Vice Chancellor supports TVET

Solomon Islands National University (SINU) has signed a contract with the Ministry of Development, Planning and Aid Coordination (MDPAC) represented by the Permanent Secretary, Mr Jeremiah Manele.

The signing is part of the integration of the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) into the formal and non-formal education system in the country and funded by the European Union.

Speaking during the ceremony the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Glynn Galo highlighted that SINU “...has the mandate to provide training that fulfils the requirement or need of the people of Solomon Islands, wherever they are, whatever occupation they hold.”.

Dr. Galo reiterated that staffs of the university have the expertise and qualification to provide suitable training for the TVET teachers.

Meanwhile, Mr Manele said, “the provision of training for TVET instructors is a milestone in the current TVET programme.

The program will be offered by the School of Education and Humanities.

Signatories of the contract Dr. Patricia Rodie (PVCAS), Dr. Glynn Galo (VC), EU Charge de Affairs and spokesperson for the National Authorising Officer.
A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

Much has happened since the inaugural SINU launching that took place on the 28th April. In this communication, I wish to share with all of us as members of the SINU community some of the very important task that have taken place since the launching.

After the SINU launching, the most pressing and outstanding task that needed to be formalised was the need to have the 2013 SINU budget passed by the SINU Council. Through the hard work of the Finance Department, under the able leadership of the Manager-Finance (Ag), Mr Walter Maesugea and the Council’s Finance and Investment Committee, the 2013 SINU Budget was prepared and tabled at the 29th April SINU Council meeting. It was unanimously passed. This gave the legal authority for SINU management to begin spending money on the needs of the University. In addition to the passing of the budget, all the Standing Committees of Council were endorsed at the same SINU Council meeting. This has further led to formally putting in place all the SINU Management committee. Much of the planning of the University will be channelled through these various committees. SINU was now in place to begin making some serious decisions because we have the avenues for planning through the committees and now we have the funds to spend on priority needs.

At the same time, a lot of work has gone into the drafting and improving various human resource policies. This was taking place under the capable leadership of the Director (Ag) Human Resource, Mr Robertson Natei. This is very important because we needed to set the policies in place to guide the University organise its human resources. One of the pressing issues then was also to have a consultancy group assist us formulate the Classification Policy of the University. We engaged a consultancy group to do this for us. However, the negotiations fell apart and I, as the Vice-Chancellor, made a decision to withdraw from any further negotiations with the organisation. This has left the University in an awkward position as we are still to have a classification policy. What this means is that all staff of the University are still in limbo and are not properly placed in your formal position under the SINU structure. We are aggressively addressing this. We are in touch with another organisation to assist us. Plans are well underway and we hope to have something in place within the next month or so.

SINU also had to properly identify priority infrastructure for maintenance and or construction if new. Under the leadership of the Mr Donald Malasa, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Corporate), the SINU Campus Planning and Project Coordination committee (CPPCC) has met and has identified our priority infrastructure needs. If new building projects are identified, Schools and Departments will be consulted to agree on a concept plan before being further developed. It is planned that some ground breaking will occur before the end of the year. Those buildings that will require maintenance will also be addressed. As part of the exercise to assess our infrastructure needs, a management team from SINU recently travelled down to Western Province to re-visit the Poitete Campus. During the visit, SINU was able to sign an Agreement with the KFPL Company which sets the platform for future partnership work with KPPPL and to support our work at the Poitete Campus. We are hoping that some maintenance work will be completed at Poitete to accommodate our students and staff who will be spending part of their time studying at the Poitete Campus.

Another very important task that has taken place since the launching has been the task of putting together relevant Academic Policies for SINU. This is very important because as a University, with the mandate of delivering academic services to the public, we need these academic policies to guide us when dealing with the many facets of academic work. Under the leadership of the Dr Patricia Rodie, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) together with Mr Peter Asap, the Manager of the Student Academic, these policies have been prepared and presented to the Senate at its first meeting held on Wednesday 19th June. We are hoping that all Academic policies will be formally endorsed during the course of the year so come 2014 we will have our detailed academic policies all in place.

Apart of the formal in-house issues that I describe above, SINU has also signed agreements with the Solomon Islands Government Correctional Services (SIGCS) and EU to provide training to identified persons. The Agreement signed with SIGCS is for the staff at the School of Technology and Maritime Studies to provide technical training to prison inmates. The agreement signed with EU is for the staff at the School of Education and Humanities to provide training to TVET teachers to complete the SINU ALTP teaching qualifications. It is through these agreements that SINU is fulfilling one of our important mandates and that is to provide educational services to the various groups of people of Solomon Islands.

I have taken the time to bring to your attention some of the preparatory work undertaken at SINU apart from the normal classroom instructions that takes place. There are still many outstanding tasks yet to be completed. However, as the Vice-Chancellor of SINU, I am pleased with the progress SINU is making. Sometimes I wish we can move a little faster than we are doing now. But I am content that each small step we as an institution take contributes to the bigger outcomes we will make.

At this point, I wish to thank each one of you for your continuous hard work and for the commitment you display at your respective work station. All the hard work that you all have put into our combined progress makes working here rewarding and worthwhile.

I remain faithfully yours,

Dr Glynn Galo
Vice-Chancellor

"...The abbreviation for Solomon Islands National University must be pronounced S. I. N. U(with each letters spelt out) not SINU(as one word)." —Vice Chancellor, Dr. Glynn Galo.
Becoming a university has been the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) strategic goal for many years since its inception in 1984. This was reflected in SICHE’s Strategic Plans for the last two decades. In its policy statement of 2010, the National Coalition for Reform and Advancement (NCRA) Government stated that its intention to establish a national university during its term in office. As a result of this policy decision, the SICHE Council in collaboration with SICHE management appointed a Project Team to lead the development of a Transition Implementation Action Plan (TIAP) to convert SICHE into a National University with funding support from the Solomon Islands Government.

