The 12th day of June marked the opening of a week-long 50th Anniversary Celebration of the University of the South Pacific in Alafua Campus, Samoa attended by the Prime Minister of Samoa Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, the University Vice-Chancellor and President Prof. Rajesh Chandra, the University Pro Chancellor Mr. Winston Thompson, Head of School Assoc. Prof. Mohammed Umar, Senior Staff, INJs, Alumni, Students including the 18 Parliamentarians who will graduate the following day. The event commenced with a march along the length of the Beach Road from the Fire and Emergency Services Authority to the front of Government Building. The USP community marched in their different colorful uniforms while the students from different Pacific Island Countries waiving the country’s flag spreading the festive spirit all-over town led by the Police Band. This was followed by a short program which was opened by Mr. Winston (USP Pro Chancellor) while the Prime Minister was the keynote speaker. Mr. Winston acknowledged the fact that Samoa was one of the Co-founders of the University in 1968. (cont... page 2)
Five Decades of Memories, Success and Hopes: USP at its Brightest, Yet!

And it is fitting to kick-off the University’s celebrations in Samoa since the country was the first to gain independence in the Pacific. He underscored the growth of Samoa and USP individually and as partners is something the is “memorable and very heart-warming.

The Prime Minister in his keynote speech regarded that particular day as “a happy day for the USP” reminiscing the past when the university has just starting with only 200 students enrolled and remarkably how it grew to a staggering 30,000 students after 50 years. He imparted the wisdom of staying and studying in Samoa wherein the students will benefit from the guidance and wisdom of their parents, thus encouraging the youth of Samoa to take up their studies in USP. It was a happy day indeed particularly when he made a remark addressed to the 18 Parliamentarians and described them as “over stayers at the sunset of their careers” but gained his admiration nonetheless (LTU).
Message from the Prime Minister of Samoa and Vice Chancellor of USP!

The messages given by the Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi and the University Vice-Chancellor and President Prof. Rajesh Chandra summarizes the history and achievements of the University in Samoa and the Pacific Region.

“The establishment of the University of the South Pacific was regarded as key to the reinstatement of autonomy within the Pacific. The autonomy resulted to the establishment of USP mainly because there was a need to fill the leadership gaps left by the retreating colonial leaders, there was a rapid expansion of tertiary-level education in the 1960’s and there was a prevailing healthy economic climate which enabled strong financial backing by the economically strong, retreating colonial powers, for the small nations within their spheres of influence. Since its humble beginning, USP has grown in size and sophistication, shaping the Pacific region for better, and making itself a source of immense pride for the region. To date, USP gained its status as an excellent tertiary education provider, research institution and development organization designed to address the needs and priorities of its member countries, in an affordable future-oriented manner that values and celebrates Pacific history, cultures, and the natural environment.”

“The USP Alafua Campus houses the School of Agriculture and Food Technology which plays a key role especially in ensuring food security and nutrition. The establishment of the Food Technology laboratory since 2017 has resulted to the development of 50 products using locally grown ingredients from our very own backyards. Another development in SAFT is the establishment of the Pest Museum and Pest Clinic. This clinic will be another first in Samoa and will serve as the place where stakeholders, especially farmers, can bring their samples for diagnosis and treatment. This approach has been practiced in other countries and will make research and university resources more accessible and relevant to our students and farmers. Mushroom production using grass cut from the regular maintenance of the university is a new initiative in SAFT which will start this year. IRETA farm in Alafua continuously producing eggs and vegetables and providing practical training opportunities for students. This year the institute has successfully organized together with SAFT and the ISTRC-PB the 1st Symposium of the International Society for Tropical Root Crops which was attended by researchers, government officials, private sectors and SAFT Lecturers.”
the students of Alafua Campus participated in a series of 4 debates as part of their collective contribution to USP’s Golden Jubilee celebrations on Alafua Campus. Debate 1 took place on Jun 11 on the motion: “USP HAS LIVED UP TO ITS IDEALS IN THE PAST 50 YEARS,” where FALE, arguing in opposition of the motion, emerged victorious over PacTAFE, who argued in support of the motion. Debate 2 also took place on the same day, where Team FBE (Affirmative) was pitted against the opposing Team FSTE on the motion: “USP QUALIFICATIONS ARE RELEVANT FOR MEETING USP PRIORITIES”. The winning argument from Team FSTE was that USP does not seem to promote the teaching and learning of traditional knowledge systems, which brought prosperity and good health to our ancestors in past millennia. The third and semi-final round was won by PacTAFE who backed the motion that THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC CAN BE MORE SUCCESSFUL AS A PAPERLESS UNIVERSITY”, against the opposing team, FBE.

