

‘INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RENEWABLE ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE FOCUS ON THE PACIFIC’ HELD AT USP



Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra (front, middle) with participants of the conference.

The opening ceremony of the ‘International Conference on Renewable Energy and Climate Change - Focus on the Pacific’ (ICRECC2010) was held on 6 December, 2010 at the University of the South Pacific’s Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji.

The conference which lasted from 6 - 8 December, 2010 covered topics ranging from renewable energy assessment, to technologies and their relevance to the development of the region and cross-cutting, socio-economic and policy issues. It also included a comprehensive discussion of the impacts of climate change as experienced by the people of the Pacific.

Delegates from as far away as Hamburg, Germany, the West Indies and Mauritius attended this conference, hosted by USP in conjunction with the Fiji Department of Energy and Environment, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) - Oceania.

In his opening address at the conference, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra welcomed participants and stated that renewable energy and climate change were “key areas of interest to the region, and therefore to USP.”

“Renewable energy is important as it not only assists in the mitigation of climate change, but provides a much needed buffer to the oil price shocks the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) are frequently subjected to because of their over-dependence on imported fossil fuels,” he explained.

Professor Chandra highlighted the importance of research and development for PICs and said that, “USP sees a special role for itself in being the major research and development hub for the PICs as research and development are typically anchored in universities and research centres.”

He mentioned that the teaching and research programme in Renewable Energy at USP had recently received a major boost from the Republic of Korea.

“In the first ever grant to USP this year the Government of Korea has provided US\$2 million to assist USP to establish a firm foundation for renewable energy teaching, research and policy,” he said.

Professor Chandra highlighted projects in renewable energy that USP is a “partner” in, which includes the Euro 1.2million ACP-EU Project DIREKT, the French-government funded solar-wind hybrid system and the US Government funded photo voltaic system to power the student *fales* at the Laucala Campus, saying that, “these projects have become important research and demonstration activities at the University.”

He added that USP was undertaking “significant work in the area of climate” and highlighted ongoing projects which include the Climate Change Adaptation and Monitoring projects funded by AusAID and UNDP, European Union (EU) and UNESCO-funded ESD projects, and AusAID-funded Future Climate Leaders project.

Professor Chandra said that he was pleased that a very large climate change project had just been

finalised with the EU and added that this “will have significant impact on the efforts of PICs to deal effectively with climate change.”

The keynote address was given by Dr Tony Weir from the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) at USP, who presented on ‘*climate change mitigation and the role of renewable energy: a global perspective*’.

Dr Weir said that “sustainable development cannot be achieved without mitigation of climate change.” This, he remarked “requires renewable energy to replace a large proportion of global fossil fuel use.”

According to Dr Weir, “such an increase in renewable energy is technically and economically possible especially if coupled with energy efficiency but will require significant investment, substantial institutional and social change and the political will to drive such a change.”

Conference convener and Head of USP’s Renewable Energy Programme, Dr Anirudh Singh said that, “a unique feature of this conference was to allow participants from all over the world to learn first hand of the results of regional projects in renewable energy and climate change funded by international funding agencies.”

The three-day conference heard presentations from local, regional and international speakers and allowed for the first time, regional countries to sit down together and device solutions to their energy and climate change problems.



UNITED NATIONS VALUES 'STRONG PARTNERSHIP' WITH USP

The United Nations values its 'strong partnership' with the University of the South Pacific.

These comments were made by Mr Knut Ostby, the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative based in Suva, Fiji.

"We value our strong partnership with USP and have recently gone a step further by signing a joint Memorandum of Understanding," said Mr Ostby while opening the Symposium on 'Role of Media and Civil Society in Strengthening Democracy and Social Cohesion' on 10 December, 2010 at USP's Laucala Campus.

The symposium was a collaborative project between USP's Faculties of Arts and Law, Business and Economics and the UNDP, Suva.

"This seminar is one of a number of initiatives of different kinds implemented in collaboration between USP and UNDP," said Mr Ostby.

"We intend to collaborate in a range of areas that are important for development in the Pacific."

"For example, the themes recently discussed in our joint electronic forum called 'Solutions Exchange' include climate change and MDGs, and today's theme of peace and development is also highly relevant," added Mr Ostby.

