



MO LE SILAFIA



JULY - DEC 2024 | ISSUE 10 | VOLUME 2

Komesina o Sulufaiga

NHRI COP29 SYMPOSIUM ON CLIMATE CHANGE & HUMAN RIGHTS - BAKU, AZERBAIJAN NOVEMBER 13 2024



(L-R) Maualai'ao P Seiuli with fellow participants at the COP29 Symposium



Group Photo of Participants at COP29 Symposium

Human Rights Commission Chairperson Dr. Pamela Towela Sambo joined stakeholders from November 11–15, 2024, on the sidelines of COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, to explore leveraging human rights frameworks for inclusive climate change adaptation in Africa. As part of the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), she participated in a side event on “Migration and Adaptation in the Context of Climate Change,” emphasizing rights-based approaches to address climate-driven migration challenges.

Dr. Sambo moderated a session on empowering communities most affected by climate change, featuring international experts who discussed the impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations and strategies to enhance resilience. The panel included Michael Windfuhr of the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; Katie Kiss, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner; Maimouuna Essayed of Morocco's National Human Rights Council; and Maualai'ao Pepe Seiuli, the Acting Ombudsman of Samoa.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/www.hrc.org.zm/>

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MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING OMBUDSMAN



AFIGOA MAUALAIVAO PEPE SEIULI

TALOFA & WELCOME to the 'Mo le Silafia' (MLS) Newsletter for July–December 2024. The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2024 has concluded, leaving behind a legacy of vibrant unity and purpose.

Village preparations adorned our streets with radiant waves of color, showcasing Samoa's pride and hospitality.

Our Office successfully hosted the pre-CHOGM Women's Forum Biennial Event, which provided a platform for meaningful dialogue on the theme, 'A Sustainable Culture of Human Rights Towards a Resilient Common Future.' The Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI) Biennial Conference also engaged local stakeholders, fostering collaboration and advancing human rights advocacy in Samoa.

We dedicate this edition of MLS to celebrating Samoa's collective achievements and the fruitful outcomes of CHOGM 2024.

Ia manuia Samoa.
Fa'afetai tele & God Bless.

THIS ISSUE

- **Duty Travel Meeting** (pg. 1-2)
 - NHRIs COP29 Symposium
 - International Conference on Gender Inclusion in NHRIs
- **OMB Team Engagement** (pg. 3-18)
 - Training Needs Assessment for OMB
 - Visit by the University of New Castle
 - JICA's 4th Annual Career Day
 - OMB @ NUS Info Session
 - OMB @ LTA
 - OMB @ MPMC
 - OMB @ SROS
 - Consultation on the National ID (NID) Act Regulations
 - National Record Taskforce
 - CFNHRI's Biennial Conference
 - Samoa Public Service Day 2024
 - Annual Human Rights Day
- **In House Matter** (p19-22)
 - In Loving Memory of Rev U Naseri
 - Recruitment et al
 - Social Committee

International Conference on Gender Inclusion in NHRIs

September 3 - 5 , 2024

The Office of the Ombudsman/NHRI Samoa through the Human Rights Unit (HRU) participated in the International Conference on Gender Inclusion in National Human Rights Institutions, held in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The conference provided a crucial platform for addressing gender issues, including eliminating sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and promoting sexual and reproductive rights for marginalized groups. Representing the Office were NHRI Principal Officer Ms. Ellenlina Moala Tumua; and Director Ulugia Rosa Toese (Toese) of HRU, who also participated as a panelist during the second day of the sessions.

Toese highlighted the need to combat SGBV and uphold the sexual and reproductive rights of vulnerable communities, drawing attention to the challenges faced by marginalized groups in Samoa. The panel discussion provided an opportunity to share insights, engage with international experts, and explore strategies that National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) can employ to address these pressing issues.

Our appreciation goes out to the UK Office in Samoa for their valuable assistance in making it possible for our Office to participate in this significant event. Their support underscores the importance of international cooperation in advancing human rights, particularly in the context of gender inclusion and protection. This opportunity has strengthened our efforts to advocate for gender equity and the protection of marginalized groups in Samoa.



