

USP Beat

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STUDENTS GRADUATE WITH MICRO-QUALIFICATION IN ESTABLISHING AND OPERATING A SMALL SEAFOOD BUSINESS

Fifteen regional scholarship recipients of The University of the South Pacific (USP) Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) Programme became the first batch to graduate with a micro-qualification in Establishing and Operating a Small Seafood Business in the Pacific.

Small-scale seafood business is fundamental to the livelihoods and helps alleviate Pacific Islanders from poverty. To support the Pacific communities in

this regard, the USP PEUMP programme introduced, for the first time in the region, a micro qualification - Establishing and Operating a Small Seafood Business through the USP Pacific TAFE.

Despite border restrictions in place, one of the recipients of the scholarship was Ioanna Nabura, Director of the Catholic Women's League (Teitoiningaina) for the Diocese of Tarawa and Nauru

She said it was the gap of knowledge the

Teitoiningaina needed.

“Seafood is our livelihood, our food and economy and it dawned on me as to my purpose of being in Fiji. I will take all these learnings and somehow replicate this into our existing training which includes nutrition and food security for close to 33,000 members of the Teitoiningaina who are females - eighteen years and over.”

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The first cohort included regional participation from Kiribati, Solomon Islands Vanuatu and Fiji. The scholarship recipients comprise of ocean artisans, seafood entrepreneurs, seaweed and aquaculture farmers, nine of which were women.

The Ambassador of the European Union (EU) for the Pacific, His Excellency Sujiro Seam said “With the Covid-19 crisis, at a time when families struggle to put food on the table, oceans are more than ever a blessing for the Pacific. As part of its engagement on oceans in the region, the EU focuses on sustainable management of marine resources and capacity building for coastal communities, with a focus on

artisans and small entrepreneurs. The EU is happy to partner with USP and other regional organisations to implement in the Pacific the “farm to fork” strategy it promotes in Europe as a part of the European Green Deal”.

In congratulating the graduands, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Pal Ahluwalia, told them they had fulfilled the core vision of the University of the South Pacific by becoming inspirational agents of positive change leading to innovative, cohesive, resilient and sustainable communities.

“USP’s mission and the USP PEUMP Programme’s core objectives are aligned

and we have managed to influence Pacific Islanders through the pursuit of excellence in knowledge by providing world-class education and research that improves lives as individuals and through our communities.” he said.

The USP is one of four key implementing partners of the PEUMP Programme, a EUR 45M initiative funded by the EU and the Government of Sweden. The USP, as main implementing partners, is focusing on building the capacity for Pacific islanders through education, training, research and development in fisheries and marine resources management.

BABANISI’S SPIRIT OF DETERMINATION HELPS HIM REACH HIS GOAL

Edward (Eddie) Babanisi completes his LLB course and returns home to the Solomon Islands early July, overcoming challenges that saw his “six years ending on a high note.”

From Makira Province, one of the more isolated islands in the Solomon Islands, situated to the east of Guadalcanal, Eddie joined The University of the South Pacific in 2015 on a Solomon Islands Government Scholarship.

Having completed his primary and secondary education in Fiji at Marcellin Primary and Marist Brothers High Schools, Eddie later went to New Zealand to undertake Rehabilitation Studies, sponsored by the New Zealand Government.

On his return from New Zealand, Eddie worked with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Health for 10 years as a community based Rehabilitation Officer. He returned to Fiji for further studies in 2015 to undertake his LLB course. Why law? Eddie says he “enjoys arguing”.

He has described his time at USP as “really, really good!” Had it not been for accessibility to most places on campus; the support of the Disability Resource Centre and the Buddy System, Eddie says, he “would not have been successful”.

Comparing his experience in primary school in the 80’s and 90’s when printed



Eddie with his Buddy at the Disability Resource Centre on Laucala Campus

textbooks had to be converted to Braille, the ability to instantly access his course work on Moodle on his laptop through softwares such as JAWS (Job Access with Speech) and NVDA (Non Visual Desktop Access) was most valuable.

