Last but not the least, SVSG would like to acknowledge the belief, the heart and the support from its established partners. Thank you for supporting SVSG, and thank you for being engaged with our work:

TO ENGAGE IS TO INSPIRE
TO ENGAGE IS TO COMMIT
TO ENGAGE IS TO VOICE WHAT NEEDS TO BE VOICED
TO ENGAGE IS TO CREATE A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS EACH OTHER

Sponsored by:
SVSG acknowledges the support from the Little Angels Foundation of New Zealand towards welfare assistance for our vulnerable children.

Faafetai! Faafetai! Faafetai tele lava

Fri, Nov 23, 2018, 9:01 PM

Dear Lina,

Thank you for sharing with me the SVSG 7th Engage Edition. As always I am touched by many of the stories and news items.

In this particular edition, the letter headed “Children of Hope……” written by a 15 year old who is a resident of the Campus of Hope, stood out in flashing lights for me. As you may recall Lina, soon after I first met you, I said it would be my dream for a child from the Campus of Hope to one day become a Lawyer and take up the fight to end child abuse, particularly in Samoa. And here we have, in this child’s letter, a young girl who has the very same dream as myself.

If this Child is serious about becoming a lawyer, and is prepared to work very hard to get the schooling marks required to enter university, I am very happy to provide the funding for her university law degree fees. I guess her immediate level of education would need to be assessed by an appropriate professional educator and a plan put forward as to how this child can attain the necessary schooling to ultimately enter university.

Lina, I would not be surprised if there are people who first think this is not practical, however to those people I would say "ANYTHING is possible", it only needs a few believers to do WHATEVER IS NEEDED to help this Child get to university, if she is really serious about her dream.

Look forward to your comments.

God Bless Lina,
In the 7th Engage Edition, a 15 year survivor of sexual offending cared for at the Campus of Hope shared her aspirations to become a Lawyer in a story titled ‘Children of Hope ...’.

It was a story that captured the attention of a dear friend to SVSG, who sent us this email to remind us of how far we have come as a family, and how we will see the outcome of our work through the beneficiaries.

To our dear friend, yes, it is possible to dream the impossible dream; and here we have a child that shared the same dream as yours.

From the moment you were connected to SVSG, to the times spent with the children of hope, to the regular visits to Samoa every now and then, you encouraged us that anything is possible.

Thank you for the belief, the prayers, and the support for the children from afar, as we continued to respect your wish to remain anonymous.

Our future lawyer is now taking up the relevant tuition to help her realise her dream.

You are right! “ANYTHING is possible.”

Love and blessings from the Children of Hope!

Talofa Lava

It is a pleasure to once again present Samoa Victim Support Group’s work for the last months of 2018 through this medium. I trust that 2019 brings each and every one of SVSG’s family of supporters good health and prosperity.

As SVSG progressed with its work this new year, we look back at 2018 with much appreciation and grateful hearts, because of the challenges that we overcame as well as the achievements that we have made.

In November, the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development recognised for the first time, SVSG’s community social protection programs as per the Special Award for Community Social Protection.

This was followed by the recognition in the international level of SVSG’s child protection work through Leilua Lino, an 18 year old survivor of sexual offending under the care of SVSG, who went on to become one of the three finalists for the International Children’s Peace Prize Award 2018.

In December, two of SVSG’s sheltered girls namely Leilua Lino and Feagaiga Stowers were amongst the locals who were nominated by the Samoa Observer in its Persons of the Year for 2018.

All these were achieved as a collective effort by SVSG and you, our family of supporters. As such, we say Faafetai, Faafetai, Faafetai tele lava.

For this Edition of the Engage Newsletter, we pay special tribute to Rosa, another 18 year old victim of sexual offending, who passed away recently. Before her passing Rosa shared her story in the hope that another child victim of rape would not have to bear the silent burden that she had had to carry – “Let what happened to me ends with me. In a Christian nation, children should grow up safely within their own family environment. I wasn’t. As such, I’m calling on all the parents to please love your children.”

This is the last edition of the Engage Newsletter to be printed under a sponsorship from the NoVo Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation through the With and for Girls Award. As such, we acknowledge with gratitude and appreciation the funding support over the last 2 years.

We welcome sponsors to fund the printing of the Engage Newsletter from here onwards.

Georgina Lui
Chair, SVSG Board
1. FAMILY VIOLENCE
SVSG assisted with processing 49 new cases in November and 30 in December, making up a total of 79 cases lodged with SVSG during these 2 months. 63% of the cases were family violence affecting 50 women and 125 children. 4 of the cases were sexual offending against girls age 5, 7, 16 and 18 with the two younger ones being sheltered for their safety.

While the number of reported cases has declined during this period, SVSG is still concerned at the number of children affected by family violence, with 125 recorded for November and December.

For so long, SVSG has been working with women as part of its prevention programs against family violence; there has been community awareness and education, multi-media campaigns and more recently, the economic empowerment of women.

However, since 2014, SVSG has been working with offenders of violence through court referred men, women and youth referred to its Advocacy Program, providing relevant counselling support to rehabilitate the offenders. The behavioural changes in the offenders justifies SVSG working towards breaking the cycle of violence by getting the men and boys engage in the fight as they have a vital role to play in ending violence against women and children.

In November, the Ministry of Women, Community & Social Development awarded SVSG with the Special Award for Community Social Protection, in recognition of outstanding performance and commitment through inclusive Community Social Protection Programs targeting vulnerable populations.

The award came as the Group near its 14th years of service to the people of Samoa, and we are grateful. Thank you so much Afamasaga Faauiga Mulitalo, Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry for recognizing the work of SVSG.

