

## WFWP Oceania: Capacity Building In The Solomon Islands

Anne Bellavance  
January 10, 2024



Anne Bellavance, regional International Vice-President (IVP) for Oceania and SE Asia, visited the Solomon Islands (SI) Chapter to support the leadership team.

The Solomon Islands Chapter conducted their Annual General Meeting and voted on the new leadership team.

New Hope Academy (NHA) concludes the academic year with the Awards and Graduation Assembly.

Plastic pollution is found on beaches throughout the Islands.

### **New Hope Academy Graduation And Awards Assembly**

Anne had the blessing to attend and speak briefly with students during the New Hope Academy (NHA) 2023 Awards and Graduation assembly held on October 26th. All the schools, colleges, and universities throughout the SI ended their academic year early due to preparations for the Pacific Games, hosted by the Solomon Islands.



A VIP from the Department of Education was in attendance, as were parents of students in both the primary and secondary school departments. The SI Peace Embassy assembly hall was brightly decorated and full of excited students and proud parents.

All graduating Year 6 students received Primary School completion certificates. Within the Pacific Islands, some students are unable to continue with their education. Some NHA graduates move into Year

7 at NHA, while remaining graduates move to other secondary schools.



The highlights of the assembly were the academic awards and class dance and singing performances. Parents crowded the stage to take videos of the Tong Il Moo Do martial arts performance with the instructor and students. Students who attended this after-school co-curricular activity also received their new belt colours.

NB: Some of the top athletes from the South and West Pacific region will be in action from November 19th to December 2nd, 2023. The Games bring together sports athletes from many countries and territories in the area, plus invitational teams from Australia and New Zealand.



**SI Chapter Meetings**

From October 27-29, WFWP SI members gathered to share their progress and discuss future activities. Updates to the SI Constitution was addressed and the Annual General Meeting was conducted. A big addition was the introduction of WFWP membership fees that can be used to conduct future activities. There was an encouraging push to welcome SI women leaders as Global Friends, set up the Global Women's Peace Network and introduce environment initiatives.

Monica Ilala Longanimala was voted in as President Candidate. Anne went with Monica to purchase office equipment for WFWP SI; a generous donation from the WFWP Victoria membership. Three

laptops were donated from WFWP Australia for use by the key positions of President, Secretary, and Treasurer. An additional four laptops were donated by WFWP Australia to be presented to four New Hope Academy departments at the beginning of the 2024 school year.



On the final day of meetings, Anne worked with the new leadership team to answer questions, share development ideas and general capacity building for the team. Afterwards, we all went out for lunch, sponsored by WFWP Australia.



**Visit To Central Islands Province**

Traveling by banana boat to the neighboring Central Islands Province, Anne accompanied Monica and Judith's family to Monica's ancestral Village of Longapolo, located on the southeast end of the main island.

Children, adults and produce purchased from Honiara, traveled the two-hour open sea. It was an experience never to forget!

For the next two days, traveling with as many children who could fit in the banana boat, we visited many small uninhabited islands to swim, snorkel, and picnic.

The stark reality is the presence of washed-up plastics and garbage that travel across the ocean to all the

shores in the Pacific Islands.

Village families are custodians of nearby uninhabited islands. These pictures are taken from Mandoleana Island. On an annual basis, villagers travel across the open sea to conduct beach clean-ups. On a monthly basis, Longapolo Village residents clean their beach foreshore, but the garbage continues to wash in, especially during storms. Collected garbage is placed in dug-out holes.



Ever wondered where our garbage ends up? It travels to the Pacific Islands' beautiful beaches, now permanently littered with our thoughtless waste!

### **Waste In The Capital City Of Honiara**

On the waterfront of Honiara where the Matanikau River reaches the sea, garbage is everywhere! At the site where travelling banana boats dock from neighbouring islands, directly on the shore of downtown shops, is washed up garbage from the sea. Local waste flows down the river due to Honiara residents using the river as a dump. Clearly, a lack of awareness and education about plastic pollution is necessary. WFWP SI will be conducting education and clean up campaigns to help address this pressing issue.

The following pictures represent our sad reality!



