

VANUATU

IMPACT STORIES

APTC 
AUSTRALIA-PACIFIC
TECHNICAL COLLEGE
CREATING SKILLS FOR LIFE

Australian
Aid 



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About the Australia-Pacific Technical College

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Message from the Australian High Commissioner to Vanuatu

Investing in education and training is key to development – it underpins economic growth and stability. Because of this, a significant amount of Australia's investment in the Pacific is committed to the education and training sector.

Knowledge and skills learned through education improve students' earning potential and quality of life, including for their families. Educating women and girls has been shown to be particularly transformative. For every additional year of education, girls will earn 10 to 20 percent more than the average income with an 18 percent return in their future wages if they have completed secondary education. Educated girls are more likely to have healthier children, who will also be better educated.

Australia established the Australia-Pacific Technical College in Vanuatu in 2007 to meet the growing demand for tertiary-level qualifications and skills. Since then, 1,653 ni-Vanuatu and other Pacific islanders have graduated with Australian qualifications (55 per cent of them women). Australia-Pacific Technical College alumni can be found across the private and public sectors in 14 Pacific countries. Many are in positions to influence and shape the future direction of the region.

Australia-Pacific Technical College graduates help to strengthen the economy in Vanuatu and

the Pacific region. The Australia-Pacific Technical College works in partnership with industry and provincial and national governments to ensure courses focus on skills that are in demand to increase employment and income earning outcomes for Pacific islanders.

The employment opportunities that the Australia-Pacific Technical College offers students are realised nationally and internationally. Australia-Pacific Technical College graduates have used their qualifications to gain work in Australia and elsewhere. These opportunities expand the graduates' skills and their experiences and perspectives.

I am proud that the Australia-Pacific Technical College campus in Vanuatu was the first to produce local and regional trainers, a majority of them women. These talented professionals are wonderful role models for students – they demonstrate what students can achieve, far beyond what a curriculum alone can deliver.

I look forward to hearing more stories of individual and collective achievements of Australia-Pacific Technical College graduates as the Australia-Pacific Technical College continues to grow.

**Her Excellency
Ms Jenny Da Rin**



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

At the Australia-Pacific Technical College, success extends beyond the number of men and women who gain internationally recognised qualifications.

In a region where relationships matter, the Australia-Pacific Technical College has embraced a partnering approach, working with governments, Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions and the private sector to ensure that the Australia-Pacific Technical College training meets labour market demands and produces job-ready graduates.

Thriving communities and societies have one thing in common – a skilled, qualified and capable workforce. Technical and vocational skills are in high demand across the region; in trades, hospitality, tourism, health and community industry sectors. Without these formal qualifications, Pacific Island workers can find themselves stalled on the career ladder. But success is also measured by the lasting impact of the difference that learning can make in the lives of individuals, their families and communities.

This collection of Vanuatu graduate profiles highlights the impact of learning at the Australia-Pacific Technical College

on individuals and communities, and the contribution to strengthening Technical and Vocational Education and Training across the Pacific.

There are many more stories of success that could have been told, that could have been highlighted in this publication. The process of selecting the stories to be told was not an easy one. I wish to extend my gratitude to all those who so willingly shared their stories and who gave their time to allow the writers to conduct interviews and research.

I wish to thank the Australian Government for their support. I also thank the Pacific Island Governments and people who have worked with the Australia-Pacific Technical College to realise the results you will read about in the following pages.

On behalf of all at the Australia-Pacific Technical College, I hope you enjoy reading these stories. We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively to enhance opportunities for the citizens of the Pacific Island Countries that we serve.

Denise O'Brien
Australia-Pacific Technical College



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FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

PALAU

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

SOLOMON
ISLANDS

AUSTRALIA

GOAL

Contribute to a more prosperous Pacific driven by a skilled, competitive and productive workforce

11152
Total Graduates

40%
FEMALE
GRADUATES

60%
MALE
GRADUATES

14
Pacific
Island
Countries

5
Campus
Locations

MARSHALL
ISLANDS

NAURU

KIRIBATI

TUVALU

SAMOA

COOK
ISLANDS

VANUATU

FIJI

TONGA

NIUE

“ Reproductive health is a very tough thing to talk about in communities and sometimes men do not like to hear what I say. Because of the cultural custom, it can be very difficult to go to a community and give information on family planning to women ”

Ms Mary Siro





HELPING BUILD YOUNG LIVES

Since she was a child, Ms Mary Siro from Vanuatu, always wanted to help young people in her community.

As a Certificate IV in Youth Work graduate of the Australia-Pacific Technical College, she is advancing opportunities for youths in Vanuatu through creative knowledge-building programs.

Ms Siro, who is the youngest in a family of 11, left school at the age of 14. "I did not have a good educational background, so when I left, I made it my ambition to do something different for myself, my future, my community and young people like me."

She later attended the Wan Smolbag Theatre in Port Vila, which is a youth centre that encourages the holistic development of youths by offering a wide range of educational, sporting, recreational and creative opportunities. It was there that she discovered her natural leadership skills and passion for helping children and youths.

Ms Siro was particularly inspired by the workshops to raise awareness about reproductive health and family planning and chose to gain more knowledge through volunteering at the Wan Smolbag before applying to the Australia-Pacific Technical College in 2013.

Studying was challenging at first for Ms Siro had to adjust to learning in the English language given her Francophone background but she received support from her trainers at the Australia-Pacific Technical College.

Advancing opportunities for youths in Vanuatu through creative knowledge-building programs

As well as developing her English skills, she also acquired management and problem solving skills, and the confidence to be creative in her work.

"The Certificate IV in Youth Work program helps youth workers use their creativity to do something different to help people in the communities. It definitely opened my mind and helped me to better understand what I am doing."

"The Australia-Pacific Technical College helped enhance my communication skills and now I have increased confidence," she further explained.

Ms Siro believes that confidence is essential in an environment where discussing a topic like reproductive health can be challenging.

"Reproductive health is a very tough thing to talk about in communities and sometimes men do not like to hear what I say. Because of our cultural customs, it can be very difficult to go to a community and give information on family planning to women."



“The Certificate IV in Youth Work program helps youth workers use their creativity to do something different to help people in the communities. It definitely opened my mind and helped me to better understand what I am doing” Ms Mary Siro

**QUICK
FACTS**

237
Pacific Islanders
with Certificate IV in
Youth Work
qualification

73
**Vanuatu
Nationals**
with Certificate IV in
Youth Work
qualification



Ms Mary Siro receives the prestigious Queen's Young Leader Award presented by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

PHOTO CREDIT BCA

ROYAL HONOUR FOR YOUTH LEADER

After graduating, Ms Siro went back to Wan Smolbag to set up a sports-based youth program to empower women and bring them together.