As a non-governmental organization, the award highlights a continuous transformation in SVSG and its work due to the identified need to support our communities, as much as the changes in the communities as we’ve come to know them inclusively, as families in accordance with SVSG’s motto that We support, we help, we care, WE ARE YOUR FAMILY!

- To Maurice & Elanit Mitry of Australia for the monthly donation towards the Campus water rates;
- To Carolyn Rogers of Abu Dhabi for the monthly donation towards the salary of the Head Matron at the Campus

Airport Donation Box
SVSG’s donation box located at the Departure area at the Faleolo International Airport was cleared out in November. A total $2,672.21 was recorded which covered maintenance for the Campus of Hope. Thank you so much to all those who have donated.

Newlyweds donated for the children
Thank you so much to the newlyweds, Fale and Isadora, for visiting the children at the Campus following your wedding day in December. We are very grateful for the tea supplies for the children’s afternoon tea.

Karen McMorran of New Zealand
Keeping in touch with SVSG’s work through our Facebook page, Karen McMorran from New Zealand put together an assorted of donated items for the children at the House of Hope In December, Sophie and Amanda travelled to Samoa for a holiday and hand carried the donation which they presented to the SVSG office in Apia. Thank you so much Karen for putting together this kind donation. Thank you also to Sophie and Amanda for carrying the gifts over for the children and for helping out with our youth fundraising, the Hope Concert while you were here.

Meriden School Care Packages
The Meriden Anglican girl’s school in Sydney put together care packages and hygiene items for the girl survivors of abuse at the Campus of Hope. Nine boxes of care packages were received in December. The initiative was part of the girls’ term long service project and SVSG acknowledged the leadership role of Miss Elizabeth Owen the Digital & Creative Arts Teacher, who was in charge of the initiative. Thank you also to Lea Magele, the English teacher at the school who was in contact with SVSG on this project.
FINANCIAL & IN KIND DONATION
The extent of SVSG’s support services for our community in need attest to the genuine and durable partnerships we have established. As such, it is a normal process that we acknowledge all the donations received from our partners and network of supporters. For November and December 2018, SVSG acknowledges with gratitude and appreciation the kindness of the following donors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donors</th>
<th>Donation for:</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peace Chapel Christian Fellowship</td>
<td>Court Office Support</td>
<td>600.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific Ezy Money Transfer</td>
<td>SVSG Office</td>
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<td>House 88</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Pouesi</td>
<td>Campus of Hope</td>
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<td>Samana Veavea</td>
<td>Campus of Hope</td>
<td>USD200.00</td>
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In Kind:
- CCK Trading Limited – 5 x bags of clothes
- Jo Stephanie – bag of shoes
- Rev. Ailepata & Nofoaga, CCCS Satapuala – ctn corned beef & tinned fish
- Venus Papalii of Vaitele fou – 4 bags of clothes, 1 bag of shoes
- Carol Vandirmade – 2 boxes chicken, 2 boxes milk, 2 boxes noodles, 1 bale biscuits, 1 bag rice, 2 ctn. Spaghetti
- Vincent Schmidt & Family-6 bags of clothes

A special thank you to SVSG’s ongoing partners for the children’s caring:
- To Toleafoa Elon Betham and the team at the Le Aute Gas for 2 x monthly gas refills for the House of Blessings;
- To Felise Sam Chong and the team at Origin Energy for the gas refill for the House of Hope and your prompt response for our call for assistance;
- To Greg & Maria Meredith for the children’s daily supplies of bread;
- To Tuato & Anna Ryan for the children’s Sunday toanai & bread supplies;
- To Elder Meliula Fata, and the LDS Office for coordinating the regular donations of food, the ongoing maintenance of the Campus and the volunteer support for the children’s rehabilitation programs;
- To Uncle Johnny for the children’s ice cream supply every Sundays;
- To the churches, villages and individuals that donated food and miscellaneous supplies to assist with the children’s daily needs;
- To Mark Tofilau of Sydney Australia for $300 per week donation towards the children’s food and allowance for the Security Guard at the Campus;

With the means such as the 24 hour Help Line, the network of SVSG village representatives throughout Upolu and Savaii, and a dedicated team of passionate individuals, SVSG has been able to reach those in need with the limited resources that we have. Highlighted below are some of the cases SVSG supported during November and December:

18.11.18: Corporal Punishment
The father of a 7 year old in Year 1 brought his son to the SVSG office to lodge a complaint against a Primary School teacher for assaulting his son while at school. The boy sustained severe head injuries and the father was concerned. SVSG immediately referred the matter to the Police for investigation resulting in the offender to be remanded in Police custody. SVSG continues to lobby to the government through its Board to reconsider amending the Bill which allows teachers to use reasonable force in schools.

26.11.18: Attempted Suicide
A 68 year old amputated father has been at the receiving end of ridicule and mockery from his family as a nomad since he returned home. He has been living abroad for 20 years and has returned to look after his elderly mother. He is unmarried with no children. In November, he had an argument with his brother and wife. The same day, he attended the village meeting and he was laughed at when he expressed his views. Hopeless and depressed, he left home and headed for the mountains with only his cell phone and paraquat. He has had enough of life. While sitting up on the mountains around 11.00pm, he remembered the Help Line number and he called for help. That call saved his life as through on line counseling, he was calm enough to return home. The next day, the attempted suicide survivor reported to the SVSG office where he has been undertaking one-on-one counseling.