Delegates from NHRIs, government and diplomatic Agencies & Missions, and Civil societies at Conference.

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OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT MEETING FOR OMB WITH THE NEW ZEALAND OFFICE



(L-R) Engagement Advisor Grace Taylor and Manager Jordana Dawson Hayes



(L-R) Senior Accounts Officer Folasaitu Ieti Seiuli & Ombudsman Maualaivao P Seiuli

A Zoom meeting between the Samoa Office of the Ombudsman (SOO) and the New Zealand Ombudsman Office (NZOO) in revisiting specific areas of collaboration between the two counterparts.

Acting Ombudsman Maualaivao Pepe Seiuli, Senior Accounts Officer Folasaitu Ieti Seiuli; Director of Education & Communication Unit Tupuola T. Tuia; and Principal Multimedia Engagement Officer Michael Tamanikaiyaroi represented Samoa. From New Zealand, the International Development & Engagement Advisor Grace Taylor and Manager Jordana Dawson Hayes participated.

Chaired by Ms. Grace Taylor, the meeting began with a prayer before revisiting and identifying capacity-building opportunities particularly for the Samoa Office. Both offices discussed key areas of interest such as public engagement, digital communication tools, and human rights advocacy. The conversation explored various avenues for collaboration, including peer training, virtual workshops, and resource-sharing initiatives.

The meeting concluded with parties agreeing to refine these capacity building activities as identified throughout 2024.



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Visit by the University of Newcastle July 2, 2024



(L-R) NHRI Director Ulugia Rosa Toese and Principal Ellenlina Moala in discussion with visitors from the University of New Castle

The Office welcomed a visit by the College of Human and Futures Newcastle School of Law & Justice from The University of Newcastle, Australia.

The student group, led by Associate Professor Amy Maguire, included final-year undergraduate students completing their studies in law. This visit marks an important event fostering collaboration, knowledge exchange, and potential partnerships between the institutions.



Happy smiles from the visitors with OMB representatives after sharing experiences and ideas in the meeting



Good Governance Unit

Purpose of the Good Governance Unit

1

The Good Governance Unit aims to ensure that public institutions effectively deliver their mandates while satisfying public expectations. It focuses on promoting principles such as transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in governance.



2

Key attributes of good governance include transparency in actions, accountability to the public, responsible management of resources, active participation of citizens, and responsiveness to the people's needs. These elements are fundamental in fostering trust and integrity in governmental functions.



3

The Good Governance Unit does not have jurisdiction over private individuals, court decisions, or statutory tribunal outcomes. Additionally, it may refuse to investigate complaints based on criteria such as the existence of another remedy, the age of the complaint, and lack of public interest.



OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

SIU Complaint Letter Collections - September, 2024

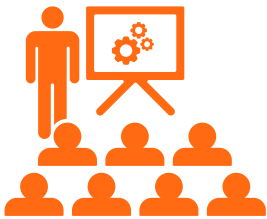


SIU: Murphy Siupolu (Senior IO) and Leota Taalo Leota (Principal IO) Folasaitu Ieti Seiuli (Senior FO) and Ropati Sitivi (Driver)

We have complaint boxes at all Government prison facilities in Samoa. On a monthly basis, we collect complaints from these boxes, conduct interviews and respond to those who have written to us through our Special Investigation Unit (SIU) mandate.

These complaints have formulated grounds for own motion investigations and referrals for action with relevant Government entities.

For statistics and trends in our prison box complaints check out our annual reports and newsletters on our website.



Meetings Attended:

- Chief Accountants Forum
- Samoa National Identification
- Records Taskforce Meeting

DATE

- 4 September 2024
- 10 September 2024
- 24 September 2024

Hosted By

- Ministry of Finance
- Samoa Bureau of Statistics
- Ministry of Education and Culture

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OMB-TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

SAMOA JICA ALUMINI ASSOCIATION (SJAA) CAREER DAY, AUGUST 23 2024



Students engaging with Senior GGU Officer Manino Eveni Tui at the OMB Booth



Students engaging with Senior ECU Officer Afoa Gagau J. Ah-Kee at the OMB Booth



Students participating during the Q & A as guided by Senior GGU Officer Manino Eveni Tui

On the 23 of August ,the Office was once again honored to participate in the SJAA 2024 Career Day which was held . The annual event was the fourth organised by SJAA with the hope of enhancing students' awareness about potential career paths based on their respective interests. OMB participated setting up an information booth to showcase our legislated services. On the day our Booth was mainly visited by students from Year 7–8 as well as Year 11–12.

