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 as it becomes the voice of our people in need:

Mari’s Bakery

Ola Fou Clinic

Saleufi Medical Clinic

KATINA MISSIONS

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:

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
SVSG has engaged the support of the Little Angels Foundation of New Zealand to provide welfare assistance to our vulnerable children.

Other In Kind Donations:
- Emma Heard of Motootua – assorted books, clothes, 1 x kg baby formula
- CCK Trading – 5 x bags CCK Coffee
- Alisa Tiaina of Tokelau – 2 x boxes of clothes
- Heperoma Toleafoa – bag of clothes

Seiuli & Janice Sefo of Malie and America 4 x large boxes of clothes

Other Financial Donations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donors</th>
<th>Donation for</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women in Business</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVSG (Sydney)</td>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>480.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous Donor</td>
<td>Office</td>
<td>150.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fatuaiupu Consult</td>
<td>Office</td>
<td>500.00</td>
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Peace Chapel Christian Fellowship: Keeping the Faith
Despite the incident that partly affected the home of the Peace Chapel Christian Fellowship in January, Pastor Samoa Unoi and congregation persevered unwaveringly in faith. With SVSG being a recipient of the Fellowship’s generosity over the years, the incident did not stop them from ensuring that their monthly donation of $300 for each month in January and February were received on time.

This ensured that when we attended the court cases of our sheltered girls during this period, there was fuel for office cars to transport them from the shelter to the Courts, to the Police for interviews or to the Office of the National Prosecution for court preparation. They are provided with water and refreshment to sustain them while the hearing takes a day or two. That SVSG’s court office has enough stationery supplies for reporting or to document new referrals from the Family Court to SVSG’s advocacy program for offenders of violence. Thank you Pastor Samoa & Alesi Unoi and the Fellowship at Peace Chapel for keeping the faith.

Mark Tofilau: It’s All About the Heart
Since late 2016, Mark Tofilau, a Good Samaritan and a son of Samoa residing in Sydney Australia, have been sharing his blessings with the children at the Campus of Hope. Through fortnightly donations via a local wholesale company, Mark’s donation have provided for baby products valued at ST4,800 to date.

Because of Mark and many other supporters out there who have donated towards the Nursery Shelter, the babies have never been in soiled diapers for a day or two as the diapers you donated kept them clean. No child from the Nursery has died of malnutrition as the donated baby formula sustains them. We do our best to give our children love, and they reciprocated with a hug.

Talofa Lava
Greetings and welcome to our First Edition for the year 2017. We trust that you and your families have had a great start to the year, and if not, then the year will only bring in new challenges that God will ensure to walk with you throughout all of them.

Last year we introduced a new name for the newsletter to give it a theme for the work of SVSG. However, since that time, the use of this title ‘The Voice’ has become commonly used in Samoa by various members of the media and as such, we have developed another title of this newsletter. We therefore use the title, ‘Engage’ as a new project for the With and for Girls Award, to develop this newsletter eventually into a magazine to engage various sectors of the community, especially our youth. We use the title Engage because we hope that this will be the beginning of a form of communication where various members of the community are engaged into discussions and gain better understanding of the issues in our community, so that they may also engage into the community and contribute to support each other.

It is a new year, and to live in the past would only bring bitterness and wrinkles on our faces. We therefore move on with this new year so that we can do better and become better at what we do. Concentrating on negativity and those who go out of their way to bring out negativity on others unnecessarily, is a waste of our time and energy, when there is so much more to do.

We therefore hope that our SVSG family, friends and supporters welcome this new idea for our newsletter, and support the development of this newsletter into a magazine, to engage our community for our families and our children.

So enjoy!

Georgina Lui
Chairperson of the SVSG Board
1. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence continues to be an issue in Samoa. Of the cases in which people sought assistance from SVSG, 59% of those cases were of domestic violence matters in January this year alone. This increased to 67% of the cases in February this year. There used to be an awareness programme in New Zealand on domestic violence which labelled domestic violence as a cycle. If a kid sees his father abuse his mother, he will grow up to be his father because that is how he was brought up. So to end domestic violence in one home, is to break the cycle. The father or the mother has to take responsibility to ensure that the child does not grow up in that environment otherwise the cycle will just continue.

Two cases brought to the attention of SVSG stood out for these two months:

Case Highlights - Family Violence & Child Abuse
2 separate cases but similar effects on the mother of a 16 year old and grandmother of a 14 year old. Both are girls and their guardians were in tears at SVSG’s office, seeking parental advice on how to handle the girls. The circumstances surrounding these different cases are the same, as both girls are from broken families, and have suffered from physical abuse.

So while SVSG provided counselling support to the mother and grandmother, the matters regarding the abuse on the girls were referred to Police to ensure something is done.

A 30 year old mother of 2 and the breadwinner for the family had enough of life and attempted suicide. Her 2 year old child who could barely speak became her voice. She alerted the neighbours about her mother and the neighbours arrived just in time before it was too late. The neighbour called the Help Line and the mother and her children are now under the care of SVSG for counselling and assistance in the form of shelter and basics supply such as food.

It is not sure if there is something wrong in our community if a mother would rather try to kill herself in front of her own children than seek help from members of her community. Samoa has always prided itself that Samoa is a family oriented community and people are communal in the way they live. SVSG was questioned by many Samoans in its establishment because of the belief that no one in Samoa does not have family.