The final round was between teams FALE and PacTAFE on the motion “THE UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC PROMOTES CULTURAL ENRICHMENT AMONG ITS STUDENTS AND MEMBER COUNTRIES.” Fighting for the motion was Team FALE: Simeanamulu Laupu’a (BA-LLB), Victory Tuala (BA-LLB) and Leva’ula Titimaea (BA-LLB), all of whom are BA-LLB students studying from Alafua Campus. Opposing the notion was Team FSTE comprised of Seira Tofete (BSc/Bio-Chem), Caroline Fuaiava Ili’ili (BSc/Ch&IS) and Tolofa’i Isaia (BA/Agri). The winning arguments by Team FALE included the promotion of cultural enrichment through USP’s curriculum; Open Day, Orientation, Social and Cultural Nights and so forth. The opposition, on the other hand, cited the non-inclusion of most Pacific languages in the USP curriculum, and the non-promotion of the Pacific research frameworks in USP, as their main arguments. USP’s Pro-Chancellor, Mr Winston Thompson and the Alafua Campus Head of School of Agriculture and Food Technology, and Acting Campus Director—Assoc. Prof. Mohammed Umar were among the members of the audience (NB).
Community Activities!

Our very own Student Welfare Officer (SWO) Ms. Ronna Lee organized a number of activities on Monday the 11th June 2018 that enabled the community to be involved with celebrating USP 50th anniversary. The community involvement held the power to bring positive measurable changes during the celebrations. Residential students had the chance to learn Keyhole Garden preparations from USP Alumnus Mikaele Maiava who has an organic farm at Moamoa. He did a demonstration and the Residential students will prepare their own garden as part of our Residential Competition.

Tusiata Iemuelu Salu, a current SAFT student and her mother Faapito did the Tapa/Siapo Demonstration and printing demonstration. Tusiata is an undergraduate student and her mother is one of very few women who still makes siapo traditionally and listed under the Samoa Tourism Authority attractions for Savaii.

The most popular activity was Floral Crown Making with SAFT Alumi Pearl Blakelock Vaai & Situfu Skipps. Some came with their friends to learn and have requested for more. They also ran Hat Weaving where they brought one of their family members who was able to do the demonstration and took the lead for this workshop. In addition, these good ladies also ran Elei Printing and it was well attended. His Excellency the Ambassador of China to Samoa and his good lady Madam Xin attended this and even participated. They enjoyed their time so much they decided to stay for the rest of the workshops. They both participated in all activities.

The last activity was the Photo Contest that NETVO Samoa offered a FREE Mifi with 2 months worth of FREE data as the top prize for the photo contest. The winner was Samson Kakadi. Also NETVO kindly donated two 4G LTE Portable Mifi devices plus two 11G data plan for 2 months for USP’s 50th Anniversary Student Giveaway during OPEN DAY. The lucky winners are Senara Tausilia and Dominique Iosefo.

Another popular activity was on Wednesday the 13th June the Animal Protection Society (APS) clinic was set up at the Campus Life Office Block next to SWO office. A few pets were able to be seen by Dr. Ken Lameta and his APS team. APS was scheduled another day to assist with Animal care on Friday the 15th of June during our USP Open day on request from the public.