Shoutout to Manino Eveni Tui from the Good Governance Unit (GGU) and Afoa Gagau J Ah-Kee from our Engagement & Communication Unit (ECU), who did a fantastic job facilitating the students. They shared valuable insights into the roles within our office and discussed potential career paths such as becoming a lawyer.

Congratulations to brave students who showed sharp listening skills and had won prizes for their spot on answers.

OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

OMB @ NUS - STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION & AWARENESS AUGUST 15 2024



Sharing information and clarifications between OMB and NUS Senior Staff during the meeting

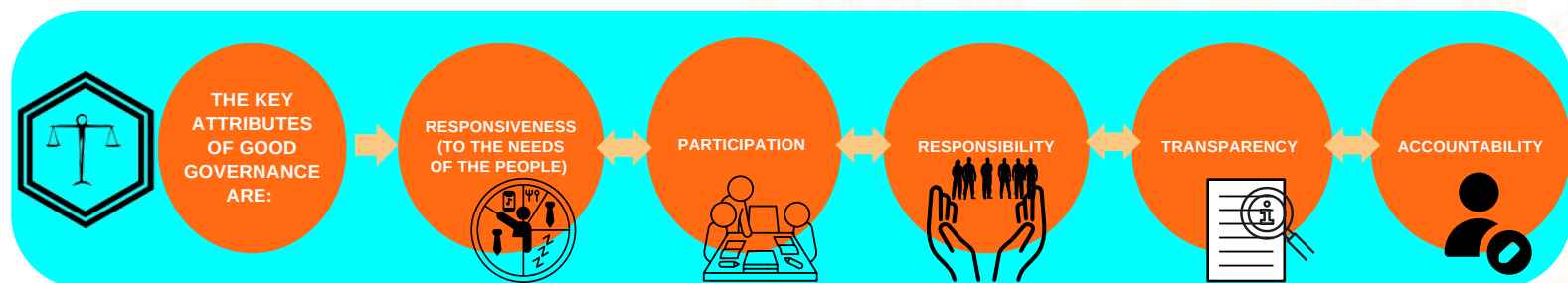
The Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) had the privilege of meeting with the Management Committee of the National University of Samoa (NUS). The focus was for the Investigation arms of OMB consisting of the Good Governance Unit (GGU) and the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) to share information on their specific legislated functions, and in-house complaint handling process.

The twofold purpose of the visit involves:

- Re-visiting working relations with government agencies and enterprises via the NUS OMB Liaison Officer; and
 - Conducting an Info-session with NUS on the mandates of OMB as a complaint handler and the office of last resort.
- Further, the one-hour session has been enriched by interactive and engaging discussions interchangeably with insightful questions from the participants that were at best facilitated by the Good Governance Unit Director Fuimaono Vaiao Eteuati, and the Special Investigation Director, Ms. Lagafuaina Tavita.

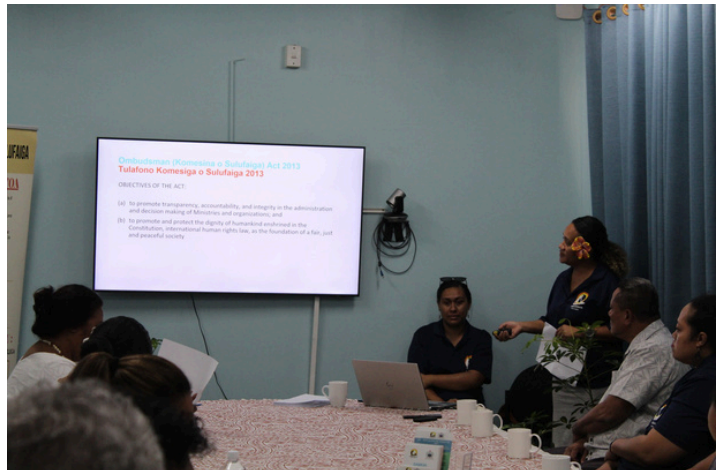
The Acting Ombudsman Maualaivao P. Seiuli and the Office extend their appreciation to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Tuifuisa'a Dr. Patila Aмоса and the NUS Management Committee for sharing your valuable time to meet with OMB.

