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Editor's Note:

Bula and welcome to yet another fun packed month!! This November is full of energy and excitement as we draw closer to the end of the school year and gear up for a brilliant Holiday School.

Apart from being the last month of our school year, November marks a start to Christmas and our holiday season. Projects Abroad Fiji is very excited to start its very own Shark Conservation Project in Pacific Harbour in January 2014. This is the first of its kind by Projects Abroad and we have been amazed by the number of people with the passion to safe guard these beautiful creatures for the future generation.

Read on to find more about our Shark Conservation project and what's happening with our Sports, Care & Teaching, Community and PRO Projects.

Teaching and Care Updates

Saunaka Village Officially Opens Primary School

Ratu Nalukuya Infant Primary School in Saunaka Village in Nadi had officially opened to cater for the children of Saunaka Village. Projects Abroad volunteer Mr. Moritz Heitzmann is based at the school to help teach the students basic syllables and subjects. He is enjoying his work so far and is happy with the students at the school.



PRO Project - Speech Therapist - Lara Gallichan

My name is Lara and I'm a Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) from Guernsey, Channel Islands. I have worked as a Speech Language Therapist for two and a half years after graduating in 2010. I love my work in Guernsey but was ready for a new challenge. When Projects Abroad Fiji came up, I thought why not!

Fiji is a beautiful place with lovely people. I am now in my 4th week out of 6 and can already envisage that leaving is going to be hard. My placement is at the Early Intervention Centre in Suva, which is for children with special needs. I have been observing and assessing children, along with working with the teachers and parents. There have been good times and lots of challenges too. The challenges are similar to those at home, which are heightened because of the lack of resources available here and also due to the fact that I'm here for such a short period of time. Working as a Speech Language Therapist in Fiji has been a very interesting and amazing experience so far and I am looking forward to finding out what's to come!

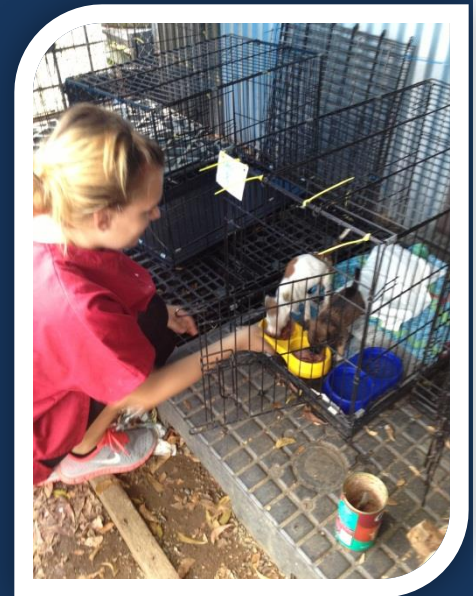


Animal Care

Our Animal Care volunteers, Lisa Schopper (Austria) and Stefania Rotiroti (Switzerland) have been enjoying their time at the West Charity Trust.

"Every day was a whole new experience for me and I love these animals. It's so different from what we have back at home," Stefania gushed.

They are involved in all aspects of the clinic ranging from feeding and cleaning in the kennels, to observing and assisting with surgeries in the clinic.



Community Care & Teaching

South African Senior volunteers with underprivileged women in Fiji



Seventy-year-old Shirley Venter from South Africa spent a month volunteering with Projects Abroad at a women's club in Dratabu Village, a village in Fiji. Shirley spent her time in Fiji helping the women of the club with their financial issues.

"I had so many ladies come to me asking for advice on business, farming, how they should invest their money and how to draw up a contract," she explained.

"Being able to give them the advice they needed made me feel obliged to do so," she shared.

Shirley believes that more seniors should participate as volunteers because she believes that they are not afraid to address the chiefs or the higher ranking people of the village.

"There is a need for volunteers at the kindergarten but more so for mature

teachers as opposed to the younger generation because I've seen that the younger people do not have the courage to speak up compared to us senior volunteers," she explained.

Shirley's trip to Fiji was one of the highlights of her life.

"It's been a dream of mine to volunteer. It makes me so happy that I can now say that I've done it," she shared.

"If I didn't come on this trip I would have regretted it all my life," she added.