Mr Ostby's comments were welcomed by the symposium conveners, USP's Head of Journalism Mr Shailendra Singh and Senior Lecturer in Management, Dr Desmond Amosa.

"We look forward to future collaborations between USP and UNDP," said Mr Singh.

Both Mr Singh and Dr Amosa represented USP at a workshop in Nadi organised by UNDP's regional program in May, 2010.

The workshop was a first step in a 12-month project called 'Strengthening Capacities for Peace and Development in the Pacific Project' (CPAD). It was attended by government representatives and civil society organisations from Pacific Island countries.

The main aim of the project is to strengthen the conflict prevention infrastructure in the region by supporting key stakeholders in Government and CSOs with a conflict prevention mandate. It is aimed at building a community of peace practitioners in the Pacific to share resources, materials and experience and to tap into the expertise that lies within the people of the region, who work on these issues on a daily basis.

As part of USP's contribution to strengthen the conflict prevention infrastructure in the region, a special issue of USP's Journal of Pacific Studies on peace and development is being published for launching early 2011. The edition is being co-edited by Mr Singh and Dr Amosa.

SYMPOSIUM ON 'ROLE OF MEDIA AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL COHESION'

A one-day symposium on the 'Role of media and civil society in strengthening democracy and social cohesion' ended successfully at the University of the South Pacific's (USP) Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji, on 10 December, 2010.

Convened by the Head of Journalism at USP, Mr Shailendra Singh and Senior Lecturer in Management, Dr Desmond Amosa, the symposium was co-sponsored by USP's faculties of Arts and Law (FAL) and Business and Economics (FBE).

It was supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Suva.

Keynote speakers included Associate Professor and Director of the Pacific Media Centre at the Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, Dr David Robie; Publisher and Chief Executive of Tonga's Taimi Media Network, Mr Kalafi Moala, and Senior Lecturer in Journalism and Communications at the University of Queensland, Dr Levi Obijiofor.

Mr Singh said the symposium was very successful. He said the speakers had made a significant contribution to intellectual life at USP while bringing to public attention an issue that is very critical for the well-being of the region.

In opening the symposium, the Dean of FAL, Dr Akanisi Kedrayate said the media was a powerful tool in terms of informing, educating and transforming societies.

She said that the symposium aimed to discuss how media could further empower people and civil society so as to transform societies.

The Chief Guest and UNDP Resident Representative, Mr Knut Ostby elaborated further on the roles of media in providing information, protecting important ideals and giving voice to the people.

He said the media informs people about significant issues affecting their social, economic and political environments.

He highlighted that the media creates a platform for public debate and this enables a diversity of views to be heard on issues of common concern.

Mr Ostby added that the media has become "more interactive, dynamic and participatory" and has defined a role for itself as a more active player in shaping our societies.

He emphasized that the dual roles of the media - to speak to the public and to speak on behalf of the public - has remained the same.

On conflict prevention and peacekeeping, Mr Ostby said that media "can promote and mobilise public support for peace building. It can promote positive relationships within groups."

Symposium convenors Dr Desmond Amosa (left) and Mr Shailendra Singh (far right) with keynote speakers Dr Levi Obijiofor, Mr Kalafi Moala and Dr David Robie.



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SOLAR PV SYSTEM COMMISSIONED AT USP

Left to Right: Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra, US Embassy Regional Environment Officer for the Pacific, Dr Norman Barth and Head of School of Engineering and Physics at USP and Project Coordinator, Dr Atul Raturi.

A new solar photovoltaic (PV) system was commissioned at the University of the South Pacific in Suva on 17 December, 2010 by the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra and Dr Norman Barth, the US Embassy Regional Environment Officer for the Pacific.

The system which was funded by the US Embassy under its Pacific Small Environment Grants is designed to power lighting in the student study areas and provide charging facility to laptops and mobile phones at the student *fales* located at the USP's Laucala Campus.

In his address, Professor Chandra highlighted the importance of renewable energy and said that the Pacific Islands were taking some of the "quickest actions" in moving towards renewable energy.

Professor Chandra said that USP remains "committed" in giving more support to renewable energy and highlighted that the project "was an example of doing something which is going to immediately benefit the students."