Additionally, to all the activities, Tolovae and the maintenance team plus all the cleaners really put in their ALL ensuring all the public facilities were cleaned daily (RL).
Another important part of the USP, Alafua Campus 50th Celebrations was the launching of the book “50 years Teaching Research and Training in Agriculture at the U.S.P. Alafua Campus.” Attended by the Prof. Rajesh Chandra (VC-USP) and Mr. Winston Thompson (PV-USP)

The 180 pages’ book compiled by Dr. Md. Abdul Kader, Dr. Jagdish Bhati, Associate Professor Mohammed Umar, staff and students consists of five chapters. The book highlights glimpse of teaching, researching and training in the field of Agriculture during 50 years of existence. It emphasizes directions in agriculture studies for the future generations so they will learn from the past, live the present and embrace the future. This book also serves to benefit the alumnus, students and researchers as a guide for them to easily have access to the past researches.
Another first in USP and perhaps the first in all Pacific region was the graduation of 18 members of the Parliament, Ministers or Assistant Ministers of the government of Samoa. Thus, it was only fitting to choose this particular event as the ‘Moment to Shine” of the Alafua campus as the USP celebrates its 50th anniversary. Juggling between their role as public servants and being a student taking up Certificate of Law (Civil) in the university was not an easy task. After 12 months and eight (8) courses, the 18 brave and hard-working souls conquered the difficulty of being a student. The program is a vocational certification program designed by the School of Law for persons who do not require degree-level knowledge of the law but who may be working in a legal field and wish to know more about specific areas of the law in which they work, and the law in general. Taefu Lemi Taefu, Associate Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, recalled in his graduation address the experiences of a “group of career politicians return to school with pre-conceived ideas and old habits, only to find themselves regress back into their former mindset as freshman university students”. He recounted how disappointed they were when they thought that being late in the submission of assignment could be forgiven since they were politicians thus exceptions apply but no, that was not the case. During the examinations when they somehow heard that it was an open book examination but a week before the schedule they learned that it was otherwise. Thus, they felt the sudden panic every student experienced when caught unprepared and named the supposedly study week to be the “panic” week. He said that nothing was more constructive, more intensive most demanding as the programme they have just completed (LTU).
The University of the South Pacific (USP) had the pleasure of welcoming members of the USP Alumni back to the University to celebrate its 50th Anniversary. It was a joy to see more than 100 former students from class 1968 to 2017 joining the USP, Alafua Campus in celebrating it’s five decades as a regional university from the 8th to the 17th of June.

The USP Samoa Alumni Committee has been actively preparing for the USP 50th Anniversary celebrations with the series of meeting at the IRETA Fale. The Alumni also took the opportunity to elect an Executive Committee to organize and lead its activities not only for the USP’s half-a-century celebrations but also for the next 12 months. The new Executive Committee include: Peseta Desmond Lee Hang as the President, Luatulufi Aiono as the Vice-President, Alice Papali’i Seuseu as Secretary, and Maena Faatunu’ula AhLeong as the Treasurer. There have been follow-up meetings scheduled to further discuss and finalize details of the USP 50th Anniversary Programme the Alumni took part in.

The USP Samoa Alumni was requested by the USP, Alafua Campus 50th Committee to be in charge of the Prayer Service on Monday the 11th of June 2018, 6pm at the USP Alafua Fale Samoa to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of USP which was a successful event.

A member of the USP Alumni Samoa was also requested to be the Master of Ceremony for the official opening of the 50th on Tuesday 12th June 2018, after polling amongst members during first meeting, Maulolo Tavita Amosa was elected. Also on request to judge for Student Debates, Alumnus Frank Lesa was appointed (AP).
In the Samoan Culture Prayer plays an important role in every celebration. Joy overwhelms the USP Alafua community as they gathered on Monday night, the 11th of June 2018 at the USP Fale, Alafua to offer prayers and devotions as the University celebrates its 50th.

Maulolo Leaulo Tavita Amosa (First Samoa President of USPSA Laucala) welcomed and acknowledged the USP Samoa Alumni and families that were present before Rev. Elder Utufua Naseri FT (EFKS Apia and USP Alumnus) conducted the service.

