

FNU plays a vital role in the construction industry



FNU staff at the CIC Trade Show. From left; Akosita Sadole, Olivia Parker, Krishna Datt and Ashish Kumar

The Fiji National University (FNU) plays a vital role in the construction industry through the training of skilled and qualified workers at its College of Engineering, Science and Technology (CEST) and we will continue working with the industry to train its workforce.

Acting Dean CEST Salabogi Mavoia made these comments at the recently-concluded Construction Industry Council (CIC) conference held in Suva.

“FNU participated and contributed greatly to this conference and we sort of co-hosted in terms of our support for CIC,” Mavoia said.

“This is also a testimony to the good working relationship the University has with the industry and the event provided us with the platform to reiterate the important role we play. We train the workforce to the calibre the industry wants because in order to build homes, roads, bridges and other infrastructure, the human resources and skills set is needed.”

“Through our School of Building and Civil Engineering at CEST, we train the land surveyors, the architects, the carpenters, and quantity surveyors, the plumbers and electricians and continue to have discussions with the industry regarding our programmes.”

Mavoia said the conference was an opportunity for the University to note issues raised by the industry and align the institution’s delivery of quality education accordingly.

“During discussions, we were pleased to highlight that we are working towards getting more qualified and experienced people into the University to further enhance our teaching and learning capabilities.”

“There was also talk on developing higher level programmes for some of our certificate and diploma courses and of course, this is

something we are also striving for in addition to attaining international accreditation for our programmes.”

“The shortage of skilled labour was also highlighted at the conference and this is evident in Fiji now as we bring in labourers from other countries. Why should we bring in labourers from other countries when we have people in Fiji that are unemployed but able to learn and do the job?”

“Our strategy is to address this through our programmes and this is evident in the alternative pathways we have. So if someone dropped out of high school or has completed Year 13 or foundation studies, they are still able to enrol and graduate from a programme.”

He added that as a dual sector University, FNU provided various academic opportunities through its technical and vocation education and training (TVET) and higher education courses.

“As Fiji’s national university, it is obvious that we have a responsibility to the nation and in addition to pathways for students coming in with the various educational background, we are also focusing on the soft skills acquired by these students.”

“All our students will be reminded of the importance of having a good work ethic and displaying characteristics that contributed positively to any organisation they are in and this is displayed through their punctuality, attendance, creative and critical thinking, diligence and motivation at work and the willingness to learn and adapt to the needs of the workforce.”

The CEST School of Building and Civil Engineering were also part of the inaugural CIC Trade Show that was held during the conference. Staff were present at the FNU booth to showcase the College’s programmes, provide resource materials and display projects by FNU students to stakeholders.