



Vukevuke wins FNU Student of the Year Award at the inaugural Disability Gala Awards Nite

Fiji National University (FNU) Student of the Year winner Iosefa Vukevuke believes everyone, including persons with disabilities, is able to accomplish anything they set out to achieve.

Vukevuke was announced the winner at the inaugural Disability Gala Awards Nite in Suva over the weekend. He received the award from FNU Vice Chancellor Professor Nigel Healey.

“I was so proud to win the award. I feel like I have achieved something and that I am recognised for the knowledge and talent that I have,” Vukevuke said.

“My university experience at FNU was a very challenging but positive one as I was given the assistance I needed by those at FNU.”

“I continued to work hard to achieve my certificate and received tremendous support from those around me and I did not let my visual impairment stop me.”

“I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the organisers and the United Blinds Person of Fiji for their support and to the Fiji National University for allowing me to enrol into the University.”

Vukevuke, 42, completed his Certificate IV in Music qualification last year at FNU’s Nasinu Campus.

He enjoys helping people and was actively involved in music programmes organised by the school during his studies at FNU.

“I am now continuing my tertiary education and my ambition is to teach children with special needs,” Vukevuke said.

“I want to show everything that all of us have the talent and abilities we need to achieve anything we dream of.”

During his address, Professor Healey announced FNU’s commitment to sponsor the University Student of the Year award for the next three years.

“It is clear that the Disability Gala Awards Nite is a welcome and long overdue celebration of the achievements of Fijians with disabilities and I applaud Rajnel’s (Prasad) determination for this to become an annual fixture in the national calendar,” said VC Healey.



FNU Vice Chancellor Professor Nigel Healey (right) awards the Student of the Year to winner and FNU alumnus, Iosefa Vukevuka at the Disability Gala Awards 2019.

Picture: Fijian Government.

“When FNU was approached to sponsor one of the five original awards, I explained that we are not a corporation that sponsors third parties.”

“We suggested that if United Blind Persons of Fiji would consider adding a tertiary student award for persons with disabilities – which was not in their original line up – to celebrate the achievement of a student with disability succeeding against the odds, FNU would be willing to sponsor such an award to inspire other young people with disabilities to consider going to university.”

Professor Healey encouraged other sponsors to consider making similar long-term sponsorship commitments towards the event. Several organisations have pledged their support towards the annual awards event.

The event organiser, Rajnel Prasad said he was overwhelmed with the support received, adding they were looking at making the event bigger next year with the possible inclusion of new award categories.