07.12.18: Sexual Violation
A 7 year old child had both her hands and her eyes tied with a piece of cloth while the offender sexually abused her. The child’s scream saved her as the offender ran away leaving her all tied up. The child told her mother on the same day about what had happened and the father was immediately notified. However, the father decided to resolve the matter within the family given the offender is a relative. The mother disagreed and took her child to her family. It was at the mother’s family that the child started bleeding and was taken to the hospital. The hospital notified the Police and the offender has been charged. The child was referred to SVSG for shelter care while the Police continue with its investigation.
17.12.18: Domestic Violence
A 36 year old mother of 5 children ages 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 was strangled by her husband following a domestic dispute. The mother struggled as she was out of breath but her husband was too strong for her. It wasn’t until she started biting her husband’s hands that she was let go and she ran to her neighbours for help. The abused mother went to her family for her safety. Upon returning home, her husband had left with their 5 children. She sought SVSG’s help in getting her children back as well as in applying for an Interim Protection Order against her husband. SVSG referred the matter to the Police DVU while applying for an IPO for the abused mother.

For immediate support, please call the 800-7874 Help Line.
It is FREE and it is a 24-hour service.

2. CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES
A total of 125 children have been affected by the 79 cases lodged with SVSG during November and December. They were either victims of domestic violence, maintenance, custody, divorce, or sexual offending.

For the abused, abandoned or disability children up to 18 years old, SVSG have been providing child protection services for them for 14 year now. Yet, despite all these years of service, caring for children from different family backgrounds, with different needs, continues to be a learning process.

And for 12 months from January to December 2018, SVSG has been struggling to make ends meet with regards to its child protection services. This is due to the fact that the usual funding support from UNICEF to cover salaries of the 3 staff under its Child Protection Team for 2 years has only been finalized at the end of December.

Nevertheless, SVSG managed to maintain its child protection role due to the generosity of individual donors, visiting schools and the church communities.

International Human Rights Day 2018 with the NHRI
As human rights defenders the world over are on the frontlines of defending the Universal Declaration of Human Rights through their work, Samoa Victim Support Group celebrated the 70th anniversary of this extraordinary document with child vendors, making ends meet on the streets of Apia.

In partnership with the National Human Rights Institute of Samoa (NHRI), SVSG celebrated with child vendors in an activity titled: ‘Buddying up in the Child Vendor’s World of Work’, focusing on human rights and dignity.

The activity aimed at working on the child vendors self-esteem, that they can rise up from the challenges of the streets, to a much better environment such as the classroom, and for SVSG’s case, the Hot Soup Skill Building Training. Each child vendor buddied up with a youth member of the SVSG (Junior) for the whole day at the youth’s workplaces.

From the NHRI and the SVSG’s human rights celebration, 10 more child vendors have enrolled at the Hot Soup Skill Building Training for 2019.

International Human Rights Day 2018 with the UNESCO
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), through Ms. Nisha, representative for the Pacific for UNESCO, recognized SVSG President Siliniu Lina Chang, and others as human rights champions in Samoa during the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Human Rights Declaration in December.

Christmas Gifts from Digicel [with Joseph Parker]
The Champ himself Laauli alemalietoa Joseph Parker assisted the Digicel management and staff in giving out Christmas gifts for the children at the shelter in December. Digicel, like all of SVSG’s business supporters, always has a planned activity for the children of hope during Christmas. But Digicel’s event this year was extra special as the children got to meet in person one of their local heroes, Joseph Parker.

For the Champ, it was an eye opening experience to finally meet the children of hope and instantly connected with them.

There was dancing and singing, the giving out of Christmas gifts and the opportunity to shook hands with the Champ. Thank you Laauli for the donation of $300. For Digicel, thank you so much to the management and the staff for always thinking bigger and better. Thank you for the children’s gifts and for continuing to work in the partnership with SVSG.

9. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
World Children’s Day 2018
The children of hope joined the celebration of the World Children’s Day in November the best way they knew how, through prayer.

Holding hands around the ‘Peace Garden’ created Miss Leilua Lino, a survivor of incest rape who is now recognized as one of the three finalists for the International Children’s Peace Prize 2018, it was simply heaven on earth.

As the sun rises, the birds chirped and the breeze soothes the skin, the babies, the toddlers, the special needs, the young and the old, rejoiced to the God Almighty in singing and in prayer. The SVSG President, the staff, the SVSG Juniors, the matrons who looked after the children, the security guards, and the groundsmen joined in the prayer celebration.

The positive changes in the lives of the children that we helped, the maturity in which the older survivors of sexual offending have shown when standing up in court, the confidence that comes with healing, have all been the rewards experienced in this child protection role.

2018 has seen the transformation in the work of SVSG through the rehabilitated children whom we have saved; that through their stories, the results of this work have been told. All the glory and honour to our God almighty for His merciful love and grace.

2.1 Campus of Hope
The children’s refuge have been home to a total of 75 children during November and December, with the Christmas period leading up to the new year being the busiest period with new admissions to the Campus of Hope. This is due to a number of domestic violence cases that affected the children during the festive season, hence their evacuation to the Campus for their safety.

We had 5 babies cared for at the nursery, 54 girls and 16 boys, age ranging from 6 months to 18 years old.

In November, an 18 year old rape victim has been hospitalized due to a severe heart condition that resulted in a minor stroke late November. While SVSG volunteers have been rostered to care for her 24/7, the supporting SVSG family have been praying for her recovery.

Stephen Fua with his mother Dr Diana Fuata’i based in the United States of America, visited our dear child in hospital and donated diapers for her usage. Stephen prayed for her and encouraged her ‘never to give up hope’. Thank you Stephen Fua and Dr Diana Fuata’i for the donation and for spending time with our courageous child.

