

Our vision is to develop and enhance the quality of leaders in Fiji

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIRMAN



William Parkinson

It has been a busy first half of the year as we settled into our new home at 6 Denison Road in Suva. The most important development has been the appointment of Sharyne Fong LF2005 as our new CEO. I have outlined previously our plans to restructure the organisation and Sharyne's appointment is a critical step in this process. She is of course no stranger to LF as a graduate fellow and volunteer Executive Director for a number of years we are thrilled to have her on board on nearly full time (she will be working on a number of her own passion projects as well).

Next step is to appoint a full time Administration Officer and a Program Co-ordinator. Sadly Gabriella Wong-Krishna who has been assisting us with running the program over the last year has left us. We are very grateful to Gabriella who stepped in at short notice to help keep the core program running. We wish her all the best for the future.

The new positions are all part of our plans to expand the reach of Leadership Fiji through the launch of shorter form leadership development programs. Earlier this year we launched our High School Prefect's Program which has been a success, however this is our first year and there has been much learning on both sides! We hope, with the support of the Ministry of Education, to continue to grow the program in 2020.

More recently we ran our first Sales Success Conference with renowned New Zealand based sales and leadership consultant Shayne Thompson. He is no stranger to Fiji, and we were thrilled to get him to return to Fiji to conduct the Mid-Year Retreat for our 2019 participants AND the Sales Success Conference. We were a little stunned by the enthusiastic response to this program that sold out in a very short time of announcing it. More sales leadership programs are on the way!

In July, we have our inaugural Adaptive Leadership Series, a three-part workshop series. These are designed for small groups (12 people) after hours over Tuesdays in July. Once again, this also "sold out" rapidly. These programs are available to anyone to attend, and our Leadership Fiji Graduates and Fellows get a discount, so if you are interested make sure you follow our social media platforms.

Also, in July we are looking to hold our first Entrepreneurs Forum, sponsored by Kontiki Finance. This is a pet project of mine! As a serial entrepreneur I know how lonely it can get and we want to develop a space within Leadership Fiji where you can go for support and advice from people who have actually been there and done it!. Don't be shy even if you are just thinking about launching your own commercial or social enterprise come along and join us.

As part our strategic rethink we have launched the LF Community Fund. This is a body that will facilitate ongoing support from our LF Alumni and Fellows to community and charity initiatives across Fiji. As you are probably aware, we challenge each participating Leadership Fiji year group to put leadership into action by taking on these community project initiatives in order to graduate. The LF Community Fund will provide our Graduates and Fellows with the opportunity to continue this work. Under the very able Chairpersonship of Rajesh Patel LF2002 (one of our founding Alumni) the Fund has already taken on a number of initiatives.

Finally, (in support of all the above !!!!), we continue to grow our family of financial partners. The Fiji Water Foundation has very generously agreed to a further grant of \$45,000 for 2019. They have become wonderful friends to Leadership Fiji also providing a number of our Fellows the opportunity to attend the famous Aspen Institute Executive Seminar and leadership programs in the USA. This experience has already helped shape our programs with the adoption of a number of techniques from this program quite apart from a number of global contacts.

The New Zealand High Commission recently announced continuation of support for Leadership Fiji. They have been a supporter since day one. We also received new sponsorship from Transam (Fiji) and recently from AVI Pacific People and we will be looking to work closely with them in the future.



In every issue of the Leadership Fiji (LF) Newsletter, we celebrate significant achievements of the Leadership Fiji Program, the works of the LF Alumni and notable accomplishments of venerated LF Fellows in Fiji and abroad. Do you have great news to share with us? Please email information@leadershipfiji.org



We are always proud of our LF Alumnus achievements and acknowledge the perseverance and diligence of those pictured here, after being appointed into positions of influence and given special awards and mention locally. From left to right, our hearty Congratulations to:

- 🌐 Anare Manulevu LF2005 on his appointment as a Partner of KPMG Fiji.
- 🌐 Veilawa Rereiwasaliwa LF2017 on his appointment as General Manager Fiji for Tower Insurance.
- 🌐 Esala Nasaroa LF2017 on being awarded the Leadership Impact Award by the Institute of Internal Auditors.
- 🌐 Abele Saunivalu LF2018 on his appointment as Audit Director of the Office of the Auditor General.
- 🌐 Maivon Wahid LF2019 who scooped the Fiji Human Resource Institute's 2019 HR Manager of the Year.

