

WOMEN'S FEDERATION FOR WORLD PEACE

NEWSLETTER AUSTRALIA



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WFWP AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER

The Hope for Humanity Comes from Mothers



“History is calling for reconciliation, compassion, love, service and sacrifice. Today’s problems cannot be solved by the logic of power. ...

Our present problems can only be solved by the logic of love.”

Dr. Hak Jan Han Moon
Founder, WFWP International

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WFWP is committed to:

- Serving communities – Service projects within Australia & the Pacific Islands.
- Strengthening the family – Workshops, forums, seminars, and conferences.
- Bridge of Peace - Reconciling differences and healing wounds of the past.
- Global Women’s Peace Network (GWPN) – A network of women leaders and organisations dedicated to solving pressing social issues and securing an environment for human development.

Feature Article



Life Comes to Earth's Newest Island: How Birds Colonized Life Forms on Barren Icelandic

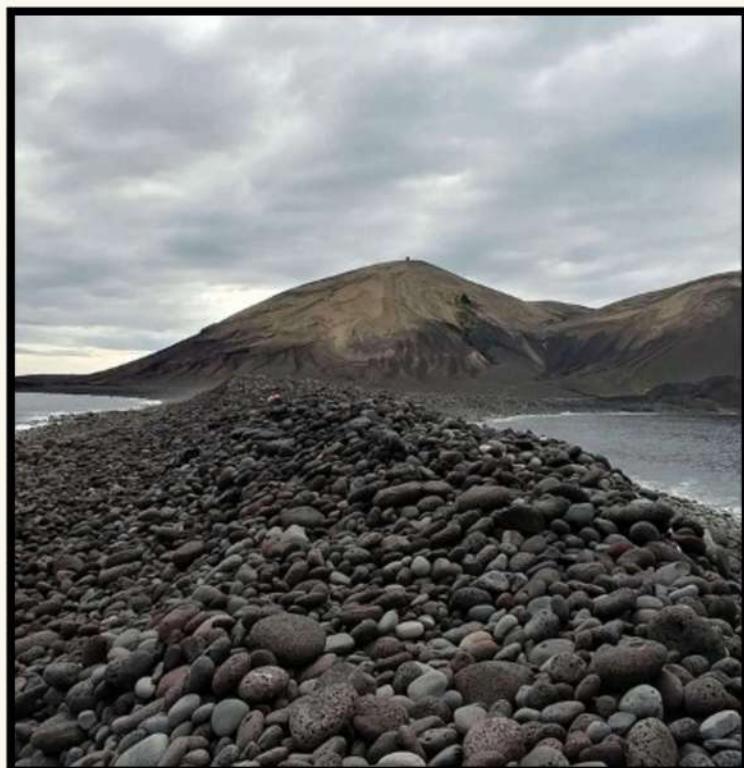
Written By Gordon Cairns
The Earth & I Magazine

SUMMARY

IN 1963, AN UNEXPECTED VOLCANIC ERUPTION OFF THE COAST OF ICELAND CHANGED THE SHAPE OF THE WORLD FOREVER: IT CREATED THE WORLD'S YOUNGEST ISLAND, SURTSEY, NAMED AFTER A GIANT IN NORSE MYTHOLOGY. THERE, SCIENTISTS WERE PRESENTED WITH A UNIQUE NATURAL EXPERIMENT: A VIRGIN LANDMASS WITH VOLCANIC SOIL THAT LACKED NITROGEN, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL FOR PLANT GROWTH. HOWEVER, BIRD DROPPINGS ARE RICH IN NITROGEN, PHOSPHORUS, AND OTHER NUTRIENTS CRUCIAL TO PLANT LIFE, TRANSFORMING LAVA INTO FERTILE SOIL AND ALLOWING VEGETATION TO FLOURISH. TODAY, THE SEASHORE HAS BECOME A HABITAT FOR PUFFINS AND MAMMALS TOO.

Scientists immediately grasped the significance of this fledgling island. While lava was still erupting on Surtsey, a group of far-sighted local biologists made landfall.

There, the scientists, whose boots were scrubbed clean of possible contaminants, were presented with a unique natural experiment: a virgin land mass, entirely free from human habitation or intentional species introduction, where the assembly of life could be observed and recorded from its creation.



For more than 60 years, Surtsey has provided scientists with a rare opportunity to observe how life establishes itself on newly formed land. Pawel Wasowicz, Director of Botany at the Natural Science Institute of Iceland, told *The Earth & I* that researchers have documented the island's development in unprecedented detail: "We have recorded every single colonization event from Year 1.

There is no other place on Earth where we have 60 years of uninterrupted human precolonization data." This long-term record has given scientists unique insights into how ecosystems emerge on bare volcanic rock and ash.

Studies on Surtsey have challenged long-standing scientific assumptions about how plants reach remote islands. Wasowicz explains that traditional views, dating back to Charles Darwin, suggested that wind and ocean currents were the primary drivers of long-distance seed dispersal. However, evidence from Surtsey tells a different story.

Most textbooks assumed the wind and sea currents were the main long-distance dispersal mechanisms to oceanic islands,” he says, adding that the expectation was for wind-dispersed species to dominate first. “But our data shows this is the wrong idea,” he explains, pointing instead to birds particularly gulls as the main agents responsible for spreading seeds across the island.

Beyond dispersing seeds, birds played a vital role in transforming Surtsey’s volcanic landscape into a thriving ecosystem. While volcanic soil is often assumed to be fertile, Wasowicz notes that northern volcanic soils lack a key nutrient essential for life. “There is only a tiny amount of nitrogen, which is the main building block for life.

Without nitrogen, you don’t get protein,” he explains. According to Wasowicz, bird droppings provided the missing link: “The droppings of the bird are rich in nitrogen, phosphorus and all types of nutrients crucial to plant life.” By enriching the soil, birds enabled vegetation to flourish, effectively engineering the island’s transformation over generations.



As Surtsey's ecosystem matures, new species are beginning to arrive, including the Atlantic puffin. Wasowicz explains that the groundwork laid by gulls has created conditions suitable for puffins, which require deeper soil to dig burrows. "The gulls came first and started to breed on the island, which enriched the vegetation; we now have this rich, green grassland on the south of the island," he says, noting that early signs suggest puffins are beginning to move in. Because gulls do not typically breed in deep grass, Wasowicz believes this transition is inevitable, adding, "The probability is this will become a breeding and nesting place for puffins, an ideal location where the bird will not encounter ground-based predators."



Wasowicz explains that seals are drawn to the coastal environment shaped by birds and return seasonally, bringing additional nutrients that further support the ecosystem. "They were attracted," he says, "by the coastal environment, where they could give birth, and the pups could live in peace for their first few months." Their presence contributes to nutrient cycling and reinforces the island's growing ecological complexity.

The lessons learned from Surtsey extend far beyond Iceland. Wasowicz believes the island offers a blueprint for ecological restoration worldwide, with birds playing a central role as "ecosystem engineers." He points to applications ranging from wetland development to mine-degraded and nutrient-poor coastal sites. "Supporting bird activity," he explains, "may dramatically speed up these restorations and expand them."



By designing landscapes that attract birds, he suggests ecosystems can be kick-started naturally. Emphasizing the need for connectivity, Wasowicz concludes, "We need to encourage connectivity where we have corridors and stepping-stones for the animals between the habitats. We can use wildlife and bird life to kick-start transformation. It happened on Surtsey.

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The Earth & I Magazine
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Global development, aid & service projects



Basic Bookkeeping Training for Pasifika Micro-Credit Recipients

September 3 | Honiara, Solomon Islands

Written by Monica Ilala Longanimala
President, WFWP SI

OVERVIEW

- **TO EQUIP SUCCESSFUL PASIFIKA MICRO-CREDIT LOAN RECIPIENTS WITH ESSENTIAL BASIC BOOKKEEPING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICAL SKILLS FOR ACCURATE FINANCIAL RECORD-KEEPING AND INFORMED BUSINESS DECISION-MAKING**
- **TO SUPPORT WOMEN AND YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS IN BUILDING SUSTAINABLE BUSINESSES THROUGH HANDS-ON TRAINING, GUIDANCE ON FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, AND PREPARATION FOR EFFECTIVE LOAN IMPLEMENTATION.**

WFWP Solomon Islands President, Monica Ilala Longanimala, together with her team, organised a half day basic bookkeeping workshop. The event was attended by more than 35 participants, including 20 successful Pasifika Micro Credit applicants, young women and girls, their supporting family members, and friends of WFWP.

The workshop was facilitated by Monica, who has a background in accounting. She introduced bookkeeping as a vital process for any business organisation and explained the difference between bookkeeping and accounting. The session also covered different types of business organisations and account types.

Participants were guided through basic bookkeeping concepts, including how to identify business transactions, record simple cash inflows and outflows, and understand the roles and responsibilities of a bookkeeper.



The aim of the workshop was to equip successful Pasifika Micro Credit loan recipients with essential bookkeeping knowledge and skills, enabling them to better understand their responsibilities as business owners. Basic bookkeeping was emphasised as an important tool for tracking business progress, supporting growth, and making informed business decisions.

At the conclusion of the workshop, the WFWP Solomon Islands President, together with Pasifika Micro Credit supervisors, conducted a breakout session to review the loan agreement and repayment schedule in detail. This ensured that all applicants clearly understood the terms and conditions before signing and receiving funds to begin their businesses.

The session supported strong business implementation and aimed to strengthen Pasifika Micro Credit initiatives within Solomon Islands communities while nurturing future leaders.