On the brighter side, November saw the announcement of Ms. Leilua Lino, one of the brave hero residence of the Campus of Hope, as one of the 3 finalists for the International Children’s Peace Prize Award coordinated by the Kids Right Foundation of Amsterdam Netherlands.
Justice Vui congratulated Leilua on her achievement:


Supreme Court Justice and representative of the Pacific region on the Committee on the Rights of the Child (C.R.C), Justice Vui Clarence Nelson, has congratulated Leilua Lino.

Leilua is one of the three finalists for the International Children’s Peace Prize 2018.

Her story of hope has made her part of the change maker movement coordinated by the Kids Right Foundation of Amsterdam.

“It is certainly a reflection of the resilience and strength shown by our children,” says one of S.V.S.G. Board member.”

Samoa Victim Support Group nominated Leilua, as the Group saw how she had created a Peace Garden as a way of coping with her anger towards those who have hurt her.

With the announcement of the three finalists by the Kids Rights Foundation earlier this week, S.V.S.G. is humbled by the recognition. It speaks of the support network behind the abused children’s journey to recovery both here and abroad.

Among such supporters is Justice Vui Clarence Nelson, whose belief, translated into fatherly advises to the Group and visitations to the children at the Campus of Hope, continues to bear positive fruits.

Justice Vui has always been vocal and expressed concerns about the high levels of abuse, domestic violence and incest due to fear of stigma in Samoa.

When Justice Vui heard of Leilua’s progress in the world of children advocacy, he sent his congratulations. “This is excellent news, via le Atua.”

And you sure did help May; you not only donated $6,000 to help finance other necessities needed for the shelter; you took off during one of our meetings and came back with a brand new weed eater to help the groundsmen maintain the Campus yard and once you heard about the drive behind the SVSG Juniors Hope Concert, you donated enough to buy one of our underprivileged families a 1,000 litre water tank.

We pray for God’s peace in your life May and we look forward to seeing you again when you visit.

Jim & Mindy Wiese of Springfield Missouri

It was a blessing to have Jim and Mindy Wiese at the Campus while on a mission in Samoa.

There was sharing on the love of God as Jim & Mindy prayed and played with the children. We pray for God’s guidance and blessing on your Missions and Evangelism work this year Jim & Mindy.

Aso Vavau of New Zealand

It was good to catch up with one of the long time supporter of SVSG from New Zealand, Ms. Aso Vavau.

Thank you Aso for the chocolates for the children as well as the $100.00 presented for their ice cream. Thank you also for buying the Nofotane brand.
Lead by a delegation of Bishops, Brothers and Sisters including Bishop Meliula Fata, and Brother Alema Tanielu who shared on the importance of their visit to the Campus and how the children inspired the youth to lend a helping hand.

It was a humbling experience for SVSG, meeting the Challenge 5000 Group for the first time yet it felt like we have known each youth member all along.

Thank you so much to the Bishops, the Brothers, the Sisters and the youth members for your genuine interest to support and help the Campus further. Thank you also for the donation of $1,400 presented to assist with the children’s daily caring.

The Favona 1st Youth performing the haka for the children

Gounder Family of New Zealand

We were very grateful to the Grounders for visiting the Campus while in Samoa for Christmas. It was such a beautiful sharing by Soonafai Gounder and how humble her upbringing was.

Thank you Fai for sharing. Thank you also for the assorted Christmas gifts for the children.

May Schwalger of Sydney Australia

A lady of a few words with a giving heart. May first walked into SVSG’s office late November to offer help. And as we shared out story, little did we know that May was on a healing mission herself.

According to May, “helping others helped me recover from what I have been through.”

He even took time out from Court to congratulate her in person.

The S.V.S.G. Patron, Chair and the Board, Executive Committee and the growing S.V.S.G. family therefore joins the Kids Right Foundation in congratulating Leilua for making it this far.

“We look forward to the announcement of the winner for the International Children’s Peace Prize 2018, on the 20th November, knowing that our local girl is already a winner in her recovery journey.

According to a dear friend of the children at the Campus, “I would like to remind Leilua that to win, we do not need to come first. The goal is just dream, and never ever let that dream go or let anybody tell you that you can’t achieve that dream.”

Leilua’s message to the abused children in Samoa is that “if I can do it, you can too.”


In December, Janet Wilson, author of Our Future: How kids are taking action expressed her interest to include Leilua’s story of creating a Peace Garden in her book. Janet Wilson is an author and illustrator of over fifty books for young people. Many have won many major awards in Canada and internationally. She is also an inspirational speaker. http://www.janetwilson.ca/

Leilua’s story of healing is now going global to save any child from going through the same hardship she went through herself.

Later in November, the Dental Clinic of the National Health Services attended to the dental needs of the children during a clinic held at the Campus of Hope.

Thank you so much Maulolo Folo and the team for coordinating this support and we look forward to continuing these clinics at the Campus for the children.

And to ensure that the children of hope enjoy the festivities like all the children, the church and the business communities have been very supportive.
**Digicel (Samoa) Limited**

Late November saw the children enjoying a bus ride to the SNPF Plaza to take part in the official lighting of the Digicel Christmas lights.

This was followed by a movie night upstairs at the Digicel office where the children were spoilt by the Digicel staff serving them pizza and drinks while enjoying the movie.

Thank you Digicel for inviting the children to witness the lighting of the Christmas lights. Thank you also to Fiaailetoa Pepe Christian Fruean and the team for your on-going support.

**St. Anthony Parish Sunday School**

The Sunday School of the St. Anthony Parish of the Catholic Church at Mulivai lead by Deacon Aukuso Gabriel, spent one Saturday with the children singing and praising.

Pictured here are members of the Sunday School dancing to the Making Melodies tune as they enjoyed their time with the children.

Thank you so much Dr. Sina Vaai and the Sunday School teachers for coordinating this fun day with the children. Thank you also for the donations presented to assist with the children’s daily needs.