Pacific Ezy Money Transfer: Supporter All the Way
A long-time supporter of SVSG, Pacific Ezy Money Transfer presented monetary donation of $1,000 in January to assist with SVSG’s work. Pacific Ezy Money donates monthly towards the operation of the office, a welcome support to cover cash power, stationery needs, fuel for office vehicles and other necessities to run the office.

Thank you to Magele Daniel Ah Kau and staff of the Pacific Ezy Money for supporting SVSG all the way.

Origin Energy: There is Power in Solidarity
Since 2015, the Origin Energy has been providing gas for the House of Hope as part of their community support. However, this year, Origin Energy has extended its support to include gas refill for the Ray of Hope shelter, home to the pregnant survivors of sexual abuse.

In January, the Chairperson of the SVSG Board Georgina Lui signed the contract to officiate this extension of Origin Energy’s support. “When we first visited the Campus, we saw the need for support, hence Origin Energy’s commitment to supply gas for the shelter.” Felise Sam Chong, General Manager.

“Thank you so much Felise and staff for the heart to support our work. You and the Team have always been behind the scene supporters but we believe that there is power in solidarity.” Siliniu Lina Chang, SVSG President

Origin Energy representative carrying the ‘Torch of Peace’ to end violence in 2012
FINANCIAL & IN KIND DONATIONS

Shelter Renovations

During the school break, there was repair work done to the House of Hope, the first shelter built on the Campus. Repairs included replacing the floor in the main areas of the house, painting as well as repairs to the roof.

We thank you to all those who were kind enough to help out including Daniel Burkhart of the Clean 4 All for the pesticide cleaning, and our Australian friend from the Gold Coast who continually helps SVSG and also funded this renovation at a total cost of ST21,102.00

SSAB: A Timely Act of Support

Late January saw the Staff Social Committee of the Samoa Stationery & Books (SSAB) presenting SVSG with ST2,000, as a gift for the start of the new year.

SSAB has always supported the work of SVSG but this donation was from the staff’s social funds. The social conscience of the SSAB Chief Executive Officer, Mrs. Fiti Leung Wai is admired for it appears to be now adopted by members of her staff. So thank you to the staff of SSAB for this wonderful and positive inspiration for the start of the New Year.

Sometimes, it is not only the gift itself that matters, but the act of support which is needed from time to time, to show us that the work is appreciated. This serves to strengthen our spirit in continuing the work.

From the SVSG Board, thank you Aumua, Fiti and staff. The gift and your show of support could not have come at a better time this year.

Case Highlights – Sexual Abuse

A 12 year old with disabilities who has been left with her brother to the care of an uncle, was caught indecently assaulted by the same uncle. The parents of the children have separated, leaving their two children with relatives. As a child, with disabilities and with no parents, the 12 year old is one of the many vulnerable children out there. An SVSG village representative, found out about the abuse and referred the matter to SVSG through its help line.

In this case it was not the family who helped this child. It was a stranger but still a person within the community who had enough courage to break the cycle on the abuse of this child. Our perceptions of family in Samoa is not supported by this case because it was a family member who was harming the child.

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

If you witness domestic violence and want to do something about it, call the Help Line.
In summary, people seeking assistance with SVSG were a total of ninety two during January and February 2017:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>January 2017</th>
<th>February 2017</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 Interim Protection Orders providing protection for 20 children and 10 mothers;</td>
<td>19 Interim Protection Orders providing protection for 43 children and 19 mothers;</td>
<td>31 Interim Protection Orders providing protection for 63 children and 29 mothers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 out of 12 were Protection Order for cases referred from Police</td>
<td>8 of these IPOs were for cases referred from the Police.</td>
<td>16 of these IPOs were for cases referred from the Police.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 cases referred to Police (7 domestic violence &amp; 4 complaint against Police)</td>
<td>8 cases referred to Police (1 sexual, 7 domestic violence)</td>
<td>19 cases referred to Police (14 domestic, 1 sexual and 4 complaints against Police)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 cases referred to the Ministry of Justice (3 custody &amp; 3 maintenance)</td>
<td>3 maintenance cases referred to the Ministry of Justice.</td>
<td>9 cases referred to the Ministry of Justice (3 custody &amp; 6 maintenance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 children and 1 mother were the new admissions to the shelter facilities in January.</td>
<td>There was no new admission to the shelter facilities in February. However, the 1 mother and her 3 children admitted in January were placed with relatives in February</td>
<td>A total of 7 children and 1 mother were admitted in the shelter facilities during the period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 47 cases were assisted with in January; A total of 40 cases were assisted with in February; A total of 87 cases were assisted with in January and February 2017

Are we turning away a child from God who just wants some money so that they can have a meal tonight? Or then there is the question because you see the parents or the adults lurking from behind, will this money go to the child or to the lazy and shameless adults who are making these children stand around on the street for them? What do I do?

SVSG had clinics and schools full of volunteers in town for these children on the streets. They were full of life and they loved sports days. It was an opportunity for them to be just kids enjoying themselves. The volunteers enjoyed their sense of humour in school and their zest for life. Because of their experience on the streets, it made them street smart and definitely not shy. However, when the school moved into the campus of hope at Tuanaimato, we no longer were able to provide this service for these children.