September 13th, Pasifika Micro Credit recipients formally signed their loan agreements and repayment schedules with their overseeing supervisor. As part of the program's requirements, applicants also submitted invoices outlining the initial costs needed to launch their businesses. Once approved by their supervisor, each recipient began receiving their first allocation of Pasifika Micro Credit funds to help establish and grow their small enterprises.



PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS



The Women's Federation for World Peace is an international NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. WFWP adheres to the principle that women working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture, and religion to create healthy families can resolve the complex problems of our societies and world – www.wfwpaustralia.org



Universal Peace Federation (UPF) is an NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. We support and promote the work of the United Nations and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. <https://www.upf.org/>



WOMEN'S FEDERATION
FOR WORLD PEACE AUSTRALIA

MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Support local community projects
in humanitarian initiatives in the Pacific
Build leadership skills through our mentoring
programs
Participate in family and youth programs
Contribute to peace events, forums, and cultural
celebrations





Pasifika Micro-Credit project

July 6-9 | Honiara, Solomon Islands

Written by Anne Bellavance
President, WFWP Australia

OVERVIEW

- TAKING A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH BETWEEN WFWP AUSTRALIA AND THE WFWP CHAPTERS WITHIN THE PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS, PASIFIKA MICRO-CREDIT (PMC) AIMS TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN THE ISLAND NATIONS OF OCEANIA BY DIRECTLY INVESTING IN THEIR BUSINESS IDEA, ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, OR MICRO-ENTERPRISE WITH A MICRO-CREDIT LOAN.**
- A GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT, AID & SERVICE INITIATIVE OF WFWP AUSTRALIA, SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES SINCE 2020.**

BACKGROUND

Pacific Island women remain significantly underrepresented in business ownership and face persistent financial barriers when starting or expanding a business. Without access to capital, female-led enterprises are more likely to struggle or fail, limiting their potential for growth and sustainability.

However, global studies consistently show that when women are empowered economically, the impact extends well beyond the individual—improving the wellbeing of families, strengthening communities, and contributing to broader national development.

Aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 1: No Poverty, investing in women's economic opportunity is one of the fastest and most effective ways to reduce poverty. By equipping Pacific women with the tools and resources to succeed in business, we lay the foundation for lasting change across generations.



The PMC training workshop empowers women and young women (18+) to start small businesses, gain financial independence, and develop leadership skills. It focuses on unemployed and disadvantaged women, offering seed funding and business training to improve living standards, foster self-reliance, and reduce poverty. In a country with high unemployment like the Solomon Islands, this program creates opportunities for economic growth, personal development, and community impact.

WHO BENEFIT?

- Women with low income who have viable business ideas that do not meet the criteria of banks or other traditional lenders and, therefore, are unable to access bank credit for their small businesses.
- Women with existing businesses and/or start-up businesses who have strong business plans.

PROGRAM

During one full day of torrential rain, and three warm and humid evenings, 60+ participants gathered at the Solomon Islands Peace Embassy with hearts full of hope and anticipation to participate in the Pasifika Micro-Credit (PMC) training workshop.



The PMC Anne Bellavance, President of WFWP Australia, guided participants through the full PMC journey. She covered the loan application process, introduced the supervisory team, taught participants how to build their SWOT analysis, and develop and write a strong business plan.



Dr John Bellavance shared valuable knowledge on recognising personal strengths, setting SMART goals, and using GANTT charts to effectively plan the business project.

We were honoured to welcome our new WFWP Oceania President, Matapa Shelley, to the PMC training workshop in Honiara.

Matapa delivered an inspiring opening address that set a warm and empowering tone for the program. Her heartfelt congratulatory speech at the graduation ceremony uplifted and encouraged the participants as they celebrated their achievements and looked ahead to the future.



Before the training program commenced, applicants met with the WFWP Solomon Islands Executive Team, led by President Monica Longanimala, to gain a clear understanding of the Pasifika Micro-Credit (PMC) process.

The team outlined the expectations, responsibilities, and structure of the program. Micro-loans provided through PMC are to be repaid over a flexible term of one to three years, ensuring accessibility while encouraging accountability and sustainability.

PMC Supervisors led engaging group discussions, offering encouragement and listening to each participant's business plan and ideas with care and interest.



The final evening was a proud moment of celebration. Surrounded by family and friends, each graduate received a certificate for completing the 23-hour workshop—marking the beginning of a new chapter in personal empowerment and economic opportunity.

As funds are repaid, they are reinvested into the program—ensuring a sustainable cycle of support for future women entrepreneurs. All loans are disbursed incrementally and staggered to support responsible financial management, with a small interest applied to help cover administrative costs.

The PMC model, developed by WFWP Australia, is now being extended to other Pacific Island nations as part of our long-term commitment to grassroots economic empowerment.

Throughout the training workshop, participants actively explored and engaged with the following key modules:

- Philosophy of WFWP
- Explaining micro-credit
- The PMC process and philosophy
- Meet Your Supervisors
- Know Your Strengths
- Using SMART Goals
- SWOT Analysis
- GANNT Planning tools and Business Planning
- Developing Your Business Plan
- Discussion with Supervisors
- Present Your Business Plan
- Graduation



While the primary focus of the training program is to support and empower local women, male family members—preferably husbands, brothers, or sons are required to attend in a supportive role.

Research from micro-credit case studies revealed that a lack of male involvement often led to challenges, including jealousy, financial misuse, and even domestic conflict. To address this, the PMC model intentionally includes male family supporters to foster shared understanding, mutual respect, and accountability—ensuring the success and sustainability of each woman's business venture.

To ensure inclusivity, Pidgin English interpreters were present to support participants who needed language assistance, allowing all women to fully participate and contribute to their business plan



Participants actively engaged in the program through a dynamic blend of presentations, guided worksheets, group discussions, and business plan "show and tell" sessions.

Applicants divided themselves into groups, each guided by a supervisor who helped them complete their business plans and answer any questions during the Business Planning sessions.

Chosen ventures included raising livestock such as chickens, establishing trade stores and canteens, transporting large drums of petrol to villages for resale, producing shell money jewellery, 'top-up' trading, and pre-prepared food stalls.

WFWP Solomon Island Executive members serving as supervisors will continue offering ongoing mentoring in business and financial management. We hope the supervisors' become trailblazers, whose success will inspire future participants at upcoming training sessions to follow their lead.

At the conclusion of the four-day workshop, twenty-three women, along with their male supporters, were proudly presented with certificates during the Graduation Ceremony. A heartfelt thank you goes to all the volunteers whose dedication made the workshop run smoothly and very special.

We eagerly anticipate updates from our PMC recipients to learn about their business venture progress. We wish them every success as they pursue lasting, positive outcomes for their families and communities.



REFLECTION FROM SUPERVISORS

The practical sessions on identifying personal values, setting SMART goals, and developing solid business plans gave participants the confidence and tools needed to start their entrepreneurial journey.

Learning how to recognise our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges was empowering, as was the focus on building a sustainable legacy for our families and communities.



With high unemployment in the Solomon Islands, PMC is a transformative initiative. It provides seed funding and training to help young women launch small businesses—benefiting not only themselves, but their families, communities, and our nation.

I witnessed participants' excitement, growth, and deep engagement. Their stories reflect the program's real and lasting impact. I look forward to continued partnership with WFWP Australia team and our generous sponsors.

PMC is changing lives—building hope, financial independence, and a brighter future for our women and girls. Tagio tumas and lukim iu again!" - Monica Longanimala, WFWP Solomon Islands President and PMC supervisor

"Over the four days of the PMC workshop, I gained so many new insights—especially practical skills like time management and business planning. This was my first experience attending a business workshop, and my first time supervising one. It was quietly challenging in some ways, but I pushed myself to stay open and keep learning.



I'm especially grateful to the participants and the WFWP Solomon Islands Executive members for their teamwork and support throughout the program. Their cooperation made this experience meaningful and uplifting.

On a personal level, the workshop truly inspired me. It strengthened my determination to become a capable "business mother" for my four daughters, my family, community, church, and for the Solomon Islands as a whole.

Most importantly, I believe in myself and in what I've learned. I'm committed to applying these lessons in real life. Thank you for this opportunity." - Janet Korasiara, WFWP SI Executive Member and PMC Supervisor



Being a supervisor and supporter for this training has been a truly meaningful experience. I've learned so much from both the facilitators and the participants' contributions. This program is a powerful model, especially for women who have never had the opportunity to learn how to develop a business plan. For many of us, it's been a real eye-opener.

The sessions on self-leadership and determination were especially impactful—they offer a strong foundation for real behavioural change and personal growth.

Anne and Dr John Bellavance have been exceptional facilitators. Their genuine commitment and heartfelt investment in this training have made all the difference. Their passion and guidance created a space where we could connect, learn, and build valuable networks.

I have great hope for what lies ahead and look forward to hearing inspiring success stories from the participants in the next six months." - Alice Hou, WFWP SI Executive Member and PMC Supervisor.



PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

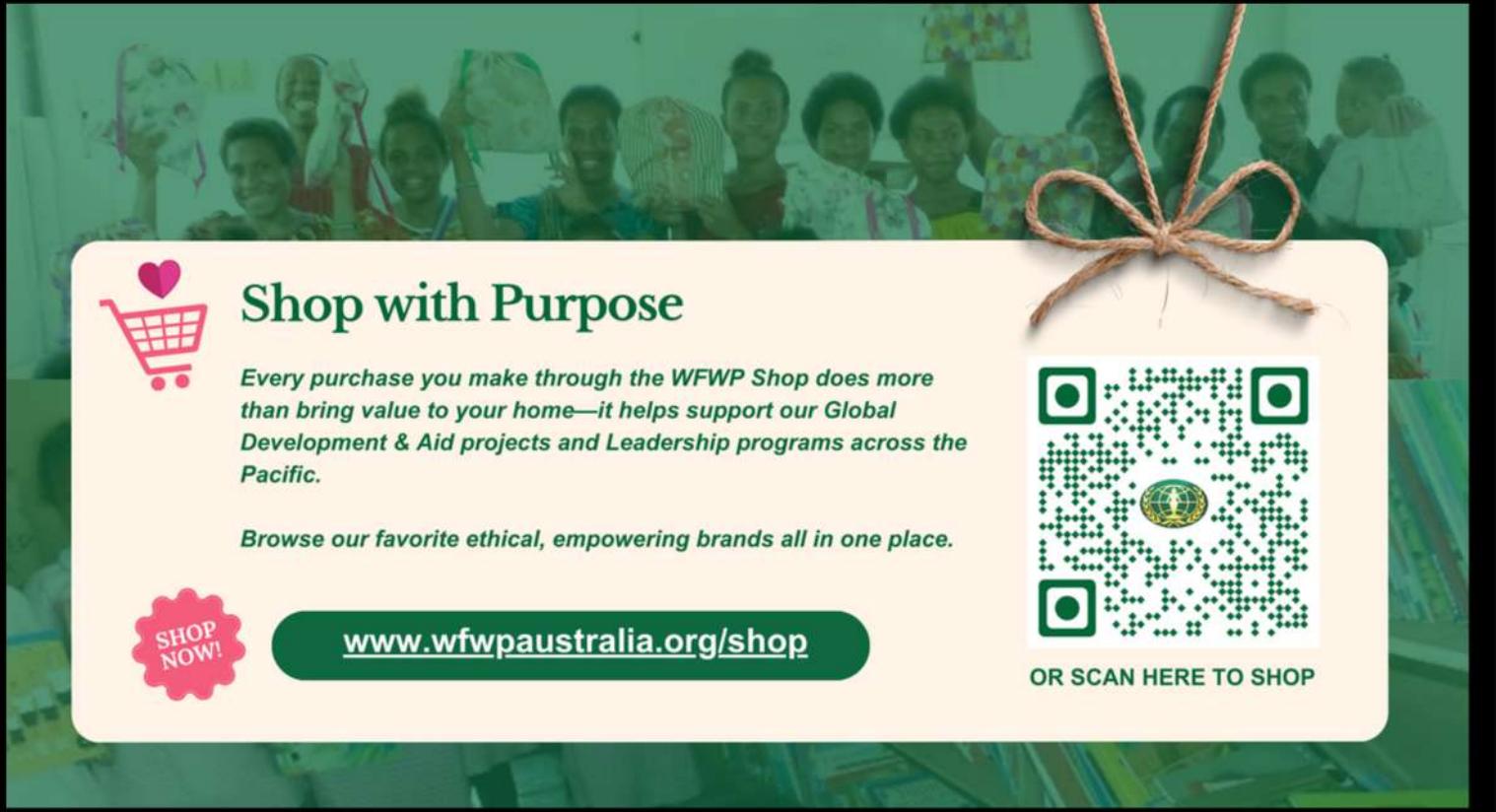
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Solomon Islands FFWPU. Family Federation for World Peace and Unification is comprised of families from around the world striving to establish a world of peace and unity among all peoples, races, and religions as envisioned by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon and to embody the ideal of true love, which is to live for the sake of others. FFWPU champions three ideals: family, peace, and unification.



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Norma Matatia: Pasifika Scholarship Recipient From Silence to Strength: My Journey to Justice

July 2025 | University of the South Pacific, Samoa

Written by Norma Matatai

My name is Norma Matatia, and I am a proud recipient of the WFWP Australia Scholarship, currently studying law at the University of the South Pacific in beautiful Samoa. This scholarship has not only opened the doors to further education but has also given me the strength to transform my past into a purpose-driven future.

A STORY OF SURVIVAL AND PURPOSE

I got married at a young age, full of hope and dreams. But what followed was 13 years of silence, fear, and pain. I was a battered wife, enduring emotional and physical abuse in a home that was supposed to be my safe haven. For over a decade, I lived in survival mode—until the day my ex-husband agreed to a divorce. That moment marked the beginning of my healing and the reclaiming of my voice.

THE ROLE OF FAITH AND FAMILY

Throughout this journey, my faith in God has been my anchor. My late father, a pastor, instilled in me a deep trust in God's purpose, even in the darkest times. It was this faith that carried me and my children through the most painful chapter of our lives.

During the year both of my daughters were in Form 7, my father was diagnosed with cancer, so we were supporting my mother as his caregiver. At the time, none of us knew that my mother was also silently battling cancer.

She passed away later that same year, and just a couple of months after, my father also passed. Losing both in such a short time was devastating. Their home had been our only safe place, and their loss left a deep void for my children and me.

But even in that darkness, God's favour never left us. After two years of working and waiting, both of my daughters were awarded scholarships to study International Business in Japan. My youngest, a 14-year-old son, is now studying at Samoa College and dreams of becoming a civil engineer. Their strength and determination inspire me every day.



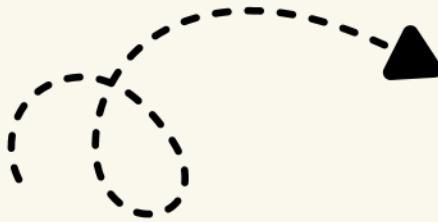
WHY I CHOSE LAW

My personal experience opened my eyes to a painful reality, the pattern of domestic violence that affects so many women and children in our nation. I realized that the root of this issue often lies in the collapse of the family unit and the lack of affirmation that sons and daughters receive from their parents. I chose to study law because I want to be part of the solution. I want to advocate for those who are still trapped in silence and help build systems that protect and empower.

MY ACADEMIC JOURNEY: LAST YEAR



Last semester was both challenging and rewarding. I was enrolled in fourth year Level Courses (Legal Ethics, Foreign Investment Law, Law of the Sea, Property Law 1) and successfully passed all of them—while working full-time to support my family. Balancing the demands of full-time work, parenting, and academic study was not easy, but every lecture, every case study, and every late-night reading session reminded me of my mission. The experience taught me discipline, resilience, and the power of purpose. I've grown not just academically, but emotionally and spiritually.



DREAMS AND GOALS

My dream is to become a family and human rights lawyer, focusing on domestic violence prevention and family restoration. But more than that, I want to help build systems that support women and children who are victims of such cruelty. The systems that offer not just legal aid, but spiritual, emotional, psychological, and practical support.

I believe in the importance of promoting safe families and good mental health as a foundation for a healthy society. I also see the need to ensure that donor support is channelled to the right organisations-those that are truly making a difference in the lives of survivors and vulnerable families.

Ultimately, I want to be part of the law-making process, influencing policies that protect the vulnerable and promote healing and justice. My goal is to help shape a society where no one has to suffer in silence, and where all persons especially women and children can live with dignity, safety, and hope.

HOPE IN THE BREAKING

To anyone reading this who may be going through a dark time—please know that your past does not define your future. With faith, support, and determination, you can rise.

This scholarship has helped fuel a dream that was once diminishing under the weight of life and hardship. It has reignited a sense of purpose and drive to be part of something meaningful. Something that impacts lives and creates lasting change. For me, it is not just about education or career—it is about legacy. A legacy that will live on through my children, through the families I hope to help, and through the laws I hope to shape for generations to come.

I am deeply grateful to WFWP Australia and the scholarship committee for believing in me. Your support has empowered me to walk boldly in the direction of purpose and impact.





Andrea Derby Pasifika Scholarship

July 2025 | Solomon Islands

Written by Andrea Derby,
Pasifika Scholarship recipient

My name is Andrea Derby, a nursing student at Solomon Islands National University and a proud recipient of the Pasifika Scholarship supported by the Women's Federation for World Peace, Australia. This report highlights the practical training I undertook in fulfillment of the mid-year requirements of my nursing program.

In the first semester of 2025, I was selected to join a cohort of students assigned to complete our rural practical training at Munda Goldie Hospital in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands. This 10-week clinical placement ran from early April to mid-June 2025.

During this period, I was involved in a variety of clinical activities, such as:

- Participating in hospital shift duties
- Assisting at the Diabetes Clinic
- Conducting school-based immunization programs
- Providing care in the Children's Ward



This hands-on experience significantly enriched my learning and deepened my understanding of rural healthcare challenges and practices.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again express my sincere gratitude for Pasifika Scholarship to cover my tuition fees. Your support has enabled me not only to participate in this valuably rural academic experience but also to continue pursuing my studies in nursing at SINU continuously without interruption.

Thank you very much for your continued support.





Florence Liliu Pasifika Scholarship

June 2025 | Solomon Islands

Written by Florence Liliu,
Pasifika Scholarship recipient

My name is Florence Liliu, and I am currently a student at the Solomon Islands National University (SINU). As I embark on my educational journey, I am excited to share the course units I undertook during my first semester of 2025.

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Pasifika Scholarship Fund Team, the Women's Federation for World Peace (WFWP) Victoria Chapter and its supporters for their generous sponsorship during my first semester this year.

A special thanks also goes to WFWP Solomon Islands for the smooth coordination of the Pasifika Scholarship locally. Through your support, I have been able to overcome the financial difficulties my parents face in paying my school fees. Your sponsorship has allowed me to focus on my studies without the stress of financial burden. Thank you once again for your kindness and great support.