Executive Seminar on Leadership, Values & Good Society: Aspen Institute, Colorado

Spring(ers) in Aspen by Arshad Daud, LF2002

Based at the Meadows Resort in Aspen Colorado the Aspen Institute was founded by Walter Paepcke in 1949. Inspired by the natural beauty and history of the location Paepcke envisioned an ideal gathering place for thinkers, leaders, artists, and musicians from all over the world to step away from their daily routines and reflect on the underlying values of society and culture. He dreamed of transforming the town into a centre for dialogue, a place for "lifting us out of our usual selves," as one visitor to Paepcke's Aspen would put it.

The Aspen Executive Seminars on Leadership Values and Good Society has been challenging participants for almost 70 years. Leaders are introduced to concepts and ideas through readings and group discussions in a way that facilitates the development of self-knowledge and habits necessary for strategic thinking and interpersonal relationships. Seven Leadership Fiji Fellows have been awarded the Fiji Water Foundation Scholarship to attend the seminars since 2002, with all participants agreeing that the experience has been an enriching experience.

My invitation to apply for the Fiji Water Foundation Scholarship to attend the Aspen Executive Leadership Seminar in 2019 arrived at an opportune time. Having graduated from University in 1993, moved back to Fiji in 1995, buying the family business in 2000, completing the Leadership Fiji experience in its inaugural year, establishing a second business in 2010 and getting hitched in 2011 I had settled onto my path in my community based on my perceived value of the knowledge and experiences gained along the journey.

Being 'self-employed' means that my leadership within the businesses is rarely challenged and this can translate to the way I view the world. Having a partner working in the opposite end to the commercial sector does help in balancing out my view on community and social constructs, but in hindsight it is quite easy to develop a very narrow view.

That view was dramatically challenged In Aspen in the company of a cohort (that included a formidable array of personalities from military law enforcement and legal backgrounds, CEO's medical professionals, civil servants, educationalists and lobbyists) who were ably challenged and guided by two very capable and inspiring facilitators.

My challenges began with having to draft a CV for the first time in 25 years and intensified with the arrival of the reading materials which included Aristotle, Hobbes, Rousseau, Ayn Rand Herman Melville to Khaldun, Bolivar, Marx, Bell Hooks, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Machiavelli ,Maya Angelo, MLK and Plato which would be the basis of thoughtful, insightful and sometimes emotionally charged discussions in Aspen.

Our week in Colorado began with delayed and rerouted flights due to late winter storms and record snowfalls and temperatures as low as -17C. The weather and adjusted program aside, it culminated in a greater understanding of the complexities of building and living in a values-based society, motivation to translate those learnings to my community and a sense of belonging to a group that I am sure will share life long and life changing friendships.

A highlight of the seminar is the re- interpretation of the play the Antigone, which my cohort presented in a Jerry Springer style show (a first we were told) complete with boisterous audience and brawling guests. The show and the facilitators reaction to it led to our choice of group name (The Springers), which is another seminar tradition.

This experience was both challenging and inspiring and I am grateful to the Fiji Water Foundation and Leadership Fiji for this opportunity. I would also strongly recommend this program to any fellow of LF who are offered the chance to participate.



Editors Note: Arshad now joins LF Alumni's Rajesh Patel LF2002, Glenis Yee LF2006, Atu Siwatibau LF2004, Sharyne Fong LF2005, Ritesh Singh LF2002 and Cathy Wong LF2008 as Fellows of the Fiji Water Foundation.