We had some children who were referred to the shelter by the police because the parents had beaten up the children as they had not brought enough money home that day from their sales on the streets. Some children were delivered to the shelter because people found them sleeping at the market or in the public toilets and there was no adult around. The matrons found these children hard to look after because of the lives they have already led on the streets. But these children continue to survive somehow without the usual support and protection a child gets from their families or their parents. It is amazing how these kids manage to survive on a day to day basis. The strength within them can only make them formidable as adults if they fully realise their potential. They have gone through the worst of life. What more can life throw at them to make them scared. They are fearless in how they tackle life and survive.

I hope that I did not come across too passionate or too much like a preacher in this presentation. You will find that if not for our passion, SVSG would not have survived in Samoa this long. But I hope that if anything, this presentation would have moved someone in this room to stand up and make it count, and make a difference. Because that is what we believe is what true leadership is about.

God be with you in all your plans as emerging leaders and we look forward to hearing your names in the coconut grapevine as someone who has made a difference.

I am Georgina Lui and I hope that in my small time today with you, I have made a difference.
The focus of the youth program is rehabilitation: To rehabilitate them so that their young lives are not wasted; So that they do not find themselves back into the criminal legal system. This can be very difficult because sometimes rehabilitation is only introduced in this youth’s life after years of criminal activity. In many of these cases, the youth became involved in criminal activity because of pressure from family for money. Many of these youths are not in school, do not have jobs, and do not appear to be searching for a job.

Some of you might be thinking of the school fights that have been occurring of late and receiving a lot of media attention, and therefore it is not only with youths that are not in school. This is a correct observation but bear in mind that just because the media has decided to focus on this problem of fights breaking out among students of different schools, does not mean that it makes up the bulk of the matters in the youth court. More like three out of 30 cases in the youth court, with most of them not about school fights. The amazing aspect of these youths who go through the criminal system is their ability to survive. It takes a lot to survive and with some of them, to use that experience to not only survive but succeed in life. This is their amazing potential and it is a challenge to us to help them realise this potential in each one of them. One of the things that we are thankful for and note, are the sports association taking up on this challenge. To give something else to the youth so that they develop self esteem and hopefully a future. These activities are:

- The free rugby clinics. Even the girls at the shelter now have their own rugby team;
- The free soccer clinics; and
- The weightlifting of which some of the girls in the shelter have taken to very well

And so forth.

Hopefully, it can take some of the children selling on the street off the streets.

This brings us to the third and last matter I wanted to talk about. The children selling on our streets. Many of you would have gone through McDonalds and meet up with these children pushing their products to you. For so many of us, it is very hard to say no to a child on the street. How can we say no?

2. Court Support for Victims of Violence
2.1 Supreme Court
Two of our sheltered girls had their cases heard in Court in January. One was adjourned to July this year while the other was finally able to put the case behind her. The person accused of violating her was found guilty and is now sentenced to jail for 2 and a half years. For the victim, the sentence is not much given the suffering she received but at least it can be a closure. Hopefully the Samoan justice system will evaluate and consult the victim before they release the person out for parole after only a year and three months imprisonment.

Trauma, loss and grief counseling are part of the care we provided for these young ones as part of their rehabilitation programs. We are grateful to the many volunteers from the church communities who have assisted in being mothers to these children, providing comfort, an embrace or a constant reminder that they are loved. We are privileged that these young girls chose to ask SVSG to be their voice when they needed an advocate for them.

The one who has finally finished her case is now going to face the challenge of moving on with her life, and reconstructing her life again.

3. Child Protection
3.1 Campus of Hope
There will always be critics. Human nature as it is, critics is something that will always be there. However, there is a difference between constructive criticism to genuinely want to improve things and malicious to deliberately put down something so many have worked to put up. Jesus said to a group of people who had gathered to throw stones at a woman in their community, “If any of you have never sinned, then go ahead and throw the first stone at her.” John 8:7

So life as it is in Samoa is used to critics. There is a common phrase in Samoa that when one Samoan does well, others can’t sit still until they bring that person down.

However, we must continue on, and for those who continue to believe and support the work of SVSG throughout this time, we are grateful and blessed always. We found that the more the critics the more people who rise to help us, and the more donations we receive. So thank you to those critics as well.
3.2 Shelter Admission & Final Release
During January and February, seven abused and troubled children plus a woman survivor of violence were admitted to the Campus of Hope; two alleged sexual victims age 15 and 16 were referred from a Police Outpost in Upolu, one troubled child age 17 was referred from another Police Outpost in Upolu, a 16 year old troubled child was referred from the Police CID while three children and their abused mother were sheltered overnight to await the processing of their Protection Order. Where would these children go if not for the Campus of Hope?

71 children (inclusive of children with disabilities), and one mother were cared for at the Campus during January and February; nine babies, 8 – 24 months old; nineteen children ages 5 – 12 and forty three children ages 13 to 18.

Out of these 71 children and 1 mother, 9 children and 1 mother were reintegrated leaving 62 children on Campus by the end of February. SVSG village representatives in Upolu and Savaii are tasked with monitoring the progress of the children placed back to the community, and report to SVSG accordingly.

3.3 Rehabilitation: A Pathway to Successful Reintegration
The Campus of Hope provides more than just a roof over the heads, food on the table, clothing and security. The children go through various rehabilitation programs to prepare them for when they are placed back into the community.