In semester one, I actively engaged in four course units: Human Development, Academic English, Second Language Acquisition, and Primary Mathematics. Group photo after typing final assessment on second language acquisition on 22/05/2025

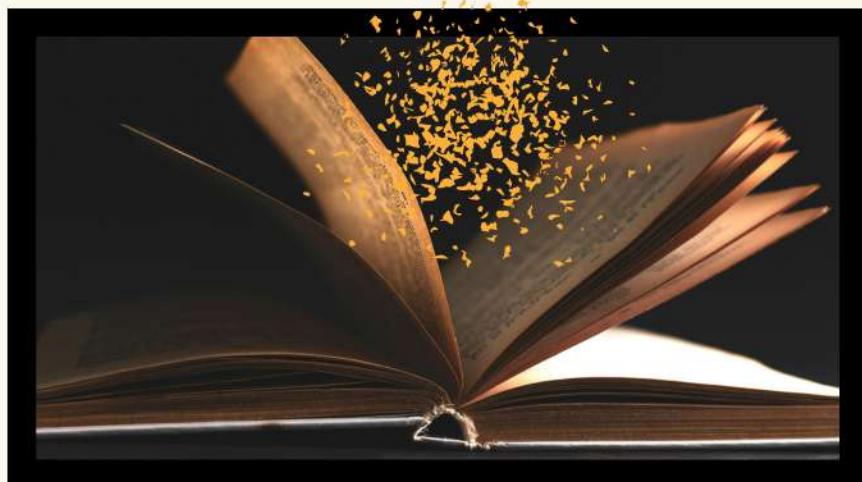
Through Human Development, I gained insights into the physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional growth of individuals, which enhanced my understanding of developmental stages and their implications for education.

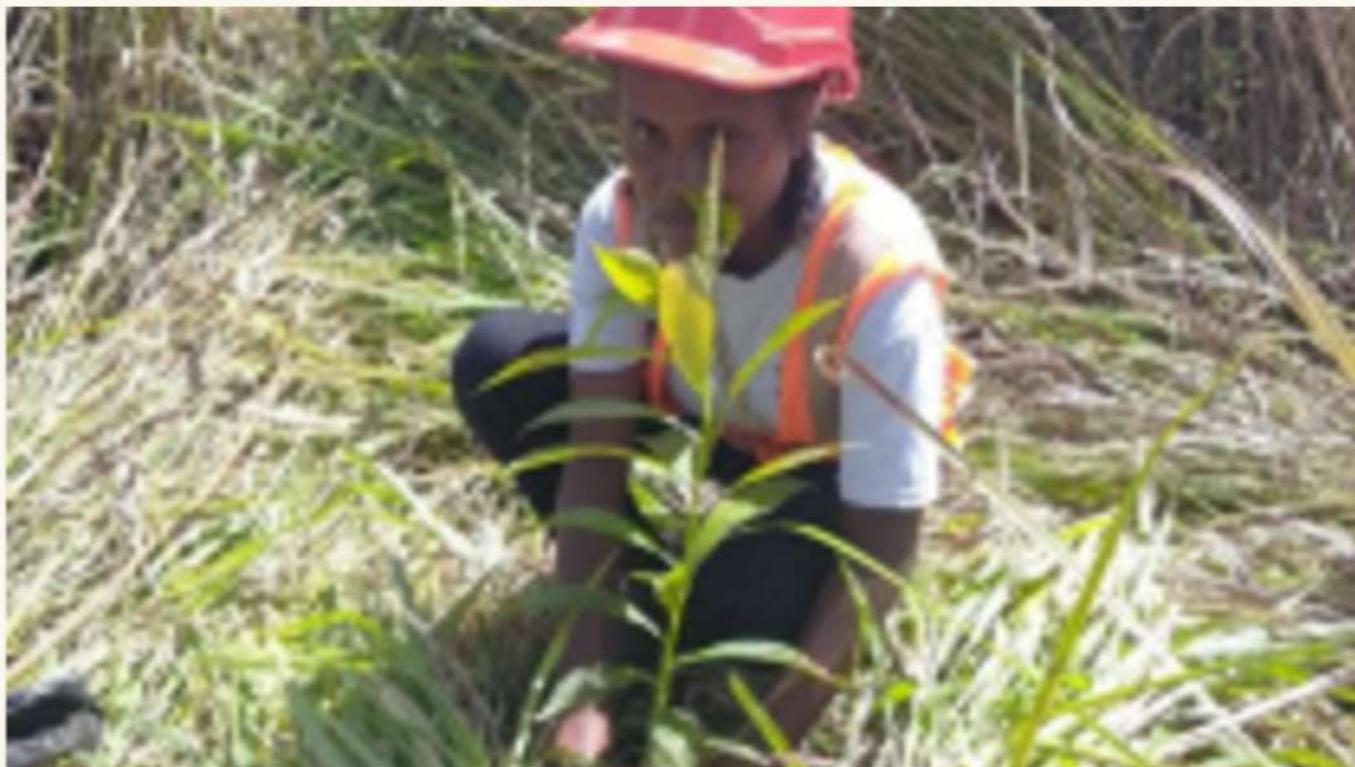
The Academic English course improved my language proficiency, particularly in academic writing, reading comprehension, and critical thinking skills. In Second Language Acquisition, I explored theories and strategies for effective language learning, which deepened my appreciation for diverse linguistic backgrounds. The Primary Mathematics unit strengthened my foundational knowledge of mathematical concepts and the teaching methods suitable for young learners. Together, these courses enriched my academic skills and broadened my understanding of educational development.



My studies have helped me grow, learn, and gain new skills that will support me in the future. My family has also benefited, as my education gives them hope and new opportunities. I plan to apply what I have learned to help my community by sharing knowledge and becoming involved in local activities. I believe my education will enable me to make a positive difference in society and improve people's lives.

Lastly, my studies are shaping my future in ways that will benefit my family, my community, and society. By gaining knowledge and skills, I am eager to make positive contributions and create lasting change for those around me.





Janitha Imurade Pasifika Scholarship

July 2025 | Solomon Islands

Written by Janitha Imurade,
Pasifika Scholarship recipient

My name is Janitha Imurade, and I am a first-year student pursuing a Diploma in Tropical Forestry at Solomon Islands National University. I am honoured to be a recipient of the WFWP Pasifika Scholarship. This support has lifted a great financial burden from my shoulders, allowing me to focus on my studies, assignments, and research without worry.

Thanks to this scholarship, I've been able to participate fully in school programs such as field trips, class projects, and access essential materials like books and modules.

In our first semester, we studied four key units:

1. Dendrology – This unit introduced us to the study of trees, shrubs, lianas, and other woody plants, covering eleven essential topics.

2. Mathematics & Computer Applications – This course builds foundational math and computer skills vital for our forestry studies. So far, we've completed thirteen topics.

3. Marketing & Economics – We explored how forestry connects with economics and marketing, focusing on applications in the Solomon Islands. This unit covered twelve practical topics.

4. Forest Survey & Mapping – With fourteen topics, this course taught us how to correctly use surveying instruments within the forestry industry.





These units have sparked even more interest in my chosen field. I find forestry to be a fascinating and essential discipline, especially in the context of conservation and sustainable development in tropical regions.

on applications in the Solomon Islands. This unit covered twelve practical topics.

Growing up in the Solomon Islands, I witnessed firsthand the environmental and community challenges our country faces. These experiences motivated me to pursue a career in forestry, where I can make a real difference. My passion began when I was a young girl—I've always dreamed of becoming a forester.

This scholarship is not just financial assistance—it is a powerful encouragement. It allows me to pursue my passion with determination and confidence, and I know it will help me contribute positively to my family, my community, and my country.

Thankyou once again for your generosity and belief in my potential. I am truly grateful and excited for what lies ahead.

LEADERSHIP OF THE HEART

Connect to your calling from within, know how to contribute your unique gifts and talents as a woman to build peace.

WOMENS FEDERATION FOR WORLD PEACE





Serah Jeffery Pasifika Scholarship

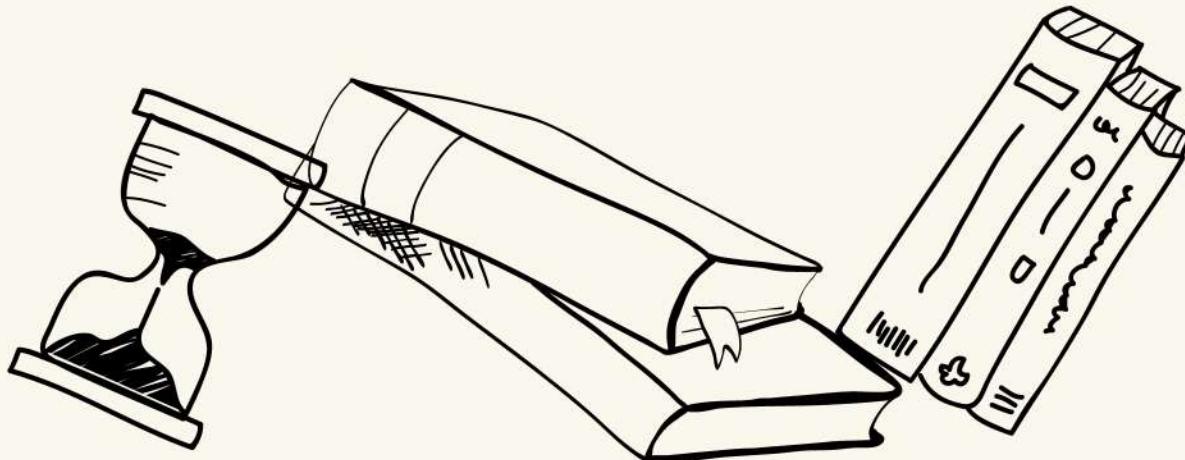
July 2025 | Solomon Islands

Written by Serah Jeffery
Pasifika Scholarship recipient

The financial support from the Women's Federation for World Peace Victoria, Australia has greatly benefited both my family and me. Through this assistance, I have been able to cover essential expenses such as food, clothing, and utilities.

