

SCHOOL OF POPULATION HEALTH PACIFIC HEALTH SECTION E-NEWSLETTER

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TALAGA



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From the Director : *Kia Ora, Kia Orana, Fakaalofa labi atu, Ni sa bula, Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Fakatalofa atu, Taloha ni, Halo oloketā* and greetings to you all. I hope that the past month has been kind to you. Building capacity is an important feature of the Section's work, hence the second edition of *Talaga* features a snapshot of past and present Pacific students at the FMHS. Ia manuia Dr Teuila Percival.

AT A GLANCE PACIFIC STUDENT'S EFTS @ THE FMHS 2008 :

◆ Non-degree	19.5512
◆ Degree programme	134.8721
◆ Postgraduate	65.5783

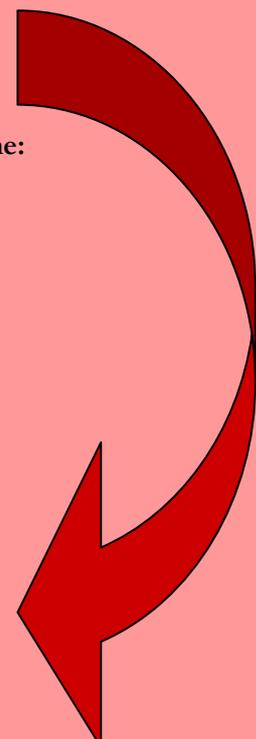
Pacific students EFTS Undergraduate degree 2008 by discipline:

◆ Medical Sciences	37.5275
◆ Medicine	35.6715
◆ Nursing	13.675
◆ Pharmacy	7.85
◆ Population Health	40.1481

Pacific students EFTS Postgraduate degree 2008 by discipline:

◆ Medical Sciences	2.7917
◆ Medicine	3.375
◆ Nursing	27.285
◆ Pharmacy	1.425
◆ Population Health	30.3141
◆ Te Kupenga Maori	0.3875
◆ Medical & Health Admin	0.2222

Source EO Office 2009



Background graphic art courtesy of Mark Dewes a 4th year student at Elam. ★



TALANOA

Early traces of Pacific students at The University of Auckland (UA).

Niuean saying

A person who is ilo ilo (clever) is simply a clever person but a person who uses their ilo ilo to benefit their magafaoa (family) or community is a pulotu (skilled person).

This saying reflects Niuean understandings of merit. In Niuean terms merit is not measured by one's knowledge or credentials but what one does with it. That is, value is placed on the way a person uses their knowledge / credentials to benefit their family or community.

According to Seve-Williams (2007) the first known Pacific graduate of The University of Auckland (formerly known as The Auckland University College, a constituent teaching college of The University of New Zealand) is Olive Nelson Virginia Malienafau, daughter of Olaf Nelson. Olive's father Olaf Nelson was a well known Samoan/Swedish trader and political nemesis of the New Zealand colonial government' who had been banished to NZ for his role in the Mau movement and anti-NZ activities in Samoa.

Olive (pictured, photo courtesy Maliena Jones) successfully completed the first section of the UNZ law exams passing with distinction. She was awarded the Butterworth prize in 1931, given to the student who has gained the highest mark in jurisprudence.



In April 1936, Olive passed the final examination for the degree of Bachelor of Law, and in August of that year, she was admitted to the Supreme Court of NZ as a barrister and solicitor. Notably Olive was the only woman in Auckland and NZ at that time, who was able to practice as a solicitor and a barrister. Following her graduation Olive returned to Samoa where she practiced law, married and raised her family.

While Pacific students numbers at the University of Auckland from the sixties up until the early nineties would remain relatively small, the School of Medicine (forerunner to the FMHS) which opened in 1968, did host some of these students. Nine years after the School opened, Dr Mary Louise Herdson a Cook Islander, graduated in 1977 with a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery (MBChB). Currently Dr Herdson is a senior lecturer in the School of Medical Sciences (UA website).

Other early Pacific graduates are Dr Samuel Fuimaono who graduated in 1981 with an MBChB followed by Dr Francis Agnew in 1986. A quick search on *Google* reveals that Sam hails from the island of Samoa and is currently practicing medicine in Auckland. Francis, a Cook Islander born in NZ grew up in Porirua where he attended Victoria University and graduated with an MSc (Hons) majoring in zoology. After graduation Francis spent six years living in the UK and Africa before returning to New Zealand. On his return to NZ Francis enrolled in a medical degree at the School of Medicine. He is currently working as a consultant psychiatrist/service clinical director with Pacific Islands Mental Health and Alcohol & Drug Services, Waitemata and Auckland DHBs (PMA website).

Tongans, like Niueans, would have to wait until the nineties before the first known Tongan graduate of the FMHS graduated. In 1993, two Tongan graduates Dr Simione Lolohea and Dr Viliami Tutone graduated with their MBChB. In 1998 the first known Niuean graduate Dr Karen Fisi Amies graduated with her MBChB (Mahina, Seve-Williams, Faaiuas, Hosking, 2007). Space in this edition does not permit further discussion but I hope to bring you an update on the whereabouts of these graduates in future editions of *Talaga* (Ed).

