

Kolej Nius

Training for a difference

Solomon Islands College of Higher Education



The official newsletter of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education

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Facts about SICHE : ✓ Established by an Act of Parliament in 1984 ✓ Has 8 schools: School of Education (SOE), School of Finance & Administration (SFA), School of Industrial Development (SID), School of Natural Resources (SNR), School of Nursing & Health Studies (SNHS), School of Marine & Fisheries Studies (SMFS), and School of Humanities, Science & Media (SHSM), School of Tourism & Hospitality (STH) still under construction ✓ Has 4 campuses: Kukum, Panatina, Ranadi & Poitete.

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Director's 2012 New Year message



Donald Malasa, SICHE Director

Welcome back to the College and to the 2012 academic year.

I hope you all enjoyed the Festive Season and a well deserved break, and now ready for another very productive and challenging year.

May I welcome new staff members and their families who have just joined the College this year.

Further more, I wish to welcome SICHE's two new schools: School of Tourism and Hospitality and the School of Humanities, Science & Media, which for the first time this year will be operating as fully fledged schools of the College.

2011 was the first year for the implementation of the SICHE Strategic Plan 2011-2015, and despite the lack of much needed financial support, the implementation of the Strategic Plan was encouraging. With

the completion of the SICHE Action Plan for 2011 to 2013, this will form the basis for planning and budgeting purposes for the implementation and monitoring of the plan for the next three years.

This year 2012 will be an exciting year for SICHE, as we are anticipating some landmark developments within our schools and campuses. These include major infrastructure developments such as the long awaited Kukum Campus Lecture theatre and fencing of both Kukum and Panatina campuses, infrastructure assessments and development of the Physical Master Plan for the three main campuses (Kukum, Randi and Panatina).

Such developments are aimed at not only improving and upgrading of the living, teaching and learning environments but also for improved security of our campuses for both staff and students.

In July this year, SICHE will be hosting the 11th Festival of Arts by allowing the use of its Panatina Campus as the main Festival venue. The College facilities at Kukum, Panatina and Randi campuses will also be used to accommodate the visiting contingents from the Pacific Island countries attend-

ing the 11th Festival of Pacific Arts. I encourage all staff and family members to be good hosts to both our visitors from our neighbouring Pacific islands and from the provinces.

With the support from Management and the staff unions (CHENLA and CHENASA) the review of SICHE Compensation or salary structure was completed and will be submitted to Council for its deliberations. It is envisaged that the recommendations in the review report will be essential for the recruitment and retention of high quality and committed workforce.

Central to these developments is the on-going commitment by the National Coalition for Reform and Advancement (NCRA) government to convert SICHE to a National University. The Council has endorsed this government's policy commitment and this year will see the development of the 'University Transition Plan'.

These new and on-going initiatives require teamwork and hard decisions and strategic choices by Council, Management and staff and I look forward to your continued cooperation in making 2012 another successful year.

Donald Malasa, Director



New Developments

Solomon Islands College of Higher Education achieves EDU Accreditation

SICHE, the National (Public) Tertiary Education provider for the Solomon Islands has qualified for Institutional Accreditation from EDU, a treaty based Intergovernmental Organization for Accreditation and promotion of Global Education. www.edu.int

The Accreditation supports the vision of SICHE to become a leading institute for excellence in higher technical and vocational learning/education that is recognized locally, regionally and

internationally.

"SICHE is greatly honored and privileged to have been awarded EDU Accreditation and we are certain it will result in greater benefits to our students and will further boost the recognition and acceptance of SICHE degrees in other countries".

Donald Malasa, College Director.

AVI to assist HR Division



Penelope (Penny) Goldfinch

An Australian Volunteer engaged under the Australian Volunteer International (AVI) by the name of Penelope Goldfinch (Penny) has joined the Human Resources Division as from the 23rd of January 2012. Penny has worked as a HR

consultant for over 10 years in many organizations, both in Australia and overseas including DeakinPrime, a subsidiary of Deakin University in Australia. She comes from Melbourne in Australia and will be engaged with the Human Resources as a Human Resources Advisor for 12 months.

Penny's role will involve assisting the SICHE Human Resources Division in the reviews and development of the Staff Manual and HR processes to meet current SICHE needs and working towards the move for SICHE to become a national university.

On behalf of the Director and Human Resources Division we welcome Penny to SICHE and hope her time with SICHE will be of mutual benefit to Penny and SICHE.

Associations of Tertiary Institutions in the Pacific established



Heads of Pacific tertiary institutions attending the meeting:

Sitting from left: Professor Asofou So'o, Vice Chancellor, National University of Samoa (NUS); Dr. Ganesh Chand, Vice Chancellor, Fiji National University (FNU); Mr. Donald Malasa, Director, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE); Professor Rajesh Chandra, Vice Chancellor, The University of the South Pacific (USP); Professor Srinivasaiah Muralidar, out-going Vice Chancellor, The University of Fiji (UoF); Ms 'Ana Lupe Voi, Principal, Tonga Teachers Training College.

