



CLASS OF
1989

Silina Waqa Ledua

CLASS OF
1995

Lautoka Nursing School / Fiji School of Nursing

Qualifications

- Certificate in Midwifery - Fiji School of Nursing, 1989
- Certificate of Public Health - Fiji School of Nursing, 1995
- Bachelor in Nursing with Distinction - University of Sydney, Australia, 1997
- Postgraduate Diploma in Health Sciences - University of Auckland, New Zealand, 2003
- Professional Diploma in Business Leadership - University of the South Pacific, 2013
- Masters in Nursing Leadership - James Cook University, Australia, Pursuing

The sight of injections made her cry, yet she would squint her eyes and brave the pain. Despite the urge to run away, she would find herself return to the queue to admire the nurses. She was mesmerised by their uniform, the haversack...and their well-groomed nails!

She was a primary school student when Silina Waqa started envisioning herself in the same outfit- neat and immaculate. But what really inspired Silina was the commitment nurses showed towards their duties-this was modeled by her two aunts who were nurses.

“They just loved their profession,” shares Silina Waqa. “I was convinced there was something special with nursing. One of my aunts based at a remote nursing station attended to the sick at any time of the night, whether she gets across to a patient on a raft or on horseback. I was even impressed with the small mini-mocs (cars) nurses drove to deliver their services back in those days.”

Born to a casual Public Works Department labourer and lay preacher who earned 30 pounds a week, the eldest of six siblings, Silina Waqa Ledua, 53, has proven any dream can be achieved through perseverance. She is the Ministry of Health’s Director of Nursing Services and she dedicates her success to her humble family, where she learnt the simplicity to life.

“I learnt the act of love role modeled before me. My parents taught us two greatest lessons that influenced my life from young age - Love for God, and love for others.”

She recalls once seven children came to stay with her family to attend secondary school in Levuka town for they didn’t have relatives to live

A PATIENT'S DELIGHT

with. The family catered for all basic needs on a single income for all the 13 kids. Silina had also snapped her pencil into two so that one of the seven others could have a pencil to write with.

No sooner was she out to pursue her lifetime dream. Originally from Galoa village, Kadavu, Silina describes her experience at FSN as 'one of its kind'.

"My student nursing days developed my life in two significant means- It enforced and sharpened the family breed discipline I had received from home which made me a better individual, and I was able to have ample freedom to test out some newly adopted adolescent lifestyle in fashion, behaviour, style, habits, peer pressure induced culture and hence was able to distinguish the right from wrong."

For a former Head Girl of Levuka Public School, Silina wasn't a rule breaker. However, there was an incident for which she was penalized, she solemnly confesses. Fortunately, this was only once in the whole three years of nursing school.

With absolute determination, she had her ambition set upon securing the position of Chief Nurse of the country. Her motto is 'Dream big but start small'.

She hunted for transfers to remote rural nursing stations, maritime

health centres, and finally gave the authorities the nod to manage a 12-bed maritime Lakeba Sub-divisional Hospital in Lau. She worked hard at all the levels of nursing till authorities recognized her potential that she was worthy to be invested upon.

Her first breakthrough was at Nabobuco Nursing Station located at the very remote terrain of the Naitasiri Province when she made a timely referral of an obstetric case to CWMH with the appropriate line of treatment given including an insertion of an Intravenous drip which impressed the 'hard-to-impress' Obstetric & Gynae consultant then, Dr Mary Schramm, who recommended Silina be given a chance to pursue the Post Basic Midwifery Certificate Course. This was only five years post registration.

She undertook Bachelor of Nursing with Distinction from the University of Sydney, which in nursing this was the first. And soon she triumphed through to promotions.

"It was a good feeling but it was only the beginning. The sacrifice became greater as I moved closer to achieving my dream. I continued to take the fairy steps and learnt the techniques of the gigantic strides," Silina said.

Meanwhile, marriage was last on her agenda. She married a senior Pastor in 2009 when she was only a

step away from reaching her goal. The same year, she was appointed as Acting Director Nursing Northern Division, and confirmed to the post a year later. This is when she spearheaded the change in the 1948 Nursing Legislation in 2009 upon assumption of the Acting Director Nursing. The new Nursing Decree 2011 was enacted in January 2012. This led to the establishment of the Fiji Nursing Council.

She also initiated the change in the National Nursing establishment in 2010, and instigated the development of the first ever documented Scope of Practice for Fiji Registered Nurses and Fiji Registered Midwives in 2013.

She also headed the establishment of the Fiji College of Nursing.

The mother of two is the recipient of Best All Round Award in Certificate of Public Health. She was awarded the Best Public Health Nurse and the Most Promising Nursing Officer at the Ministry of Health National Excellence Award 2004.

Her advice to young alumni is not to give up when the journey gets tough because everyone with a purpose in life is destined to achieve their dreams.