Eddie plans to continue to be associated with USP as an alumnus. Working

with the Solomon Islands Campus, he wants to empower other persons with a disability gain higher education and become successful in their chosen career for which he has three tips: have a spirit of determination; always focus on what you want to be; and use your knowledge and build on it!



CLEAN UP OF BEACHFRONT AT MARINE CAMPUS



Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Pal Ahluwalia with Ambassador Seam, EU staff and post graduate Climate Change students

The success of a clean-up by USP PaCE-SD students of the beachfront at Marine Campus on World Environment Day and International Oceans Day on 6 June brought home to many of them the need to raise more awareness amongst the public of their responsibility to keep our oceans litter-free and pollution free. They hope to make this a monthly activity.

The University of the South Pacific (USP) climate change postgraduate students commemorated World Environment Day and International Oceans Day by inviting the Vice Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Pal Ahluwalia, Head of the Delegation of the European Union in the Pacific, Ambassador Sujiro Seam and the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PaCE-SD) Deputy Director, Dr Morgan Wairiu to help them raise awareness and create an opportunity to reflect on the responsibility in the important task of preserving and enhancing our environment..

Professor Ahluwalia said the global celebration of World Environment Day and International Oceans Day provided an ideal platform for the University's public outreach efforts. He said The University's researchers and institutions work hard to understand ocean environments and we (USP) will help and support to create a sustainable future and to celebrate the many forms of life that the ocean supports. USP also celebrates our leading scientists, academics, researchers and the contributions from our students in

understanding our oceans," said Prof Ahluwalia.

"Our students at USP are taking the lead as Environment and Ocean Ambassadors reaching out to national, regional and international audiences on education about marine pollution, research and general conservation of our oceans. We pride ourselves on being a leader in sustainable practices and education."

The clean-up event was an initiative of the USP PaCESD post graduate climate change students with support from the European Union funded Intra-ACP GCCA+ Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience Building (PACRES) project and the university's Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PaCE-SD) and in collaboration with 16-year-old climate justice activist, AnnMary Raduva from Fiji.

Prof Ahluwalia also acknowledged the presence of AnnMary Raduva and her young supporters and said the world needed more such youth as them to echo their collective efforts to protect the environment and oceans. AnnMary has participated as a presenter/speaker at the USP PaCE-SD seminars at the marine campus last December prior to COP 25 in Madrid, Spain.

This year's Oceans Day theme was "Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean". Professor Ahluwalia said he looked towards the students, youth and the

younger generation to guide and support them with partnerships, ideas and innovations to build a sustainable ocean.

"Our sustainability ambitions stretch across campus operations, teaching and research and PaCE-SD champions this ambition and it is very encouraging to know that the climate change postgraduate students are leading with the "walk the talk" responsibility!

"Let us use this event to encourage and empower one another to protect our natural surroundings and be environment and oceans guardians and champions," he said.

Professor Ahluwalia thanked the EU and PaCE-SD for supporting the PACRES project and the students for providing a great opportunity to celebrate both World Environment Day and the International Oceans Day with a coastal cleanup.

He showed his appreciation to Ambassador Seam and EU support staff, USP's project partners from SPREP and PIFS, Dr Morgan and the USP PaCE-SD staff and students for organising an event under extreme restrictions and complying with the Fiji government and USP's public gathering policies.

Fifteen garbage bags of household items, plastic garbage and aluminum cans were collected and weighed on the day by the students.

USP'S INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCES PROVIDES COASTAL EXPERTISE IN SUPPORT OF WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



The University of the South Pacific's (USP) Institute of Applied Sciences (IAS) provided its scientific technical expertise to support the Ministry of Waterways and Environment's World Environment Day message of habitat restoration and promoting nature based solutions on Thursday, 4 June 2020.