He further described the project as "a wonderful

fusion of the Pacific tradition of the Pacific fale with cutting-edge renewable energy technology."

"This is a fantastic project which combines very practical benefits, it combines tradition and modern technology and makes people realise in practical terms what sustainability means," added Professor Chandra.

In thanking the US Government for their support with the project, Professor Chandra also highlighted the "strong" relationship between USP and the US Government.

The project was introduced by the Head of School of Engineering and Physics at USP and Project Coordinator, Dr Atul Raturi who said that it would allow USP students to "understand" the capacity that natural resources have and what it provides for them.

Apart from providing solar energy to the student fales, Dr Raturi explained that the system would also generate data which could be used to expand and move to a bigger system and added that it would help develop a standard for PV systems.

Besides demonstrating the development of sustainable energy, Dr Raturi explained that this work will also help monitor and evaluate the performance of PV systems under Suva-like meteorological conditions and come up with recommendations for future installations.

In his address, Dr Norman Barth highlighted USP as a key institution and added that the University is a "foundational organisation for the Pacific region and its future."

He reminded those present that, "we are on the other hand at the beginning of an incredible transition, to renewable energy, to green economies and to low-carbon economies" and added that USP was at the forefront of such a transition.

Dr Barth said that the US Embassy was involved with the funding of another project at USP, which is the establishment of a Geo/Earth cache program for Global Environmental Change Education and Awareness in the South Pacific.

The solar PV system project is being undertaken by Mr Rajneel Prasad, a Masters in Physics student at USP as his final thesis project.

STAFF PROFILE | SERA KURUSIGA | CLEANER

What is the length of time you've been employed at USP?
15 years.

What is your home country?
Fiji.

How do you usually begin your working day?

As soon as I arrive at 7am, I start with the tasks as scheduled by the Hall Supervisor

What is the best part of your current work?

Meeting different staff on a daily basis. For example, when I was based at the main administration building I had the opportunity to mingle with the Senior Management Team on a daily basis.

What is your best practical remedy for work and life stress?

Gospel music is usually my remedy for a hectic day at work.

What is the most unusual/unexpected event that has ever happened to you?

None that I can think of at the moment. Not because there aren't any but 15 years is quite a long time to try and recall the moments at the drop of a hat.



What is the best advice you've ever been given, or have given to students at USP?

Not to meddle in other people's business but to mind one's own.

Who inspires you and why?

My parents because they are honest and hardworking and I try to portray an image of them always in my life.

What have been your main career highlights?

This work has given me the opportunity to pursue further studies. I have done a Certificate in Management Studies and graduated in 2009.

Which Book are you reading at the moment, and why?

Hearing Gods Applause, because it's a very good book to build my spiritual life.

What are some challenges you think are faced by young people in the Pacific?

Negligence - youth are usually neglected and they don't usually find the support from parents to pursue own dreams.

What are your hopes for the Pacific region in 2011 and beyond?
A peaceful Pacific in 2011.

USP LAUNCHES NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMMES IN DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS



The Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra gives his address at the launch. Sitting left to right: The Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Mr Solo Mara, Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade, Associate Professor, Dr Sandra Tarte and Dean of FBE, Professor Biman C. Prasad.

The University of the South Pacific's School of Government, Development and International Affairs in the Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) launched its graduate programmes in Diplomacy and International Affairs on 6 December, 2010 at the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies at USP's Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji.

The new programmes will see the introduction of a two-course Postgraduate Certificate, a four-course Postgraduate Diploma and an eight-course Masters of Arts programme in Diplomacy and International Affairs.

In his welcome remarks at the launch, Dean of FBE, Professor Biman C. Prasad said that the Faculty of Business and Economics believes that the new programmes in diplomacy and international affairs are "one of those strategic areas that will help build capacity in the region."

In his address, Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra highlighted that, "there is a major need in the Pacific Islands for us to assist the governments to have more trained

capacity to negotiate competently, confidently and for their interests" and added that, "this is where this programme is expected to make a major contribution."

Chief Guest and Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation, Mr Solo Mara mentioned of the "promise these programmes hold for employers like governments, regional and international organisations in getting graduates that can apply the theory of international relations into the practicalities of providing advice, assessments on international and regional issues that are affecting our regional governments."