She also made concerted efforts to raise awareness on critical issues affecting youth in Vanuatu, including teenage pregnancies, family planning and sexual health, and has become a strong advocate for these issues within the community.

Recognised by the Vanuatu Athletes Commission for her work with the women's sports program, she was one of two Pacific women to fly to Greece for one month to study Olympic values.

One of her most incredible achievements, was to be a recipient of the Queen's Young Leader Award in 2016. This award recognises and celebrates exceptional people aged 18-29 from across the Commonwealth, who take the lead


in their communities and use their skills to transform lives.

It was a surreal moment for Ms Siro.

"At the ceremony, I kept thinking back to where my passion all began. At times, I thought about giving up because I was tired and did not have money to help people. It is a very difficult job, but I have achieved something I could not have imagined."

Meeting entrepreneurial youths from across the globe at the Queen's Young Leader Awards ceremony, has inspired Ms Siro to encourage young people in Vanuatu to set up businesses and "keep the money in the community."

Ms Siro is now the Youth and Sports Coordinator at the Ministry of Youth and Sports. "My job is to find partners and create good relationships with places like Wan Smolbag to support and extend our programs."

A portrait of Ms Leimalu Tapasei, a woman with short dark hair, wearing a light blue ruffled blouse and a necklace. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background consists of large, green, leafy plants.

“ When you live in a rural community, you can see the struggles that people go through and where training is needed ”

Ms Leimalu Tapasei

GRASSROOT PROJECTS EMPOWER WOMEN

Ms Ines Leimalu Tapasei is the first female chairperson of the Sunae Village Tribunal Council on Moso Island and also a graduate of the Australia-Pacific Technical College.

Working as a full-time cookery trainer at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology, Ms Tapasei has always wanted to help improve the lives of people in her community.

“When you live in a rural community, you can see the struggles that people go through and where training is needed,” she said.

Keen to make a difference, Ms Tapasei enrolled in Certificate IV in Community Development at the Australia-Pacific Technical College. She says she learned a lot, particularly in understanding the structure of communities and issues such as climate change and disaster relief.

“More importantly, studying at the Australia-Pacific Technical College made me realise the value of women and how I can really make a positive change within the community,” she added.

She has risen as a leader and is making an impact in her new role where she will be administrating the affairs of the Sunae community for the next two years.

She is focused on community restructuring through subcommittees that target key issues within the village, including education, village laws, development and natural resources.

Ms Tapasei looks forward to developing partnerships with government and non government organisations to advance this goal.

To help women who stay at home, Ms Tapasei has started health awareness programs and runs training in cookery, hospitality and healthy eating.

"People in the community have a garden with fresh food but the mentality is to sell the produce and buy rice instead. So to reduce lifestyle diseases, I try to educate them to put nice healthy food on the table, rather than buying processed food."

Ms Tapasei believes change in leadership is especially important for women. "Women can bring about change and I believe that there will soon be more women leading in the community."

"There is the mentality that women have to be home to cook, but we want to change that. Women are good managers so we have to give them skills and knowledge and every opportunity they need to be a good leader."

One of the upcoming projects that Ms Tapasei has in the pipeline is a community shelter that can be used by the villagers during a natural disaster

"We will build an evacuation centre which will also be a women's centre. It will be managed by women and there will be training and sewing workshops for women."

"If people, especially women and girls, want to help their community, I would say go to the Australia-Pacific Technical College which is about training and upskilling and learning more. It is very helpful not only for the community but in women's lives."

“ More importantly, studying at the Australia-Pacific Technical College made me realise the value of women and how I can really make a positive change within the community ”

Ms Leimalu Tapasei

**QUICK
FACTS**

53
Pacific Islanders

with Certificate IV in
Community Development
qualification

45
**Vanuatu
Nationals**

with Certificate IV in
Community Development
qualification

“ I realised that when I went to work on the cruise ship, every skill that I had learnt during my study at the Australia-Pacific Technical College directly applied to my work ”

Ms Alency Naket





GRADUATE EXCELS IN AUSTRALIA

Australia-Pacific Technical College graduate, Ms Alency Naket has always had a love for communicating with people which drove her interest to work in the hospitality sector.

"I admire the hospitality industry. I started building up my experience and discovered that I love talking to customers. So I decided to go into that area and try and build something to help people in the community."

Ms Naket has worked at various restaurants and resorts in Port Vila, and secured a contract on a cruise ship before enrolling in Certificate III in Hospitality with the Australia-Pacific Technical College, where she acquired skills ranging from cocktail-making to preparing for functions and events.

"The Australia-Pacific Technical College is where I developed my knowledge of the industry. My studies helped refine my hospitality skills and I also picked up on other traits like communication, punctuality and confidence."

Since completing her Australia-Pacific Technical College qualification in 2014, Ms Naket has worked through four eight-month long contracts for P&O Cruises Australia.

"I realised that when I went to work on the cruise ship, every skill I had learned during my study at the Australia-Pacific Technical College directly applied to my work."

Australian-standard
qualifications opening
opportunities locally
and beyond

1. Seasonal Worker Programme
<https://www.employment.gov.au/seasonal-worker-programme>

Seasonal Worker Programme Factsheets
<https://www.employment.gov.au/factsheets>

Ms Naket's adventures did not end there. After her experience as a cruise ship employee, she travelled to Australia under the seasonal worker program and worked for six months at Cable Beach Club Resort and Spa located in Western Australia.

The seasonal worker program¹ is an Australian Government initiative helping to contribute to the economic development of Pacific Island countries by providing access to work opportunities in the Australian agriculture sector and the accommodation and tourism sector in selected locations.

While in Australia, she received two awards for excelling in her work. "I won the 'best employee of the month' twice. I was glad that I had achieved something that I never achieved before."