Rehabilitation includes counselling, skills and sports empowerment programs, academic development through the School of Hope, vocational programmes, peer support from a pool of successful alumni of sheltered girls, and community engagement with SVSG partners both locally and internationally. Some of the activities are highlighted below:

In February, two of the older girls who attended the SVSG (Christchurch) Homestay Programme in New Zealand were safely returned home. The programme has been running for years by the SVSG sub-group in Christchurch. It is a programme where girls are sponsored by families in Christchurch to stay with them for a period of two months, exposing them to a safe community in Christchurch, where they attend counselling and community activities to prepare them for reintegration into society.

First of all, the establishment of a shelter for the young in Samoa and the fact that this shelter is constantly full of the young in Samoa requiring shelter and a safe haven. These are our young, abused within their homes and requiring a place of safety, of which they were supposed to be given in their homes. The fact that such a shelter exists within this country is always a shock to many because of the perceptions of so many of Samoa that everyone has family, and there is always someone in the family to look after that young person who is abused within their family. What if the young girl is someone raped by her father a head figure within the family. What if the mother is herself a victim of a horrible cycle of not knowing who to turn to because the loss of a husband will mean no income to support her and her other children. The mother cannot bring herself to believe the young girl because believing the young girl means destroying herself. What if she is also stuck in a cycle of abuse, emotionally incapable to getting help.

This is a common story that SVSG comes across and the amazing person in this story is the young girl, who against her family and with no support told herself that if she does not help herself, who is going to do it? So the amazing girl chose to stand up for herself and put a stop to the cycle of abuse on herself. She chose courage to protect herself because no one else will, and tell people what has been happening to her so that someone who is in a position to help can finally help her. She comes to SVSG for help. She tells her story. She has to tell her story again to police. And the the ultimate humiliation, to tell her story again in court, facing her father on the other side, with her mother and her family sitting on the side of her father, supporting her father against her. Putting up with the questions to her, putting up with accusations that she is lying and making up these stories about her father, in a cold room full of strangers. This is the story of our amazing youth and their courage. The question is, what can we as emerging leaders do to help such a girl. The shelter is full of these amazing youth and their courage to choose to take back their lives and live a good life.

Second, is the establishment of a young offenders court in Samoa shows recognition is given to the fact that the youth are a particular vulnerable group within our society, that require special treatment when they are brought through the criminal legal system. SVSG has become involved in this through its youth programmes of which young offenders are referred to for rehabilitation.
Leadership Samoa in one of their recent graduation sessions invited our Chair for the SVSG Board to present on the problems with the youth today. Mrs. Georgina Lui, our Chair gave the following speech:

THE REAL LIFE PROBLEMS FACING OUR YOUTH TODAY
Members of Samoa Leadership Group, participants for this year’s emerging leaders programme and to all guests for this day’s talk. It is with pleasure that I greet you on behalf of SVSG, the President and it’s Board. Most of these talks on behalf of our group were previously given by our President Siliniu Lina Chang but due to the fact that she is unavailable due to other commitments, I as Chair of our Board was asked to present on this topic. The topic as you know from the programme is the real problems facing our youth today, a very wide topic as you would most likely appreciate and cannot be covered within the thirty minutes allocated. In the spirit of how SVSG works, I would like to turn around the topic into this: The amazing youth of today and what we can do to help them fully appreciate their potential and their ability to contribute to our future.

Talking about problems can just amount to a full blown discussion on problems, analysing them, stretching them out and spending months and years on discussing and developing papers on problems. This will result in a lot of time, a lot of energy and probably a better appreciation of the problems. But then, what next? After talking about the problems, is someone going to step up and try and do something about the problems or are we just going to sit there and better appreciate the problems and have something to talk about in our cock-tails and our constant dinners. So therefore in the spirit of how we work in SVSG, I have decided to talk about the amazing youth of today and how we can help appreciate their strength, their potential and their ability to contribute to our future.

Also in February, the older girls kicked start 2017 with a retreat activity. On the theme ‘Sisters of Hope – the Rising Stars’, the 3 days retreat saw the successfully reintegrated survivors, and the survivors in residence at the Campus, coming together as they believed that ‘sharing is caring’. The objective of the retreat was to improve self-esteem through sharing and rising up like stars. The retreat forms part of the girls peer support activity for the ‘With and For Girls’ Award.

Guest speakers included a Team from the National Health Nutrition Division, reminding the girls about the importance of a healthy body and mind in their rehabilitation journey. Taumuafa Toma Vavae and Perive Faamausili Saena were the other speakers, sharing on the merciful love of God.

A fun activity saw the children enjoying a good laugh when Tupai Bruno and the team at the Magic Circus of Samoa, treated them to a special show. The children loved it, even the children with disabilities were all smiles. Laughter surely is the best medicine.

Sports development is supported as the older girls are trained in rugby with the Samoa Rugby Union. Others have joined weightlifting with the Samoa Weightlifting Federation. Two of the girls reintegrated during this period are our successful weightlifters that represented Samoa in local and regional games. SVSG is glad that it was able to support the development of their talent and had entrusted the families of these girls to continue the drive.

Part of the children’s rehabilitation is to engage with the community to regain lost confidence. Michael and Anna Wade from Vancouver in the United States were at the Campus in January engaging with the children through games and fun activities. The day ended with a barbecue and ice cream provided by this kind couple who included a day at the Campus on their holiday in Samoa. The kids enjoyed themselves and a wonderful treat before school starts. The SVSG Board are deeply grateful to Michael and Anna for taking time out to share their love with the children.
3.4 School of Hope

Based inside the Campus of Hope specifically for the continuing education of the children under SVSG’s care, the School started its First Term late January. 55 children ages 5 to 18 were initially enrolled with the 7 new admissions to the shelter taking the total enrolment to 62.

