



The University of Fiji

Uni MATTERS

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Excerpts from the Vice Chancellor's Graduation Address — 3rd April 2009

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you all to the University to participate in our second graduation ceremony.

On behalf of the University, I thank the *Vanua o Vuda* most sincerely for performing the traditional Fijian ceremony of welcome for *Na Gone Turaga Bale na Momo na Tui Vuda*, the Chancellor of the University of Fiji. The expression of respect and loyalty you have portrayed through the ceremony is a significant aspect of today's graduation, as it brings to us the blessings of the *Vanua*.

This is a great day on two counts. As we celebrate the success of our students in this hall, thousands of families across Fiji are celebrating the birth of Lord Ram at the conclusion of the Rama Navami festival. I offer my heartiest congratulations to all the graduands. May Lord Ram shower his choicest blessings on everyone present here this morning.

A brief word to our graduands: You are now about to begin an important journey.

Take with you the knowledge you have gained, but also take with you an open mind. It is great to have a route planned for your journey, but be willing to travel the byways and narrow lanes to see what they also have to offer. Take a pledge that you are going to make a difference in the world, even if it is in one small corner of it. Work hard but do get your priorities right. Always have time for your families and friends. Take time to enjoy the beauties of nature and to care for them because without water and air, our planet and our people cannot survive. Finally, enjoy the trip. Go on your journey armed with enthusiasm and curiosity. Open your hearts to your fellow passengers and they will surely open theirs to you. I wish you well on your journey.

Today we also express our deep gratitude to: the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Fiji for its vision and determination in making this University not only a reality but a great success; the Foundation Vice-Chancellor, Professor Rajesh Chandra, for guiding the university in the formative stages, the community for rallying behind the idea of the University of Fiji; the generous donors; the landowners for their support;



Professor Srinivasiah Muralidhar

all the scholarship agencies; and to the Interim Government for its strong encouragement and support, including a budgetary grant of \$2 million this year. We owe our progress and success to them all.

I call upon individuals and organizations in Fiji to get seriously involved in the development of this university which has demonstrated beyond any doubt that we can do so much with so little. To all academic, administrative and support staff of the University, I say thank you for your dedication and hard work, thank you for believing in this university.

Na Momo na Tui Vuda, the Chancellor of the University of Fiji, our guests, parents, graduands, members of the University community, and the people of Vuda, *Vinaka Vakalevu, Dhanyavaad*, Thank You.

Professor Srinivasiah Muralidhar
Acting Vice Chancellor

From the editor's desk...

Welcome to the very first edition of the University's newsletter, '*Uni Matters*'. This edition is dedicated to the very successful graduation ceremony we had last week, as such you will find a few graduation photos, comments from staff, graduate profile and speeches that were delivered during the graduation. '*Uni Matters*' will be the university's regular means of communication. It will include news items such as, visiting academics, university accreditations, sports fixtures/results, seminars, student profiles, graduate profiles, news from individual departments as well as an overview of upcoming events in the university.

I wish to encourage staff and students to submit newsworthy items as much as possible. '*Uni Matters*' will be a fortnightly newsletter which will be published every second and fourth Wednesday of the month. Several copies of the newsletter will be disseminated to staff and students and an electronic version will be placed on the university's website for a wider audience. The web link will also be emailed to all staff and students to enable them to download the newsletter from any location. The next edition of '*Uni Matters*' will be published on Wednesday 6th May.

Zaheer Hassan — Marketing and PR Officer

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Graduand's Appreciation Speech

His Excellency, the Chancellor of the University of Fiji, Ratu Josefa Iloiloivatu Uluivuda, Distinguished Guests, Members of the University Council and Senate, Staff of the University, parents, and fellow graduands.

"Parents and Teachers can only give good advice or put them on the right path, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands."

Anne Frank

Today is a special day for all of us, parents, lecturers and graduands. It is a day we can celebrate the success of hard work, discipline, patience, and sacrifice of every parent, teacher and student in this hall.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all the parents and guardians for their continuous love and support for without them we wouldn't be here today. Thank you for believing in us, and for being there through the difficult times. You all have been our source of inspiration and have been role models in our lives.

This day is dedicated to you all. We feel proud of you and share our achievements with you.

May I take this opportunity to thank the University of Fiji, its Founders, Management and Staff, both Academic and Administrative

for establishing this unique institution to cater initially for the Western region of Fiji and for the disadvantaged, but today we have students now from all over Fiji and a few from the region.

Thank you for lightening the burdens of our parents, thank you for allowing us to pursue our dreams right in front of our door step. Our gratitude for the great and fond memories that we have for the University and the ever lasting friendships that we have built over the years. The University will always remain in our hearts. UniFiji gave us a sense of belongingness and togetherness.

And as to my fellow graduates, today is the beginning of an endless journey in the building of our beloved nation, Fiji.



Be proud of yourself and make Fiji feel proud of you. This is not the end of the road, just the first steps forward. Be grateful that you are a graduate of the University and help others. **"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."** (Nelson Mandela) Or change yourself, I wish to add with humility and happiness. May I wish you all every success in your new careers, in your new lives.