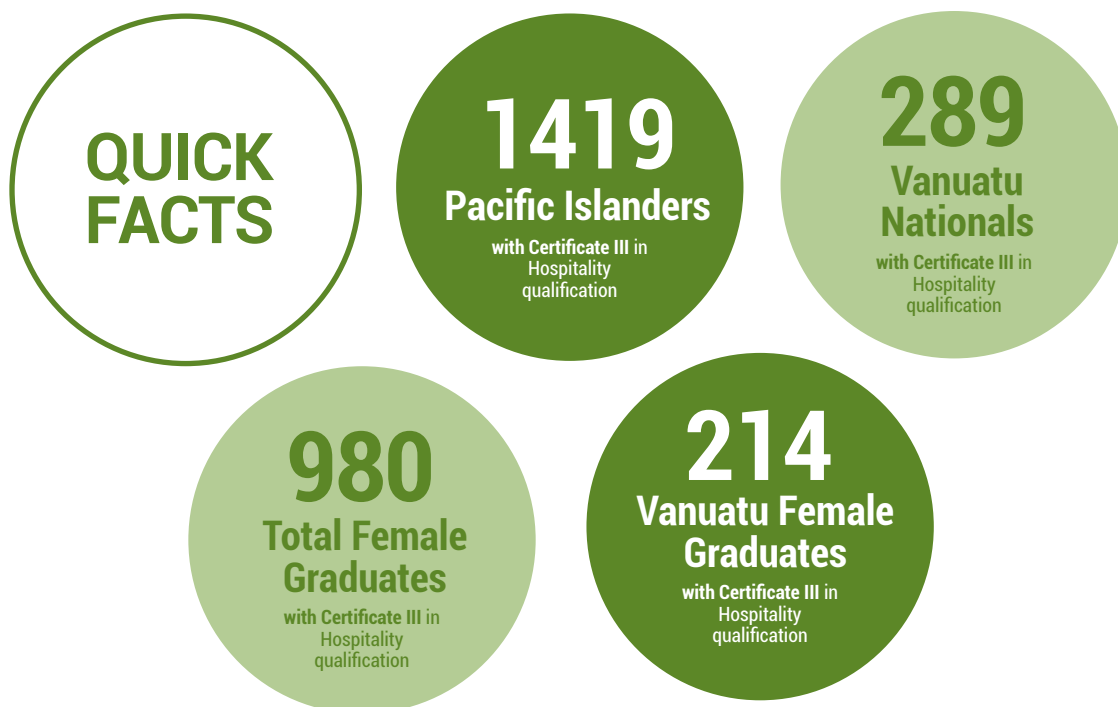
Ms Naket said that the Australia-Pacific Technical College played a big part in assisting her to seize the opportunity to visit and work in Australia.

"I was able to use the Australian standard skills and knowledge I learned from the Australia-Pacific Technical College when I worked for the Australian tourism and hospitality industry and found them very relevant."

For Ms Naket her long-time dream of running her own business is now a reality. Since her return to Tanna Island, she has branched out to open her own restaurant, Tino's Café, named after her son.

The motivation behind starting her own business is to pass on the knowledge and skills to help people in her community, especially women who do not have employment or work experience.

Ms Naket is confident her business will be a success. "The knowledge and skills from the Australia-Pacific Technical College has helped me a lot in starting my own business, and whenever I am stuck, I go back to my notes from the training."



“ Going to Australia was one of my dreams and the Australia-Pacific Technical College helped to make that dream a reality ” Ms Tina Saurei

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE CHERISHED

Ms Tina Saurei is a proud advocate of the Australia-Pacific Technical College, which she says has propelled her into the international job market.

An ‘accidental’ encounter with the Australia-Pacific Technical College, while accompanying a friend seeking information on technical programs, intrigued Ms Saurei’s interest in developing her tourism skills. This led her to pursue the Certificate III in Tourism qualification in 2013.

“I have increased my knowledge of computer technology and customer service and can work comfortably in a social environment, as well as understand about health and safety at the workplace. In our industry, we work with people from different places and countries, and these skills have helped me to excel.”

Ms Saurei said that employment prospects for her increased after her Australia-Pacific Technical College training. “Because of my qualification, I was always called in for job interviews whenever I applied for a job.”

One of her proudest moments since graduating from the Australia-Pacific Technical College, is having the opportunity to work in Western Australia. She worked at Cable Beach Resort and Spa for seven months from September 2015 to April 2016 as a room attendant under the seasonal worker program.

Ms Saurei said that the first few months of her employment focused on the expectations and requirements of the Australian standard, which she already knew about from her Australia-Pacific Technical College training.

“The experience was very good. I was also able to support my family financially. The standards were very different from the tourism industry at home. Everything has to be of high quality.”

“Going to Australia was one of my dreams and the Australia-Pacific Technical College helped to make that dream a reality,” she added.



“ The Australia-Pacific Technical College has contributed to a real foundation of education for people in my community ”

Mr Elder Kalmaire



CYCLONE PROJECT THRILLS COMMUNITY

In the aftermath of Cyclone Pam in 2015, the small community of Manua on Efate Island, Vanuatu was thrilled to benefit from the construction of a cyclone-resilient kindergarten.

The Tauawia Early Childhood Resource and Research Centre opened in February 2017, was largely built by the Certificate III in Carpentry students of the Australia-Pacific Technical College.

The Australia-Pacific Technical College partnered with stakeholders including the Early Childhood Care and Education Unit of the Vanuatu Ministry of Education and the Victoria University in New Zealand, to raise funds to construct the kindergarten.

The centre, the first of its kind in Vanuatu, was established with the vision that it will enable early education for the community, and at the same time, be a training centre for local teachers and encourage research.¹

Early childhood is an emerging sector, but it is a crucial one, as explained by the Vanuatu Education Support Program Secretariat Manager, Ms Libby Hegerty.

¹ https://moet.gov.vu/docs/press-releases/ministry/Tauawia%20Early%20Childhood%20Resource%20and%20Research%20Centre%20opens_03_2017.pdf

Working with communities
in building resilient and
safer structures

"Research shows that the chances of a child successfully completing basic education and moving onward to further education increases enormously if they have a good pre-school experience," she said.

Manua School Chairman, Elder Kalmaire, said that the partnership with the Australia-Pacific Technical College boosted the education of children and people in Vanuatu, with 56 households now benefitting from the new centre.

"Previously, teachers were not well supported. There was not enough resources or solid buildings. Now with the new building and an improved environment, I can see that the children are excited as well as their parents."

"The Australia-Pacific Technical College has contributed to a real foundation of education for people in my community," he said.

Working on a live project such as building the kindergarten, gave students pride in their work, explained Australia-Pacific Technical College's Country Manager in Vanuatu, Mr Nick Crosling.

"There is something particularly energising about a live work project. Not only is it a legacy that is left behind from the Australia-Pacific Technical College's standpoint, but more importantly, it gives students an opportunity to do something that is helping the community and it also reflects their qualification," explained Mr Crosling.