The TIAT was duly endorsed by the SICHE council on 4th December, 2012. On 6th December, 2012, the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) Bill 2012 was enacted by Parliament.

The Solomon Islands National University Act 2012 was gazetted and assented on 21st December, 2012, and became effective as of 1st January, 2013.

VISION
The Solomon Islands National University aims to be an outstanding institution for quality teaching, learning, skills training and research in Solomon Islands and the region.

MISSION
The mission of the Solomon Islands National University is to:

• Deliver outstanding technical and vocational training;
• Deliver outstanding tertiary education;
• Champion academic inquiry and applied research;
• Provide the most conducive environment for teaching, learning, skills training and research;
• Respond to the education and training needs of diverse communities with relevant solutions.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
To achieve its Vision and Mission, the Solomon Islands National University will be guided by the following principles:

Excellence and Quality: SINU is committed to providing excellent and high quality teaching, learning, skills training and research;

Innovativeness: SINU will encourage and promote creative ideas and solutions to existing new challenges;

Relevance: SINU will be committed to providing relevant teaching, learning, skills training and research that meets diverse community at present and in the future;

Accessibility: SINU will be easily accessible regardless of physical, political, gender, ethnic, religious or other differences;

Collegiality: SINU highly values mutual respect that encourages a sense of community.
As members of SINU’s Quality Assurance Committee, Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic Services (PV-CAS), Dr. Patricia Rodie, Head of the Curriculum Service Unit, Mrs. Tiraro Galo and Captain Starling Dafei took part in a workshop and conference held in Auckland New Zealand from 29th April to 2 May. This was organized by the Academic Quality Agency (AQA) for New Zealand Universities.

Below is an extract from Sunday Star issue of May 5, written by Dr. Rodie on what she learned from the trip.

“...The AQA for New Zealand Universities is responsible for ensuring quality assurance of New Zealand Higher Education institutions. The workshop and conference provided an opportunity for participants, including three of us from the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), to listen to various speakers on the theme: “Support for Quality” in higher education. In fact, New Zealand has a well-established higher education quality and standards framework that Solomon Islands can learn from. They have a framework for academic activities and guideline statements that allows for self-reviews and external validation of academic programs offered by their universities.

One important feature of the New Zealand quality assurance system is that it is well coordinated by an organization mandated by the New Zealand Education Act (1989). The act provides for the formation of an organization that is responsible for quality assurance of New Zealand universities, known as Universities New Zealand (UNZ). UNZ then established two bodies with complementary functions; the Committee on University Academic Programs (CUAP), which is responsible for the approval and moderation of all university programs, and the AQA which is responsible for quality assurance of higher education institutions. Solomon Islands will need to establish similar bodies to support and enhance quality of academic programs offered by universities operating in the country. One of the bases for the New Zealand quality assurance framework is the New Zealand Qualification Framework (NZQF). The Solomon Islands National Qualification Framework (SIQF) needs to be implemented as soon as possible, so that it can be used in the development of quality standards and framework by universities operating in the country. During the AQA Conference last week higher education institutions in the Pacific and New Zealand were encouraged to work in collaboration with one another to enhance and maintain quality standards. I believe one of our main challenges now is to develop a shared vision on the key role of higher education in our country. This requires the support of all key stakeholders of higher education in our country, as well as universities throughout the Pacific region.

I believe we can work in partnership with other universities in the Pacific Islands to develop a framework for ‘good practice’ in our universities. This is important so that we can produce work-ready graduates, not only for Solomon Islands but also for the South Pacific region, including New Zealand and Australia.”

-Courtesy of Dr. Patricia Rodie.
Since this is the first issue of the university newsletter. Our editorial team have decided that we put up pictures of the happenings prior to this first issue being published.
IN PICTURES:

2013 S.I.N.U Council members

Students taking a break off from their studies

Signing of trade skills training Agreement, S.I.N.U and correctional Service

Academic Manager Peter Asaph and Finance Manager Walter Maesugea during EU/NAO/S.I.N.U Agreement signing, Coconut Café

S.I.N.U staff presents donation for Temotu Tsunami victims

Visiting MSG delegates and S.I.N.U staff
ANNOUNCEMENTS:

21 June: Semester One ends.
25 June: Registration begins
1 July: Late registration begins
9 July: Semester 2 begins

QUICK QUIZ.

1. Who is S.I.N.U’s Chancellor?
2. How many schools does S.I.N.U have?
3. How many campuses does S.I.N.U currently have?
4. What is the difference between S.I.N.U and SINU?

STUDENT PROFILE

Name: Ramcey Olisukulu
Programme of study: Diploma in Business Administration
Place of Origin: South Malaita
Hobbies: Reading, Watching television documentaries, Volleyball and Table-tennis
Achievements: 2012- Diploma in Finance Graduate (SICHE)
2013- First student representative to the S.I.N.U Council

Campus nius: Ramcey, what can you say about being the first student rep. to the university council?
Ramcey: I personally thank my fellow students for having the confidence in me to be their voice in the council, I believe this is part of my learning process which I see as a platform for me to build my knowledge and skills on as a future leader to this country.

Campus nius: What is the most challenging part of your role as the rep to the council and as a regular student?
Ramcey: The most challenging part is having to manage my time wisely and setting my priorities right between attending meetings and coping with my assignments and other study commitments.
LET’S MAKE S.I.N.U A SMOKE-FREE UNIVERSITY

DON'T SMOKE