Standing from left: Professor Mahendra Kumar, Vice Chancellor, The University of Fiji (UoF); Mr. Kalpet Kalpeo, Principal, Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT); Dr. Michael Gregory, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Quality), USP, Dean, Oceania University of Medicine (OUM) Samoa; Mr. Jean Marie Virelala, Principal, Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education (VITE); Mr. Subhas Chandra, Director, The Pacific Institute of Technology (PIT)

The SICHE Director attended the second meeting of the Heads of Pacific tertiary institutions which concluded in Nadi, Fiji, on 13 December 2011. The meeting was to establish an association to be known as the **Association of Heads of Tertiary Institutions in the Pacific**

Islands (AHTIPI).

The following founding office-bearers were elected: **President:** Professor Rajesh Chandra, Vice-Chancellor & President, The University of the South Pacific; **Vice-President:** Professor Asofou So'o; Vice-

Chancellor & President, National University of Samoa and **four (4) Committee Members** elected were:

1. Dr. Ganesh Chand, Vice-Chancellor & President, Fiji National University; 2. Ms 'Ana Lupe Voi, Principal, Tonga Teachers Training College; 3. Mr Donald Malasa, Director, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, and; and 4. Mr Kalpet Kalpeo, Principal, Vanuatu Institute of Technology. Dr. Michael Gregory, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Quality), USP, was appointed Secretary/Treasurer.

The meeting also adopted a Constitution and identified the roles and functions of the Association as: (i) to be a forum for academic leadership of tertiary institutions to attain academic excellence in the Pacific Islands through co-operation and the exchange of ideas; (ii) to promote cooperation and collaboration between institutions in areas such as administrative and academic practices, development and maintenance of academic standards, staff recruitment and exchange and student affairs; (iii) to serve as a mechanism for collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organisations, including in particular, development partners and international organisations on tertiary education; (iv) to be a strong and credible voice for tertiary education and to raise its profile, including interna-

tionally; and (v) to provide joint responses to governments, regional agencies and development partners where appropriate.

The meeting also received updates from its various Working Groups established at its first meeting, namely the Library Working Group and the Information and Communications Technology Working Group. The meeting also agreed to set up a Procurement Working Group as a means of cost saving. USP was designated to lead the Procurement Working Group. There was interest from some institutions, especially those that have not quite developed their Management Information Systems (MIS) in the development of common software for MIS. FNU was tasked to lead in this exercise for those interested.

A presentation was made on a proposal from USP to set up a Regional Licensing Authority that would deal with issues such as copyright and members endorsed the formation of this agency and agreed to become members.

The Association also agreed that a conference with the theme: "Tertiary Education in the Pacific Islands: current situation, challenges and future directions" be held in the middle of 2012. A working committee with representations from the tertiary institutions is working on it.



Courses

Addressing the “untrained” teacher issue

SICHE has been working with the MEHRD to address the issue of “untrained” teacher in the schools through - out SI.

To date, the School of Education (SOE), has used (i) Block face-to-face delivery on campus for the Certificate in ECE, Certificate in Teaching Primary and Certificate in Teaching Secondary. The block mode was extended to Education Authorities who want their “untrained” teacher issue quickly address and Makira/Ulawa Province was the first which saw 50 graduated in 2010.

The second cohort was for 25 school based untrained ECE teachers in Choiseul Province.

The first block was conducted in June 2011.

For Block 2, four lecturers from the School of Education (SOE); Roselyn Maneipuri, Nollan Teika, Brenda Sevala and Dr Joanna Daiwo flew down to Taro, Choiseul Province, to conduct Block 2 of the Certificate in Teaching—Early Childhood Education (CT-ECE) programme. The Block started on 16 January and finished 3 February 2011.

The CT-ECE is a 120 credit points course designed to up-skill the “untrained” teachers and certify them at the end with a qualification.

Another mode employed to address the issue was the DFL

mode. For a start, the Certificate in Teaching Primary (CTP) was used and to date almost 1,000 Teachers in Training (TiT) are currently enrolled the programme in Malaita and Guadalcanal Provinces.

The CTP is another 120 credit points course that is taken in 1 year full time and 2 years in DFL mode.

The challenge of the “untrained” teacher issue in the SI education system will remain an issue for sometime taking into account the high national birthrate. It means more classrooms and teachers needed every year .

MASE Business Training Centre to Franchise SICHE ‘Certificate in Business Studies’ Course

An audit was conducted on the MASE Business Training Centre, a private training provider, and concluded that MASE is compliant. MASE has in turn advertised the course for applications.

With this arrangement MASE is required to meet the requirements of the course which include admission level, tutors, facilities to graduation.

A formal agreement will be signed between MASE and SICHE soon before it starts.

Resources & Facilities

Technical Assessment Panel appointed to assist the Tender Board

Two priority activities for SICHE in 2012 identified were (i) to have a facilities and stock-take audit and (ii) developing a Physical Master Plan.

These activities are essential to the progress and developmental plans of SICHE especially with the government’s intention to upgrade SICHE to a national university. Invitation for Expression of Interests (EOI) was advertised and three contractors qualified to go into the next phase, and that is, submission of bills of quantity.

The work is very technical so a Technical Assessment

Panel has been appointed to assess the submissions and make recommendations to the Tender Board.

