



# To all members of Fiji National University

*FNU community message 06<sup>th</sup> December 2021*

**B**ula Vinaka, Namaste and greetings to all members of the FNU family.

I hope everyone is keeping safe and well, and observing the public health advice and restrictions which are there to protect us, our communities and our loved ones.

It has been heartening to see that our borders have finally opened to visitors from around the world after being closed for 20 months. The colourful scenes and emotions we witnessed tell us of a united journey in fighting against the pandemic, achieving adequate levels of vaccinations and having COVID safe measures in place to welcome visitors to our beautiful islands.

But given my background in the medical field, I must strongly advise everyone not to be complacent. We have to ensure that we follow all relevant protocols and follow the National advice to keep everyone safe and stop the spread of COVID-19.

This is especially important now as we soon head into the holiday period and sometimes may get swayed away by merrymaking and forget to adhere to the health advisories. I encourage everyone to be responsible and encourage others in your community to do the same.

Last week I had the privilege of attending an awards ceremony at the Nasinu campus to honour students who won gold medalists and special prize recipients from our graduating Class of 2020 and some from the 2021 cohort.

A total of 10 students were recognised for their achievement and for completing their courses amidst a global pandemic. It was indeed a proud moment for the university, parents, families, friends as the students did not only successfully complete studies in their field of interest at FNU, but also managed to do so at the top of their respective classes.

This is certainly no small feat, as students had to navigate through online and remote learning and teaching due to the pandemic. And I would like to take this moment to congratulate all FNU students who have graduated during this pandemic. You certainly deserve to celebrate your day as it is a significant step in your education and career progression. It is also a reflection of your years of hard work, dedication, ambition commitment and sacrifices.

I realized we haven't had a ceremony for three consecutive years. We hope that in the New Year, restrictions will ease and we will be able to once again hold graduation ceremonies in public which is always marked with great pomp and celebration. For now, our Academic team will send all graduating students their certificates via mail. If you have any enquires regarding graduation, please contact the Graduation Coordinator [gc@fnu.ac.fj](mailto:gc@fnu.ac.fj)

While most students are sitting their final examinations, I wish to advise students that respective colleges have lined up some Summer Classes. This will enable students to do additional courses

during their break. Students interested in taking up additional courses are encouraged to contact their respective colleges and or course coordinators to enrol and prepare themselves for a busy few weeks ahead. You can check out our social media pages for details regarding these programmes.

Last Friday, I was privileged to attend the soft launch of the Communicable Disease Research Centre (CDRC). The Centre has been formed through collaboration between CMNHS and the Otago University, Global Health Institute (OGHI) with support from Mercy Hospital in Dunedin, New Zealand.

CDRC will produce Pacific led world-class research in communicable diseases for the Pacific region. It also aims to enhance the capacity for research training and support for student research specifically in Communicable Diseases.

The Centre presents an important ambition of the CMNHS to not only educate Pacific health workers but to generate the information that guides health practices in the region. It also provides an opportunity for CMNHS to position itself as a regional Institution that identifies and addresses priority infectious diseases in the region, whilst also building research training, capacity and quality in coming years through collaborations with Ministries of Health, and organisations and institutes involved in infectious disease research.

For those interested in joining FNU, the good news is that applications for Semester 1, 2022 studies are open for most colleges. I encourage prospective students to visit [www.fnu.ac.fj](http://www.fnu.ac.fj) to view the full range of programmes on offer.

FNU has 5000 placements for TVET programmes available to Fijian students funded through the Tertiary Scholarships and Loans Service (TSLs). We also have Reskilling and Upskilling opportunities so, whether you are looking to re-enter employment, move sectors, or secure your future in your current industry, FNU's re-skilling and up-skilling short courses have everything you need. Education for Employability is your goal and our mission.

The first round of twenty-five short courses will be offered in January 2022.

Finally, I would like to remind everyone to not let their guard down and to keep following the COVID safe protocols to keep you and your family members safe. So keep washing your hands regularly with soap and water, wear face-covering when going out, keep your 2-metre distance and use alcohol-based sanitiser when wiping your hands. Please encourage others to do the same.

Have a productive week and keep safe.

Thank you.

**Dr William May**  
**Acting Vice-Chancellor**  
**Fiji National University**

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