In emphasising the importance of programmes in diplomacy and international affairs, he said that governments have spent a significant amount of money in sending "young recruits to pursue these programmes in faraway corners of the globe" and encouraged USP member countries to take advantage of the new programmes which will be on offer.

Associate Professor from the School of Govern-

ment, Development and International Affairs at USP, Dr Sandra Tarte explained that the introduction of these programmes would "meet a long-standing need and interest in the USP region for postgraduate training and qualifications in the related fields of diplomacy and international affairs."

She said these programmes aimed "to equip graduates with knowledge and understanding of the international system including the rules of diplomacy, key international institutions and the processes of global and regional governance and to develop both academic background and practical skills training in diplomatic negotiations, especially in respect to key policy areas such as trade and environment."

She highlighted that the courses comprise a mix of global, generic themes and Pacific Island content to "ensure that subjects are contextualised for Pacific Island students."

The new programmes are now on offer for first semester, 2011.

USP AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MANOA SIGN AGREEMENT

The University of the South Pacific and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa signed an Agreement for Cooperation on 2 December, 2010 which formalises their intention to work closely together for the next five years.

The Agreement was signed by the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra, and the Dean of the School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Professor Edward Shultz. The signing took place at the USP's Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji.

Both universities are well-known and respected for their Pacific orientation and the depth and strength of their Pacific Studies programmes. This collaboration is expected to result in the further development of Pacific Studies at both USP and the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, and will enable joint research, joint teaching, and special

projects that will attract the attention and interest of a wider community.

Professor Chandra said that, "the University of the South Pacific is committed to strengthening its Pacific Studies programme and the broader work of the Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture, and Pacific Studies. I am very pleased to enter into this formal arrangement with the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, which is very well-known for focus on Pacific cultures."

He highlighted that the Agreement was "part of USP's attempt to create strategically important linkages with universities in different countries and different parts of the world. Given the common emphasis of the University of Hawai'i and USP and Pacific people and Pacific cultures and Pacific development, it is natural that we have an agreement between ourselves."

In describing USP's relationship with the University of Hawai'i, Professor Chandra said "we have had interactions with the University of Hawai'i for many years now and in fact one of the first student exchanges that USP had was with the University of Hawai'i and we have had collaboration with and among academics from USP and Hawai'i."

At the signing, Professor Edward Shultz said "we hold the University of the South Pacific in high regard, and the University of Hawaii is taking a renewed active interest in the study of 'The Pacific'."

The Agreement focuses on academic exchange and collaboration for learning, teaching, and research. There are opportunities for faculty members, post graduate and undergraduate students to study and conduct research at the partner institution.



LAUNCH OF THE FIRST-EVER ALUMNI NETWORK FOR USP LAUTOKA CAMPUS

Left to Right: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Services) Professor Susan Kelly, Acting USP Lautoka Campus Director, Dr Pramila Devi and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Regional Campuses) Dr Esther Williams.

The first-ever USP Alumni Network for the Lautoka Campus was launched at the Tanoa Waterfront Hotel in Lautoka on 17 December, 2010.

This milestone event was a step towards assisting the Alumni Office at USP's Laucala Campus to build the overall USP Alumni Network and was attended by the USP Lautoka Advisory Committee members, USP alumni members from the Western Division, USP Lautoka Campus and Laucala Campus staff as well as members of the media.

The official programme started with a welcome address by the Acting USP Lautoka Campus Director, Dr Pramila Devi. She said that the invitations sent to the alumni regarding the establishment of a network received a "very positive response."

Dr Devi informed those present that at the beginning of the year, the Lautoka Campus acquired funding through the Vice-Chancellor's Office for its proposal for a project to enhance DFL services and to establish an alumni network in the Western Division. This project, as explained by Dr Devi, had two key objectives

which were: firstly, to conduct a survey to gather DFL students' responses in order to improve services to Lautoka Campus students and secondly, to establish a network of USP graduates working and living in the Western Division.

She highlighted that the Lautoka Campus looks forward to working very closely with USP alumni in the near future and outlined plans of having similar alumni gatherings in the Western Division.

The keynote address was given by the USP's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Regional Campuses) Dr Esther Williams who said that the launch of the Alumni Lautoka Branch "forms part of the University's Strategic Plan where we will build up our USP Alumni Network (USPAN) across the region and internationally."