“ Previously, teachers were not well supported. There was not enough resources or solid buildings. Now with the new building and an improved environment, I can see that the children are excited as well as their parents ”

Elder Kalmaire

PRACTICAL TRAINING SUPPORTS LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY



“ The Australia-Pacific Technical College has played a big role in providing their programs and the transmission of knowledge and skills to our people here ”

Mr Jean Marie Virelala

The demand for qualified skilled workers was particularly felt from the devastation left by Cyclone Pam. Not only was there a need for re-building and construction work, but as the Vanuatu economy regained stability, new infrastructure projects began to emerge.

“The industry was pleased that the Australia-Pacific Technical College offered the Carpentry program in Vanuatu,” said Mr Crosling.

The Australia-Pacific Technical College's presence in Vanuatu was commended by the Director of Tertiary Education for the Ministry of Education and Training, Mr Jean Marie Virelala, who acknowledged the College for bringing positive change and skills development to the people of Vanuatu.

He believes that it is important for Vanuatu nationals to have access to quality education and resources, as it will contribute to a better quality of life for them and their communities.

“The Australia-Pacific Technical College has played a big role in providing their programs and the transmission of knowledge and skills to our people here.”

He thanked the Carpentry students for helping in constructing the Tauawia Early Childhood Resource and Research Centre in the aftermath of Cyclone Pam. The centre was built to the Australian Standard 1684 code and acts as a model for cyclone-proof structures that can be replicated across Vanuatu.

Australia-Pacific Technical College's Carpentry Trainer, Mr Trevor Ingram said that the best training for carpentry students is when working on a live project such as in the case of the Tauawia Early Childhood Resource and Research Centre.

He added that the construction of the kindergarten was special for students as they realised that the building will remain standing long after they have completed their studies.

BUILDING SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE FOR WOMEN CARPENTERS

Traditionally, education and employment opportunities in construction trades such as carpentry, were not commonly accessed by women in Vanuatu.

Today, the Australia-Pacific Technical College's quality focused training is developing the skills and confidence of ni-Vanuatu women to enter this trade. The College provides encouragement and support to women in the skill areas that have been traditionally dominated by men.

One standout example is graduate Ms Janet Noel. After completing Certificate III in Carpentry in 2016, Ms Noel is now working as a cabinet maker and aspires to become a civil engineer.

"It used to be said that women cannot do men's work, but we are now able to show that we can and we are changing that mindset."

She said studying at the Australia-Pacific Technical College helped her to progress her trade skills as well as boosted her confidence.

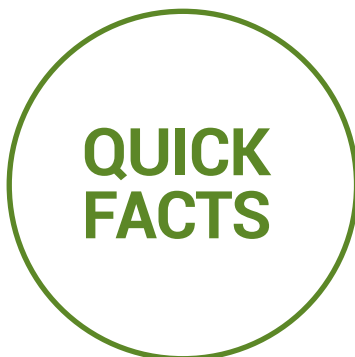
"At the Australia-Pacific Technical College, I learned how to handle tools of the trade - reading and understanding instructions on how to use machines while always ensuring the safety of my workmates and myself."

Ms Noel's advice to other ni-Vanuatu women is to develop self-confidence. "I would encourage females not to look down on themselves, stand up and go for whatever you aim to do. Do not look back even when there are challenges."



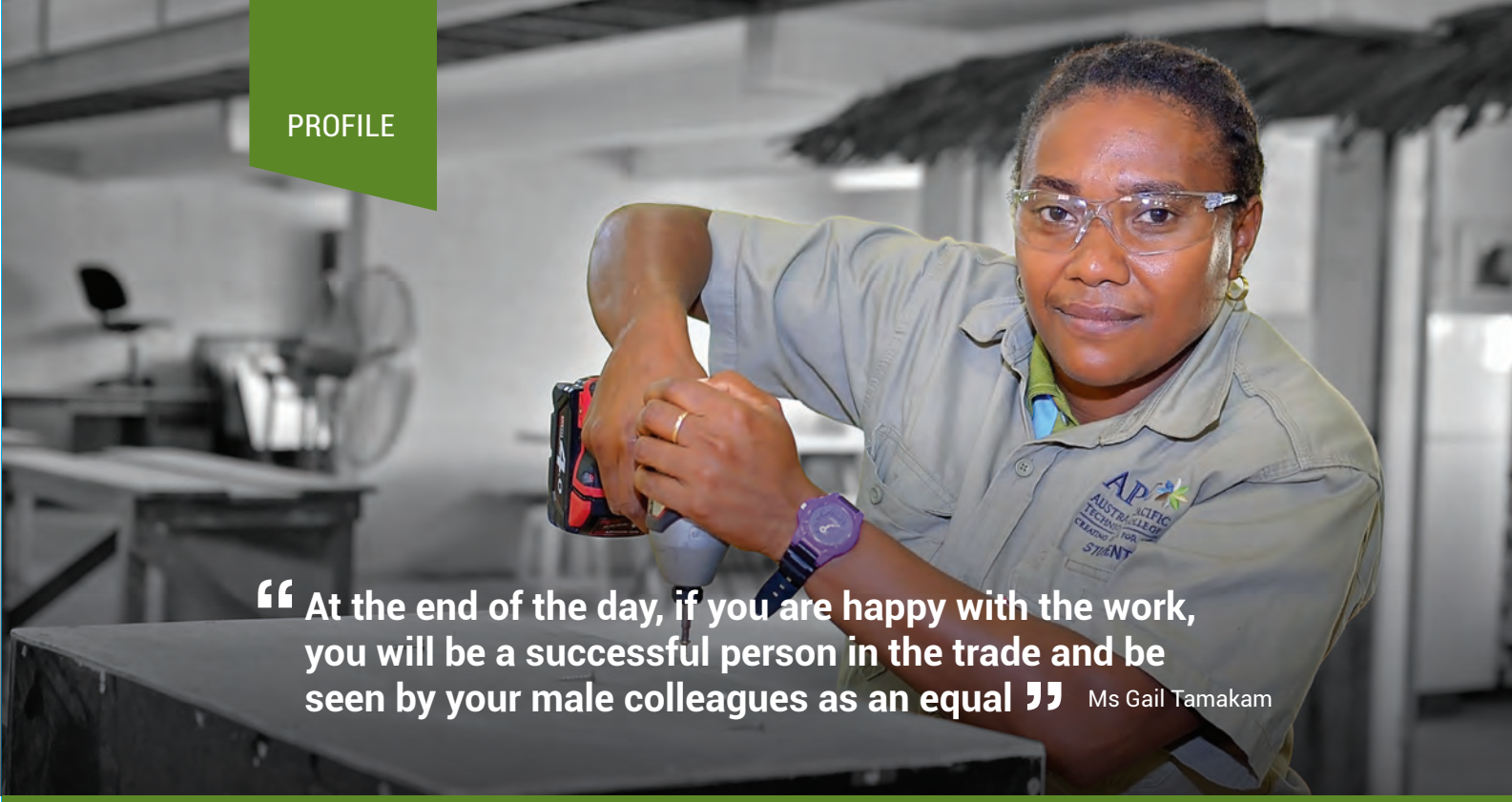
“ At the Australia-Pacific Technical College, I learned how to handle tools of the trade - reading and understanding instructions on how to use machines while always ensuring the safety of my workmates and myself ”