More-so OMB looks forward to maintaining ongoing collaboration with NUS as we are indeed grateful for the opportunity to connect with the academic circles and community. Fa'afetai tele.



OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

OMB & LTA : INFO SESSIONS, SEPTEMBER 2, 2024



Discussion at during the OMB & LTA information session

The Investigation arm of the Office consisting of the Good Governance Unit (GGU); and the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) met with the Management Team of the Land Transport Authority (LTA) today for an 'ice-breaking session' basically about the complaint handling role of the Ombudsman Office.

The two-fold purpose of the meeting include:

1. Re-establish relations with government ministries and state-owned enterprises via the OMB Liaison Officer; and
2. Sharing the legislated roles and mandates of OMB as the external complaint handler.

The expectation whilst the desired outcome is to at least increase the basic understanding of the LTA staff about the role of the Ombudsman, sharing tips on the nuts-and-bolts of public complaint handling, mindful of enhancing respect for good governance and integrity in OMB's special investigation duties. The one-hour session was enriched by engaging discussions and insightful questions from the participants.

The Acting Ombudsman is grateful to the CEO of LTA Sagauga Leilani Galuvao and the LTA Management Team for setting aside your valuable time to meet with us. Nevertheless, we are keen to build on this momentum and further strengthen our collaboration.



OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

OMB @ MPMC - INFO SESSION SEPTEMBER 3, 2024



ACEO Aitu Ah Sam-Meredith and the MPMC staff :Photo by ECU



A glimpse at discussions during the OMB and MPMC Info Session

Once more the Investigation Arm of the Ombudsman (OMB) comprising of GGU and SIU continued its information sessions with government Ministries and Public Enterprises. This time around with the Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (MPMC) at the MPMC Conference Room.

The session aimed to re-ignite relationships with government Ministries and state-owned enterprises through the OMB Liaison Officer (OLO) and share a presentation on the legislated roles and mandates of the Ombudsman as the external complaint handler.

By fostering a deeper understanding of the Ombudsman's role and sharing tips on effective complaint handling, the session emphasized the essential importance of good governance and integrity in OMB's special investigation duties.

The Acting Ombudsman sincerely extends our sincere appreciation to ACEO Aitu Ah Sam-Meredith and the MPMC staff for their very warm reception and engagement.



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The Mo le Silafia (MLS) Newsletter is compiled and edited by the Education & Communication Unit.

OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

OMB @ SROS - INFO SESSIONS, SEPTEMBER 5, 2024



(L-R) SIU Principal Investigator Leota Ta'alo Leota setting the tone with SIU Director Lagafuaina Tavita and GGU Director Fuimaono V Eteuati.



(L-R) SIU Principal Investigator Leota Ta'alo Leota setting the introductory tone with SIU Director Lagafuaina Tavita and GGU Director Fuimaono V. Eteuati.

The Investigation Arm of the Ombudsman (OMB) continues rolling the information sessions with government Ministries and Public Enterprises meeting with the Senior staff of the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa (SROS) to again share the roles of the Office of the Ombudsman.

The immediate objective of the visit was two-fold:

1. Re-establish relations with government Ministries and State-owned Enterprises via the OMB Liaison Officer (OLO); and
2. Share a presentation on the legislated roles and mandates of OMB essentially as the only external public Complaint Handler.

Ultimately, the expectation is to create awareness and perhaps increase SROS's understanding on the role of the Ombudsman. It was also a chance to exchange tips on how to deal with public complaints about our service delivery and administration matters.

Further, enhancing a shared respect for good governance and the integrity of OMB's special investigation duties.