The panel members are: Frank Wickham—Chairman; PS or Director of Civil Engineering MID; Chief Planning Officer of Honiara City Council ; Director of USP, SI Campus; Head of Survey & Cartography Department, SID, SICHE; and PPO, SICHE, secretary.

SICHE has been without a Physical Master Plan since (it last went missing in) the late 1990s.

A date for their meeting will be announced soon.

Work on Kukum Lecture Theatre started



Profiling the Lecture theatre and digging of foundation has started.

AW Construction was awarded the contract to build the long awaited for Kukum lecture theatre. A ground breaking ceremony was held in December 2011 and work on the site has finally started.

The theatre is built next to the main library at Kukum Campus and it is designed to blend in with the landscape.

The theatre should hold 300

students and also have tutorial rooms.

Completion of the lecture theatre would be a relief, to big classes as they will be will be conducted in a spacious room with proper facilities. The theatre is expected to complete at the end of 2012.

The project is sourced from SICHE’s Development budget.



Sponsorship & Training

Recipients of the 5 SIG scholarships for SICHE



SICHE executive; L-R Dr Patricia Rodie, Donald Malasa, Francis Ramoifuiula, Norman Hatigeva (taking the photo) meet with the US-Tertiary of MEHRD, Franco Rodie (3rd from L).

SICHE has kept its promise to allocate 5 scholarships to SICHE starting in 2012. These scholarships are for SICHE staff to do further training in regional institutions as a condition.

The SICHE SDC decided to give training priority to the technical areas such as trades, agriculture, forestry and environment which have been missing out on training in the past years

because prioritising of training was done by the scholarship provider.

The need to have qualified staff at the SNHS for the Bachelors of Nursing course was another area considered.

As it turned out, some specialised areas are not available in the regional institutions so SICHE and SIG entered into an understanding on how to fund trainings that are not available in the regional institutions but in Australia and NZ.

SICHE is planning to prioritise postgraduate training under this scheme for 2013 as part of the

transition to university plan. Upgrading of qualifications of trades staff and identifying of specialised training in regional institutions will remain a challenge and will require good planning to still cater for the needs in these areas.

SIG scholarship recipients were: Freddy Saenilea—USQ, Australia; James Kimata - USP, Fiji; Simon Sulu—USP, Fiji; Luke Ihodi— Wollongong, Australia; Dewin Alick— USP, Fiji.

There were other staff members who were also awarded scholarships in the open category and a notable one is the Manager of Finance, George Tasra who resigned to do a MBA at USP, Fiji.

Nation & General

Youth Environment Programme (YEP)

The Youth Environment Programme (YEP) is a new initiative hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) through a UNDP funded project called "Strengthening Environment Management and Reducing the Impacts of Climate Change" (SEMRICC).

The YEP is a mechanism that mobilizes young professionals to raise awareness on environment issues and concerns in the communities.

MECDM and UNDP are working in partnership with the School of Natural Resources (SNR) of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) to implement the programme. Currently, 40 YEP volunteers sponsored by MECDM are doing their Certificate in Environmental Studies at SNR. There will be ten more new YEP volunteers for this year 2012.

During the college holidays, the YEP volunteers are involved in a number of activities:

- Work and Learn (WAL) – The first batch of 20 volunteers did attachment in 11 stakeholder

organizations in Honiara for 2 weeks starting on the 19th to the 1st of July 2011.

- Look and Learn (LAL) – Ten volunteers in the second batch of YEP intakes did a LAL programme on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) at Baraulu in the Western Province, hosted by the Roviana Conservation Foundation. The other 10 did theirs at the Naro MPA in West Guadalcanal. These two activities happened at the same time with the WAL.
- Vulnerability and Adaptation training on developing Local Early Action Plans (LEAP) for Climate Change Adaptation on the 7th – 11th November 2011.
- Computer skills training on the 16th – 25th November 2011.
- Awareness on Food Security and Climate Change in collaboration with the Adaptation Fund project in communities in South Choiseul, Makira, Isabel, Malaita and Honiara on the 2nd – 23rd of December 2011. These activities are funded by the SEMRICC project. Through their participation in

the programme the young volunteers will acquire valuable practical skills that will contribute to enhance their marketability and employability when they leave school hence helping to reduce high youth unemployment.

In a way, YEP is a good test for

the content of the course. Gaps identified can be considered in the course review.

YEP is established under component 4 of the SEMRICC project: – *Institutionalizing human resources capacities development and awareness raising.*

Registration for 2012 courses



Students going through registration formalities

Each year applications are invited for courses in the next year. Applications are usually opened on 1 August and closed 31 November.

For the 2012 courses, a total of 6,952 applications were issued and only 4,497 were returned. This is a drop from the last 2 years by a third but that does not affect the number of spaces at SICHE. For 2012, 1,171 were given placements: SFA-220; SNR-206;

SNHS-44; SID-114; SOE-416; and SMFS-171.

Two things were evident during the registration week and they were: (i) students found it difficult to pay the fees and (ii) a good number of people were looking for spaces.

Classes were expected to start on 6 February which was the registration week for late students.