Ms Janet Noel



902
Pacific Islanders
with Certificate III in
Carpentry
qualification





“ At the end of the day, if you are happy with the work, you will be a successful person in the trade and be seen by your male colleagues as an equal ” Ms Gail Tamakam

SHINING EXAMPLE - GAIL TAMAKAM

An ambassador for women working in the carpentry trade is Australia-Pacific Technical College graduate, turned tutor Ms Gail Waki Tamakam.

Completing both the Certificate III in Wall and Floor Tiling qualification in Fiji and later, the Certificate III in Carpentry in Vanuatu, Ms Tamakam has drive and a wealth of experience that she now passes onto students at the Australia-Pacific Technical College.

Ms Tamakam has been in the construction industry for most of her working life, and has a range of experience in plastering, painting, and tiling. She was motivated to apply to the Australia-Pacific Technical College to learn more about her trade.

“The Australia-Pacific Technical College really supports gender equality by encouraging women to enrol in trade courses,” she said.

There are daily challenges being a female teaching a male-dominated class, however, studying and working in the Australia-Pacific Technical College's supportive environment has helped give Ms Tamakam confidence.

“One really big challenge is still to tell a male that something isn't good or correct,” she admits. “Without my training at the Australia-Pacific Technical College, I wouldn't have the confidence in myself to stand in front of my student and respond confidently.”

While the future holds immense potential for Ms Tamakam, her current focus and passion is to encourage women to “pick up the tools” and be successful in traditionally male-dominated fields.

“At the end of the day, if you are happy with the work, you will be a successful person in the trade and be seen by your male colleagues as an equal.”

Her advice to other women is to pursue whatever their heart tells them and to do their best. “You will find yourself growing your skills and knowledge in the trade.”

She concluded that the training and support provided by the Australia-Pacific Technical College was key to a successful career in her trade.



“ I did not complete high school or go to a university, but was able to gain skills and knowledge from studying at the Australia-Pacific Technical College, which has led me to my job as a trainer ”

Ms Rollyne Liu



Providing quality training through Australian-standard facilities

COLLABORATING FOR QUALITY TRAINING

Skills development is critical to economic, cultural and social development of Vanuatu citizens. One critical component in the Australia-Pacific Technical College's ability to produce highly skilled graduates for a sustainable workforce is its collaboration with local Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions.



The partnership between the Vanuatu Institute of Technology, which is the national Technical and Vocational Education and Training provider in Vanuatu, and the Australia-Pacific Technical College demonstrates a mutual commitment to the provision of quality and relevant training leading to strong employment outcomes.



The Australia-Pacific Technical College supports local institutions through teacher training, upgrading facilities to meet industry expectations and by providing training frameworks.

An example of this support is the newly refurbished Hospitality and Tourism Leisure Training Centre, which includes a kitchen and café, that is used to train Commercial Cookery, Hospitality and Tourism students.

"The Australia-Pacific Technical College and the Vanuatu Institute of Technology students share facilities but the partnership is more than a simple refurbishment. It is a sharing of the collegiate friendship between trainers from the two institutions," said the Australia-Pacific Technical College Country Manager in Vanuatu, Mr Nick Crosling.

BOOSTING INDUSTRY AND BUILDING CONFIDENCE



“ Vanuatu has a very big food influence and is a melting pot of different food cultures. Having a commercial training kitchen available to locals is a great privilege ” Mr William Griffiths

The Hospitality and Tourism Leisure Training Centre is one of the biggest commercial training kitchens in Port Vila and is designed to be a central hub for chefs across the Pacific.

“Vanuatu has a very big food influence and is a melting pot of different food cultures. Having a commercial training kitchen available to locals is a great privilege. It is a good experience for students to understand how a commercial kitchen should run and function,” Australia-Pacific Technical College's Certificate III in Commercial Cookery Trainer, Mr William Griffiths said.

He believes the skills that students obtain at the facility are vital because its Australian standard, which means they can use those skills and practices to further their career

He said the newfound confidence is the most evident change in students after their interaction with the training and facilities at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology and the Australia-Pacific Technical College.

“When they first attend the Australia-Pacific Technical College, many of the students can be quite shy. Once they start to relax and settle down, they become more comfortable and confident to engage with the learning and talk more openly,” said Mr Griffiths.

Similar views were expressed by Certificate III in Hospitality Trainer, Ms Rollyne Liu, who said the Australia-Pacific Technical College is contributing positively to the development of culinary and hospitality professionals across the Pacific, largely through upskilling workers, embedding communication skills and enhancing confidence.

“Most of the students who apply to the Australia-Pacific Technical College are from the industry so they come to us with some level of knowledge, experience and skills in various areas.”

“Through studying at the Australia-Pacific Technical College, their skills and confidence develop further in customer service, team work, communication and handling customer complaints.”

Seeing students in a real work setting at the Hospitality and Tourism Leisure Training Centre helps Ms Liu identify skill gaps, and set up training procedures or steps to further develop her students' knowledge.

“The facility is very important for students. I cannot send a student out on a work placement until I see a demonstration in the kitchen or see them serving real customers. It is a great place for feedback,” she said.

Ms Liu had never imagined she would be where she is today or have the chance to influence the lives of students.

Her journey began as a student at the Australia-Pacific Technical College. She completed Certificate III and IV in Hospitality and later a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. In 2011, she started working for the College as a Hospitality Tutor.

“When I joined, I was fortunate to support the delivery of three different programs – Hospitality, Tourism and Commercial Cookery. I got to work with different trainers and often sat in the different classes and got to learn about training delivery.

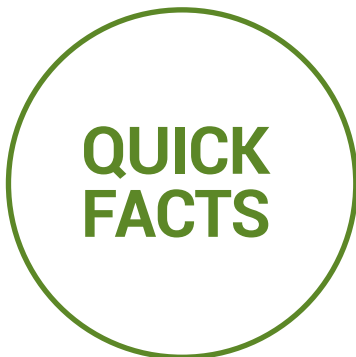
She added that this helped her develop her knowledge further about the different programs, which is helping her train other Vanuatu nationals develop their own careers.