Prayer of thanksgiving was offered by Makerita Vaái (Former USP Samoa Center Director), Prayer of Confession offered by Tuisuga Aveau Sofara (Former Minister of Agriculture and a USP Alumnus) and Prayer of Petition offered by Pitovaoiga Faátoía Malele (USP Alumnus). Bible readings were delivered by Tilafono David Hunter (CEO Ministry of Agriculture, Former Head of School of SOA now SAFT and a USP Alumnus) and Sister Emanuela Betham (One of the first enrolled students in 1968).


Vote of thanks was given by the President of the USP Samoa Alumni, Vice Pro Chancellor NUS and USP Alumnus, Peseta, Dr. Desmond Mene LeeHang thanking and acknowledging those that were able to make it at such short notice. The night ended with great food with great company sharing countless memories of USP (AP).
On the last day of the week-long celebration, the USP Alumni had the chance to network with fellow graduates, staff and students. A sports day was held at the Alafua grounds for fun games and in the evening a Networking event was held at the Samoa Tourism Fale to end the 50th celebration. Both events were relaxed and honorably felt welcoming for all Alumni present. It was a day filled with entertaining, bringing back memories with abundant food and great company.

The USP Samoa Alumni look forward to welcoming more Alumni back to similar events. To keep up with the latest from the USP Samoa Alumni, be sure to follow us on Facebook or contact Alice Papalii – Seuseu (Secretary) via email: aliceipapalii@gmail.com or Maena Faatuuala - AhLeong (Treasurer) via email: Maena.Faatuuala@mof.gov.ws. There is a $30.00 membership registration which will contribute towards projects planned by the USP Samoan Alumni Committee. The USP Samoa Alumni Committee wish to THANK All for their support (AP).
USP Alafua Campus OPEN DAY!

Once a year the University of the South Pacific opens its door to visitors and show-case the different services the university can offer to its stakeholders. This year the Open Day was celebrated during the last day of the week-long celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the USP. On the 15th June the event has officially started by an opening program attended by visitors and USP Alafua Staff. The visitors were welcome by Assoc. Professor Mohammed Umar while Prof. Rajesh Chandra gave the opening remarks. The Keynote Address was delivered by the Hon. Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Lopao’a Natanielu Mu’a. In his speech, he underscored the importance of Agriculture in Samoa and encouraged the student-visitors to consider Agriculture course in USP in their career path. He also acknowledged the significant contributions of USP-SAFT in producing graduates who are mostly employed in MAF and SROS and also continues to collaborate with MAF and USP as partners for the advancement of Agriculture in the country. Meanwhile, the visitors have experienced the USP hospitality with cultural performances from the Tongan students and refreshments. After the program, guided tours to the different displays around the campus commenced (LTU).
USP Alafua Campus OPEN DAY: Tours and Displays

Different sections of the Alafua campus showcased their programs through displays. Guided by the students’ volunteer, the students-visitors coming from the different schools in Apia, Samoa visited the displays around the campus. During the tour, the students had the opportunity to ask questions and gained new information from the tour-guide, Laboratory Technicians and from the Lecturer themselves. The highlights of the Open day were the displays from SAFT and IRETA. SAFT displays were located in the C3&C4 Lecture Hall and laboratories while IRETA farm showcased both their livestock and crops. While in the USP groud near the student Fale are the displays of private and government sectors (LTU).
On June 15th, the Crops and Livestock Sections of the Institute of Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture (IRETA) displayed several crops and farm animals during the USP 50th Celebrations and OPEN DAY.

Mr. Oliver Cris Ubaub, IRETA-Farm Manager and his team brought down a few farm animals (Poultry, Pigs and Sheep) from the farm for display and placed them in small paddocks. The team set-up their display outside of the Animal Science Laboratory.

The display site was crowded with visitors from different schools and private individuals. Mr. Ubaub and his team presented excellent demonstration and explained to the students the different areas at the farm such as the Cattles, Sheep, Piggery and the Poultry section. Also, the students and visitors had the chance to view and acquire new information about the different methods that can be used when planting specific crops. The farm (crops) products were on special prices sale for the Open Day (AP).
Fellowship Night with VC and PC!

