

Lautoka Hospital Murals

Youths from the artistic network of FRIEND are getting together to paint a series of murals inside the Lautoka Hospital.

In an endeavor to renovate the signs at the hospital and promote better navigation, each ward is being assigned a local flower and painted with relevant imagery. For example, the women's surgical ward may be themed with the 'Tagimaucia' and will be decorated with the famous Taveuni flower. Other wards will become Kakala, Frangipani, Sandalwood, Lagakali, Makosoi and Marigold.

The youths are working on designs for the murals experimenting with pencil and water colour paints and coming up with some beautiful results.

Pauliasi – a local screen printer has worked with the group on the principles of cutting Tapa designs.

Four of the participants say they are handling paint brushes for the first time.

One of the young girls who is also painting says it is unfortunate that the youths do not have more opportunities for creative development in secondary schools. For Soko, this is also her first opportunity to use the brush.

Mural painting at the hospital has started from the first floor and the project is expected to take around six weeks.

The program is still looking for interested donors to assist with materials, professional allowances and refreshments for the artists.

Lautoka Hospital and FRIEND are thankful for the generous donation of paints from APCO. APCO a long term supporter of youth development program of FRIEND had also provided paints for the famous Shelly Park and Natabua Prison murals.



Youths at a pre mural workshop trying their hand at flower painting.

FRIEND @ Hibiscus Festival 2009



Miss FRIEND supported by Bank of Baroda

22 year old Kelera Tuirara is a third year Banking and Management Student at the University of the South Pacific.

Kelera was appointed as Miss FRIEND from a selection of girls for her willingness to learn more about the organization and the work that we do with our rural and underserved communities.

Tuirara is interested in issues such as climate change, global warming and the economic situation.

Her message to youths is to believe in themselves despite the challenges they face in life. "Victory is meaningless without the possibility of failure," she says. "Pushing yourself to take up a challenge whilst knowing that you might not succeed is an effort to be commended on."

The Bank of Baroda is teaming up with FRIEND to provide sponsorship in putting up a contestant for Hibiscus this year.



Takitaki

Youth Speak



21 year old Priya Darshani Chandra found her niche with ATS Pacific as an accounts receivable clerk soon after her training with YEN. She lives with her mother and 3 siblings in Kashmir

Q: How did you hear about FRIEND and how did you become interested in FRIEND's YEN program?

There was this HIV survey that was being conducted by HIV Hub Centre and they had involved FRIEND YDP program asking their youths to conduct surveys and answer questionnaires. Some of my friends encouraged me to come along and take part as it would help us earn some pocket money so I agreed and joined them... I got to learn more of HIV in depth and I did earn my pocket money which was very considerate since we youths sometimes are so broke. My name was now in FRIEND's YDP database where I began to attend their workshops and trainings for youths which helped me mentally and proved how important young people are and that they do have a major role to play in our communities.

Q. What have you learned through your involvement with the Youth Employment Network and how has this program helped you and how it could help other youths?

Involvement in YEN has taught me a lot of things such as : Being responsible, being a team player that if you don't have a qualification still there are other means of survival and how important it is to be away from all kinds of trouble, has helped me mentally and proved how important young people are and that they do have a major role to play in their society.

It was helpful to me because I was encouraged that IF WE WANT TO, WE CAN DO IT....other youths out there needs this encouragement and needs the reminder that we are the future leaders.

Q. What values that you have learnt in the YEN program that you can relate it to your work-place?

Yes respect is one major value that I learned from FRIEND and I believe that it applies everywhere and to everyone. Be a team player is something that is stressed in the training. Everyone is important and do unto others what you want them to do to you.



