advocating for gender quality and has always supported her professionally and personally.

"My father has always been my rock and shelter when I needed him the most."

"I know I can always rely on my dad. Like my mother, he is my number one supporter. My dad has always given my mum, sisters and I all the support we needed to pursue our studies, our careers and has never held us back or stopped us from pursuing whatever dream we have. I know I am very lucky in that aspect," she said.

Bogitini, while pursuing her undergraduate studies, was part of the econesian society comprising of environmentally conscious students working towards protecting the environment.

"We also did clean-up campaigns around campus as well as nurturing rare plants and animals in collaboration with NatureFiji MareqetiViti," she said

She was also part of the Wantok Moana tribe, a group passionate about conserving the marine ecosystem and resources.

This year Bogitini is on a mission to create greater awareness within the Natabua community on the importance of conserving the environment.

"My aim is to educate everyone especially the women folks on the importance of regaining and protecting the environment."

Last year, Bogitini initiated the recycling program at Natabua Campus and this year she has plans to do clean-up campaigns and plant more trees.

Bogitini is thankful to Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, at FNU's, Natabua Campus, Lautoka for supporting her mission and encouraging her to take the lead role in protecting the environment.