On the night of the 12th of June, the Alafua campus headed by the Acting Director Assoc. Prof. Mohammed Umar organized a fellowship night dedicated to Prof. Rajesh Chandra for his services to the university and support to Alafua campus as the USP Vice-Chancellor. This event is very timely as he will leave his post by the end of the year. Assoc. Prof. Umar paid tribute to the effort made by the VC to restore “order” in USP ten years back. And how stable the university after 10 years under his leadership, underscoring the number of infrastructure projects, curricula development and accreditation making USP world class institution, while USP Pro-Chancellor Winston Thompson acknowledge the virtues and attributes of the VC as the key factor of his success as a leader. The President of the I&Js Association Ms. Josie also took the opportunity to speak and on behalf of the association said their thanks to the VC for the support and being attentive to the needs of the staff. In return, Prof. Chandra replied by acknowledging the whole community of USP being part of every success the university has attained for the past years. He also mentioned that he will leave his post happy and confident of the legacy he will leave to his successor in the university. The fellowship has started with a traditional Samoan dance called Siva wherein Prof. Chandra and Mr. Thompson gamely participated. Then followed by a sumptuous dinner shared by all attendees. Alas! It was a night of celebration and friendship to remember (LTU).
Celebrating the Pacific Islands Culture in a Night!

On Friday the 15th of June, SWO, Ms. Ronna Lee together with the University of the South Pacific Student Association (USPSA) and all the students put together an entertainment praiseworthy for the celebrations of the 50th Year anniversary of USP. The student leaders and country representatives all worked well as ONE PEOPLE with our USPSA President Luaiufi Aiono, an outstanding student leader. It has been years since USP, Alafua Campus held cultural night and this year to commemorate its 50th Anniversary. The late Seiuli Alan Alo’s SPACE team opened the night with a number of their performances throughout the night followed by a flaming performances of fire knife dancing from the Siva Afi. A two-time gold medalist of the USP, Alafua Campus, winner of Samoa Observer Tusitala Competition, winner of Commonwealth Short Story prize for Pacific Region and a USP alumnus Jenny Bennett recited a poem she wrote inspired by her then one-year daughter.

The audience were taken to the Solomon Islands by the energetic Solomon community dancing jumping and singing to the elegant graceful dancing and singing from the Kingdom of Tonga Community. A glimpse of the cultural performance from Haiti by the beautiful Randy to the small atoll Tokelau with a beautiful dance from Tokelau’s finest Joanne O’Brien and Teine Ata Asikia. The audience also witness Vanuatu’s cultural performance performed by the Vanuatu community, a beautiful Tahiti dance by duo Joanne O’Brien and Teine Ata Asikia plus beautiful dancing and singing from the Fiji Islands by the Fijian Community.

While the Samoan group performed numbers of contemporary dances as well as the girls taking the stage with their beautiful poised Samoan “siva” The Samoan Group also had the pleasure to end the night (as so as in our culture) with their “taualuga” (AP).
The University of the South Pacific recognized the value of fitness among its staff thus on Friday 29th of June 2018 I&J Sports Day took place. Though cloudy and wet but the whole day was a success with remarkable individual results and performances. There were two teams Savaii (Blue) team and Upolu (Red) team. It was a day filled with fun and laughters among I&J staff. From warm up exercise with Zumba from Etetei and SPACE just before volleyball then touch rugby to a lot of ball kicking with soccer to egg and coconuts race and even to trying out the English Cricket. The day ended with a dance challenge that Ms. Victoria Muavae mastered after a crazy challenge with Paulo Teniteni. A massive job well done to all I&J staff and some academic staff that took part as well as a big thank you to the I&J Association Officers and everyone that helped out to make the day run smoothly. It was indeed an extremely close fought throughout the day with the final placing decided. In the end of the day, Victoria Muavae for females and Paulo Teniteni for males were named “Players of the Day” and the Overall winner was awarded to the Upolu (Red) Team (AP).
USP 50th Anniversary in Photos!
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Md. Abdul Kader (PhD)
University of the South Pacific
School of Agriculture and Food Technology
Alafua Campus
Samoa, Apia
Tel: (+685) 21671 Ext 286; Facsimile: (+685) 22933
E-mail: mdabdul.kader@samoa.usp.ac.fj