**Holy Family Parish of Taufusi**

Catechist Penitito Posiano represented the Holy Family Catholic Parish at Taufusi to present five bags of clothes for the children cared for at Campus of Hope. The donation was put together by all members of the Holy Family Parish under the leadership of Father Losi Numia, Deacon Soopele Siamoa and Chairperson Sala Epi.

Thank you for your continuous support for these vulnerable children.

**Catholic Parish of Vaimoso**

November also saw the Catholic Parish of Vaimoso donating food supplies and clothing as part of the churches donation to those in need.

Thank you to parish priest Father Sanele Tuilaepa, Deacon Faleafa Mata’ia and Faleuta, Deacon Mikaele Fonoti and Faletua, Deacon Faalotonu Une and Faletua, Chair of the Vaimoso Parish Manuleleua Talitau and congregation, for supporting the daily needs of the children cared for at the Campus of Hope.

**James Palu and friends**

James and Lala were in Samoa for a holiday and took time out to spend some time with the children.

Speaking to the children, James encouraged them to keep the faith as he related very well to their situation.

Thank you James and Lala for inspiring the children through your visit.

**Challenge 5000 Group**

More than 50 youth who called themselves Challenge 5000, from different ethnicities who attend the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints in Auckland, spent time with the children early December.
Coralie Allen of the Kindest Cut

She is no stranger to the children at the Campus as Coralie had made regular visits from Sydney Australia, just to spend time with the children and treat them to a hair-cut. Early November saw Coralie at work with Peata of the Peata’s Salon, cutting the children’s hair.

At the same time, a container load of donations put together by Coralie and supporters in Sydney, was de-vanned at the Campus, containing miscellaneous food and clothing materials.

While some of the donated items were for the children at the Campus, the rest were distributed to assist with the welfare needs of the community, who have sought SVSG’s assistance.

Coralie with the assistance by the SVSG Juniors distributed the basic food and supplies to the underprivileged members of the community while she was in the country. Thank you so much Coralie for the heart to keep on coming back to support SVSG and its work.

Antioch Assembly of God of Ilili American Samoa

The Evangelism Team of the Antioch International Evangelism Ministry visited the children in November as part of their Outreach program in Samoa.

Lead by Lay Preacher Falō Johansson under the leadership of Rev. Asaua & Fia Fuimaono, the group’s Outreach was to take the Word of God and the message of salvation to those who are suffering and faced with life difficulties; fulfilling the great Commission God has commanded for every believer to proclaim. Thank you Falo Johansson for always including the children at the Campus in the Church’s Outreach program. You first visited us in 2016 and you continued to support us any way you can. Thank you also for the donation of $500.00 presented during your visit.

Island Rock

For the Island Rock Company Limited, the children of hope were amongst the families visited as part of the company’s “25 days of the spirit of Christmas”. There were gifts for each child as the company’s staff went around wishing them a joyous festive season.

Thank you so much Tuaopepe Jerry Wallwork, the management and the staff of the Island Rock for your continuous support.

Samoa Stationery & Books

As long-time supporters of SVSG’s work especially for the children, Aumua Ming and Tofilau Fiti Leung Wai and the staff of the Samoa Stationery & Books, in partnership with the Miss SFA’s Project, put together Christmas gifts for the children for Christmas and a monetary donation of $200.00.

In welcoming Asomua Asia Stanley and staff of SSAB at the Campus, SVSG President acknowledged the ongoing support from SSAB. Thank you so much Aumua Ming & Tofilau Fiti Leung Wai.

2.2 School of Hope

A total of 70 children attended the school on Campus during November and December, taking the total number of children being taught at the School of Hope for 2018 to 206 [50 boys and 156 girls].

Funding support from the government enabled SVSG to recruit teachers and volunteer trainers for the School throughout the year.

An in compliance with reporting requirements by the Ministry of Education, Sports & Culture, SVSG submitted a financial and narrative report in December, for the funding support received from the government through MESC for 2018.
There was never a shortage of love and support for the children at the School of Hope.

Early November saw Mrs. Cassandra Hart and the Year 8 students of the Peace Chapel School spending time at the School of Hope.

They played games and fellowship with each other, with a promise to continue this inter-school visitation in the future.

The children were also invited to take part in the Missionary Infants School Moamoa sports day in November.

There was so much fun as the children from both schools enjoyed each other’s company and fellowship through sports.

Thank you Sister Palepa for the invitation. No matter the difficulties they go through, but you have opened up your hearts and accepted them as who they are.

There are no UPY students coming out of the School of Hope, nor will there be any SSC or SSLC graduating from it.

But the success of the School of Hope is measured by the resilience of the children to rise up from the challenges they faced as abused and abandoned children, to become inspirational figures for other abused and abandoned children.

They will graduate from the School of Hope as stronger individuals ready to face life outside of the Campus.

Some of these success stories from the School of Hope include:

Three families at Malaemalu Falealii and one from Faleula have had their water tanks installed, with delivery to others still progressing. The SSGJ (Junior) youth groups from these villages have helped with the cement work for the tanks. [Donations: Hope Concert for Clean Water –- Bluesky $1,000; Pacific Ezy Money $200; Fexco $250; Chan Mow & Company Ltd $1,000; Maurice & Elanit Mitry $2987.00]

Gender Based Violence Awareness

The youth participated in the Samoa Faafafine Association activity to celebrate the International Human Rights Day, through a float event.

Proud in the SSGJ yellow and black colours, the youth used the event to raise awareness on Ending Gender Based Violence as well as the Positive Movement as per the ‘We Can, You Can’ Campaign.