Dr Williams remarked that since the establishment of USP in 1968 till 2010, there have been over 36,000 graduates.

"Over the past four decades, not only has USP expanded physically as an institution, we have truly asserted ourselves and assumed our place in the region and in society as the premier pro-

vider of higher education, a driver of national and regional development and a shaper of Pacific identity in many ways," she added.

Dr Williams highlighted that USP has an extensive alumni and said that, "we have to now build this network and bring our alumni together from across the oceans."


In emphasising the significance of the launch, Dr Williams said "it is about our commitment to the success of USP and the people of Fiji and our member countries."

"We can all stand tall with our different flags of our member countries with a keen sense of pride, solidarity, distinction and hope. We recognise the significance of today's event and honour the vision of those who founded USP and those who contributed to building USP and the Lautoka Campus into what it is today," she added.

Dr Williams encouraged the alumni present to maintain communication and to support USP.

Entertainment was provided by the Lautoka Campus students and after the conclusion of formalities, invited guests were served dinner.

ALUMNI PROFILE | FIJI ISLANDS | JOWANA KALOUCAVA



Which programme did you graduate in and which year? Bachelor of Arts majoring in Accounting and Economics – 2010.

What is your current occupation? Assistant Project Accountant (Water Authority of Fiji).

What did you enjoy most about being a student at USP? The friends that I made, the exposure to other cultural groups and the all nights that we had to go through before the assignments due date.

What was your greatest achievement whilst studying at USP? Meeting deadlines on time.

How do you think USP helped you in your career? Firstly, USP helped me in developing critical

thinking skills which assisted me in making fair/subjective judgments. Secondly I have learnt the importance of time management and USP provided better learning resources that enabled me to achieve my goals.

What inspires you and why?

My family and friends as they are the ones who made the load light with their endless support and encouragement.

After graduating from USP what has been your greatest achievement?

Being equipped with the ability to be fair and objective in decision making and to be transparent in regards to my career.

Your advice to current and future USP students? Utilise your time and the opportunity that you have to education as this will be your asset in years to come.



Honourable Minister for Health, Dr Neil Sharma and USP's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Services), Professor Susan Kelly at the ceremony.

WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND VARIABILITY AND CHANGE IN PICs - CLOSING CEREMONY

The closing ceremony of the Training and Capacity Building Workshop on 'Climate Change and Variability and Change in Pacific Island Countries: Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation' was held on 3 December, 2010 at the University of the South Pacific's (USP) Lower Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji.

The two-week long workshop was organised by the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) at USP as part of AusAID funded Future Climate Leaders Project activity.

The closing address was given by the Honourable Minister for Health, Dr Neil Sharma. He highlighted that "capacity building and training workshops like this one creates a network of practitioners and specialists on climate change at a regional level that will address the effects of

climate change in the long-term."

"We consider these efforts part of sustainable approach that transcends many different cultural, social, environmental and institutional boundaries, and builds capacities towards finding better solutions," he added.

He mentioned that it was "encouraging" to see workshop participants from different Pacific countries and that, "this testifies to the interest on the subject of climate change and adaptation strategies."

He said that, "USP through its postgraduate diploma program on climate change, helps build a cadre of local skilled professionals to support and guide governments, NGOs and regional organisations in their efforts to adapt to climate change, and to train others in adaptation especially at community level."

He elaborated that the message of adaptation was "about adapting to climate change and improving the ability of communities to respond to the effects of climate variability."

"This 'no regret' strategy has immediate benefits in that it helps to mobilise communities and volunteers to prepare for the effects of climate change adaptation which demands effort from our communities," he explained.

Dr Sharma emphasised that, "a clear understanding of the basic science of climate change and of its impacts on different aspects and sectors of our life was needed."

He added that, "it is successful only when people adhere to, and take ownership of the adaptation strategies taking place in their community. This process requires information about climate change to be widely disseminated in the communities, NGOs, government and international agencies."

"It is clear that adaptation to climate change has multiple dimensions and deals not only with land management, food and water supply, but also involves different cultures, and spans many disciplines such as education, health, economics and many cutting issues such as gender and governance," highlighted Dr Sharma.