Fortune/US State Department Global Women's Mentoring Partnership

By Glenis Yee, LF2006

Every year, US Embassies the world over nominates emerging women leaders as potential participants to the Fortune/US State Department Global Women's Mentoring Partnership. The Partnership is a professional exchange program run by the State Department and Fortune Magazine to match mentees with executive women mentors from Fortune's Most Powerful Women community.

I was honoured to be chosen as a participant this year, one of 19 women from 15 countries and the second ever participant from Fiji. Sashi Kiran from FRIEND was the first.

The Trip

The program involved a three week visit to the US for workshops, discussions and the mentorship component. It focuses on an exchange of knowledge, ideas and assists mentees with expanding their networks while developing practical skills like public speaking!

While sponsored and supported by the US State Department and the Fortune Most Powerful Women Network, the program is organized by Vital Voices, an NGO based in Washington DC. Vital Voices works with women leaders in the areas of economic empowerment, women's political participation and human rights. It believes that that there is a need to invest in women leaders who improve the world and grow their communities. The cost (not only economic) of not empowering women and girls is too great.

Week 1 (Washington DC)

The first week involved getting to know my fellow mentees with ice-breaker sessions and mini-introductions about ourselves, our countries and who we are, not only what we did. There is something to be said about connecting a group of strong, amazing women. Our group included a woman from Kenya who left a corporate job to set up a school for special needs children, a South African ER doctor turned filmmaker creating stories for African audiences to address the mental subjugation of her people, entrepreneurs from Poland, India, Columbia, North Macedonia, Russia (amongst others) and lawyers (like me) from South Africa and Malaysia.



Participants meeting the Assistant US Secretary of State Marie Royce and other women leaders from the State Department

Week 2 (Hartford, Boston, Woonsocket)

The second week involved the mentoring component. I was matched with Karen Lynch, President of Aetna and Vice President of CVS. Aetna and CVS merged in November 2018 as part of the \$69B deal, making it Fortune's No. 2 company with over 170,000 employees and close to 10,000 retail stores. Aetna is a traditional insurer (initially life and now medical) while CVS focuses on pharmaceutical and retail. I also joined the Executive Team on an Innovation Immersion excursion. Given the merger, the company is still going through the integration piece which was, for me a corporate lawyer running M&As, fascinating.



Aetna's HQ in Hartford and meeting with Karen Lynch

Week 3 (New York)

The last week involved meeting the other participants in New York to articulate the lessons learned over the past few weeks. It also involved meeting with supporters of Vital Voices including Diane von Furstenberg (the creator of the wrap dress) whose mother survived Auschwitz. Her mom taught her that "Fear is not an option" and "Love is life". These inspirational messages are displayed along a 5-level staircase in her flagship store, a staircase she walks up most days (she is in her 70s!).

Lessons

Some lessons that I can share from the experience are to "get comfortable with being uncomfortable", this is true of US corporate culture and some would say, of life. Also given the constant changing environment, we should try to imbed a culture of continuous improvement in our respective organisations. For women, it means shaking off the "imposter syndrome" and not shrinking to fit preconceived notions of what it means to be a woman or a leader. Further, to create enduring change, women cannot effect it alone. Lastly, like in the US, "volunteerism is leadership" so it is important to continue to pay it forward.



Closing dinner with fellow participants, Assistant Secretary of State, Marie Royce, President of CBS News, Susan Zirinsky and Patti Sellers

PS: It was the Leadership Fiji program that kick started this "leadership" journey for me in 2006.

I am grateful to Imrana Jalal, Maryanne Harvey and Emily Artack, friends/family in Washington, Connecticut and New York respectively for inviting me to their home(s) for hot cups of tea, home cooked meal(s) and talanoa on my days off.

Session Reports

The following are activity reports, in summary, of some of the sessions, site visitations and group retreats that have taken place so far. Traditionally, working groups are assigned to these reports, and the five Teams of Tuitui, Tabua, Tagimoucia, Tilapia and Tauratale shared in the responsibilities of tracking and evaluating these sessions.