She has gained a new appreciation of life after her volunteering experience.



"I have learnt to value what I have. I wish I could leave everything I have and just see these people have a better life," she shared. "I've seen much poverty within the village and it really breaks my heart to see how they have to cook, how they eat - it's just life changing," she added.

Shirley was impressed by the impact that Projects Abroad has had on the villagers, particularly on the women.

"Projects Abroad has made so much difference within this village -I see that the people depend on us, that they need us to improve their lifestyle," she remarked.

Shirley also enjoyed living with a host family and immersing herself into the local culture during her time in Fiji.

"Having La as my host was the best and seeing the 'lovo' (food baked underground) cooked for 25 people at one time was amazing," she gushed.

Shirley's advice to future volunteers is to live the life of a local as much as possible.

"You have to become one of them, a native woman," she urged.

"You have to eat what they eat and live how they live in order to be successful at your work," she concluded.

Sports Program

Dylan Thompson who came all the way from the UK is our first 3 months Sports volunteer. Dylan has a Master's in Sports Science and he spent two months assisting the Physical Education department at the Dilkusha Boys School.

As the school holiday approaches, Dylan is working full time with Cricket Fiji coaching students Cricket at the Suva schools. Dylan has been actively involved in the program running at Marist Brother's High School these last few weeks.

ENGLISH CLASSES

Currently, The Projects Abroad Nadi office has one volunteer who is also taking English lessons. Keiko Yone, who is 27 years of age, is from Tokyo, Japan. She is taking 14 hours of English classes and is here for three months.

Before coming to Fiji, Keiko used to work at a Day Care Centre in Tokyo. Her main reason for taking English classes is that she would like to work as a nanny in Japanese families that encourage their children to speak English at home. This is a common practice in Japan whereby families employ English speaking nannies who not only can look after their children, but also can help them with their English speaking skills.

The English lessons that are taught consist of vocabulary exercises, diary entry, grammar, phonics and conversation. Most of these exercises are done orally in order to help Keiko improve in her speaking skills. Her knowledge of grammar is satisfactory and she is working on improving on her speaking skills. When Keiko is asked questions in English, she tries her best to answer the questions correctly even though it takes a while to answer them. Furthermore, to incorporate the duration of the English classes, there is a combination of concepts taught from simple to challenging exercises. Keiko's feedback about each lesson and about her joyful teacher, Miss Liti, is very positive.



Upcoming Shark Projects

We are so excited about the upcoming Shark Project that will commence in January 2014 based in Pacific Harbour, on the south coast of Fiji's main island of Viti Levu, just 45 minutes by bus from Suva and 3 hours from Nadi.

Volunteers do not need any previous diving or shark research experience to take part in the Fiji Conservation Project. However, volunteers must be able to swim and be medically fit to scuba dive. This project is not available for people who do not want to take part in the diving.

It is a great opportunity for anyone who has a passion for the marine life and about conserving these remarkable species, SHARKS, and actually do want to do something about their extinction. We are tired of hearing the cliché about Saving Our Sharks, we want something done about it and we urge all volunteers to participate in a life-changing experience that will make a difference in our marine life and to you personally as an individual.

For more information do not hesitate to contact our Nadi office on 6700122 or email infomanagerfiji-projects@abroad.org.

Holiday School- Vesida Hart

Vesida Hart Holiday School in Suva kicked off yesterday with an encouraging turnout of 26 children all under the age of 5. As for the kids they were super excited having to learn from foreign nationals for the first time and the fun activities was an added bonus. The Holiday School is currently operating for 1 week before the remainder of our volunteers joins in for Holiday School in Dilkusha Boys School.



PROJECT DAY SNAPSHOTS

The Nadi volunteers outdid themselves this month at Lautoka School for Special Education. Projects Abroad had a colorful day with the students of the school bring the place to life with splashes of brilliant colours. Project Abroad volunteers Mr. Wouter Toorn, Ms. Sarvin Randhawa, Ms. Keiko Yone, Ms. Samara Harris, Ms. Melanie Fees did a wonderful job at the school creating a colourful environment and producing a wonderful mural with the help of amazing talents from the students.