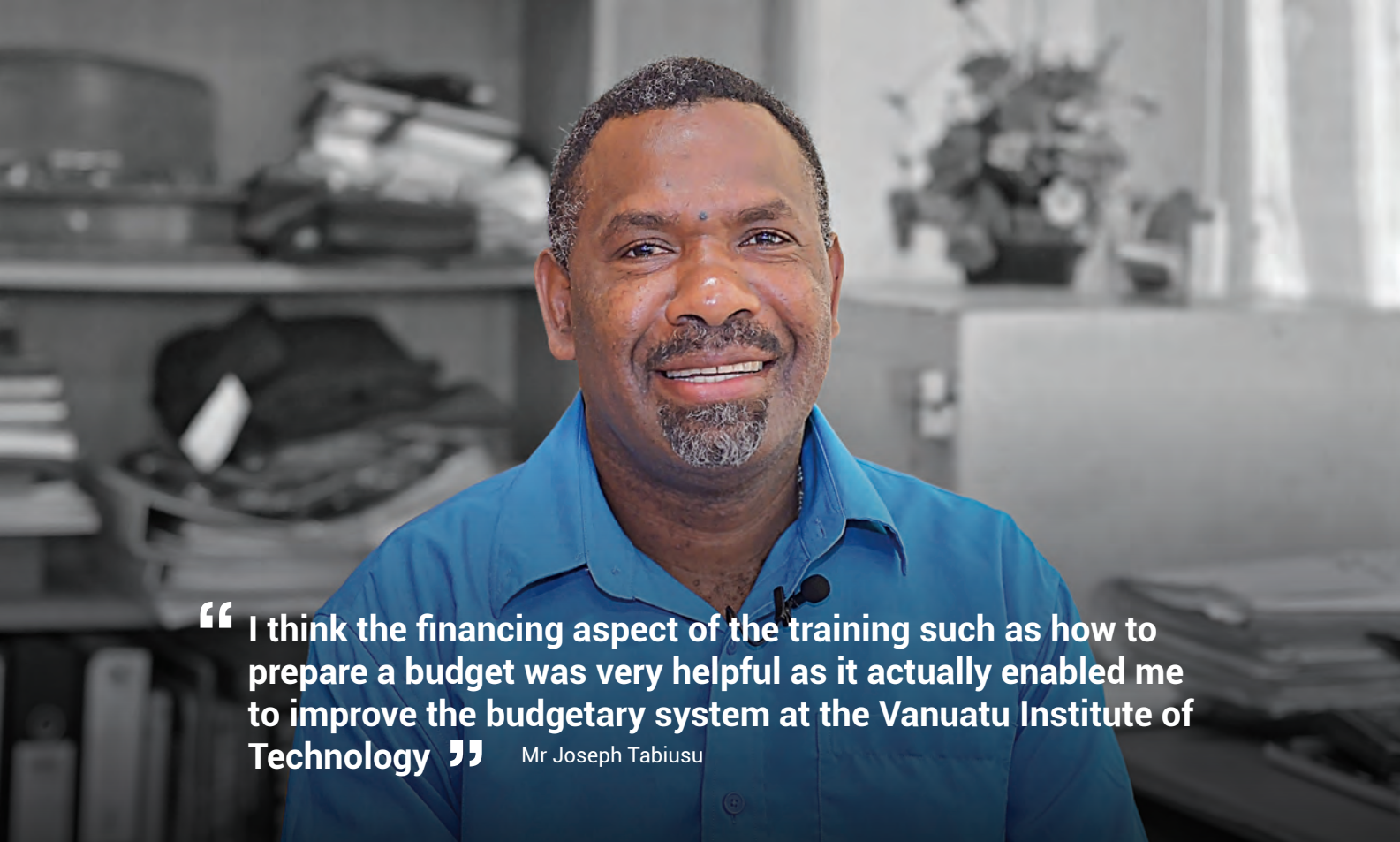
Ms Liu was able to take advantage of the professional development opportunities provided by the Australia-Pacific Technical College, and successfully made the transition in 2013 from a tutor to a trainer.

“I feel very proud that I have an impact through the training I conduct at the Australia-Pacific Technical College. I did not complete high school or go to a university, but was able to gain skills and knowledge from studying at the Australia-Pacific Technical College, which has led me to my job as a trainer.”



“The facility is very important for students. I cannot send a student out on a work placement until I see a demonstration in the kitchen or see them serving real customers” Ms Rollyne Liu



A portrait of Mr. Joseph Tabiusu, a middle-aged man with short dark hair and a goatee, wearing a blue button-down shirt. He is smiling and looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a blurred office setting with shelves and a plant.

“ I think the financing aspect of the training such as how to prepare a budget was very helpful as it actually enabled me to improve the budgetary system at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology ” Mr Joseph Tabiusu

BUILDING PROFESSIONAL CAPACITIES

Providing professional development opportunities is key to strengthening the national Technical and Vocational Education and Training sector.

A positive flow-on effect from the partnership between the Australia-Pacific Technical College and the Vanuatu Institute of Technology has been the provision of facilities and resources to upskill national trainers.

Since its establishment in Vanuatu, the Australia-Pacific Technical College has provided professional development training programs such as Diploma of Management and Certificate IV in Training and Assessment for the Vanuatu Institute of Technology staff.

Diploma of Management graduate and the Vanuatu Institute of Technology's Deputy Principal of Corporate Services, Mr Joseph Molkis Tabiusu, said the training helped him develop skills as a manager and leader.

Mr Tabiusu, who graduated in 2015, was one of the first staff members of the Vanuatu Institute of Technology to go through the program.

He gained important skills and experience such as developing and evaluating business plans and projects, managing people, conflict resolution, financing, budgeting and decision making.

“I learned many good things, classic examples being, how to manage a group of people to effectively perform as a team, how to do an action plan and how to conduct analysis of activities before making a decision.”

“I think the financing aspect of the training such as how to prepare a budget was very helpful as it actually enabled me to improve the budgetary system at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology,” he said.

Mr Tabiusu added that he now has an expanded knowledge-base on the general management of finance and cash flow reporting for operations, which he said, is very important to be managed in a proper way.

Another example is the Vanuatu Institute of Technology's Communications Trainer for the Tourism program, Ms Marie Tavi, who undertook the Australia-Pacific Technical College's Certificate IV in Training and Assessment program.