Overview of Fiji's History

Starting with the fortnightly sessions, the Leadership Fiji 2019 participants dove into the History of Fiji.

The day session began with a tour of the Fiji Museum with Dr Robert Nicole. The participants progressed to ANZ House, Suva to complete the remainder of the session with guest speakers Professor Sudesh Mishra, Professor Vijay Naidu, Mr Jone Dakuvula and Dr Sandra Tarte, whilst from Wellington, New Zealand was Professor Jon Fraenkel who gave a first-hand glance at Fiji's History through the eyes of the Pacific's Correspondent.

This session covered aspects of Fiji's History from the pre-contact period to the Indentured Labour period to post-coup phase and up to present day events. The different styles of leadership used in the early days have very much changed with time.

What a great way to begin the program by starting out with Fiji's history.



Human Rights and the Media

The 2nd session, Leadership Fiji 2019 participants were joined by Human Rights speakers, Josephine Kalsuak of SPC who outlined the origins of Human Rights. We now know why Human rights were put into place. Ashwin Raj, Fiji Human Rights & Anti-Discrimination Commission gave a fresh perspective on the importance of Human Rights and why we need to be educated on that. Human rights need more interdependency. Shamima Ali, the Coordinator of Fiji Women's Crisis Centre outlined her roles in the different NGO's she's a part of. We now have a deeper understanding on women's rights and why it is hard for women to report domestic violence to the relevant authorities. We can now boldly say that we will help and educate the public on the avenues they can take to report abuse. Joshco Wakaniyasi, Director of Spinal Injuries Association of Fiji dug deeper to ensure the participants understood those living with spinal injuries. Human Rights is everyone's rights regardless of race, religion or creed OR spinal injuries.

A Leader's Lunch with Justin Tierney sharing his experience with running a company in a foreign country was a daunting task but with the help of the locals Justin was able to build BlueScope to where it is today.

Vijay Narayan of Communications Fiji Limited and Elenoa Baselala of the Fiji Times gave insight and a better understanding on how news is reported and what rules and regulations need to be followed. They shared a few stories of the struggles they face as news reporters and how the media is often mis-interpreted.

The session ended with site visits to the different media outlets, Fiji Times, Fiji TV and Communications Fiji Limited.



Law and Order and Government Machinery

To better understand the concept of law and order and the rule of law, Leadership Fiji 2019 participants were updated by presenters, Professor Biman Prasad, Mr Joji Kotobalavu, Ms Mary Chapman. They provided participants with a better understating on the role of the opposition and the challenges faced in parliament.

Mr Richard Naidu gave a brief overview of the Fijian law and order and rule of law.

A second panel discussion by Mr Viliame Naupoto, Mr Christopher Pryde, Mr Sevuloni Naucukidi outlined the roles and responsibilities of the Military, DPP and Corrections in maintaining law and order.

Justice William Calanchini identified roles and responsibilities of the judiciary.

Our site visit to Parliament had Mr Vatimosi Delailovu briefing participants on the different arms of parliament, its actual locations and the mechanics of Fiji's parliamentary system.



Tourism Industry

This session was over two days in the burning West and were a mixture of presentations and site visits with relevant representatives who were symbolic of the tourism sector of Fiji.

On day 1, participants had the opportunity to hear and pose questions firsthand with a number of speakers which included Thomas Valentine, Operations Manager Tourism Fiji, Kolora Mason [LF2018] Head of Products & Reservations Pacific Destinations, Tui Kabu from Fiji Backpackers and Brian Kirsch, Vice President Fiji Hotel & Tourism Association, Mereseini Baleilevuka, Chief Operation Officer of Free Bird Institute and Bradley Robinson, CEO of Raffe Hotels and Resorts.

The site visits comprised of visits to the home of Fiji Airways, where our Alumni, Sharun Ali LF2008 and General Manager Safety, Security & Quality and his fellow colleagues gave us an overview of their operations and an insight into the Boeing 737.