There are 2 teaching staff and 2 volunteer trainers at the School for the livelihood component of the school curriculum. In addition, the School receives volunteer support from the LDS Church Mission one day a week, volunteers from Projects Abroad helping out with the children’s reading and a music teacher volunteering once a week to teach music lessons.

Progress is assessed on a case by case basis as we see children that used to keep to themselves actively participating in classes; a 16 year old child smiles as she learnt to write and spell her name; or a 6 year old who for the first time, was able to speak and called out ‘mama’, a testament of a restored self-esteem as this abused child learnt that it is okay to speak out.

These are some of the most significant change stories from the School of Hope during January and February. They may be small changes but SVSG believes that the ripple effect of these changes in one individual can symbolize a huge change for a family or community, as we continue the fight to end family violence.

3.5 Partnership with the Little Angels Foundation New Zealand

Limited finances continue to be an issue in the provision of basics such as medical care for the child’s welfare. During January and February, parents of three children sought SVSG’s welfare support for their children:

- A two month old baby and an eleven year old boy, both with rheumatic heart diseases required travel support for medical treatment in New Zealand
- A four year old with disabilities whom the mother and her family cannot provide care for was brought to SVSG seeking assistance in the care of the child.

Here is a look at why some of the youths have joined the SVSG Juniors:

I joined SVSG Samoa not because someone told me to join, but because I want to fight for what I wish to see in Samoa in the future. I fight for the women and children who went through a very rough path because of domestic violence and sexual abuse in their homes. Love does not leave bruises, abuse is not love, and violence in homes is not LOVE. I am passionate in making a change not for myself but for the youth of SAMOA as we are future leaders of tomorrow. I want to empower those who were traumatized and are victims of such crimes as this is not the end of the world. There is HOPE for OPPORTUNITY and HOPE to live and dream a better life than who they were before. I fight to help build them to become stronger and be better than yesterday, as I believe that they never chose this life of being victimized, they deserve to live a normal life like you and me. I am Carmenita Fogamanono Solaese 24 years of age, eldest of 3 and a graduate of Chongqing University of Post and Telecommunication. As I always say to myself every day I am here for a purpose and God placed me in SVSG. I believe that part of my journey in life is to be in SVSG. [Carmenita Solaese - President]

My name is Aiganofealofani Malo from the village of Laulii, a female of 23 years old and currently working for Transam Samoa Ltd as an Accounts Receivable Officer. It is a great honor for me to join SVSG Juniors as I am so passionate to learn and help those in need, help with problems they face, especially the sexual victims. I believe this is a change in my life as I have always taken the time to party and go out but not lending a helping hand and participate in the activities conducted to help out in the community. It is so heartbreaking seeing the youth (of my age and the young ones especially the girls struggling with fear and abuse by their cousins, uncles and fathers and I will stand up and speak up for these victims and make sure they speak up to tell the truth. I will help any way I can to help those in need. Nevertheless I hope to encourage other youths out there to join and be the change by helping out. [Aiganofealofani Malo - Secretary]

Joining SVSG as a volunteer is an excellent opportunity to be part of a network made of young adults who are passionate about making a change; through various initiatives put in place to end the perpetuation of violence against our women and children. I grew up seeing violence being accepted and swept under the carpet by people with respected titles, through the use of “ava fatafata.” This I believe has been one of the major challenges in efforts towards putting an end to domestic violence. Although I very much value our culture of respect, I believe that it should not get to the point where perpetrators are not accountable to the damage they cause. I am a young female of almost 24 years old; graduate of the University of Otago in Politics and Tourism and am passionate about making Samoa a harmonious place free from abuse for our women and children. I will be taking on an additional degree in LAW in the hopes of understanding and in learning more ways that our women and children can be protected in the eyes of the law, for the years to come. [Temukisa Faumuina - Supporting Member]
SVSG JUNIORS
Many were starting to wonder, “what happened to the SVSG Juniors?” Well wonder no more, we would like to introduce to you our new executive team for the SVSG Juniors:

President: Carmenita Solaese / Vice: Rahmat Faumui
Secretary: Aiga Malo / Vice: Ianeta Sa’u
Treasurer: Akenese Fonoti / Vice: Vincent Laumoli
Sports Rep: Vailolo Farani and Ken Sonny
Supporting Members: Temukisa Faumui and Nofovaleane Alatupe

The former SVSG Junior President Mr. Nathan Ryan together with their executive members have progressed onto the main SVSG, while the young ones continue with the youth group. Mr. Ryan is mentoring these young volunteers so that they will not lose sight of why they have put up their hands to volunteer.

At the moment there are thirty members of the SVSG Juniors and it will continue to grow as long as you want to start putting up your hand to engage in your community in a meaningful way. Contact any of these members of the executive or the office to join the juniors and you are set to go. We welcome you all as you will most likely be the future for the SVSG as young people are fresh and they come with new ideas to improve. Always remember that this group was not established by experienced older people in the community. It was established by a group of young people fresh out of law school, who did not know anything at the time but only saw pain that they did not think existed in Samoa because of their privilege upbringing. So it was an idea born from young people.