The coastal vegetation planting activity was part of an on-going partnership between the Fiji Department of the Environment and the British High Commission.

Her Excellency Melanie Hopkins, British High Commissioner to Fiji said, "there is a need for greater Commonwealth cooperation on both climate and oceans and Commonwealth countries coming together to work on ocean protection can create real change for the entire planet".

The Deputy Director of IAS Dr Gilianne Brodie, who is also the Faculty of Science and Technology's Research Group Leader for Biodiversity & Conservation, said it was an exciting time to see the committed partnership of the United Kingdom and Fiji governments in valuing Fiji's biodiversity and working together towards protecting wetlands and restoring functional natural ecosystems with the utilisation of local expertise.

USP's Institute of Applied Sciences is very pleased to be part of this collaboration.

"Seagrass habitats are nearshore wetland ecosystems considered as one of the world's most valuable natural resources

because they are beneficial to the welfare and daily livelihoods of coastal and small island people particularly in developing countries like Fiji." Dr Brodie said.

"An understanding of seagrass bed location and health as well as the impact of any seagrass removal on donor beds is vitally important to ensure that the health of natural vegetation remains intact".



Her Excellency Ms Melanie Hopkins, British High Commissioner to Fiji being guided by Mr Tomasi Tikoibua, Senior Scientific Officer of the Institute of Applied Sciences Environment Unit in coastal restoration awareness in support of World Environment Day

Dr Brodie has strong support for her environmental and capacity building research work. She has several local and regional postgraduate students assisted through the Commonwealth Marine Economics Programme. She is also Co-Investigator on the UK Research and Innovation's Global Challenges Research Fund One Ocean Hub project launched at USP by the British High Commissioner Her Excellency Melanie Hopkins in 2019.

In the Pacific the beneficial value of coastal habitats like seagrasses arises via economic and ecological services such as human food provision (fish and invertebrate), coastal protection, sediment stabilisation, exceptional carbon storage capacity, water purification (via filtration), primary production, pathogen reduction and use as a compost fertiliser or fuel.

In many parts of the world, long-term seagrass losses and degradation are directly related to run-off of nutrients and sediments from human activities on land. Because of this, USP has in recent years, supported several postgraduate students from Fiji, Solomon Islands and Kiribati to better understand seagrasses. These students are working on projects related to habitat mapping via remote sensing, coastal protection modelling, climate change impacts, carbon storage, seagrass health, coastal erosion, reproductive biology and the linkage of seagrass habitat health to fisheries, catchment management, pollution and water quality.

The Institute of Applied Sciences is currently implementing a Blue Carbon project which complements and supports the coastal and marine habitat restoration concept.

Dr Brodie stated that the wealth of experience and knowledge gained through these projects and research work has allowed the Institute to provide scientific support to the regional governments on initiatives that will benefit the livelihoods of people in the region.



INAUGURAL POETRY SLAM NIGHT – TUVALU CAMPUS

More than 100 people attended the inaugural Poetry Slam Night on 12 June at the USP Tuvalu Campus. The event was officially opened by Mr. Penehuro Hauma, author of a popular Short Story in the Pacific, titled 'It's Not That Easy'.

In his opening remarks, Mr Hauma described his experience as a writing student, under Professor Albert Wendt's supervision, at USP Laucala Campus.

He talked about how he was inspired to write his famous short story 'It's Not That Easy' while listening to the fight between Mohammed Ali and Joe Frazier. In addition, he shared a poem he had penned on the topic of the night, 'COVID-19'.

The Poetry Slam Night was an initiative of the USP Tuvalu Campus Staff Social Committee that wanted to create a safe space for the members of the community to express their perspective about COVID-19 or describe their COVID-19 experience.