8. VISITORS & SUPPORTERS

Samoa Business Network

Following the Business Trip Conference for the Samoa Business Network early November, members of the network from New Zealand visited the children at the Campus for the first time.

Accompanying the visitors was Afamasaga Jackie Curry who has been very accommodating by including SSGJ in the Community Projects/NGO discussion panel which focuses on the opportunity to introduce “Social Enterprise” as a way of creating sustainability for NGOs.

Thank you to the Samoa Business Network for the donation of $1,700 presented to the children during your visit.
It has been a busy time for the youth group as they finalized their community projects planned for 2018.

### Book Drive for Foailuga Savaii
In November, the SVSG Juniors launched a book drive for to help set up a library for the children at Foailuga Savaii. The initiative was in response to a request from the community at Foailuga Savaii, for a library to assist with the children’s reading.

At the same time, fundraising activities such as Zumba and the Hope Concert we carried out for the Clean Water Project, assisting underprivileged families access water as part of SVSG’s welfare assistance.

### Clean Water Project
SVSG’s Welfare Database attests to many of our families in need of welfare assistance. And therein was the focus of SVSG (Juniors) fundraising drives during November & December, through the Zumba and the Hope Concert – to give back to the community through a drive for clean water. The youth’s target was to supply 10 x 1,000 litre water tanks to 10 families under the SVSG database, in need of clean water.

We therefore acknowledge with gratitude the support from our donors, both here and abroad, who have made this Clean Water project a reality. A special thank you to Fred Yazadani, General Manager of the Rotomould Water Tank at Fugalei for partnering with us for this project.

From the Zumba fundraising, the youth were able to secure 1 x 1,000 litre water tank. The Hope Concert late November and the donations from our supporting partners enabled the youth to reach its target of 10 x 1,000 litre water tanks. Chan Mow and family donated for 1 tank; May Schwenke of Melbourne Australia donated another while Maurice and Elanit Mitry of Sydney Australia donated 3 tanks. Fittings and cement for the tanks have all been provided through this project.

- Feagaiga Stowers who became one of Samoa’s gold medalist in weightlifting at the Commonwealth Games at the Gold Coast Australia in April. In December, Feagaiga was one of the nominations by the Samoa Observer for the Person of the Year 2018;
- Fatima Menefata who graduated from a Culinary Course while attending the School of Hope and is now working as a full time Chef Assistant at the Tanoa Tusitala Hotel; and
- Leilua Lino who is one of the 3 finalists for the International Children’s Peace Prize Award 2018 for her Peace Garden initiative developed while being a student of the School of Hope. In December, Leilua was one of the nominations by the Samoa Observer for the Person of the Year 2018, alongside fellow student and sister of hope, Feagaiga Stowers.

### 2.3 Child Vendors – The Hot Soup Skill Building Training
The skill building school continues to gather momentum as it near the years end.

SVSG President had been meeting with the mothers of the children under the Hot Soup program to encourage the children to the trainings so that they are able to develop their talents further, rather than becoming child vendors.

To cater for the demand for Christmas cards and unique Christmas gifts during the festive season, children at the Hot Soup Skill Building Training produced creative Christmas cards and Manger products made coconut shells. While the Christmas cards were sold to the supporting business community and individuals, the Manger products of Baby Jesus were delivered as Christmas gifts to SVSG’s supporting partners.

The Hot Soup Training also hosted child vendors involved in the Human Rights Celebration early December, as part of the SVSG and the National Human Rights Institute Buddy up activity.
After taking the child vendors for workplace tours, the last visit was at the Hot Soup Skills Training centre. Seeing the children trying on different tools used for skill building and the excitement in their faces upon completing a product, was enough to justify the need for education for these young entrepreneurs.

From the NHRI and the SVSG’s human rights celebration, 10 more child vendors have enrolled at the Hot Soup Skill Building Training for 2019.

And the community has been supportive of the families of the children under the Hot Soup Skills Training.

Leading up to Christmas, Father Spartz Silva and members of the Catholic Church visited each family at Tafaigata whose children attended the Hot Soup Skills Training, to present them with Christmas meals. For most of these families, it was the first time that they have been treated to a delicious hot meal for Christmas and with presents for the children.

Thank you so much Fr. Spartz and the women’s fellowship that put together this kind gesture for these families for Christmas.

2.4 With and For Girls Award

While the 2 year funding as one of the 2016 recipients of the WAFG Award came to an end in December 2018, SVSG is grateful to the Star Foundation for coordinating the Awards to recognize work of organisations across the world that supports girls and their empowerment.

For 2018, SVSG’s work had made huge progress not only in supporting the theme of the With and For Girls #PressForProgress International Women’s Day 2018, but most importantly, we have been able to translate these progresses into outcomes for some of the girls.

We had not just one, but two of our girls at the Campus of Hope, namely Leilua Lino and Feagaiga Stowers, being nominated by the Samoa Observer for Persons of the year 2018.

6. ONE SKY GIVING CIRCLE

Taking on a positive mentality towards life in general is the behind the ‘We Can, You Can’ Positive Movement.

More and more supporters of SVSG have come on board in November and December to become agents of change through the ‘We Can, You Can’ Campaign.

Patricia Shi from the University of Liaocheng in China was happy to share the positive message. Patricia left her home and spent 3 years teaching Mathematics at the Lotofaga College and Vaimauga College. According to Patricia, if she can sacrifice her time to help others, so can you.

At the Moamoa Missionary Infants School, Sister Palepa, teachers and students became part of the Positive Movement by taking time out to pose for the cameras bearing the ‘We Can, You Can’ banners.

Then we had the Sunday School from the St. Anthony Parish, Mulivai, doing their part in spreading the Positive Movement when they visited in November.