He stressed the need to build partnerships and alliances and said that, "only in coming together we can make sure our communities are prepared to adapt. Our livelihoods, only then will be protected from the threats related to climate change."

At the ceremony, USP's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Services), Professor Susan Kelly congratulated and told participants that it was "very important" for them as advocates, to empower people at the local level.

Certificates were presented to the participants on the final day of the workshop.

STUDENT PROFILE | MEREIA BELO | POSTGRADUATE - SOCIAL POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

What is your home country? Fiji Islands

6 What campus are you studying at? Laucala Campus

Why did you choose to study at USP? Being the established tertiary institution in the country and one of the only two regional universities in the world. USP also offered my programmes of interest being Sociology and Psychology, two social science disciplines that are interrelated.

What do you enjoy most about 'uni' life? Getting to learn from renowned academics, meet interesting people, making new friends from all over the Pacific region and learning to appreciate the diverse cultures of the Pacific.

What do you find most difficult or challenging? Having to meet assignments deadlines especially when taking 3-4 units in a semester and class presentations which are nerve wrecking at times. However I have learnt to overcome all these obstacles utilizing time management skills, constructive coping strategies and learning support services available at USP.

What do you like best about your programme of study? Learning to connect social and economical issues to the formulation of social policies for the purpose of social development in society. It has broadened and enriched my horizons of learning in the areas of policy development and analysis which encompasses its formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes on the ground for the people.

What can't you live without on campus? Apart from my family's support, true friends who have made my learning experiences at USP most memorable and enriching in the sense that we have learnt to share and care for one another which strengthens our intellectual pursuit although challenging at times but always filled with love, fun and laughter.

What could improve your studying experience at USP? I believe USP has a lot to offer in as far as student learning facilities are concerned but each individuals needs to set their priorities right and stay focused on the purpose of their being at this prominent institution. However having said that, I would also love to see an increase in the number of computer labs, studying areas and outside seats to accommodate the ever increasing student population in recent years hence improving studying experiences at USP.

What is your best survival tip? Group study works for me. Each individual has a unique approach to learning and collectively works wonders. It is a benefiting learning and mentoring experience. So my advice to students is to look for study buddies who share same values, attitudes, interests in learning to help you through your studies.

What do you do to relax when you're not studying? Talanoa session with my circle of friends because we need to unwind, breathe and relax after a day's hard work. Laughter is the best medicine to relieve stress.

Who is your role model or mentor and why? It would have to be my mother, the late Mrs. Vani Belo. Through her upbringing and deeds, I was able to learn to live each day as it comes and to be grateful with what life has to offer and strive to perform to the best of your abilities. To put God first, respect elders, treasure family, and cherish friends as they provide the social support that we need in life. It is so unfortunate that she is not around to share the joys of my achievements.

What career(s) will your course prepare you for? With my academic background in Sociology/ Social Policy & Administration and Psychology, I would be able to contribute in the areas of Human Resources, Administration, Social Policy Development and Analysis in any aspect of society.

What are some challenges facing (young) people in the Pacific? Access to basic education opportunities because education leads to greater things in life. An educated youth or person would contribute constructively to family and community. As future leaders they deserve to be educated to equip them to become better citizens of tomorrow.



JAPAN'S ODA PRESS TOUR VISITS THE JAPAN-PACIFIC ICT CENTRE AT USP

USP's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Regional Campuses), Dr Esther Williams and Ambassador of Japan, H.E. Mr Yutaka Yoshizawa.



A press tour to give Fiji's media representatives first hand knowledge of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Fiji began on 8 December, 2010 with a tour of the recently built Japan-Pacific Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Centre at the University of the South Pacific's Laucala Campus in Suva, Fiji.

In her welcome remarks to the tour members, USP's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Regional Campuses), Dr Esther Williams commented that the Japanese Aid relationship with USP "goes back to almost 40 years."

"We have trained a number of our staff in Japan and we continue to send people there," she said.

Dr Williams said that the vision of the Centre, to be the ICT hub throughout the region is "now coming to fruition."

She highlighted that the Centre is really the "People's Centre" and added that "it is not only going to benefit USP but the whole Pacific region."