An upcoming project which SVSG thinks is suitable to be led by the SVSG Juniors is the new classroom proposed to be built by students from a school in the Gold Coast who have been fundraising for four years for this project. The students will be travelling to Samoa later this year with a team of builders to build their new classroom, an addition to the school of hope on the campus of hope. Who better to meet these students and work with them then our youths in Samoa, the SVSG Juniors. So it is an exciting time for the SVSG Juniors and we hope that you will put up your hand to join this new and exciting group.

All the parents in these cases are unemployed, relying solely on subsistence farming. SVSG assisted them where ever possible or offered alternative solutions to their requests.

Samoa unlike countries such as New Zealand or Australia does not have a government social welfare system to provide assistance for such families. There are no unemployment benefits but there was supposed to be an informal social welfare system where we rely on our extended families to provide this support when we cannot for a period of time. However, if people are coming to SVSG for this help rather than their extended families, then SVSG is just thankful that we were there when they needed help. But the question continues to remain, what happened to our Samoan informal social welfare system?

Many of us in Samoa are very much used to this way of life and we tend to think it is only laziness that cause these people to have limited finances to care for their children. We don’t know if this assumption is true. All that we know is that it is an assumption only. We cannot however let such an assumption stop us from helping the children when help is needed.

SVSG partnership with the Little Angels Foundation is based on assisting underprivileged children. There were three in Upolu and three in Savaii that this partnership provided assistance to in January this year. In February, the Foundation donated $200.00 to assist with a 3 year old Baby Penina while in hospital as she continues to fight congenital hydrocephalus.

The partnership is to cater for those who fall in the gap in today’s society in Samoa. Those children who their families cannot provide for and for some reason our social informal welfare system cannot also provide for.
4. Advocacy Program for Offenders of Violence

Going on to four (4) years now since September 2013 when the Family Violence Court first referred male offenders of violence to SVSG’s Advocacy Program, the Program continues to provide rehabilitation programmes to offenders. More than 400 men, women and young offenders of violence have attended SVSG’s rehabilitation programs under the Men’s Advocacy, Tina Faufautua and the Youth Empowerment Programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jan-17</th>
<th>Feb-17</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 women offenders of violence</td>
<td>1 woman offenders of violence</td>
<td>3 women offenders of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 men offenders of violence</td>
<td>2 men offenders of violence</td>
<td>6 men offenders of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A total of 6 referrals from the Family Court were recorded for January 2017</td>
<td>A total of 3 referrals from the Family Court were recorded for February 2017</td>
<td>A total of 9 referrals from the Family Court were recorded for January &amp; February 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of SVSG’s supporters have asked why we are helping offenders. But the answer lies in SVSG’s work, which is all about families. This is supported by a former presiding Judge of the Family Violence Court (FVC) who commented that, “It became apparent to the Court that in order to effectively lessen and eliminate family violence, the focus must be on the offender, as so much of what he or she does affects the family unit. I have said this many times and will say it again here that these SVSG programmes are the secret to the success of the FVC.” Justice Tafaoimalo Leilani Tuvalu-Warren.

A total of 13 men and 3 women have attended the men and women’s advocacy programs during January and February; 3 new referrals to the Tina Faufautua and 6 new referrals to the Men’s Advocacy with 7 of the participants continuing from 2016.

The programme is to support the alternative courts established by the Government and the Judiciary to cater for youth offending and domestic violence. The courts are based on New Zealand models in recognition of the fact that with youth, there are special vulnerable members of the community that require alternative form of sentencing rather than the usual imprisonment sentences so their young lives are not destroyed.

SVSG GLOBAL UPDATES

The international sub groups of SVSG in Auckland and Christchurch New Zealand; Sydney, Queensland and Melbourne Australia, and American Samoa, are led and supported by sons and daughters of Samoa. Set up to support and raise awareness of SVSG’s work internationally, the SVSG Global Family, as they are known for, each have a role to play, in getting SVSG to where it is today.

In January, the main office received ST20,000 from SVSG (Auckland) as proceeds from their Dinner of Hope fundraiser in November 2016. Thank you to the SVSG (Auckland) Director Peseta Levai Aati-Schuster and Team for your contribution directly towards the shelter operation. ST1,009.90 was also received from SVSG (Auckland) towards expenses for the 2016 AGM that was held here in Samoa.

For SVSG (Christchurch), February saw the returning home of 2 shelter girls who were attached to the Homestay Program coordinated by Pastor Jeremy Faumuina and the Christchurch network of churches.

SVSG (Melbourne) continues to do fundraising for the construction of the House of Strength, home for children with disabilities at the Campus of Hope.

Upcoming Events from the Global Family for March include:

- the SVSG (Sydney) Friends of Hope visit from 4 – 11 March 2017; and
- the SVSG (Queensland) Dinner of Hope on 25 March 2017

The SVSG Board and the Executive Committee acknowledge the love and the commitment from SVSG (Auckland), SVSG (Christchurch), SVSG (Sydney), SVSG (Queensland), SVSG (Melbourne), and SVSG (American Samoa).

“Let us stay strong as we once again commit our journey this year to the God of miracles.” Tuisugaletaua Sofara Aveau, SVSG Patron.
SVSG Thanksgiving Service: Journey Together with the God of Miracles
‘Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil’, this verse from Psalm 23, according to Reverend Utufua Naseri sets the guiding principle of SVSG’s work for 2017 as we set sail in our journey together with the God of Miracles.

