



Takitaki

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F.R.I.E.N.D RECEIVES AWARD FROM EUROPEAN UNION

FRIEND was awarded funding from the European Union through the Ministry of Finance's Fiji Education Sector Programme. The award was officially handed over to FRIEND's director, Sashi Kiran during a ceremony attended by eighteen other EU award recipients at the Holiday Inn in Suva. For FRIEND the award was a timely assistance for one of its youth development programme, FACE. The FRIEND Art and Cultural Enterprises (FACE) project was created from an idea that grew out of concern for the under-served youths in Lautoka. FRIEND program officer Kiniviliame saw and felt the need for Lautoka street boys to be gainfully occupied in a program that will enable them to focus on an alternative life off the streets. The FACE project involves upgrading skills, improving self esteem, and setting achievable goals using art. It is divided into four phases: Visual arts, Music, Playback Theater and Dance. Exhibitions will be held after each programme phase to allow the youths to showcase their talents.



FRIEND's Art club (FACE) project participants.

F.R.I.E.N.D OPENS ITS NEW SHOP



FRIEND's Fiji Style Shop at the Garden City was officially opened on 9th of February by the first secretary of the Australian High Commission Ms Richelle Tickle. The opening marked yet another milestone for FRIEND with guests and friends of FRIEND turning up in numbers for the official launch. The FRIEND Shop stocks the complete range of Friends Fiji Style Chutneys, Pickles and handmade cards as well as other handicrafts and art pieces. We also intend to stock a wider variety of local goods from the north and farmed grains and delicacies like 'satwa' and 'mithouri' we are currently trialing. FRIEND's Fiji Style Shop is intended to be a one stop shop for any homemade product you want and we welcome all to visit and view locally produced art crafts and chutneys!

Richelle Tickle of the Australian High Commission officially opening FRIEND's Shop doors.

ASPBAE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING—LAUTOKA

Adult education for community development is a major part of FRIEND's work so when ASPBAE decided to have their Executive Council meeting in Fiji in February we were excited to learn a few things in this area. Delegates from Australia, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and the Philippines were welcomed by the FRIEND team. Asia South Pacific Bureau for Adult Education (ASPBAE) works in the region and their Fiji members include FCOSS, WAC, CCF and FRIEND. FRIEND was asked to coordinate logistic arrangements for the Executive Council meeting. On day one Rev Aquila Yabakai, (CCF) and Sashi Kiran, (FRIEND) were invited to speak on adult education in Fiji. Delegates also learnt of case studies from Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. Later that day ASPBAE convened its council meeting which ended on the 16th of February. Vitogo Village hosted the EC team for dinner where they enjoyed and shared the Fijian village experience. On the last day the group toured Bekana Island before leaving for their respective countries.



ASPBAE Executive council members outside Waterfront Hotel, Lautoka

VIDEO SKILLS WORKSHOP, 4- 15 FEBRUARY, 2008

I woke up the next morning with pain in my shoulders and could not think of what could be wrong. I wasn't feeling sick. Back at the workshop I saw almost everybody hunched over their laptops and realized how intense the workshop was. The would be movie makers of the NGOS. An opportunity of a lifetime! And an eye opener in terms of a glimpse into what really happens in the world of movie making. The scenes and sounds and transitions! fire-wires and USB's, cameras and tripods. This was a two week Video Skills workshop at SPC in Nabua under the guidance of RANA GHOSE, an academic from India, and AREN BAOA of SPC. With the skills learnt at the workshop FRIEND now hopes to start documenting the trials and successes of the organization on video.

Sandhya Narayan



Participants at the Video Skills Workshop

TRAINING OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPERS



Participatory Action for community Empowerment (PACE) facilitated a two days workshop in Ba, with 25 participants from women and youth Leaders representatives.



It was great to see the women in rural areas being involved in decision making from their communities. The involvement of the Indo Fijian Women's group in this workshop was impressive and an eye opener for the Indigenous Fijian women on how they plan or organize things differently but with the same focus. The Ba District Officer, Mr Nacanieli Lomani also shared about their work, the services the Provincial Council provides and how communities can access these.



Photos from top to bottom: Representatives from Ba Zanana Mulim League, Koronubu, and Votua.

WHATS HAPPENING

8th March
International Women's Day

10th March
National Youth & Commonwealth Day

12th March
FRIEND's Youth Community Outreach

17th March
Prophet Mohammed's Birthday

21st—24th March
Easter weekend

MY INDIA EXPERIENCE

During a 3 week meditation trip to India, I visited a Value Based School, Omega International School at Chennai, Tamil Nadu where I was invited to teach levels 8 and 9 on restorative justice processes. It was a challenge for me coming from a background of adult education having to design lesson plans for the two weeks within a limited timeframe. The activities included case studies based on a crime scenes, ground works and the mediation circle. The students did role plays, explored roles of mediators, and mapped out feelings of victims and offenders using different scenarios. The teachers of Omega International are now looking at including Restorative Justice lessons into their curriculum. This was a great learning experience for me and I thank all those that contributed to my trip. *Adi Vasu Chute*

SUPPORT WORKER WORKSHOP

Psychologist and Trauma Counselor Joann Robinson conducted a 5 day workshop from 18-22 FEBRUARY at JJs on the Park made possible by AusAid. The participants were support workers who worked with vulnerable groups like victims of sexual assault, offenders or victims of domestic violence. The objective of this workshop was to come up with "Simple Solutions To Assist Workers Dealing With Critical Incident Stress". The focus throughout the workshop was to understand the processes and inter-relationships between the worker and client, and other co-workers. Participants' learning focused on improving assessment skills, developing short term solution therapy skills, promoting longer term psychotherapy skills and minimizing the impact of the incident. We gained much knowledge and confidence to work with ex-offenders, offenders and their communities. *Ashna Shaleen and Swastika Singh*