She elaborated on upcoming plans of the Japan-Pacific ICT Centre to be an International Telecommunication Union Academy which would allow training programmes to be conducted in the Centre. Dr Williams advised that the Pa-

cific Regional Resources Centre which will look after the telecommunications companies throughout the region and the Pacific Islands Telecommunications Agency which looks after the telecommunications associations within the whole Pacific region will be hosted in the Centre.

She thanked the Japanese Government for their assistance and support to USP.

In his remarks the Resident Representative of JICA Fiji Office, Mr Juichiro Sasaki said that since its establishment, JICA Fiji "has been carrying out its ODA activities to support the socio-economic development of Fiji and neighboring Pacific Island countries through a variety of programs and schemes."

Mr Sasaki highlighted the priority areas of JICA's activities in Fiji, which were:

- Education;
- Health and medical services;
- Environmental protection and disaster management and;
- Upgrading livelihood by promotion of income-generation.

The 2-day tour visited several of Japan's ODA projects sites around Viti-Levu in Fiji.

PROJECT DIREKT PARTNERS WELCOMED AT USP

A luncheon gathering to welcome the Small Developing Island Renewable Energy Knowledge and Technology Transfer Network (DIREKT) Project Partners was held on 9 December, 2010 at the University of the South Pacific's Faculty of Science, Technology and Environment (FSTE) Building in Suva, Fiji.

Project DIREKT is an EU-funded renewable energy project which aims to facilitate the use of renewable energy resources in the Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries through training, capacity building and technology transfer. It is especially relevant to the needs of businesses, educational institutions, managers and government policy makers, who need more information in this area to succeed.

The four-member consortium of ACP-EU nations participating in the project are represented by the University of West Indies, the University of Mauritius and the University of the South Pacific, with the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences providing the project leadership.

The welcome address was given by the Dean of FSTE, Dr Anjeela Jokhan. She said "we are pleased that USP is a partner in this project" and added that this project "ties in well" with some of the other projects which USP has in renewable energy.

"Projects such as this one gives us here at USP a good opportunity to work with international partners and develop good international collaborations," she highlighted.

Dr Jokhan stressed that, "renewable energy is a critical area of development in the Pacific, given

the dependence of the Pacific Island countries on fossil fuels."

"It is not only crippling our economies but preventing the countries from funding other more critical developments such as health and education," she explained.

In his address, the Project Leader, Professor Walter Leal from the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences in Germany, explained the rationale behind the project and said that "renewable energy is an area of great social, environmental, political and economic relevance especially in Small Island Developing States (SIDS)."

He described the project as a "unique" one, saying that "we combine technology for renewable energy to the advantage of small island states."

Professor Leal said that by "technology transfer in renewable energy, we can add concrete benefits to the economy of these countries and also work towards this goal of having energy independence which is something which we are keen to pursue."

He explained that the project aimed at "increasing capacity among the countries to take advantage of the opportunity of renewable energy, and to establish a market research framework for this area."

Further deliberations were made by the Project Manager (USP) Ms Pritika and the Project Coordinator (USP) and the Head of USP's Renewable Energy Programme, Dr Anirudh Singh.

Ms Pritika said that Project DIREKT was divided into six "Work Packages" with USP being the

lead partner for Work Package 2, which is basically the assessment of the need for market-oriented research and technology transfer.

Dr Singh further elaborated that work on this had been completed and said that it revealed "a clear demand for academic and vocational courses in the region."

"We find that courses are needed to train personnel as both financial and project managers for renewable energy projects. The general staff of renewable energy businesses require basic awareness training in renewable energy as well as training in the operation and maintenance of renewable energy technologies," he explained.

Dr Singh said that during the course of study of the political and institutional frameworks in the region and of the participating ACP countries, it was revealed that, Fiji and the Pacific Island countries do not have Ministries of Science and Technology or even research policies relating to the development of science and technology.

"Such policies are vital for the development of the science and technology sector in the region. As a result, there are few if any scientific and analytical laboratories in Fiji and the region," he added.

The Project DIREKT team from Barbados, Germany, Mauritius and Trinidad & Tobago attended the third Project DIREKT meeting from 9 -10 December. Most of these partners also participated in the 'International Conference on Renewable Energy and Climate Change- Focus on the Pacific' (ICRECC2010) at USP.