Held at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral at Mulivai late January, Father Falaniko Matulino, the Head of the Apia Vicariate of the Catholic Church welcomed the Head of State, Afioga Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi, the Deputy Prime Minister, Honorable Fiame Naomi Mataafa, members of cabinet and hundreds of leaders from churches, villages, government ministries, partners and friends of SVSG who came together in prayer.

It was really a coming together of a Family, to pray and to uplift together our support services to the God of Miracles. Church leaders from different denominations took part during the service. We had Reverend Taumafai Komiti of the Methodist Church Matafele; Associate Pastor Faamatuainu Amosa Pouoa of the Apia Harvest Centre and Reverend Dr. Mosese Mailo, Principal of the Piula Theological College offering our prayers. Then we had our bible readings by Pastor Sauleola Timo of the Seventh Day Adventist Afega and President Pulotu Lyndon Chu Ling of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints Malie Stake.

The beautiful hymns were sung by choirs from the Catholic Church Luatuanuu, CCCS Church Toamua, Methodist Church Matafele and the SVSG Village Representatives from Falealili. Elderly and SVSG village representatives from Savaii travelled on the last ferry to take attend the service.

And through Rev. Utufua Naseri’s sermon, SVSG’s Family was reminded that in our journey, we will encounter difficulties and challenges, but only through the divine intervention of the God of Miracles, will we be able to endure and continue. Throughout the despair, the uncertainty, the rejection, the hatred or when we are trapped at ground zero, we always find love in God’s grace, as we ‘Journey Together with the God of Miracles’.

With the domestic violence issue, it is to try break the cycle of violence within families before it gets too serious. SVSG provides this program to support these courts that were established under NZAID. However, SVSG received no funding at all for the provision of this programme.

With the support of the Ministry of Justice and the family court judge, SVSG had applied to the Civil Society Support Program (CSSP) during its NGO Call for Proposal 2016, for funding under its family violence criteria. The funding sought is for the continuation of this programme provided for these alternative courts. However, CSSP declined the application, questioning the relevance and the effectiveness of the programmes. This is despite confirmation from judges and the court registry on the relevance of the programme. As the programme is ordered by the Courts, we are not sure if CSSP is questioning the decision of the judges of Samoa in sending offenders in these programmes by saying basically to the Court of Samoa that they may not be relevant or effective. In any event, due to the continual need from the Court, SVSG has to continue this work without funding.

So a the SVSG (Sydney) sub-group has shown keen interest in fundraising for the continuation of this programme. Families and friends listed below have also donated for the continuation of this programme. However, a stable source of funding would go a long way in developing the programme.

January & February Donations for the Advocacy Program:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hana Folautonu</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>Judge Talasa Saaga &amp; Family</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senara Tuua Pei</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>Lefau Soonalole</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semau Lemo Levi</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>Mila Apaui</td>
<td>30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peta Leaia</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>Rev. Aila &amp; Valasi Patea</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makerita</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>Rev. Siaosi Fimoe &amp; Faletua</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnny &amp; Palepa</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>Epenesa Pouesi-Young</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Jackson</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>Puaa Setefano</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pouesi Leofoalii</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>Leima Matoka</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ana Rock</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>Faapito Matoka</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sula Segia Sheck</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>Air Pacific</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pemelika Iese</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>Pamela &amp; Raelene</td>
<td>50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leliana (New Year)</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>Ofeira &amp; Krystal</td>
<td>20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saumani</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,330.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1 Reformed Women Graduated

Families and friends of close to 40 graduates of the Tina Faufautua Advocacy Program crowded the Travellers Point mid-February, to congratulate their grandmothers, mothers and aunties, who have successfully completed Court ordered counseling programs with SVSG.

In attendance also were Hon. Laaulialemaleletoa Leuatea Polataivao, Justice Vui Clarence Nelson, Justice Tafaaimalo Leilani Tuala-Warren, Judge Talasa Atoa-Saaga and the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Justice, Papalii John Taimalelagi Afele, who was the guest speaker for the night.

Reverend Elder Taipisia Leilua of the Malua Theological College officiated the opening prayer, referring to the Book of Esther and how this Jewish woman risked her own life to save the lives of her people. Such is the support work carried out by SVSG through counseling programs for the women offenders of violence referred from the Courts and have graduated on the night.

The CEO of the Ministry of Justice acknowledged the assistance from SVSG in supporting the work of the Family Court, through working with the women offenders of violence.

Speaking on behalf of SVSG, Hon. Tuisugaletaua Sofara Aveau, SVSG Patron paid tribute to the recognition by the Courts of SVSG’s counseling programs. The attendance by the members of the Judiciary on the night attested to the valued partnership established with the Ministry in addressing family violence.

For the graduating mothers, the Champions of violence in the homes, they received certificates, special awards and gifts courtesy of our generous donors and sponsors acknowledged herein:

EVENTS

Fun Day at Tanoa Tusitala Hotel

The staff of the Tanoa Tusitala Hotel and their families continued with their tradition of hosting the children cared for at the Campus of Hope once a year. In January, the children were treated as guests at the hotel, splashing at pool, playing games and enjoying lunch provided by the hotel.