She said being exposed to such training has really helped her with lesson planning and time management skills.

"Through the training, I gained a good understanding of time management. I have a family at home, so this skill has been very useful to me," she said.

Ms Tavi also completed the Australia-Pacific Technical College's Certificate III in Tourism program to learn more about the operations of the Vanuatu tourism industry. She is

using the new skills and knowledge at the Vanuatu Institute of Technology to provide communication training to tourism and hospitality students.

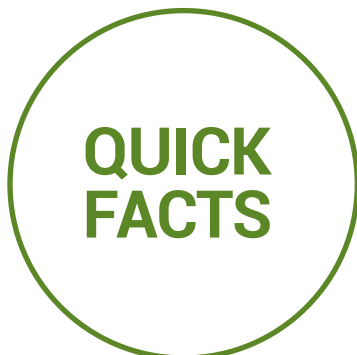
With newfound confidence in her own skills through the training, Ms Tavi plans to run her own small tour guide business in the future. "I think gaining new skills is very important and the more you practise, the more confident you become in your career and work."

Ms Tavi encourages her fellow colleagues to seize the training opportunity presented through the partnership between the two institutions.

"I think the Australia-Pacific Technical College is a very good place for gaining more knowledge and skills. I would really like to encourage my workmates and also my students to learn new skills and take them into their future."



“ I think gaining new skills is very important and the more you practice, the more confident you become in your career and work ” Ms Marie Tavi





“ I don't sit around and wait for somebody to tell me what to do – I would rather go and look for an opportunity myself ”

Ms Serah Tari



SHARING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Ms Serah Tari's skills and knowledge gained from the Australia-Pacific Technical College and from her various work experiences have positioned her as a key representative for women entrepreneurs in Vanuatu.

Self-employed since 2002, Ms Tari has done everything from running a backpacker guest house, business and administration coaching, setting up a homemade soap business to sustaining a tour business that is currently being rebuilt after Cyclone Pam. She was also the Vice-Chairperson of the Indigenous Tourism Association.

Having established herself as an inspirational entrepreneur in Vanuatu, Ms Tari believes her training allowed her to effectively encourage other women to build their own businesses.

Ms Tari graduated with Australia-Pacific Technical College's Certificate III in Tourism in 2012, which she said, helped her learn more about tourism operations of Vanuatu and the region.

Three years later, after completing another qualification from the Australia-Pacific Technical College – Certificate IV in Training and Assessment – she learned to customise her own training to suit the needs of the women she worked with in rural communities.

Empowering women
with business skills

In 2016, she began working as the national consultant for International Trade Centre – an initiative between World Trade Organisation and United Nations that aims to empower women working in handicraft to find global markets.

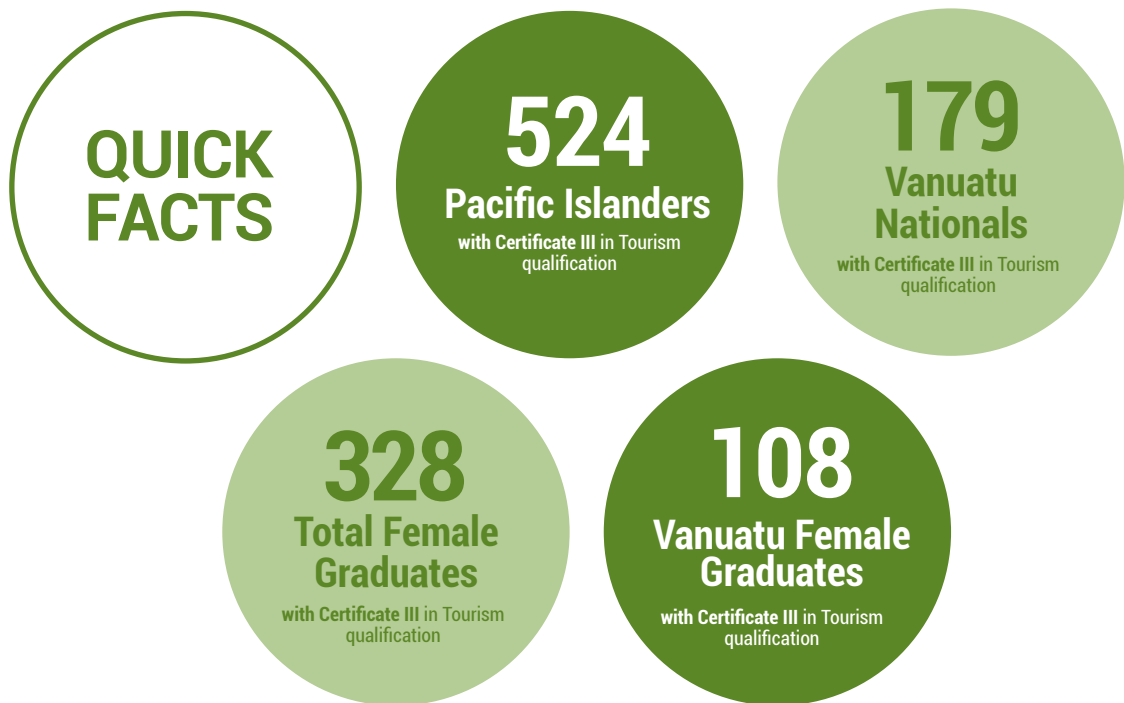
Through the project, Ms Tari set up the Women's Export Association of Vanuatu, and works closely with communities, including those on outer islands, to connect ni-Vanuatu women and help them identify potential handicraft products they can weave and export.

As a result of the positive impact of her work in local communities, she travelled to Geneva,

Switzerland in 2016, to deliver a presentation on women in small business in Vanuatu at the World Trade Organisation Public Forum.

It was a platform for her to talk about the experiences and challenges of businesswomen in Vanuatu as well as an opportunity to connect and discuss sustainable business growth with women from other parts of the world.

"It was a unique experience and gave me a lot of exposure," she said.



EMPOWERING WOMEN WITH TOURISM FOCUSED BUSINESS SKILLS

Ms Tari currently works with 25 women in Port Vila to help grow market for quality locally made handicrafts.

She believes there are endless possibilities for creating international connections. "At the moment, the interest from buyers are mostly for handicraft products but that does not limit us. Once we get the handicraft market going, then we look into the other products as well."

Through her work with the Indigenous Tourism Association, Ms Tari has been able to financially empower women, ensuring that they are compensated for their time.

"Working with vendors, we realised they are not paid for their time. With the project, we are trying to educate weavers about charging for the time and effort they put into producing their products," she said.