Food Security on Trial

Nilesh is a deaf youth who has been attached with FRIEND income generating scheme for some time. With the current world financial crisis, the devaluation of the Fiji dollar and inflation, Nilesh has come up with a very effective way of dealing with all these. He has begun with his back yard gardening in the FRIEND office compound in Lautoka. So far the office has been paying money to have the lawns maintained, but now, Nilesh is making better use of the same lawn. Nilesh is very proud with his garden in which he has planted cabbage, lettuce, long beans, pawpaw, egg plant,



dhaniya, moong, rosella and bitter gourd. Seeing his garden, our director was well pleased. Sashi says "you could plant as much as you want and where ever you want except on my parking lot please"! For the rest of the staff members this is a very encouraging initiative, seeing Nilesh transforming an ordinary lawn in Lautoka city into a vegetable garden. He even has compost from which he gets his organic manure for his garden. This compost consists of peelings *By Sarwan*

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Takitaki

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Ba communities meet up with the new District Officer

Six of the FRIEND communities in Ba had a chance for a face to face dialogue with their new District Officer, Me-tuisela Mua.

Representatives from Kainani, Koroqaqa, Tau-vevega, Vatu-laulau, Ba Hart and Badrau were part of a Participatory Budgeting workshop held earlier this month.

The communities each looked at



development issues in their areas and drafted action plans for themselves.

The direct audience with the new DO gave them a chance to get first hand answers from the authority on possible course of actions.

The workshop also featured a speaker from the Legal Aid office in Ba, Alumita Lekenaua, who informed the group about the relation between human rights and development and also took the opportunity to talk about the services of Legal Aid.

The group also was elated at the chance for an audience with a long time development worker in Ba, Mr Pravin Bala who highlighted common concerns for those living in and around Ba.

The workshop is part of a series aimed at increasing community understanding of how governments make and implement decisions about budgets at local and national levels.

New Products

Check out Friend's Fiji Style @ Range at our specialty shop for these new products

Lime Chutney

Chilli Garlic Paste in Olive Oil

Meyer Lemon Marmalade

Tamarind Slabs (400g/1kg)

**Shop 3
Garden City
Suva**

Recipe Corner

PIZZA Toast with lime pickle



(A snack to chase off the chills of a cold weather or a quick meal for the hungry)

Ingredients: six slices of bread, tomato sauce, chopped onions, tomatoes, coriander, capsicum, chopped Friend's Fiji Style Lime Pickle, Pizza Cheese.

Method: Lightly toast one side of bread in an electric frying pan or oven. Turn over and spread evenly with sauce. Pile on the other ingredients putting on cheese the last. Heat again till the cheese melts. Serve hot with a side salad.

With Sandhya Narayan





Takitaki

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FRIEND (LY) LA (BASA)

The FRIEND Labasa Office is now two months in existence and very much focused in establishing the first two 'farms' for the underserved. The staff have been inundated with requests from over 39 communities / individuals to assist in their projects to date.

With continued support – and we mean – real everyday interaction from the likes of the management of the Fiji Development Bank, the senior most managers of the Northern Development Program and the so far, stuttering assistance from the Ministry of Agriculture as well as not only the moral support of the Commissioner Northern, but his office opening any doors to the powers that be within the community at large, the FRIEND staff have been overwhelmed by the coming on board of all stakeholders in benefitting our underserved to better themselves and get out of the cycle of dependency and the like.

The focus for the month of July is to ensure that at the very least, two model farms are up and running. Jane and Rashida are culling information received from various communities whilst Victor is working closely with the NDP and the FDB to ensure the said recipients are assisted wherever possible to ease the transition into any income generating ideas that the individual / group may wish to enter into. We are also expecting a volunteer from the US Peace Corps to join us in the coming month to ensure that the Youth Programme is up and running within the shortest period of time.

Since its inception the Founder intended FRIEND services to reach the Western and Northern Division however due to higher cost of establishment it has taken longer for the services to be provided in the North. AUSAID grant of \$50,000 gave a kick start to the project establishment.

The official opening of the Labasa Office shall be on July 22nd and it is envisaged that His Excellency Mr James Batley, the High Commissioner of Australia will be the Chief Guest along with other dignitaries and invited guests.

By Victor Kissun

Labasa Office Official Opening Program 22nd July, 2009.



Time	
10.00	Guests are seated
10.10	MC welcomes guests
10.20 – 10.30	Welcome to the North by Commissioner Northern
10.30 – 10.50	FRIEND Overview
10:50 – 11:00	Official Opening by the High Commissioner Mr JAMES BATLEY
11.00	Refreshments