

# USP final year law students complete internship at the MSG Secretariat

Top (L-R) James Apaniai; Epineri Sebouma (Politics and Security Officer); Sovaia Marawa (Trade Advisor); Hudson Fano; Naomi Nawasaitoga (USP Legal Centre Coordinator); Roy Mariasua (Accountant); Stanley Wapot (Program Manager Sustainable Development)

Front (L-R) Lorna Macanawai; Romulo Nayacalevu (Program Manager Governance and Legal Affairs); Zaneta Kafa

Four final year law students at the University of the South Pacific's Emalus Campus recently completed their internship program at the MSG Secretariat. Zaneta Kafa, James Apaniai, Hudson Fano of the Solomon Islands and Lorna Macanawai of Fiji were attached to the Secretariat for a period of ten weeks learning about the different programs of the MSG as well as researching on key issues around trade, sustainable development, security and human rights. Their attachment is part of their law clinic course and provided the interns with the opportunity to understand some of the issues that the governments of the MSG region were engaged on and of which they needed to address applying their legal lenses.

In welcoming the students to the internship program, the Director General Ambassador Amena Yauvoli said that, "the MSG Secretariat is pleased to host the law students. It is wonderful to see them tackle the issues they were assigned too as they applied their legal knowledge and research skills. Their internship will add value to their experiences and empower them to understand the pressings issues of our sub-region. We welcome their valuable contributions through their research and interactions with us."

Lorna Macanawai said that her "experience is one to remember and that it was definitely a fond one where I acquired

new-found knowledge. Everything I thought I knew about the work of the MSG Secretariat was wrong and this attachment corrected my misunderstanding and perspectives and made me appreciate more the work of the MSG Secretariat." Lorna who was attached with the Governance and Legal program researched on areas of domestication of human rights treaties; diplomatic immunities and providing advice on depositories of treaties including MSG treaties.

James Apaniai said that he learnt a lot about professionalism in his first job experience and the importance of confidentiality especially in his future work as a lawyer. James who was attached to the Trade program said that it was also his first exposure to the MSG trade frameworks and notes the ongoing work around the ratification of MSG's Free Trade Agreement.

Following her placement, Zaneta Kafa felt that she now has an idea of what she wanted to do after graduating and that was basically empowering her community using her skills and knowledge of the law. Zaneta felt that her attachment with the Sustainable Development Program, had "shaped my plans for my career" as she researched on issues of illegal logging; finance for climate and development and laws on environmental protection in the Solomon Islands.

Hudson Fano, a police officer in the Solomon Island was attached with the Security and Politics program and he was impressed that "very few people worked in the engine room, driving the work program of the Secretariat." He felt that his internship experience was truly a life changing one. Hudson researched and delivered papers on a draft policy framework for conflict and post conflict reconstruction and development using the Solomon Island as a case study as well as a policy paper on secondment of police officers from the MSG states to the Secretariat.

The Law clinic coordinator at USP law school, Naomi Nawasaitoga in thanking the Secretariat staff for the internship opportunity said that she was impressed with the effort and the quality of work her students had put into the placement, adding that most went over and above that which was required of them to do. She was pleased to see their commitment and acknowledged and thanked the Director General and program staff who provided valuable coaching and support to the interns.

In his address to the students at the conclusion of their internship program, Romulo Nayacalevu, Program Manager for Governance and Legal Affairs reminded the students that as law students, the internship program would have provided them the opportunity to take initiatives; broaden their research skills and knowledge, applied their research into producing quality papers; strengthen networks and build their capacity and professionalism as it prepared them for legal practice. "I hear from your feedbacks today that you have certainly met those expectations, he adds."

The MSG Secretariat is pleased to support the University of the South Pacific Law School in this endeavour and wishes the interns successful careers in their practice.