References: Mahina, O., Seve-Williams, N., Faaiuas, A., Hosking, D., (2007). *Atea, Moana, and Vanua: Voices from the Brown Edge*. Auckland: O Lagi Atea Moana Press.

'WAZZUP'

The Pacific Health Section (PHS) and the Pasifika Medical Assn (PMA) hosted **The Pacific in Medicine Dinner** on the 28th of August at the School of Population Health. The dinner provided an opportunity for Pacific students in medicine and nursing to meet with the wider Pacific medical and nursing community in NZ. The guest speaker for the evening was Dr Api Talemaitoga. Api is currently the Chief Advisor Pacific for the Ministry of Health. Other speakers for the evening were : Dr Teuila Percival, Dr Sitaleki Finau, Dr Kuinileti Chang Wai, Dr Ted Hughes, Debbie Sorenson and Christine Tapu. Dr Api Talemaitoga (pictured top right) spoke



about his experiences as a medical student at Otago University and as a medical practitioner in Fiji and NZ.



Dr Chang Wai , Dr Hughes and Debbie Sorenson (Debbie pictured bottom left with Pacific students) also shared their journeys from their island homes of Samoa, the Cook Islands and Tonga to NZ.

Christine Tapu (pictured bottom right) spoke movingly about her experiences as a nurse and encouraged students to remember their Pacific values of *aloha* and respect when dealing with Pacific patients.



Nursing student Karen Taufu (pictured top left) and fifth year medical student Timothy Hopgood (pictured in the maroon shirt bottom left) thanked the speakers on behalf of the PHS and PMA.

TAGATA/TANGATA



Timothy Hopgood is a 5th year Tongan (the village of Fava'u in Ha'apai) / European / Māori medical student at the University of Auckland. He is "following the yellow brick road" to become a general paediatrician, who is engaged in clinical and public health research. Tim is interested in addressing the "broader, but still definitely amenable, determinants that affect both Pacific children and New Zealand children overall - including child poverty". He is the founding chair of the Paediatric Interest Group of the University of Auckland, a student group set up to promote awareness in multi-disciplinary approaches to improving children's health. Tim's research on the cost of nutritious food for New Zealand children with the Department of Paediatrics was recognised in 2008 as the best public health summer studentship, earning him

the *Wallath Award*. Tim is also a senior member of the editorial team of the *New Zealand Medical Student Journal*. As a Pacific student, Tim has been actively involved in programmes that recruit and retain Pacific students in pathways towards health careers. He has been an active member of the Pasifika Medical Association (PMA) since 2005. Throughout his journey, as a Pacific student, Tim recalls that he's "had setbacks, no question but the key is, re-establishing momentum, through support mechanism such as MAPAS. As he states: " Anything which I have achieved since day 1 directly reflects the massive effort my family, my friends, MAPAS and the med school itself have put in behind me."

BUSH TALES



SIGNS TO MAKE YOU SMILE!!!

UPCOMING EVENTS & NOTICES

1. Job Opportunity

The Pacific Cooperation Foundation is a public/private sector partnership seeking two Auckland based team members. The Senior Programme Manager is a leadership role. The successful candidate will be responsible for the delivery of the project-based programmes; management of the project team; and will support the Chief Executive in building and maintaining sponsor relationships. The Foundation is seeking a bright and capable manager who has a “can do” attitude and who is results focused. For a full job description of these positions or other enquiries please contact Lisette@pcf.org.nz or ph (04) 931 9380. Applications close on 11 September 2009 and can be addressed to Lisette Sheriff, Personal Assistant to CEO, Pacific Cooperation Foundation, PO Box 10467.

2. Annual Appeal

Friday 18 September 2009 is Loud Shirt Day

Loud Shirt Day is the annual appeal of The Hearing House and the Southern Cochlear Implant Paediatric Programme – two organizations that offer therapy to enable deaf children with a cochlear implant or hearing aids to speak clearly and naturally like their hearing peers. For more information visit : <http://www.hearinghouse.co.nz/>

3. PhD scholarship

We invite applications for a PhD Scholarship from students who meet University of Auckland PhD eligibility requirements. The PhD Scholarship includes University Fees for the first three years (\$5,000 pa) plus a stipend of \$25,000 pa for three years with start date in early 2010.

Project summary

In New Zealand the Ministry of Health does not currently recommend vitamin D supplementation in pregnancy or infancy. Vitamin D deficiency is common in New Zealand as are poor health outcomes associated with vitamin D deficiency. For more information please contact:

Dr. Cameron Grant, Department of Paediatrics The University of Auckland on 09 373 7599 ext 86192 | M 021 717 127 | F 09 373 7486 or email cc.grant@auckland.ac.nz

Dr. Bettina Ikenasio-Thorpe 09 2760044 ext 2207 / M 021 407 770 or email: Bettina.Ikenasio-Thorpe@middlemore.co.nz

The views contained in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the PHS or the SOPH. If you would like to place a notice please email Nuhi: ns.williams@auckland.ac.nz. The Newsletter will go out on the first week of every month. KIA MANUIA