We visited a local boutique chocolate factory, Cacao Fiji, located at Challenge Plaza, Namaka where founder and owner Arif Ali LF2017 gave us an overview of the end to end processing of chocolate making.

Our visit to Port Denarau Marina and the presentation by General Manager, Cynthia Rasch provided us with a better appreciation of the Yachting Industry and its contribution to Tourism in Fiji, and a visit to Ramada Suites by Wyndham on Wailoaloa Beach gave us an appreciation of an Apart-Hotel style living.

We concluded our visit at Sigatoka Sand Dunes National Park where Park Manager, Jason Tutani LF2012 shared their work and challenges and took us on a hike up the sand-dunes which tested our stamina, and was a chance to get some bonding amongst us whilst encouraging and helping each other up the Dunes.



Poverty and Social Welfare

This session focused on the topics of poverty and social welfare. The session revolved around different aspects and implications of people living under the poverty line. Many facets including social, economic and financial aspects of surviving in poverty was discussed. LF participants also got to hear from the speakers about different CSO's and organisations that are currently trying to battle this issue. This session also consisted of a site visit to the Samabula Old People's Home.

Mr Rupeni Fatiaki, the first speaker of the day shared with the group about the mechanics of the Social Welfare department, the challenges they faced and how they help the less fortunate. Mr Sunil Kumar shed light on Homes of Hope and how they are enabling women to to integrate back in their societies. Mr Masimake Latianara discussed about how Habitat for Humanity is now adopting methods to make housing more accessible and disabled-people friendly. Ms Iris Low-McKenzie spoke about the different ways in which Save the Children's Fund is helping school children by providing stationary. Ms Vani Catanasiga discussed ways in which social help and services are given during times of emergency and needs, and the challenges of running an organisation as such.

Finally, Ms Neelum Kumar gave the LF cohort a guided tour of the Samabula Old People's Home and spoke of the challenges faced by the organisation, and the different social activities the residents of Samabula Old People's Home engage in.

This session was indeed an eye opener about several social issues that are faced by Fijians on a daily basis. Apart from this, the participants were also introduced to a wide variety of speakers from different back grounds and organisations. Ultimately, the lesson of the day was how we as individuals can give back to society and enrich other people's lives.



Etiquette Dinner

The second event for the day, the Etiquette Dinner was facilitated by Mr Mazey, who talked the group through dinner about the use of different utensils, table manners and expected behaviour while in a dinner party. Leadership Fiji's Board Chair shared tips on networking during a cocktail and the etiquette and protocols to follow when invited.

Participants had the opportunity to invite a guest each to be part of the experience, to meet fellow colleagues and share in a four-course dinner.

The take-away from this event, is to try and meet one new person when invited to attend a cocktail or dinner and follow through on conversations immediately after.



Fiji's Economy & Infrastructure

Speakers for this session were: Dr Sunil Kumar; Permanent Secretary for Economy, Ms Makereta Konrote; Governor Reserve Bank of Fiji, Mr Ariff Ali; Mr Shavindra Nath of Fiji Revenue & Customs Service; Mr Mark Halabe, Managing Director of Mark One Apparel; Mr Ram Bajekal, Managing Director of Flour Mills of Fiji Group; Mr Seymour Singh LF2018, Manager Strategic of Water Authority of Fiji and Mr Sakiusa Nabou, General Manager Projects at Telecom Fiji Limited.

The session was hosted at the Reserve Bank of Fiji's Tower 11, and for many participants it was their first time to enter the hub of Fiji's financial regulator.

Participants learnt the importance of understanding our Economic environment during the last decade and most importantly to be able to forecast for the future.

We need to be proactive and be able to understand the movements and the direction in which the economy is moving towards.

For any economy to grow it has to have debt, at the same time be self-sufficient enough to pay its debt in a timely manner and meet its obligations for its population.

Participants also got insight and some Toastmaster experience over their Leaders Lunch hour with Suva Toastmaster and Leadership Fiji Alumni, Veronika Naiwaqa LF2015.



