

# Friends of Suai/Covalima



Newsletter December 2021

## Scholarship appeal

There are limited educational opportunities for many young people in Covalima, especially for women and those in remote, rural communities. Since 2012, Friends of Suai/Covalima (FoSC) has funded more than 166 scholarships for students from Covalima district to further their studies at senior secondary schools, vocational training centres and universities in Timor-Leste. The scholarship program encourages gender equity and provides educational opportunities for students from disadvantaged families.

FoSC has made a commitment to fund ongoing scholarships and also offer 14 new scholarship places for the 2022 school year and **we need your help!**

All funds raised will benefit students and will contribute towards enrolment fees, training materials, equipment, transport, accommodation and pastoral care from the Education Coordinator.

It costs between \$250 and \$1700 per year of training to fund a scholarship but any amount is appreciated.

Donations can be made via the following methods:

- Direct deposit into our Commonwealth Bank account. Acct Name: Friends of Suai Donations BSB: 063 243 Account Number: 1034 3552
- On-line via the Friends of Suai Covalima Give Now webpage: <https://www.givenow.com.au/foscscarships>
- A cheque payment to **City of Port Phillip** sent to Friends of Suai Covalima, City of Port Phillip, Private Bag 3, St Kilda Vic 3182



*Left: Students in their final year at Maliana Agricultural Technical School harvesting chillies at the school farm. Right: Practical experience teaching in the classroom is an important part of the training for students at Baucau Teachers College.*

## 2022 scholarship opportunities



The CCC is now registering and interviewing candidates to apply for vocational and tertiary scholarships for 2022 including primary teaching, construction and motorbike mechanical training. FoSC also hope to provide scholarships for secondary school graduates to continue their vocational study in agriculture and electrical studies. After the initial processes at the CCC, the Education Coordinator will facilitate successful candidates to attend testing and enrolment sessions at each training centre. An update on the outcomes will be provided early in 2022.

*Photo: Scholarship candidates are interviewed by a panel at the CCC.*

## Scholarship update

There were 17 scholarships offered for the 2021 school year: 11 continuing and six new students. Fifteen of the students have been able to continue their study throughout the year, despite ongoing disruptions due to COVID-19 and severe weather events, and FoSC look forward to sharing pictures of graduation ceremonies scheduled in the coming weeks and months.

The students at Baucau Teachers College have been well supported throughout the year and have adapted well to online learning when needed. In 2021 there were seven students at the College, including two students who have recently completed their fourth year to complete the equivalent of a Bachelor of Education.

In recent years FoSC has offered places at the National University in Dili for students to complete tertiary study in Nursing (specialising in Midwifery) and Community Development. Most of the students have finished their fourth year of class studies but will not graduate until their proposals are approved and research projects are finalised. All of these activities were delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is anticipated that most students will complete and graduate in 2022. The students have expressed their commitment to finish their studies, graduate and start working in the community.



*Left: Two students at CVTC Suai will complete a Certificate II in Hospitality this month.*

*Right: Idalia received a scholarship to complete the Cert II in Hospitality in 2017 and has been working in restaurants in Dili since graduating.*



## Training at the CCC

Many forums and training programs take place at the CCC, including English language and computer training courses delivered by the CCC staff and the Rural Women's Development Program leadership training for members of village councils. All training at the Centre now includes a health component, with training on hygienic practices including the importance of handwashing and social distancing. The participants are provided with bars of soap and WHO infographic posters about preventing COVID-19 transmission and are encouraged to share information with their friends and families.



*Left: Students enrolled in English language and computer courses at the CCC all complete training on health & hygienic practices. Right: Many young students are enrolled in computer training courses at the CCC.*

## Suai Secondary School library

More than 2,100 students and teachers at the Suai Secondary School use the school library, which was established through the Friendship. FoSC supporters continue to donate items to add to the collection and raise funds for the salaries of two librarians to manage the library resources.

The librarians and English language trainers at the CCC recently participated in a training course on installing and using KOHA library software to catalogue and manage the library materials. The trainers from the Xanana Gusmao Reading Room in Dili also provided a wi-fi router, barcode reader and collection of fiction books. The staff are now busy cataloguing the library collection.



*Left: Training on implementing an online library management system for the school library. Right: Students from the National University in Dili using the resources at Suai Secondary School during their three-month placement.*