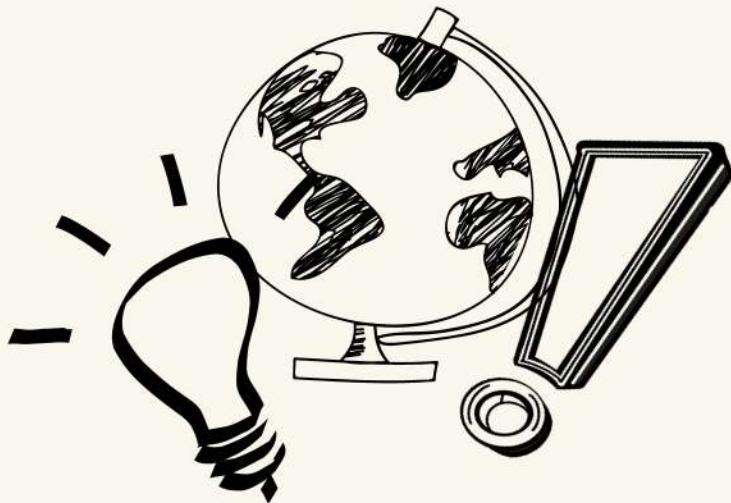
It has also provided me with the opportunity to develop my skills as a data analyst, enabling me to make meaningful contributions to any organisation I work with

As a mother, I faced many challenges during my studies. I often had to work just to afford bus fare to attend classes, and at times this prevented me from attending school regularly. Heavy workloads, traffic congestion, and the cost of paying double bus fares made attendance difficult, especially since classes are held five days a week. During assignment periods, I am required to budget at least 250 Solomon Dollars per week or more, which adds further financial pressure.



My aspiration in pursuing this course is to become a woman in IT within our organization, driven by my passion for technology and its ability to solve problems, enhance lives, and foster innovation. I aim to gain knowledge in software development and cybersecurity, as well as to engage in projects that have a tangible impact on the world. I believe this program will provide the strong foundation and practical experience needed to reach my goals and contribute meaningfully to the field.

My objective in becoming a data analyst is to establish a solid foundation in data analysis, strengthen my technical skills in SQL, Python, and R, and gain hands-on experience through projects that transform data into insights for informed business decision-making. This includes learning how to analyse and visualize data effectively.



Therefore, I really appreciated the great support from the Women's Federation for World Peace Victoria Australia and in partnership with the Women's Federation for World Peace Solomon Islands for coordinating the Pasifika Scholarship smoothly.

It really adds value to my academic study level and brings mutual benefits for me and my family, community and nation. My heartfelt thanks to the generous supporters of Pasifika Scholarship, WFWP Victoria and WFWP SI. Without your assistance, I could not achieve my dreams in academic life, as attaining finances to pay my tuition is a major challenge but I was blessed to have overcome this through the Pasifika Scholarship support. Once again thank you so much.





Pasifika Scholarship Recipients Meet WFWP Australia President

July 10 | Solomon Islands

Written by Serah Jeffery
Pasifika Scholarship recipient

OVERVIEW

- TO STRENGTHEN ONGOING SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT WITH PASIFIKA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS THROUGH A FACE-TO-FACE MEETING, PROVIDING ENCOURAGEMENT AND RECOGNISING THEIR ACADEMIC PROGRESS, ACHIEVEMENTS, AND CHALLENGES.
- TO FOSTER CONNECTION BETWEEN STUDENTS AND WFWP LEADERSHIP, REAFFIRMING WFWP'S COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION, MENTORSHIP, AND EMPOWERING FUTURE LEADERS IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS.

As part of the ongoing support provided through the WFWP Pasifika Scholarship program, WFWP Australia President, Anne Bellavance, met with four Pasifika Scholarship recipients in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

The students are currently studying at Solomon Islands National University (SINU) in diverse fields, including Nursing, Agriculture, Business Studies, and Education.

The purpose of the meeting was to engage with the students in person, listen to their academic journeys, and learn about their progress, achievements, and challenges. The meeting also provided an opportunity to introduce the newly appointed WFWP Oceania President, Mrs. Matapa Shelley.



President Anne Bellavance invited each student to briefly share an update on their studies. President Matapa Shelley expressed her appreciation for being part of the meeting and encouraged the students to study diligently and contribute to WFWP in meaningful ways.

WFWP Solomon Islands President Monica Longanimala Ilala thanked President Anne Bellavance and President Matapa Shelley for making time to meet with the scholarship recipients. The students expressed their sincere gratitude for the continued support of WFWP Victoria Australia, acknowledging that the Pasifika Scholarship program has had a significant and positive impact on their academic journeys and personal development.

WFWP Mission and Vision



WFWP Chapters adhere to the principle that women working together, taking initiative, and empowering one another across traditional lines of race, culture and religion to create healthy families are resolving the complex problems of our societies and world.

Ultimately 'solutions' come as true partnerships between men and women and are established in all levels of society. The beginning point is within society's most elemental level - the family.

Vision: Women working together to realise one global family rooted in a culture of sustainable peace.

Mission: Empowering women as peace builders and leaders in the family to transform the community, nation and world. Through education, advocacy, partnership, reconciliation and humanitarian service, WFWP

Victoria chapter articles



WFWP Victoria's First Agna Yoga Wellness Workshop

Octomber-November | Victoria, Australia

Written by Anne Bellavance
President, WFWP Australia

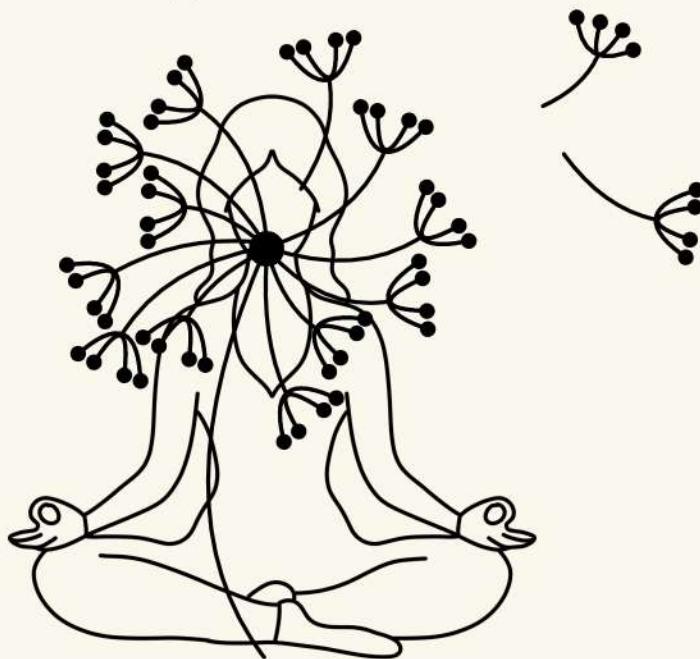
OVERVIEW

- A WELLNESS-FOCUSED GATHERING PROMOTING INNER PEACE, BALANCE, AND SELF-AWARENESS THROUGH AGNA YOGA AND MINDFUL MOVEMENT IN A SERENE NATURAL SETTING.
- A NURTURING SPACE FOR REFLECTION AND CONNECTION, FOSTERING HARMONY, HOLISTIC WELLBEING, AND A SHARED COMMITMENT TO A CULTURE OF HEART

WFWP Victoria hosted its inaugural Agna Yoga Wellness Workshop at the serene Camp Belgrave in Belgrave Heights, marking the beginning of a meaningful new initiative focused on holistic wellbeing and inner peace.

The session was led by Sneha Harish; a warm and authentic yoga instructor whose gentle presence set the tone for a truly rejuvenating afternoon.

Surrounded by the stillness of nature, participants experienced a harmonious blend of movement, mindfulness, and connection, guided by Sneha's nurturing and heart-centred approach.



REFLECTING ON THE EXPERIENCE

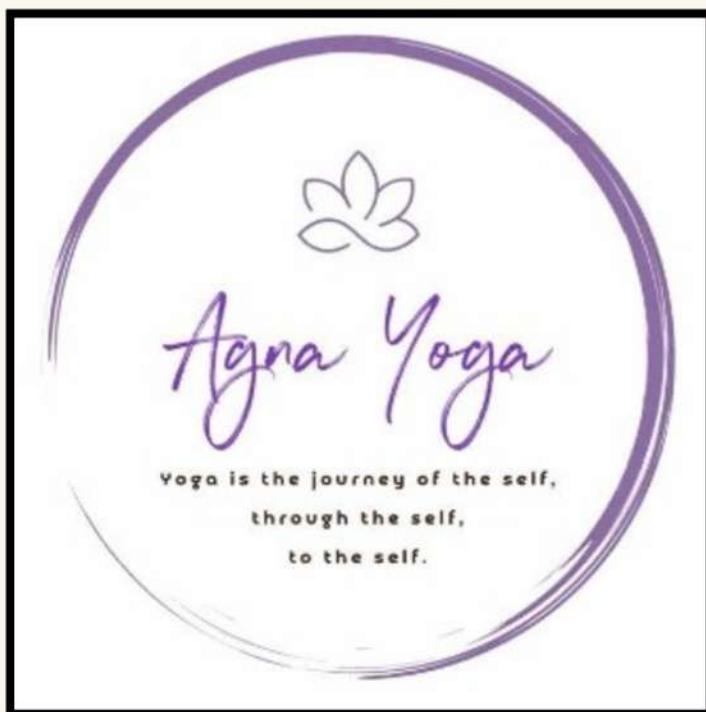
Sneha shared: "I felt truly blessed to begin my yoga teaching journey at the serene Belgrave Heights campsite for the group from WFWP Australia. From the very beginning, I was welcomed with genuine warmth and open heartedness. The first class turned into a heartwarming experience—thanks to the welcoming group and the peaceful surroundings of Belgrave Heights. Grateful for the connection, nature, and open-hearted community."