Sally Driu
Graduating Student
3rd April 2009

Staff Comments....

"The graduation ceremony is only a half day affair but the preparation required is enormous. We had to start preparing months ahead. Stocktaking of all academic dresses had to be done several weeks before the actual ceremony. I setup an Organizing Committee and every member was assigned various activities to coordinate and they performed exceptionally well. Everything fell into place perfectly including the hall setup, marshalling, rehearsal, stage setup as well as landscaping. We also had an impressive Traditional Welcome Ceremony for the University's Chancellor. My heartfelt appreciation goes to all our staff members including the academics, administration and ancillary."

Ms. Sarojini Pillay – Registrar

"Our graduates from the School of Business and Economics are readily accepted by employers in various organizations. FIA recognition of our B.Com degree in accounting will continue to provide a further stimulus for employment. The School has a challenging task of contributing with highly motivated graduates who have excellent business and managerial skills for Fiji's economy."

Dr K.L Sharma – Dean, School of Business and Economics

"The Registrar and her team of organizers performed their different tasks very well indeed. However, there are certain things that we can improve on next year; these include: Performing the Fijian Traditional ceremony in an open space for everybody to see, also, all academic staff should wear their gowns during the ceremony. It would also be nice to form cultural groups to dance and sing (Fijian, Indian, English) during large gatherings. Overall, the ceremony was very well coordinated and I am thankful once again to the graduation committee as well as everyone who participated in the ceremony in any way."

Joji Uluinakauvadra
Director
Centre for Indigenous Studies

"The second graduation of the University was a great success with 58 graduands being awarded with Diplomas and Degrees. The marshalling of the procession of graduands, academic staff, senate and council was well coordinated. I wish to thank Mr. Prem Sinha, Ms. Mala, Mr. Karuna Reddy and the student marshalls for their efficiency and punctuality. The graduands and the staff of the university are also acknowledged for their

Cooperation. Best wishes to the graduands in their future endeavors."

Ms Sangeeta Menon
Chief Marshall

"The success of last week's Graduation Ceremony was proof of outstanding teamwork. Hats off to all the members of the Graduation committee as well all staff of the university for their hardwork."

Prem Sinha
Assistant Registrar

"Congratulations on the convocation. Overall, I think the graduation ceremony was very well organized and it should always be seen as the main event of the university. A good graduation ceremony is enough to attract more students. However, I do have my reservations regarding the University song. We should replace the word 'men' with an alternative word."

Dr. Saeed Ahmed
Umanand Prasad School of Medicine

Graduate Profiles



Name: Salesh Kumar

Unifiji Qualification: Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Leadership

Year of Graduation: 2009

Current occupation: Tutor in English for Academic Purposes and Hindi Studies, School of Language, Arts & Media, the University of the South Pacific

What made you choose the University of Fiji for your studies? The University of Fiji has a specialized program for Educational Leadership. It introduces participants to the importance of leadership in education as the 21st century educational leaders are facing numerous new challenges. The 21st century shows that significant political, social, and economic shifts in the country, as well as broad changes in the educational industry, demand new ways of organizing and managing schools. The Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Leadership undoubtedly prepares participants to meet the new challenges in an ethical and moral way.

How do you think this qualification will assist you in your career? It will definitely reshape the notion of educational leadership, which is connected to practice. Given any leadership role, I will be in a position to respond to emerging trends in educational reform and the contexts of schooling, and new understandings of effective leadership.

Do you have any other comments about your qualification or the University in general? The University of Fiji is new to the tertiary education panorama but it has promptly assessed the needs of the educational system in the Pacific and has aptly responded to it.

Name: Sandhiya Gounder

Unifiji Qualification: Bachelor of Science (Information Technology & Management)

Year of Graduation: 2009

Current occupation: Currently working at the university as an attachment.

What made you choose the University of Fiji for your studies? The University is close to my home and it is quite affordable.

How do you think this qualification will assist you in your career? Doing a double major in Management and IT provides graduates with numerous options. With my Management major, I hope to enter the hospitality industry and the fact that I also have an IT background, I could get an IT related job.

Do you have any other comments about your qualification or the University in general? I think the University provides excellent opportunities to students like me who have difficulty paying fees for higher education as well as difficulty leaving parents and living away from home to study. I would definitely pursue my Postgraduate studies at the University.



Name: Jazbeen Ali

Unifiji Qualification: Bachelor of Commerce- Accounting and Management

Year of Graduation- 2009

Current Occupation: Graduate Accountant at Price Waterhouse Coopers

What made you choose UniFiji for your studies?

I was a USP student for half a semester. I never liked staying away from home so I came back to Nadi. I am also grateful to UniFiji, especially to Dr. Dulare who accepted me in half the semester.

How do you think this qualification will assist you in you career?

Hope to become a chartered accountant (CA) or a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) one day. Also hope to have my own firm one day.

Do you have any other comments about your qualification or the University in general? I know Mr. Coutman is working towards the CPA requirements, once this is done it surely will attract more students. Coz plenty people at my workplace are enquiring about it.

Photo Gallery