But it is not just about the money, she explains. "The project is about building their business skills because if they know what to charge, their lives improve."

Newfound confidence and a sense of pride is also evident in the women Ms Tari works with. "They spend so much time making beautiful handicrafts. Having international consultants come in and sample their work and knowing that their work will be appreciated overseas brings such a smile to their face."

Ms Tari has also witnessed how crucial follow-ups and connection are to maintain an entrepreneurial spirit amongst vendors.

"Every week, I call or visit the women I work with and talk to them about different activities or do training. It shows you are concerned about them and they know that you are not forgetting them."



“ The project is about building their business skills because if they know what to charge, their lives improve ”

Ms Serah Tari

BUILDING A NETWORK FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Ms Tari believes her Australia-Pacific Technical College skills have made her look at the tourism industry differently, and has helped her develop and maintain networks.

Often invited to speak about her experiences to share knowledge and to inspire others in the community, Ms Tari tries to bring people together to share skills and expertise.

"If we get together and talk, it refreshes our learning and we think of new things. For us in Vanuatu, we have a lot of opportunities to put in expressions of interest for projects and we can all bring our different skills together and put proposals forward."

Ms Tari maintains strong ties with other Australia-Pacific Technical College alumni through continuous knowledge sharing, and encouraging each other to pursue businesses.

She is often a part of industry morning teas and meetings organised by the Australia-Pacific Technical College's Tourism program, which has been an invaluable way for her to stay connected and seek advice and feedback on ideas.

Like Ms Tari, Certificate III in Tourism Trainer, Mr Kevin Tabi also believes that students can be their own employers and can create their own opportunities.

"There are a lot of opportunities in Vanuatu and the Pacific. The problem is we often depend on investors or think somebody else has to do something and we will just get involved. But there are resources, opportunities and a market for our own ideas," he said.

Throughout the program, students are given the confidence and know-how to start their own businesses, including learning about essential things like the business registration process, marketing and networking.



“ There are a lot of opportunities in Vanuatu and the Pacific. The problem is we often depend on investors or think somebody else has to do something and we will just get involved. But there are resources, opportunities and a market for our own ideas ” Mr Kevin Tabi

Australia-Pacific Technical College's Country Manager in Vanuatu, Mr Nick Crosling believes that cultivating a business sense in students is an important way to put their skills, industry experience and creativity to use, and also helps create a self-sustaining national workforce.

"We strongly encourage all our students to enhance their entrepreneurial ability - to think about what they could do to become their own employers and establish a business service relevant to their new qualification and skills," he added.

The campus also facilitates regular business forums for interested students and alumni, featuring representatives from the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the banking sector and other business leaders within the community, including past Australia-Pacific Technical College graduates.

"It is always good for an Australia-Pacific Technical College student to hear from graduates like Ms Tari, who have finished their training and have set up their own businesses," he said.

Ms Tari agrees that her time at the Australia-Pacific Technical College empowered her to make an impact.

"I have learned a lot from the Australia-Pacific Technical College and I would always recommend people to attend the College. You meet a lot of different people that you can develop networks and work with," she concluded.



“ We strongly encourage all our students to enhance their entrepreneurial ability - to think about what they could do to become their own employer and establish a business service relevant to their new qualification and skills ”

Mr Nick Crosling



“The training helped improved my skills and ability to connect with communities and implement strategies to build awareness of issues among people”

Mr Jimmy Lume

PASSION FOR HELPING PEOPLE TRANSFORMS COMMUNITY

Helping people by sharing his knowledge and exchanging ideas has been a key part of Mr Jimmy Lume's life.

He has been making an impact in his small community of Lenatuan village on Tanna Island in Vanuatu through several development projects, and has been a strong advocate on issues such as climate change and gender equality.

Turning his passion into a career, Mr Lume was instrumental in setting up the Lume Rural Training Centre so that people can learn a broad range of technical and vocational skills.

To achieve change and raise awareness of local and international issues, he completed two qualifications from the Australia-Pacific Technical College.

These were Certificate IV in Community Development and Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

“The training helped improved my skills and ability to connect with communities and implement strategies to build awareness of issues among people.”

By upskilling himself, Mr Lume is now recognised in the community for the positive changes he is making through his work at the Centre.

“I could not create change within the community without gaining the skills necessary to improve myself and my own work. The Australia-Pacific Technical College improved my values and complemented my efforts into gaining more knowledge which I could then apply in my community.”

EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH OPPORTUNITY

While women in Vanuatu are key contributors to society and are seen as holding families and communities together, in many instances, a lack of support from family members can prevent women from accessing or continuing their education.

One of the greatest takeaways for Mr Lume while attending the Australia-Pacific Technical College has been the awareness on gender equality in communities.

Ensuring women have access to training and employment opportunities is an issue Mr Lume believes needs more attention through more inclusive policies and strategies.

A broadening awareness of gender-related issues has motivated Mr Lume to encourage women to learn non-traditional skills at the Lume Rural Training Centre.

“We have to make sure the enrolment at the Centre is fifty-fifty for men and women. This is to create equal space for women to be recognised.”

While Mr Lume knows it will take time to achieve equal opportunities for women, he remains positive. “It has taken a long time, but we have slowly changed many things in our community.”

“ We have to make sure the enrolment in the Centre is fifty-fifty for men and women to create a space for women to be recognised ” Mr Jimmy Lume

A COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr Lume believes his qualifications from the Australia-Pacific Technical College assisted him in helping his community move forward after the devastation of Cyclone Pam.

His experience in project grant writing, as well as developing, implementing and evaluating projects for rural and remote communities, helped him progress many community-based projects.

It has also enabled him to design and develop tailored programs to train members of his community in honing skills that will help them to effectively adapt to changing climate patterns as well as provide opportunities to engage in employment.

His commitment to helping people extends far beyond an ordinary hobby. At the heart of his

work and passion is improving resilience for his community.

At the Lume Rural Training Centre, Mr Lume has directed his attention to creating programs and projects focusing on climate change and environmental issues. He has been educating the community on how to build *nakamals*, which are housing structures constructed using traditional materials and techniques.

"We found that when a cyclone comes, the traditional houses were more resilient as they were light and could sustain the local environment," he explained.

Mr Lume has also helped establish sustainable energy systems such as a water and sanitation project to ensure availability of clean water and affordable solar power system units for rural people.

**QUICK
FACTS**

1635
Total Ni-Vanuatu
Graduates

890
Total Vanuatu
Female Graduates

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Disclaimer

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