The workshop offered participants an opportunity to pause, breathe, and realign with their inner selves — perfectly embodying WFWP's mission of fostering harmony through a culture of heart.

Following the session, attendees enjoyed a delightful afternoon tea, sharing reflections and deepening their sense of community and shared wellbeing.



With plans to continue monthly sessions on the second Sunday of each month, the Agna Yoga Wellness Workshop promises to grow into a cherished space for self-care, connection, and spiritual growth — a beautiful expression of WFWP's commitment to nurturing the inner and outer peace of all who attend.



PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Hosted by:



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Christmas Party Get Together

December 14 | Melbourne, Australia

Written by Anne Bellavance
President, WFWP Australia

OVERVIEW

- A CELEBRATION OF UNITY AND PEACE TO HONOUR THE YEAR'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND FOSTER UNITY, PEACE, AND GOODWILL. THE CHRISTMAS GATHERING STRENGTHENS CONNECTIONS, INSPIRES GRATITUDE, AND RENEWS OUR SHARED COMMITMENT TO BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE.
- FESTIVE FELLOWSHIP TO CELEBRATE PROGRESS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND THE SEASON OF GIVING. THROUGH JOY AND MEANINGFUL REFLECTION, WE EMBRACE LOVE, UNITY, AND HOPE FOR THE YEAR AHEAD.

Our Strategic Partners, Family Federation for World Peace & Unification Victoria (FFWPU) and the Universal Peace Federation of Victoria (UPF), came together with family and friends of WFWP Australia, Victoria Chapter to celebrate the joy of Christmas in a beautiful gathering at Camp Belgrave in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. It was a heartwarming day filled with connection, smiles, and the spirit of unity with yummy food, children's water activities and a visit from Santa.



The celebration welcomed 114 attendees, including many children. Among them were 25 WFWP members (excluding spouses and children), with three WFWP volunteers supporting FFWPU in preparing and delivering the festivities.



The program featured joyful Christmas carols, a short and meaningful message from Rev Daniel Meadows (FFWPU Victoria), and a much-anticipated visit from Santa, who delighted the children with gifts. Guests then enjoyed a generous banquet-style lunch, followed by warm fellowship, children's activities, and relaxed time together — creating cherished memories for families and friends.

A big thank you to everyone who joined in, making this celebration meaningful and memorable. Here's to spreading peace, love, and harmony as we step into the new year!



Leading into the Future Mentor Program 2025 Theme: ConfidentHer

May - December | Australia

Written by Patricia Vaz
Mentoring Program Coordinator

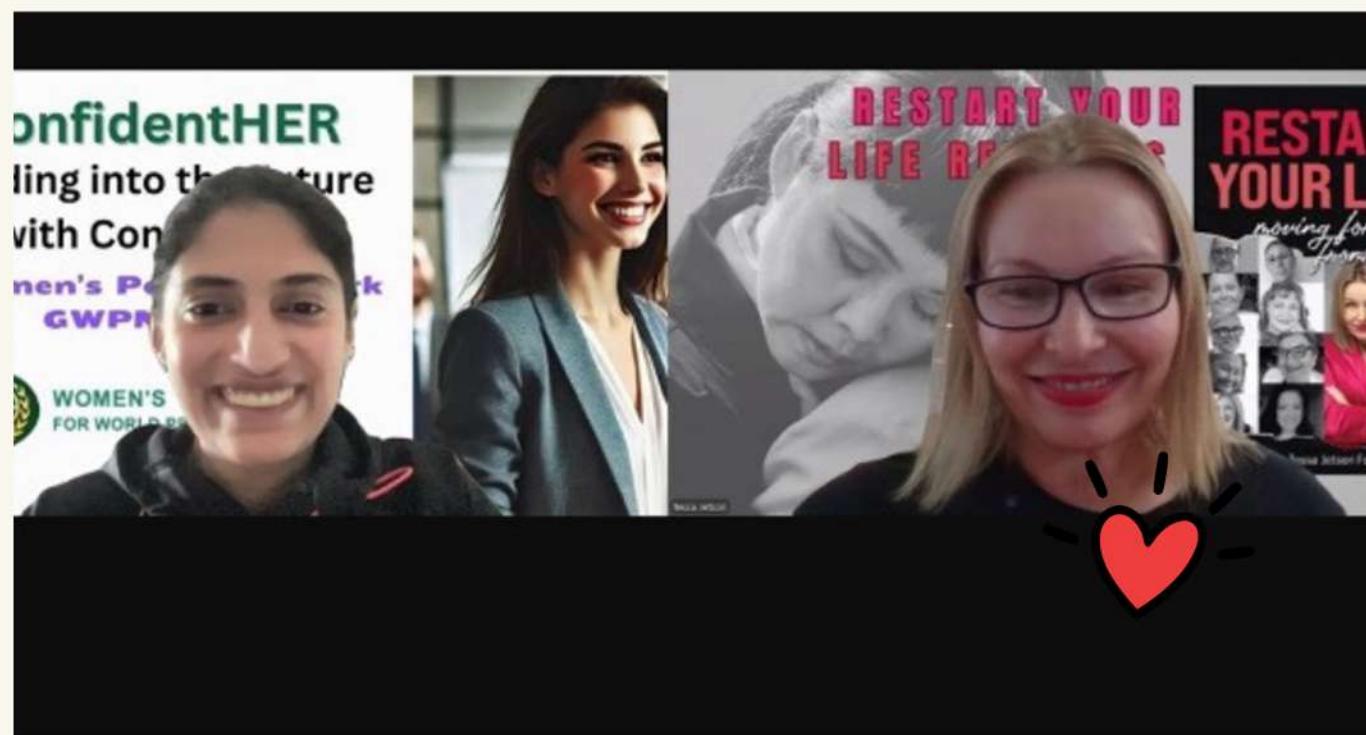
OVERVIEW

- CONFIDENTHER IS A HEART-CENTRED MENTORING INITIATIVE OF WFWP-AUSTRALIA THAT SUPPORTS WOMEN TO BUILD CONFIDENCE FROM THE INSIDE OUT, GROUNDED IN VALUES, STRENGTHENED THROUGH CONNECTION, AND GUIDED BY SERVICE-ORIENTED LEADERSHIP.
- THROUGH MENTORING, MASTERCLASSES, AND AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY SPACE, THE PROGRAM NURTURES MUTUAL LEARNING, COURAGE, AND REFLECTION, RECOGNISING MENTORSHIP AS A TWO-WAY EXCHANGE THAT CREATES LASTING PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE IMPACT.

The ConfidentHER mentoring program was never intended to be just another program. From its inception, it was designed as a space of belonging, courage, and conscious growth, a place where women could pause, reflect, and step more fully into who they are becoming as leaders, professionals, and human beings.

As part of the Leading into the Future initiative of Women's Federation for World Peace Australia (WFWP Australia), the 2025 program ConfidentHER exists to support women in building confidence from the inside out, grounded in values, strengthened by connection, and guided by service to something greater than self.

Looking back on 2025, what stands out most is not only what we delivered, but how we showed up for one another. The ConfidentHER WhatsApp community became a living expression of the program's spirit. It was a space where gratitude flowed freely, wins were celebrated, and vulnerability was met with encouragement and care.





Messages of appreciation, reflection, and celebration reminded us that every level of participation mattered. Whether someone attended every workshop or engaged more quietly, each woman contributed to the collective energy of the group.

One of the most powerful lessons this year was the reminder that mentorship is never one-sided. Mentors consistently shared how deeply enriched they felt by the commitment, openness, and courage of their mentees. Mentees, in turn, spoke of the confidence gained from being truly seen, heard, and believed in.

The Masterclasses supported women in connecting inner clarity with practical action. The generosity of facilitators reflected WFWP's belief that peaceful societies are built when individuals are empowered and guided by values. Confidence showed up in many forms courageous conversations, academic achievements, renewed purpose, and deeper connections.

As we conclude ConfidentHER 2025, gratitude sits at the center. Gratitude for mentors, mentees, presenters, and the community that chose collaboration over comparison. ConfidentHER remains a living expression of WFWP Australia's mission: empowering women as peace-builders and leaders through self-development, service, and connection.

International Day of Peace Conference

2025 Theme: Act Now for a Peaceful World



September 20 | Melbourne, Australia

Written by Dr John Bellavance
Vice-President, UPF Australia

OVERVIEW

- THE CONFERENCE BROUGHT TOGETHER SPEAKERS AND 60 ATTENDEES TO EXPLORE PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO PEACEBUILDING, FOSTERING DIALOGUE, REFLECTION, AND STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE.
- THROUGH PRESENTATIONS, CASE STUDIES, AND DISCUSSIONS, THE EVENT HIGHLIGHTED INDIVIDUAL, COMMUNITY, AND SOCIETAL ACTIONS THAT PROMOTE HARMONY, SOCIAL COHESION, AND HUMAN DIGNITY.



The United Nations International Day of Peace Conference was held with the theme, 'Act Now for a Peaceful World'. The conference brought together speakers and 60 attendees to discuss how to create a more peaceful world. The event was organised by the Women's Federation for World Peace, the Universal Peace Federation, and the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification.