We sincerely appreciate to ACEO Kent Onesemo, ACEO Masuisuiolemalietao Dr. Seesei Molimau – Samasoni, Manager Fa'aea Tailai and the commendable SROS staff for meeting with us.

The Office of the Ombudsman looks forward to continuing the momentum with our collaboration.

OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

CONSULTATION ON THE NATIONAL ID (NID) ACT REGULATIONS SEPTEMBER 9 2024



Group photo of participants from various government ministries and agencies

The Office participated in this special consultation organized by the Samoa Bureau of Statistics (SBS) to further discuss the development of the legislation for the National ID (NID) Act. The consultation, held at the DBS Building, brought together various government stakeholders to refine the regulatory framework and ensure its effective implementation. Representing the Ombudsman's Office were Tupuola Toetu Tuia and Michael Tamanikaiyaroi from the Engagement and Communication Unit (ECU), who shared insights on matters pertaining to good governance and human rights implications of the NID Act.

The Office's involvement includes human rights considerations which were obviously at the forefront of the discussions, emphasizing the importance of protecting privacy and maintaining transparency in the rollout of the developed National ID legislation and all its essential relative system.

NATIONAL RECORDS TASK FORCE MEETING - SEPTEMBER 24, 2024



National Workforce Task Meeting with various officers of the public and private sector.

The ECU Team participated in the National Records Task Force Meeting hosted by the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture (MESC) at the Samoa Cultural and Arts Centre at Malifa. Presentations were shared on how best to manage records and storing archival materials from government offices.

We acknowledge the National Archives and Records Authority (NARA) Team and ACEO Fanuaea Amela Silipa for the partnership and collaboration.



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OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

CFNHRI BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OCTOBER 17 & 18 2024



Group Photo of Special Guests and Participants after the Opening ceremony

At the margins of CHOGM, the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI) also meet for its Biennial Conference. Notably at the Conference was the handling over of the Forum's chairperson role as well as making a Declaration to guide the Forum's strategic direction for the next 2 years.

Our Samoa Acting Ombudsman Maualaivao Pepe Seiuli was confirmed as the CFNHRI's new chair for 2024-2026, taking over the chairmanship from Hon. Providence Umurungi, Chairperson of Rwanda's National Commission for Human Rights. The theme of the Conference was "A sustainable culture of human rights towards a resilient common future." This is in alignment with the general CHOGM theme of resilience, sustainability and a shared future.

Day 1 officially started with a prayer and spiritual guidance from Rev. Dr. Latu Latai of EFKS Apia. This was followed by a Key Note Address from the Samoa Prime Minister Honorable Fiame Naomi Mata'afa emphasizing the importance of human rights as for one the foundation for just; and peaceful societies in the midst of global crises such as war, pandemics and climate change.

Opening Remarks were also delivered by Prof. Luis Franceschi, the Assistant Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat on their commitment to the future of human rights in the Commonwealth. The remainder of Day 1 was then occupied by presentations from different expertise on:

- Pillar 1: Resilient democratic institutions that uphold democracy, human rights and rule of law; and
- Pillar 2: Resilient environment to combat climate change.

Day 2 started by a Keynote Address from the Deputy Speaker of the Samoa Parliament Hon. Auapa'au Mulipola Aloitafua who emphasized for the most part the importance of National Human Rights Institutions in keeping Governments accountable.

Panel Discussions also continued with representations from different areas of expertise on:

- Pillar 3: Resilient economies that support recovery and prosperity; and
- Pillar 4: Resilient societies that empower individuals for a peaceful and productive life.

At the closing, the Apia Declaration drafted by the Samoa Ombudsman Office/NHRI and the Drafting Committee of the Forum was finalized and passed unanimously by participants. A dinner was held thereafter the Closing for guests and delegations with with closing best wishes from Steve Onwuasoanya, the Acting Head of the Human Rights Unit of the Commonwealth Secretariat.



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OMB-TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

CFNHRI BIENNIAL CONFERENCE - PHOTO TIME



Panel members during discussions at one of the Conference sessions



Beautiful handsome smiles from OMB staff as professional hosts during the Conference



(L-R) Mr. Steve Ibe Onwuasoanya & To'oto'olea'ava Dr. Fanaafi Ai'ono Le Tagaloa during a panel discussion.