Mid-Year Retreat

The Mid-Year Retreat is one of three mandatory Retreats that participants are required to attend, apart from 80% attendance of other sessions and their community project, in order to graduate from the Leadership Fiji Program.

The Retreat was held at the Warwick Hotel, along the Coral Coast and participants were fortunate to have Shayne Thompson, Australiasia's most dynamic high-performance sales, negotiation and performance coach as their facilitator for the weekend.

The weekend provided participants with an opportunity to reset and self-reflect. Shayne stretched everyone to think creatively with lots of activities that pushed participants out of their comfort zones and helped each one set a vision for their future.

The evening's reading on The Ones Who Walked Away from Omelas got many thinking and reflecting on their life.

All in all, the weekend was full of fun and inspired every participant to forge ahead and go make a difference.



Sales Success Conference



"The conference was very informative and interesting to attend. It gave me a more clearer perspective of being just a manager and how we can become a great leader. One major obstacle we face in today's economy of Fiji is the Pacific way of thinking and working. It becomes very hard to move people from that mentality to the new modern approach of doing work."

-Sumeet Prasad

"The Sales Conference was a mind blowing 2-day event that took us to another level of Selling and targeting potential customers who don't know or want to buy the product or service yet.

The tools, models and techniques learnt were easy to comprehend, adaptable and practical to use in any situation regardless of the product or service we are selling. We seek first to understand our customers problems by asking questions before we offer our products and services to fulfill their needs. Knowing their personality types also assists in the selling or negotiating process. The leadership element Shayne emphasized on resonated with many of us and the knowledge and skills learnt, we will share with our teams and organisation, to bring about a positive impact and lasting change.

Thank you for an inspiring and empowering 2 days, Shayne..."

-Sustina Kamali



It is of great pleasure to recommend Shayne Thompson and his Sales Success Conference.

Shayne has excellent insight on Leadership, Coaching and Sales Success and I was able to understand all the concepts, models and ideas provided during the 2-day conference. This conference is highly recommended to all sales, sales leaders and potential sales enthusiast.

-Whilma Smith

Very great experience in terms of understanding the fundamentals of sales, the type of questions to ask, how important it is to identify the type of customer we are liaising with and how to tackle each types of customers, the list goes on and on. I am very happy that I attended the sales success conference and would recommend it to everyone else.

-Alsace Smith

Great stuff!!.. A must for aspiring sales leaders and leaders and would recommend it to everyone else.

-Philip Filipo

A must do for any business wanting to increase sales! Invest in your team and empower them with the skillset to become sales professionals instead of order takers!

-Morika Hunter



Upcoming Sessions & Events

Environment
Session
Suva

Wed 26 June 2019
8am to 5pm

Entrepreneurs Forum
Niu Grillz
Fiji Club

Wed 3 July 2019
6pm to 8pm

Health Session
Suva

Wed 10 July 2019
8am to 5pm

Adaptive
Leadership Series
Suva

Tuesdays in July
9th - 16th - 23rd

Sugar & Mining
Session - West

Thurs 25 July to
Fri 26 July 2019
6am to 5pm

Education Session
Suva

Wed 7 August 2019
8am to 5pm

Alternative
Agriculture Session
West

Fri 24 Aug to Sat 25
Aug 2019
6am to 5pm

Fiji & The World
Session - Suva

Wed 4 Sept 2019
8am to 5pm

Go North

Fri 18 Sept to
Sat 21 Sept 2019
4am to 5pm

Participants Choice
Suva

Wed 2 Oct 2019
8am to 5pm

Closing Retreat
West

Fri 18 Oct to
Sat 19 Oct 2019
5am to 5pm

2019 Vision &
2018 Fellows
Presentation
Suva

Thurs 31 Oct 2019
3pm to 5pm

2019 Graduation
Dinner
Suva

Fri 1 Nov 2019
6pm to 10pm

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Partners Acknowledgement



The Fiji Times



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