At the Samoa Faafafine Association activity to celebrate the International Human Rights Day, the Sisters of Hope joined the Youth Empowerment Group to promote the ‘We Can, You Can’ campaign while taking part in the SVSG Juniors float for the day.
5. THE NOFOTANE PROJECT WITH THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT (CFLI)

The period November and December saw the SHINE Program reaching close to 200 newly self-employed nofotane women of Faleula, Afega, Tuanai, Leauvaa, Levi, Lotosoa Salepuae, Utualii, Tufulele, Faleasii, and Sapapual in Upolu; and Tufutafoe, Falealupo, Fausaga, Falelima, Sagone, Fogatuli, Vaipuna, Salailua, Siutu, Saleaula to Faasaleleaga in Savaii.

The self-esteem workshops have been marked by an appreciation of the women’s economic empowerment not only by their husbands and children, but also their village communities.

As earners for their families, the nofotane women have challenged all unemployed women with a positive message, that “if we can earn a living for our families through the work of our hands, you can too! For the nofotane earners in remote areas of Savaii such as Tufutafoe, Falealupo, Fausaga, Falelima, they shared on the challenge they face as new entrepreneurs in sourcing out markets for their products.

And this is where the CFLI Project comes in, to assist the women with developing the quality of their products and in linking them with market affiliations both locally, and internationally.

The 6-months project with the Canadian government through its Wellington office will be completed on 28 February 2019 with a market day to showcase the nofotane women’s products and to celebrate the sustainability of their economic empowerment.

In paying tribute to their achievements, SVSG is re-printing herein the stories on the girls’ nomination as per the Samoa Observer edition of 30 December 2018:

Leilua Lino - Helping Survivors of child abuse to find peace
By Adel Fruean, 30 December 2018
25 Hits

FINDING PEACE: Leilua Lino (middle) advocating for her peace campaign together with children at the Campus of Hope. (Photo: Samoa Victim Support Group)

In September this year the findings of a public inquiry into family violence in Samoa were officially released, and uncovered extremely high levels of violence against women and girls.

Data from the inquiry indicated that 9.5 per cent of the female respondents reported being raped by a family member in their lifetime.

The story of 18-year-old Leilua Lino is of a girl turning tragedy into a cause to empower survivors of sexual violence — having been raped by her own biological father at the age of nine, and being bold to testify against him in Court and later raise awareness in primary schools on child abuse — for the benefit of children across Samoa.

Her testimony in Court — despite her mother’s plea that he was a “good man” — proved crucial in ensuring her father was sentenced to 29 years imprisonment.

Last month Leilua received international recognition for her work at the Samoa Victim Support Group, when she was announced as one of three finalists for the International Children’s Peace Prize 2018, as her primary-school and community-focused awareness has reached over 3000 children and compelled over 100 children to report abuse, according to the Amsterdam-based not-for-profit organisation KidsRights Foundation.

The courage that she is showing and the lives that she is impacting in community schools in Samoa and in the communities makes her a nominee for the Samoa Observer People of the Year 2018.

Speaking to the Samoa Observer recently, Leilua said she came from a poor family and her mother sold cucumbers to raise her and her seven brothers’ school fees.
Her life changed when her father started drinking and would beat her up in rage.

“When I was young, my relationship with my parents was very good, I used to love going to school. My school experience had its ups and downs.

“But everything changed when my father started drinking, it changed his ways. My father was a good man, he always goes to church, but when alcohol was introduced in his life he stopped going to church.

“At the age of nine, my whole life turned upside down. It never crossed my mind that my own biological father could do something like this and that was when he raped me at a young age,” she said.

Her mother did not believe her when she told her of the incident, according to Leilua.

“As I cried myself to sleep every night, the thought of my own mother not helping me tore me apart from within. My mother would always tell me, after it happened, that my father was a good man. But I pleaded with my mother that I needed her help. My cry for help was not heard and I used to wonder if there was a reason for my existence, because no one loved me, even my own blood.”

Leilua’s abusive father eventually stopped her from attending school, and ordered that she stayed home and did the house chores. On Sundays, she found solace in the church’s Sunday school class, and one day opened up on her abuse by her father with best friend Rosalina.

“She (Rosalina) advised me to seek help because I was young and my situation was not something that could happen to me at that age. She told our pastor if he was really in need of help and I said yes, please help me. Our pastor contacted Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG) who sent a representative to speak to me about what happened,” she added.

Leilua moved to the SVSG — who then helped her to file a police statement that incriminated her father — and opened a new chapter in her life, by becoming an “ambassador for peace” and reaching out to children exposed to abuse through her Peace Garden and raising awareness.

“I created peace gardens in our campus which have helped 200 children to recover from trauma. I was set on becoming an ambassador of peace, to change lives of those that suffered the same fate as mine to convince them in life they are not alone; there is always someone out there that can give a helping hand.

Inspirational speakers such as Ms. May Schwalger from Australia also shared with the youth on the importance of being educated;

In December, the parents and families of all youth under the Youth Development Programme were treated to a Christmas performance by their rehabilitated sons in the Youth Development Programme.

Thank you so much to all the volunteer facilitators for taking time out to coordinate the different programs which enabled us to influence some form of behavioural changes in the lives of the men, women and young champions, who are now advocates of violence free families.

4. SVSG VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES

The commitment from our proud SVSG village representatives has been outstanding.

They came as individuals and worked as a group which enabled SVSG to reach even the most isolated of places, just to lend a helping hand.

The village representatives are not just village leaders, they are also church ministers and family leaders, who have put up their hands to be the first point of contact for any call received by SVSG through the Help Line, requiring support. They do all these work for free, opting to become volunteers for SVSG and its work.