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OMB-TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

CFNHRI BIENNIAL CONFERENCE - (OCTOBER 17 & 18 2024)



Group photo of opening ceremony invitees



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OMB-TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

SAMOA PUBLIC SERVICE DAY - NOVEMBER 22, 2024



The Office proudly joins the nation in commemorating Samoa Public Service Day, honoring the dedication and hard work of all public servants. We are deeply grateful and humbled to be among this year's recipients of the Public Service Excellence Awards—fa'afetai tele, Samoa Public Service Commission!



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OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY - DECEMBER 10, 2024



On December 10, 2024, the Office of the Ombudsman/National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) Samoa marked Human Rights Day with its inaugural Human Rights Awards Ceremony at the Lava Hotel. Themed "Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now," the event celebrated individuals and groups whose remarkable contributions have advanced human rights in Samoa.

Hon. Papalii Oloipola Taeu Masipa'u, the Speaker of Parliament, delivered the keynote address, urging everyone to continue learning about human rights as a foundation for dignity and equality. He praised the recognized champions for their passion-driven efforts to create meaningful change. Ms. Nicolina Aculita, the UN Resident Coordinator, echoed these sentiments, highlighting the impact of individual actions in building a more equitable society.

The ceremony honored winners of the TV5 Trivia Quiz Nights held earlier in December and presented awards to five 2024 Human Rights Champions in categories such as youth advocacy, community leadership, justice, media, and creative arts. Special recognition was given to Hon. Justice Vui Clarence Nelson, the Komesina o Sulufaiga Human Rights Champion, for his outstanding commitment to justice and human rights.

The event was a testament to the power of collaboration, with heartfelt thanks extended to partners and stakeholders who contributed to its success. The Office continues to call on all Samoans to stand for human rights, ensuring everyone can live a life of dignity and worth.



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OMB-TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY - PRIZEGIVING TIME DECEMBER 10 2024



Samantha Kwon with UN Coordinator Ms Nicolina Aculita



Conrad Lee Hang with Acting Ombudsman Maualaivao P Seiuli



Nadia Eneliko with Acting Ombudsman Maualaivao Pepe Seiuli



Tooa Brown with UN Resident Coordinator Ms Nicolina Aculita



Iutita Eneliko with Maualaivao Pepe Seiuli



Fa'au Y. Wong See with Maualaivao Pepe Seiuli

Congratulations to our Trivia Quiz Winners:

Quiz 1: Iutita Eneliko, Nadia Eneliko, Conrad Lee Hang and Fa'au Yennor Wong See.

Quiz 2: 3rd: Salamasina Onosemo; 2nd Samantha Kwon; and To'oa Brown.

OMB - TEAM ENGAGEMENTS

HUMAN RIGHTS DAY - SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARDS DECEMBER 10, 2024



Ben Percival receiving the Media Human Rights Champion Trophy for his father Galumalemana Steven Percival



Community Human Rights Champion: Maluseu Doris Tulifau (Brown Girl Woke) with Momoko Nomura UN Human Rights Advisor



Human Rights Justice Champion: Mataafa Faatino Utumapu with Mele Mauala Country Programme Coordinator UN Women



Nynette Nelson receiving the Award for husband Justice Vui Clarence Nelson with Speaker Papali'i Li'o Taeu Masipau

Congratulations to our Human Rights Champions 2024!!

Young People's Human Rights Champion: Moemoana Safaatoa Schwenke

Community Human Rights Champion: Maluseu Doris Tulifau

Human Rights Justice Champion: Mata'afa Faatino Utumapu

Media and Creative Arts Human Rights Champion: Galumalemana Steven Percival

Komesina o Sulufaiga Human Rights Champion: Hon. Justice Vui Clarence Nelson



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IN-HOUSE MATTERS

IN LOVING MEMORY OF REVEREND ELDER UTUFUA NASERI



Rev. Elder Naseri speaking on the Candlelight Service for National Humans Rights Day on December 10, 2023

With heavy hearts we dearly remember and honor the remarkable life of Reverend Elder Utufua Naseri, whose legacy continues to inspire and guide us.