MOOT COURT BUILDING AND COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE OPENS AT USP EMALUS CAMPUS

Official opening ceremony of the new Moot Court Building and Community Legal Centre at USP Emalus Campus in Vanuatu.

A new Moot Court Building which also accommodates the Community Legal Centre was officially opened at the University of the South Pacific's Emalus Campus in Port Vila, Vanuatu on 16 December, 2010.

The function also served to thank the Australian Government for its assistance in the construction of this building and in the operation of the Community Legal Centre over the past eight years. The ceremony was officiated by Emeritus Professor Don Paterson. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was performed by the official guests that included the Australian Charge d'Affaires, Mr John Pilbeam, Chief Justice of the Vanuatu Supreme Court, the Honourable Vincent Lunabek and the Director-General of the Ministry of Justice and Social Welfare, Mr Russell Nari.

In his speech, Professor Paterson thanked the people involved in seeing this project reach fruition, including previous Dean of the Law

School, Professor Robert Hughes, Professor and former Head of the Law School, Peter MacFarlane, former academic staff members, Mr Ted Hill and Mr Bob Sibley, Team Leader of the Vanuatu Legal Sector Strengthening Project, Ms Michelle Brazel, senior adviser to the Public Prosecutor, Mr Bernard Standish, current manager of the Community Legal Centre, Mr Bob Cartledge and Counsellor of AusAID in Vanuatu, Mr Nick Cumpston.

Speakers at the ceremony highlighted how the facility would provide an excellent training ground for law students, particularly in the practice of advocacy and for improving professional standards for lawyers in government and private practice in Vanuatu.

The ceremony paid homage to the Constitution of Vanuatu. The ceremony was opened and closed with prayers by Pastor Sethy Regenvanu and entertainment was provided by the students at USP.

'MEET THE MEDIA LUNCHEON' AT USP

Members of the media at the luncheon gathering ►

A 'Meet the Media Luncheon' was organised by the University of the South Pacific's Development, Marketing and Communications Office on 7 December, 2010 which was held at the Communications Conference Room at USP. This was to showcase to the media representatives what the University is all about and the services that it provides within the USP region.

Presentations were given by the Faculties and the different Support Services of the University to the invited members of the media on the efficiency and effectiveness of their services, and how they help and assist students during their time at USP.

In his address, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra stated that this was "good year for USP" as he explained that USP had been able to reverse the enrolment decline and the decline of senior staff.

He highlighted that USP boasts of being one of the few institutions that carries out internal and external audits and assured donors that their funds are being well used.

In the presentations by the three Faculties at USP, namely the Faculty of Arts and Law (FAL), the Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) and the Faculty of Science, Technology

and Environment (FSTE), new innovations and courses on offer were highlighted.

The Dean of the Faculty of FSTE, Dr Anjeela Jokhan mentioned that the recently built Japan-Pacific Information and Communications Technology Centre at USP "offers facilities of international standards to the people of this region."

She also highlighted two new programmes that will be offered from Semester II, 2011 which are Bachelor of Net-centric Computing and the Bachelor of Software Engineering.

Dr Jokhan elaborated on new student support initiatives by FSTE, like e-mentoring and the Distance and Flexible Learning (DFL) students' follow-up online where DFL students will be sent study tips and reminders on assignments and upcoming exams.

Similarly, FAL had introduced a new programme which was Minor in Information and Library Studies. The Associate Dean (Research and Graduate Affairs) from FAL, Dr Mohit Prasad highlighted the Faculty's innovations for 2011, which include the Course Representative System. He explained that in this system, each course offered by FAL will have a class representative to present feedback to the Faculty schools and lecturers.



The Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching), Dr Kesaia Seniloli from FBE highlighted that the Faculty had been awarded with the 'Three Palmes Award' for Excellent Business School by EDUNIVERSAL International Scientific Committee in its World Convention in Prague in October.

She also highlighted the introduction of new graduate programmes in diplomacy and international affairs in 2011.

The University has five Support Services available on campus which are:

- The Student Academic Services (SAS);
- The Centre for Flexible and Distance Learning (CFDL), of which the Student Learning Services (SLS) is a sub-section;
- The USP Library Services;
- Information Technology Services; and
- Campus Life.

The presentations ended with a lunch for the invited guests.