The event encouraged young people to express their feelings through poetry. While some poets highlighted how they were disadvantaged due to COVID19, some poets, especially the young, were just happy that Tuvalu is Corona Virus free. The USP Tuvalu Campus Director, Dr Rosiana Lagi said the event was a great success as it drew many people from different age groups. She added that it was pleasing to see families come out together to participate in the event. It also allowed the campus staff and students to engage



Mr. Faivatala Moresi, Dr. Nakibea Kitiseni, Dr. Rosiana Lagi, Mr. Penehuro Hauma, H.E Marc Su

with the University's stakeholders and provide an opportunity for the participants and guests to find out about courses and programmes offered at the USP Tuvalu Campus.

Participants at the event expressed their poem through recitation, singing and art. The event was filled with fun. USP students provided entertainment through traditional dances with island music provided by a local band and many great ideas were shared.

The Republic of China (Taiwan) Ambassador, His Excellency Mr Marc Su, presented the awards which were co-sponsored by Dr. Nakibea Kitiseni, an Associate Professor in Sports Management at the Huanggang

Normal University, (currently stranded in Tuvalu due to COVID-19) and a local business. Refreshments were sponsored by local businesses. Dr. Lagi expressed her appreciation for the support from the sponsors and the members of the communities.

VIDEO COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS - WINNERS

The Faculty of Science, Technology & Environment (FSTE) ran a competition for our students on sharing their experience of remote learning.

Dr Anjeela Jokhan, Dean, FSTE thanked the students who sent in their videos. The faculty selected 4 videos and declared the winners of this competition. The winners each received \$50 recharge cards.

The winners;

1. **S11161608 Ernest Kalsa**
2. **S11158137 Salwesh Bans**
3. **S11173379 Ponipate Navusowata**
4. **S11141607 Sera Laliqavoka**

Dr Jokhan congratulated the 4 students for their excellent work.



Nuese laopo, one of the youngest Poets



RESET FIJI - A PEOPLE'S POST-COVID-19 DIALOGUE SERIES

The University of the South Pacific (USP) in collaboration with MaiTV, Oxfam in the Pacific and the Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG) is hosting a public policy dialogue series in the months of June and July aiming for solutions here in Fiji to address the growing impacts of COVID-19 and to reset Fiji's economy.

The climate emergency and on-going natural disasters (Cyclone Harold) coupled with the pandemic has exposed, again but perhaps more starkly, the fundamental flaws within the current dominant economic systems. Jobs and livelihood losses, bankruptcy, capital flight, evacuation and forced migration, drop in remittances, increase in crime, increase in mental health issues, and violence against women are some of many impacts already felt and will become even more pronounced as the global economy slides into recession.

But out of crisis there is also opportunity.

There is now a growing realisation amongst our people that our resilience is built on existing structures and communal systems - an economy of solidarity amongst people - one of sharing and caring. The Fiji government has been an early mover to capitalise, at least politically, on this system of solidarity and to frame its response to the pandemic and natural disaster through the 'Veilomani' efforts.

Australia and New Zealand are moving quickly by signalling a Trans-Tasman bubble to protect their economies although our exclusion as island nations is presented for our benefit - a do no harm policy. But our Pacific governments appear to be desperately seeking to be part of the trans-Tasman bubble and a return to the power politics of old rather than taking the opportunity to RESET our development priorities and responses.

With borders unlikely to reopen anytime soon, the pandemic has in fact locked an entire country into a temporary pause

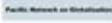
with devastating impacts. The pause is an opportunity to RESET our developmental priorities in Fiji. It will require all of us to look internally to build from our greatest assets: our people, a clean healthy environment, our cultures and stories of leadership in times of unprecedented calamity to shape a response. The RESET will require an entire country to own it, drive and shape a post-COVID-19 world.



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REGIONAL STUDENTS can contact their Campus Directors:
www.usp.ac.fj/campuses for assistance.

The continuous assessments in your courses are being designed flexibly,
so it is not too late to resume.