Rev. Elder Naseri was more than a revered religious leader; he was indeed a champion of human rights and a devoted member of the Human Rights Advisory Council. His invaluable contributions greatly enriched our understanding and awareness of human rights issues in Samoa.

Momoli atu fa'amaisega ma mo'omo'oga alofa o le afioga i le Sui Komesina, le pulega fa'apea le Ofisa o le Komesina o Sulufaiga mo le Faletua Taiaopo Naseri; le Aiga fa'anoanoa ona o le vala'au paia a le Altua i lana auauna.

Rest in peace, Rev. Elder Utufua Naseri. Your spirit and dedication will be cherished and remembered always.



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IN-HOUSE MATTERS

STAFF MOVEMENT - RECRUITMENT & OUTGOING STAFF

TALOFA !! - SENIOR HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER PHAEDRA LAMEKO



Senior NHRI Officer Phaedra Lameko has brought her expertise and wealth of experience to the Office on August 19, 2024.

We are very pleased to announce that Ms. Phaedra Lameko has officially joined the Office of the Ombudsman/NHRI Samoa as the new Senior Human Rights Officer, starting on 19 August 2024.

With her extensive experience and dedication to promoting and protecting human rights, Ms. Lameko is a valuable addition to our team. Her role will be instrumental in advancing our mission to uphold justice and ensure that the rights of all individuals are respected and protected.

We warmly welcome Ms. Lameko to our Office and look forward to the positive contributions she will bring to our work. Congratulations, Phaedra!

Induction for SIU Senior Investigator Mr. Murphy Siupolu



(L-R) Mr. Murphy Siupolu with Senior staff of the Office sharing notes during induction

We are also very proud to announce that Mr. Murphy Siupolu has joined the Office of the Ombudsman Samoa as the new Senior Investigations Officer for the Special Investigations Unit (SIU). Mr. Siupolu officially began his tenure earlier this week taking part in our comprehensive induction program.

The induction program was coordinated by the Corporate Service Unit Team; along with contributions from the Good Governance Unit; Special Investigation Unit; the National Human Rights Institution; and the Education & Communication Unit all aiming to provide the new staff member with a fair overview of the Office's mandated functions, strategic direction, and internal policies and processes.



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SOCIAL COMMITTEE FOR FATHERS' DAY - AUGUST 10 2024



(L-R) Principal Leota Ta'alo Leota (President of the OMB Social Committee) giving thanks Director Lagafuaina Tavita (SIU)

The OMB Social Committee hosted a special Father's Day lunch to celebrate and honor all the amazing fathers in our team. It was a wonderful afternoon filled with laughter, delicious food, and heartfelt appreciation for the fathers who contribute so much to our lives both at work and at home. Happy Father's Day to all the dads!

OMB STAFF & FAMILIES HIKE-A-THON AT MOUNT VAEA HEALTH IS WEALTH - AUGUST 15, 2024



OMB Staff enjoying a Hike-a-thon at the Mount Vaea with their families. Health is wealth August 23, 2024.

The staff of the Office of the Ombudsman (OMB) on August 23, 2024, came together for a Hike-a-thon at the picturesque Mount Vaea, accompanied by their families.

The event was not just an opportunity to explore one of Samoa's iconic natural landmarks, but also a reminder of the importance of maintaining a healthy mind in a healthy body after all, many insist for the most part that health is wealth.



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VOLUNTARY TOY DRIVE - DECEMBER 9 2024



(L-R) OMB Staff distributing the gifts to all children & parents in their wards.

Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes every child's right to rest, leisure, play, and participation in cultural and artistic activities appropriate to their age. [humanrightsforkids.org](https://www.humanrightsforkids.org)

In alignment with this principle, our office organized a voluntary Toy Drive this year, collecting toys, books, and stationery for children who are likely to spend Christmas in the hospital, thereby missing out on their right to play. We delivered these gifts to their bedsides and provided care packages—including diapers, coffee, Panadol, masks, and snacks—to the parents of babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our family and friends who contributed to this meaningful cause. Your generosity has helped uphold the rights of these children and support their families during a challenging time. "Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now."



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