In December, the SVSG village representatives for Savaii celebrated the end of the year’s work with a thanksgiving service lead by Reverend Faamanua Faaliga of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa Papa Puleia.

Thank you so much to all the SVSG village representatives for all your hard work and perseverance throughout the year.
2.5 ECPAT International

In November, ECPAT International (ECPAT) launched the Sexual Exploitation of Children (SEC) in Pacific Region Survey. The main objective of this project is to explore the scale, scope and context of the sexual exploitation of children in the Pacific region.

Specifically, this project aims at gather data from frontline workers that:

- Indicates the extent of SEC in the Pacific region;
- Provides information on country level trends in SEC;
- Measures the level of awareness of service providers and practitioners;
- Explores the impact of cultural and social norms on SEC.

ECPAT will use the data gathered to produce a brief paper about sexual exploitation of children in the Pacific that can be used to generate momentum and justify advocacy for responses and further research in this domain. As a member of the ECPAT International since 2013, SVSG has been coordinating the completion of the survey by frontline workers for children in Samoa.

3. ADVOCACY PROGRAMS FOR OFFENDERS OF VIOLENCE

Breaking the cycle of violence by working with the perpetrators of violence referred by the Family Court to SVSG’s advocacy program continues to gather momentum as the year came to an end.

The three different programs under the Men’s Advocacy, the Tina Faufautua for women and the Youth Development Program for the young offenders have seen practical rehabilitation more effective.

There are facilitated counselling sessions by volunteer church and village leaders;

The youth took part in the Human Rights Day celebration with child vendors;

“In life, I want to be a light that is shone upon those that have no voice; I want to dedicate my life in serving God’s purpose and not of my own desires. In the end I had the chance to forgive my own father of what he did to me not for him but for my own peace.

“In the bible it says that if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins your Father will not forgive your sins,” she added.


A lovely couple from Sydney Australia, Edisson Arias and Ana Grassi dropped by SVSG’s office to congratulate Leilua for such an achievement and donated supplies for the children.

Feagaiaga Stowers - I used to be afraid of the outside world -
By Thomas Airey , 30 December 2018

GOLDEN MOMENT: Feagaiaga Stowers.
(Photo: Andrew Cornaga / www.photosport.)
Weightlifter Feagaiaga Stowers was just 17 years old when she won gold at the Commonwealth Games held on Australia’s Gold Coast in April.

It was a crowning moment for perhaps Samoa’s brightest young athlete.

And Stowers’ star shines even brighter given the darkness that surrounded her upbringing. A survivor of abuse, there was a time when Stowers used to think her life didn’t mean anything.
"Not being able to be with family is the saddest thing," she told the Samoa Observer in 2016.

"I used to be afraid of the outside world and I thought that everyone was just as evil as the people who hurt me."

She was taken in by the S.V.S.G Campus of Hope in 2013 and the only person she felt she could trust was 'Mama Lina', the SVGS president Siliniu Lina Chang.

"Feagaiaga has come a long way from a shy and hopeless survivor to a champion that she is today," Siliniu said in a statement after the Commonwealth Games.

She said Stowers was one of the girl survivors of violence that took up weightlifting as part of their rehabilitation programme in 2015 through a partnership with the Samoa Weightlifting Federation.

"Through weightlifting, she found a way to release her anger and her sense of hopelessness."

S.W.F president and head coach Tuaopepe Jerry Wallwork told the Samoa Observer after the Commonwealth Games that he saw potential in Stowers the first time he had met her.

"Feagaiga is a special young lady. I think when I say special, she’s had a bit of tough upbringing." He said he is happy that weightlifting has saved her and given her the right path to follow.

"We just needed to instil the discipline, the drive, the direction to guide her."

He said she’s a quiet young lady, and rarely says a word even to her coach who works with daily.

"Even when she’s injured, she still doesn’t say a word, so I have to find out from some of the senior girls that she’s injured."

In an interview with Samoa Observer in 2016, Stowers said that Tuaopepe gave her hope by introducing her to weightlifting, the sport which gave her a second chance at life.

"Once I got to train with Tuaopepe and I saw how amazing it is to be noticed and appreciated by people, that really cheered me up.

"So coming in here has made me realise that what happened in past is the past but it is up to us to choose which pathway to take, it is up to us whether we dwell on the past or start a new beginning for our own self.

"He didn’t look at my background; he didn’t look at my past but he focused on how I can become somebody in the future."

Tuaopepe said she has the same natural talent as Ele Opeloge, and is every chance to emulate the Olympic silver medallist lifter.

"So for her to reach this level at this young age, and she’s only been lifting for three years, or little bit less than three years, is fantastic."

Stowers told the Samoa Observer after winning gold at the Commonwealth Games she never thought it could happen.

"What I have learnt from this competition is to not run away from challenges; God will always make things possible."

She said the medal wasn’t just for her, but also her family, friends, country and teammates.

Stowers will always be grateful to Siliniu for pushing her to do something that matters in life.

The S.V.S.G president said Stowers’ success was humbling, not just for the gold medal, but because of her successful reintegration into society.

"With confidence and determination, the once shy teenage girl is now a Champion in her own right; a survivor living life to the fullest outside of the Campus of Hope."

That former shy teenage girl is training every day for upcoming International Weightlifting Federation World Cup in China next February, before the Pacific Games is held in Samoa in July.

Her long term goal is the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo, where she’ll hope to match or better Ele Opeloge’s silver medal at Beijing 2008.

Given all that she’s come through in her first 18 years of life, you would have to back this member of the Samoa Observer’s People of the Year 2018 to keep on shining.