PRESENTERS

MC, Jess Ness – A community builder



The day's events were hosted by MC Jess Ness, a community builder and advocate with over 15 years of experience.

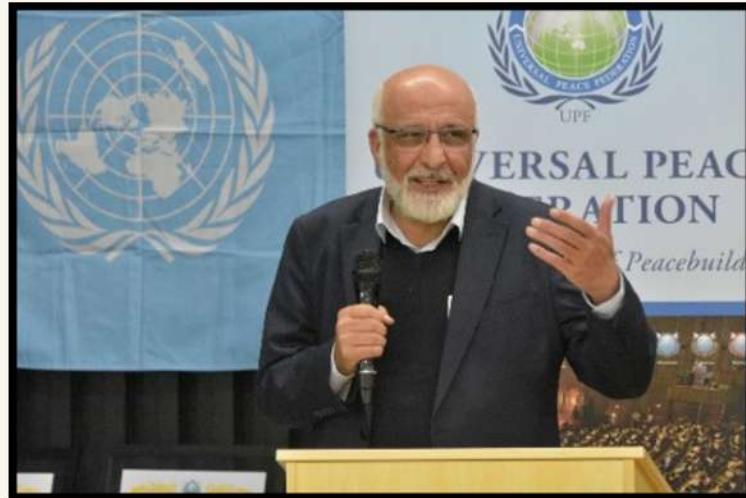
Dr Ala Mustafa – The Long and Treacherous Road to Peace

Dr Ala Mustafa, Paediatric Cardiologist, co-founder of the Palestinian Australian New Zealand Medical Association, and Australian Founding Director of the Palestine Children's Relief Fund, shared insights from decades of humanitarian work in conflict zones.



Dr Ala discussed the historical and ongoing challenges in Palestine, highlighting how forced land loss since 1946 has created a prolonged humanitarian crisis. Dr Mustafa emphasised that wars leave lasting scars, some visible, others deeply psychological and that new generations continue to carry this trauma. He concluded that seeds of peace can be sown through the dedicated efforts of doctors and humanitarian organisations, stressing the urgency of collective action.

Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai – Why Peace Has Been Elusive



Mr. Mohammad Masoom Stanekzai, Honorary Fellow at the Asia Institute and former Chief Peace Negotiator of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, drew on his extensive experience in peace negotiations to examine the obstacles to sustainable peace in Afghanistan and beyond.

September 2019, Melbourne, Australia

Mr. Mohammad outlined how external interference, repeated regime changes, and prioritisation of military solutions have normalised violence and displacement over decades. He warned that global trends, including rising military budgets and declining UN Sustainable Development Goals, make peacebuilding increasingly difficult. He added that currently, Afghanistan has become one of the darkest places on earth for women to live and the most dangerous place for the freedom of speech.

He asked, 'Why Peace Has Been Elusive?' For too long, in Afghanistan and elsewhere, military solutions have been prioritised over addressing the root causes of conflict or implementing preventive measures. Decades of war and extremist ideologies have normalised violence. Reversing this requires investing in a culture of peace through families, schools, elders, poets, and religious leaders.

Dr Mujib Abid – Peace Must Begin with the Individual



Dr Mujib Abid is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne's Initiative for Peacebuilding.

He said that growing up in Afghanistan under Western occupation made him a product of the Western narrative. The problem with this was a community disconnect – the Western narrative about Afghanistan was different than what was happening in communities outside Kabul.

Dr Mujib found hope in an amazing group of activists that approached peace building in a non-violent way. He concluded by saying that peace must begin with the individual.

September 20 | Melbourne, Australia

Ms Anthea Hancocks – Building Peace and Social Cohesion Starts in Our Neighbourhood's

The conference then featured a presentation by Anthea Hancocks, CEO of the Scanlon Foundation Research Institute.

Ms Anthea challenged attendees to consider what actions are truly effective for creating meaningful peace and social cohesion. She presented foundations' 2024 Mapping Social Cohesion Report which is based on 8,000 people in Australia completing a survey.



The report showed that when Australians are worried about their financial security, this creates stress and decreases social cohesion. Data showed that older people had a strong sense of belonging, but were more fearful of change. This was the opposite for young people. Australians don't want religion driving policy, but on average are very tolerant of religion.

The great news from the report shows that Australia has a very high level of social cohesion and a very large proportion of Australians who embrace multiculturalism. Anthea concluded that building peace and social cohesion starts in our neighbourhoods.

Dr John Bellavance – Six Key Principles of Peacebuilding

The principles of peacebuilding were presented by Dr John Bellavance, Vice-President of UPF Australia.



The principles of peacebuilding were presented by Dr John Bellavance, Vice-President of UPF Australia.

Dr John outlined six key principles:



1. Peacebuilding requires finding commonality based on universally shared values.
2. Peace must be established in the individual first. This is not guaranteed without values education. Values education in the public sphere is often ideological.
3. The family sets the values and pattern for all people to live together in harmony.
September 20 | Melbourne, Australia
4. Dehumanising others cannot be accepted for any reason. The 'us versus them', 'we are right, they are wrong' – a common-enemy identity must be replaced with a 'common-humanity identity'.
5. Peacebuilding requires humility, an openness to truth, and a willingness to listen to the stories of others.
6. Peacebuilders use the power of the rules of international law, grassroot coalition building and political negotiation. Negotiation, dialogue, compromise and the political process are the alternative to endless conflict.

Dr Birgit Trauer – Peace Through a Relational Lens



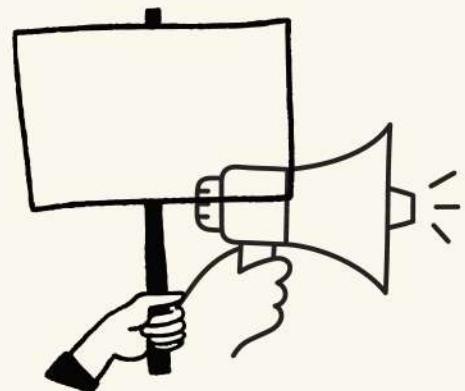
Dr Birgit Trauer, the Founding Director of The Cultural Angle and a Charter Member of the International Institute of Peace through Tourism spoke on 'Peace Through a Relational Lens'.

She emphasised that peace begins at home and is reflected in the attitudes and behaviour demonstrated in our personal relationships, families, and communities – the quality of our relationships determines the quality of our lives.

She stated, 'Our actions at the micro level echo in our communities and the wider world around us'; however, she highlighted that values and attitudes are not always connected. The three sources of conflict are: Economics and access to resources, differing world views and values, and power and control. Dr Trauer also addressed the issue of patriarchy which exists in both men and women based on the values and biases that individuals hold. She concluded by presenting the three core competencies for peace building found in her book Relationship Wisdom, Emotional Empowerment and Conscious Communication.

Ms Arfa Sarfaraz Khan – Breaking the Silence Confronting Violence Against Women in Conflict and Beyond

Arfa Sarfaraz Khan, President of the United Muslim Sisters of Latrobe Valley addressed 'Breaking the Silence: Confronting Violence Against Women in Conflict and Beyond'.





Ms Arfa highlighted that women bear a disproportionate burden in conflicts but are also powerful agents of change. Sadly, the data shows that a large number of women are giving birth within 50 km of a conflict.

She shared that women are resilient despite harassment and sexism. These women are working to make the world a better place.

She said, 'put yourself out there to build the world you want'. Peacebuilding requires us to listen to other people's viewpoints rather than just waiting to respond. She encouraged us to speak our truth. To be honest about what we know, and don't know.

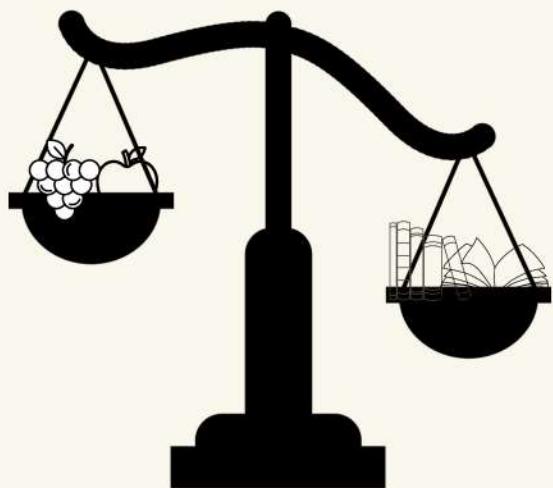
September 20 | Melbourne, Australia

Ms Raviana Sailo – A Peace of Mind Building Inner Peace Through Nutrition and Education

Raviana Sailo, Chair of Psylaw Incorporated, presented on 'A Peace of Mind,' exploring how fundamental needs like nutrition and education can build inner peace and societal stability in hardship-stricken regions.

Ms Raviana noted that a wholesome meal is a foundation for hope, learning, and wellbeing. Her organisation started Meals for Minds a program that provides fortnightly nutritious meals for around 70 students living in one of Myanmar's most disadvantaged communities.





For many, these meals are the difference between learning on an empty stomach and thriving at school. She said, 'peace is the presence of dignity allowing people to flourish. Food is not charity; it is dignity and peace of mind. Peace is like a meal we all share.'

The conference concluded with remarks by Anne Bellavance, President of the Women's Federation for World Peace Australia.



PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Hosted by:



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<https://www.wfpaustralia.org>



Universal Peace Federation (UPF) is an NGO in General Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. We support and promote the work of the United Nations and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. www.upf.org/



Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU) is comprised of families from around the world striving to establish a world of peace and unity among all peoples, races, and religions as envisioned by Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon and to embody the ideal of true love, which is to live for the sake of others. FFWPU champions three ideals: family, peace, and unification. www.ffwpuaustralia.org/

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

- **The Centre for Global Nonkilling:** An organisation founded on the belief that a killing-free world is a measurable goal and is possible for humans to achieve.
- **Australia Arab Chamber of Commerce & Industry (AACCI):** The only national association for two-way trade and investment between Australia and the Arab League countries.
- **Global Somali Diaspora (GSD):** A not-for-profit organisation that mobilizes members of the Somali diaspora for positive action.
- **Beit-Jala Palestinian Association:** An organisation that supports members suffering from the consequences of political instability in their hometown in Palestine, helping them to achieve full participation in Australia.
- **Australian Arabic Council:** An award-winning human rights organisation committed to community relations affecting the Australian Arabic culture.
- **The Institute of Tourism:** An organisation that advocates for ethical tourism and its positive effects on local people and the environment.
- **Friends of The Children Foundation Inc:** A foundation that works to nurture the environment, improve children's health, and support children's hospitals and refugee houses.
- **The Cultural Angle:** A consultancy focused on travel, tourism and cultural understanding, founded by Dr. Birgit Trauer.
- **United Muslim Sisters of Latrobe Valley (UMSLV):** An organisation dedicated to fostering unity among Muslims and better understanding with the broader society.
- **The Multicultural Media Centre (AMMC):** An organisation that helps cross-cultural communities tell their stories and engage with wider Australian society.

Pasifika Festival

&

CHARITY WALK

December 6 | Melbourne, Australia

Written by Anne Bellavance
Co-Chair, MPF Committee
President, WFWP Australia

OVERVIEW

- CHAMPION PACIFIC ISLAND COMMUNITIES IN VICTORIA AND BEYOND, AMPLIFYING THEIR VOICES, FOSTERING SOCIAL INCLUSION, AND CELEBRATING THEIR UNIQUE HERITAGE.
- SHOWCASE PASIFIKA CULTURE IN ALL ITS RICHNESS, HIGHLIGHTING FAMILY, FAITH, AND SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS, AND FEATURING VIBRANT PERFORMANCES FROM PACIFIC ISLAND DANCE GROUPS AND DANCE ACADEMIES FOR ALL COMMUNITIES TO ENJOY.
- RAISE VITAL FUNDS TO SUPPORT WFWP GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND AID PROJECTS ACROSS PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS.
- SUPPORT PACIFIC ISLAND BUSINESSES, PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STALLHOLDERS TO PRESENT AUTHENTIC PASIFIKA FOOD, CRAFTS, AND MERCHANDISE, STRENGTHENING CULTURAL CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.



The Melbourne Pasifika Festival (MPF) is an annual celebration of Pasifika culture on the first Saturday of December, bringing families together to experience the vibrancy of the Pacific through beautiful traditional dance performances, arts and crafts, authentic food and merchandise, morning Zumba session, engaging children's activities, lively DJs, and the energy of a live band or special guest artist.

The festival promotes a culture of peace by fostering dialogue, reconciliation, and conflict resolution at all levels. By celebrating and honouring the beauty and distinctiveness of each Pacific Island culture, the festival offers the wider community a meaningful window into the richness of Pasifika life.

Through supporting and advocating for Pacific Island communities living in Australia, WFWP Australia connects with like-minded individuals and organisations committed to building a more harmonious and peaceful world. As Global Partners advancing the 2030 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the MPF Committee and its supporters actively contribute to:

Goal 16: Promoting just, peaceful, and inclusive societies

Goal 17: Strengthening partnerships to achieve shared goals

WELCOMING CEREMONY

This year's Opening Ceremony was conducted by the Fijian Community Association of Victoria and led by respected elder Vili Raqauqau, a dedicated parent and supporter of the LTV Youth Group in Dandenong.

The Welcoming Ceremony—Veiqaraqaravi Vakavanua in the Fijian language—was conducted with great dignity and marked a beautiful and meaningful beginning to the festival. This ritual traditionally opens all significant Pasifika services and gatherings, where ceremonial kava is shared to foster unity, respect, and harmony among participating communities. Typically led by the high chief of the hosting village, the ceremony commences with words of welcome and blessing from elders and religious leaders, grounding the festival in deep cultural and spiritual significance.





Giving the Opening Address, Anne Bellavance thanked the Melbourne Pasifika Festival Committee and all the volunteers that make the festival hum so smoothly. She shared that this year's stall holder payments enabled 2½ young women to undertake 1-year of university in 2026.



Anne briefly explained the Global Development & Aid project run by WFWP Australia and encouraged people to get involved through the philosophy from our Founders, Father, and Mother Moon, of 'living for the sake of others' as a methodology to create peace within myself, my family, my community, and on in society.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES



Children's activities were a vibrant and much-loved feature of the festival. Coaches from Rugby Victoria ran engaging junior and senior rugby clinics in the morning, catering to both primary and secondary school-aged children.

Adding to the excitement, two jumping castles, Māori stick-on tattoos, and boomerang lessons with Flying Toyz created a joyful atmosphere filled with energy, laughter, and fun for children and families alike.



STALLS



The festival proudly showcased Pasifika food and merchandise stalls representing nine Pacific Island heritages. In alphabetical order, these were: Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

A heartfelt thank you to all the Pasifika businesses who participated—your incredible offerings were so well received that many stalls sold out, reflecting the strong community support and enthusiasm for Pasifika culture.

PERFORMANCES



The cultural dance performances were absolutely phenomenal, showcasing the rich traditions of eight Pacific Island cultures, with the Bula Meke, LTV Youth Group showcased first after completing their Welcoming Ceremony. In alphabetical order, these were: Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tahiti, and Tonga—each group bringing their unique heritage to life through vibrant costumes, music, and movement.





The audience was electrified by guest artist Aremiti Chansin (Aremiti Music), who travelled all the way from Tahiti to perform, generously sponsored by Air Tahiti exclusively for the concert.

Alongside him, DJ Faiza kept the energy high, creating an unforgettable live music experience that brought a true concert atmosphere to the festival.



A heartfelt thank you to our MCs for the day, Anthony Makaea (President, Niue Community Council of Victoria) and Nancy Fugui (Executive, Solomon Islands Victoria Association, SIVA), for their warmth, professionalism, and energy in guiding the festival's program



A special thank you to our Melbourne Pasifika Festival Committee members and volunteers for their dedication and countless hours of hard work.

Together, you helped create a vibrant and joyful celebration, bringing the wider Australian public and communities together for a true gathering of cultures across a sea of Islands.



REFLECTIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS



Great day celebrating the pacific culture with family and friends. Delicious food that reminds you of home and fantastic stalls.

Great event, awesome to see diversity growing in Melbourne, beautiful atmosphere.

Such a beautiful day out celebrating the Pacific, thank you so much we had so much fun!!

A great series of dance performances choir and bands. Great vibe with the communities dancing. Good activities for the kid and food stalls.

Fantastic event. Looking forward to a bigger and better one next year! Round of applause to the organisers and all those involved in moulding of the event!!



PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

HOSTED BY:



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LJ Hooker Casey
Multicultural Commission of Victoria
Positive Media Ratio – 89.9 TheLight FM
Ray White Narre Warren South Real Estate
Rugby Victoria



SBS Melbourne
The Saturday Paper
UPCOV (United Pasifika Council of Victoria)
3CR 855 Radio AM
3MDR Mountain District Radio 97.1fm
3ZZZ 92.3FM – Multi-Cultural Radio



Contact Us

WFWP Australia National Office

E-mail: contact@wfpaustralia.org

Website: wfpaustralia.org

Facebook: [wfpaustralia](https://www.facebook.com/wfpaustralia)

Instagram: [@wfpAU](https://www.instagram.com/wfpAU)

LinkedIn: women's federation for world peace
australia

WFWP Victoria

42-46 Bartley Rd., Belgrave Heights, VIC 3160,

Office: +61 3 5968 2664

E-mail: contact@wfpaustralia.org

WFWP New South Wales

824 - 826 George Street

Chippendale, NSW 2008

E-mail: nsw@wfpaustralia.org

WFWP Queensland

Shop 2, 2 Harbour Road

Hamilton, QLD 4007

E-mail: dr.yejeong@wfpaustralia.org

WFWP New Zealand (Sub-Regional HQ)

NZ Peace Embassy

24 St. Stephens Ave, Parnell, Auckland, 1052

Tel: + 649 263 6984

E-mail: wfpnz@gmail.com

Website: www.wfp.org.nz/

Newsletter Team

Editor in Chief: Anne Bellavance

Co-editor and Proofreading: Roshani Fernando

We thank all our members, sponsors and
supporters.

Feel inspired?



Support our Pacific Islands
Humanitarian Service Projects

Volunteer:

Get involved with one of our Regional Chapters.
Contact us to find out how.

Donate:

Make a financial contribution, where 100% of your
donation supports Global Development and Aid
projects. WFWP International is a volunteer based
NGO and a NFP charitable organisation.

Pasifika Scholarship Fund:

The full scholarship is for young adults living in the
Pacific Islands who do not have the financial means to
attend university, but who have a driving desire for
education to become future leaders.

The program supports young adults who are
passionate, and who align their beliefs and goals with
the values of WFWP International: 'Living for the sake
of others'.

Pasifika Micro-Credit: Taking a partnership approach
between WFWP Australia and WFWP Chapters within
Pacific Island Nations, Pasifika Micro-Credit aims to
empower Island women by directly investing in their
business idea, economic activity, or micro-enterprise.
The program provides micro-business training and a
low interest micro-loan.