Name: Jade Moore
Occupation: Senior Library Assistant
Section: Library
Year Joined: 2013
Campus: Laucala, Fiji
Home Country: Fiji

STAFF PROFILE

Most memorable moment at USP?

Being given the responsibility of looking after the Library's Learning Commons.

Best part about your job?

Interaction with students - being able to help find solutions or resources and the gratitude received in return.

What three words would you use to describe your role?

Friendly, helpful, supportive.

What is your personal motto?

Be kind, be honest and respectful. Embrace creativity and individuality.

Favourite thing about USP.

The diversity of our students, the greenery of our campus and of course the library.

What motivates you?

Being happy and helpful.

What has been your favourite project at USP?

Preparation of Open Day displays as I enjoy being creative.

Best remedy for work stress?

Going to the beach or reading a good book.

Where did you receive your qualifications?

The University of the South Pacific.

How has COVID-19 affected you and your section?

The Library has had to adjust our opening hours and the Learning Commons is closed due to Covid 19 restrictions. We now offer services such as ask-a-librarian online and continue to promote our online resources.

Best advice you have ever been given?

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.



Name: Janice Taga
Programme: Masters of Science in Marine Science
Faculty: Science, Technology & Environment
Year Joined: 2013- Degree level; 2018- PG; 2019-Masters
Home Country: Fiji
Campus: Laucala (Lower Campus), Fiji

STUDENT PROFILE

Why did you choose USP?

Best University in the region, it was closer to home and for better and quality education

What are your career goals?

Aspiring to be an outstanding scientific researcher especially in my field of study.

Preferred mode of study?

Both face to face and Online

Which course have you enjoyed the most? Why?

I honestly enjoyed all of my courses; it all had offered a different learning experience. What I enjoyed most was the interaction with lecturers and colleagues, working in groups and going out to the field for practicals.

How has COVID-19 affected your studies and mode of study?

Due to the global pandemic restrictions, my field sampling and imported research equipments were delayed or on hold. I had to adjust from face to face classes to online engagement with students.

I like to stay positive and for my research, it has provided me with more time to revise on my methods, work plans, continue writing and prepare well before I actually start with my data collection.

Three words to describe USP

DIVERSE, QUALITY AND FUN

Describe how you feel about studying on your campus?

Studying at lower campus is really fun, whether it was eating gugula, bara or sharing a packet of noodles from the canteen, it still felt like home. The students get along really well and the lecturers are very supportive and approachable. USP is like a second home.

What extra-curricular activities are you involved in?

I am a PEUMP Masters Student and also a part time tutor and lab demonstrator.

Do you prefer to work as part of a group or alone? Why?

I like Both: Team work is the best way to work and learn from your group members. On the other hand; working alone is a self learning experience, motivating ourselves to get things done and meeting deadlines.

How is USP preparing you for the future?

USP has provided me with the knowledge and skills for my field. It has also allowed me to engage with some amazing scientists and build my platform as a young researcher.





Ana Tuiketei Bolabiu
ICC Listed Counsel,
Notary Public & Pacific Consultant
USP Alumni

“USP has ignited the passion in me to never stop learning in order to keep growing in every area of my life”.

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USP - SHAPING PACIFIC FUTURES

REVISED ACADEMIC CALENDAR YEAR

SEMESTER 1, 2020

29 June – 17 July:
Grades submissions

MID-YEAR BREAK: 27 June - 02 August

SEMESTER 2, 2020 COMMENCES ON 3 AUGUST

28 August:
Fees Due Date

19 - 27 September:
Mid-Semester Break

14 - 22 November:
Study Week

23 November - 04 December
Examination/ Assessment Weeks

TRIMESTER 2, 2020

18 May:
Trimester begins

1 -14 August:
Study Week and Examination Period

TRIMESTER 2 BREAK: 15 - 30 August

TRIMESTER 3, 2020

31 August:
Trimester begins

14 - 27 November:
Study Week and Examination Period

USPBeat Magazine

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