PRESS RELEASE:

The National University of Samoa collaborates with The University of Auckland in art, poetry and addressing well-being and mental health

Apia, Samoa – Wednesday, 7th September 2022. The University of Auckland and the National University Samoa authors, poets, and artists posing with the 2nd edition of the Talanoa Fogafala Across the Moana art and poetry book, at the National University of Samoa after the book launch. The collaboration was initiated by Professor Carol Mutch from Auckland University in partnership with Leua Latai (NUS), in 2019. The book launch is the 2nd edition of the Talanoa Fogafala Across the Moana art and poetry book. This year it was led by Dr Jacoba Matapo, Tim Baice, Fetaui Iosefo of The University of Auckland, and Leua Latai of NUS.

The 2nd Talanoa Fogafala across the Moana has grown in authorship from 21 authors in 2019 to 47 artists and poets who submitted paintings, short stories, and poems for publication in this edition. Both universities extended the book launch the next day in a Writing & Illustration workshop, which was open to the community and staff at large for the 3rd edition of the Talanoa Fogafala across the Moana. The collaboration ended yesterday with the Faculty of Education Seminar Series with Dr Jacoba Matapo, Associate Dean of Pasifika Studies & Senior Lecturer in the School of Critical Studies in Education at the Faculty of Education & Social Work, at The University of Auckland. She passionately spoke on the importance of Early Childhood Education, ECE. Dr Matapo presented on the importance of early childhood and presented on the topic, “Indigenizing infant and toddler pedagogy in Aotearoa New Zealand for Samoan children under two: The pedagogical framework of Pepe Meamea in Early Childhood Education, ECE.”

The interest has grown with the 3rd Talanoa Fogafala Across the Moana already in progress targeting capacity building for NUS staff but the local community as well. The editors are for next edition include Afioga Silafau Professor Sina Va’ai, Afioga Tavu’i Dr Niusila Fa’amanatu-Eteuati, Dr Masami Levi, Leua Latai from the National University of Samoa and Tim Baice, Dr Jacoba Matapo from The University of Auckland. The event was collaboration between the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Arts (NUS) in partnership with the University of Auckland.

The event was funded by Moana ed (NZ), the New Zealand High Commissioner to Samoa, the Faculty of Arts (NUS) and Teacher Education Department of FOE (NUS). In recognizing and
embracing the essence and spirit of the project the following poem by Associate Professor Susana Tau’a perfectly summarizes the partnerships and friendships that have been built during the collaboration with The University of Auckland.

**The Round Table – Susana Tau’a**

Symbol of unity and fellowship,
Many a times, we gather around,
To talanoa, reminisce, vent, about everything and nothing in particular
To share ideas, food for thought,
Space within space
To ‘soalaupule’
To ‘musumusu a puiali’i’
About all things under the sun

**Image 1:** Poets and artists from the University of Auckland & the National University of Samoa
Images courtesy of Jacoba Matapo ©2022

**Front row (left to right):** Fusi Gauta, Judy Alexander Pouono, Silafau Professor Sina Vaa’i, Dr Jacoba Matapo, Tim Baice, Leua Latai, and Vernetta Ah Heem.

**Back row (left to right):** Christine Avia, Jackie Ioana Ah Hoy Wright, Onelau Fa’amoeemoe Soti, Dr Masami Levi, Roonie Mariner, Tavu’i Dr Niusila Fa’amanaatutu-Eteuati, Fualuga Taupi and Pule Taulauniu Mariota from the Faculty of Education and Faculty of Arts with colleagues from The University of Auckland, Dr Jacoba Matapo & Tim Baice.
Image 2: New found poetry writing session conducted by Dr Jacoba Matapo and Tim Baice from The University of Auckland at the National University of Samoa. Staff and members of the local community attended the writing workshop. The workshop looked at newfound poetry as a research methodology in creative writing, the arts and literature.

Image 3: Illustration workshop conducted by Momoe Malietoa Von-Reiche and Leua Latai from the National University of Samoa expanding writing into drawing and illustrating in enhancing one’s own poems.

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