Treating the children for Christmas is an annual event by Tanoa Tusitala Hotel, staff and their families, which forms part of the community support SVSG has been blessed with. This is what genuine and durable partnerships is all about.

SVSG President Siliniu Lina Chang acknowledges the ongoing support from Tanoa Tusitala Hotel and staff through this partnership. “Thank you so much Lafo Fuimaono Terama and staff for continuing with the Tanoa Tusitala Hotel’s tradition of supporting the community through the work of SVSG.”

SVSG Thanksgiving Dinner

The SVSG Patron Honourable Tuisugaletaua Sofara Aveau and faletua, the Board, the Executive and staff came together late January at the Travellers Point for a thanksgiving dinner. It was a rare opportunity to actually sit down and enjoy together a meal without always on the run. In acknowledging the great work achieved to date, the Patron encouraged everyone to remain strong to carry our work through in 2017.

This was reiterated by Board Member Mulipola Anarosa Molioo, who spoke on behalf of the SVSG Board, “Let us continue to carry the Cross as our reward awaits us.”

SVSG President acknowledges the contribution from Tuala and Sarona Poni-fasio, and the staff of the Travellers Point for sponsoring the venue and the delicious meal for the night.
Family Violence Consultation
As an advocate of work to address family violence, SVSG’s views on family violence and work done to date to address it, have been sought by the Fatuaiupu Consult during January and February. The 4-member team include Maulolo Leaula Tavita, Galumalemana Nuufou Petaia and two others.

The consultation is all part of the continuous learning for the SVSG staff as the Fatuaiupu Consult assessed the rationale behind the methods used by SVSG in addressing family violence, and the effectiveness of these methods, as collabo-rated by a random selection of women and children survivors that were inter-viewed during the consultation.

Staff Sessions on Stress Management
In order for SVSG staff to effectively assist our people in managing stress, they have to go through the test themselves.

Thanks to Elder and Sister Kinghorn of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, ongoing sessions on stress management not only for the office staff, but also for the staff and volunteers at the Campus of Hope have been carried out.

Simple things that we always take for granted such as managing our body, our thoughts and our environment all form part of stress management.

| WOMEN's ADVOCACY (Tina Faufautua) GRADUATION FINANCIAL REPORT |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Allocated Funds** | **$1,000.00** |
| **Expenses:** |  |
| 1 Shopping for Food | $300.00 |
| 2 Chef (Sala Tovia) | $300.00 |
| 3 Cooking Gas | $122.00 |
| 4 Rev Dr Taipisia Leilua | $150.00 |
| 5 Chairs (Toamua) | $50.00 |
| 6 Petrol Truck - Getting Chairs | $50.00 |

**Donors for Graduation Gifts:**
- Samoa Stationery & Books: 50 Tote Bags & 50 School Bags
- Digicel Samoa: 40 T-Shirts & 40 Caps
- Pacific Ezy Money Transfer: 12 Cooler Bags, 6 Caps & 100 Key Rings
- Western Union Money Transfer: 100 Pens & 30 Key Rings
- Bluesky Samoa: 40 Bags & 33 rugby balls

**Donors for Refreshments:**
- Penina donated 90% of what was needed for the menu.
- Imeleta Shuster
- Lesina A
- Linda L
- Lolo Fidow
- Makerita M
- Naoupu Leo
- Rosalia T
- Sunema T
- Talisuaga L
- Talosaga M
- Tavae Pa To

- Puaa & 1 box sausage
- Talo, niu, luau, moa samoana
- 1 box of chicken, fish
- 1 box chicken, talo, niu, luau, 3 moa
- 1 box chicken, talo, niu, luau, 3 moa
- Talo, niu, luau

**Donor for Venue**
- Tuala & Sarona Ponifasio: Travellers Point, Malifa
5. Disability Support

5.1 Community assistance
SVSG’s advocacy role is inclusive of people with disabilities, especially the children who are most vulnerable to abuse, neglect and abandonment. For the elderly, SVSG has been the voice for welfare assistance for those cared for in the homes.

During January and February, 2 children with disabilities and 4 elderly were provided with welfare support as part of SVSG’s community assistance. For the disability children, the parents could no longer care for them, and as such, have referred them to SVSG for shelter assistance. For the elderly, wheelchair assistance was provided to assist the caregivers in mobilising them within their homes, or to attend community and church activities.

5.2 Shelter assistance
There are 5 children with disabilities cared for at the Campus of Hope; 2 with physical disabilities age 15 and 17, and 3 with mental disabilities age 5, 17 and 18. Two of these children were abandoned and referred to SVSG by concerned strangers to the children, while 3 are survivors of sexual abuse.

From 2012 when we sheltered the first child with disabilities to date, SVSG is the only family these disability survivors know. We provide for their daily needs, attend to their medical, rehabilitation programs and schooling.

In all of these cases, it was not the family who reported the matter out of concern for the child, but those outside of the family who showed that they care when they see a child being abandoned, neglected or abused. Strangers became the voice for these children and SVSG is encouraged and thankful to see such courage within our community; the courage to stand up and be the voice for the vulnerable. This is reassurance that humanity is very much a part of us.

After 6 weeks of volunteering at the Campus since February, with all their expenses self-funded, our honorary volunteers are not calling it quits yet. Despite their age and the difficulty of travelling, they are willing to continue with their support, if not here in Samoa, then in Australia through hosting members of SVSG when they visit.

This is the extent of the growth of the SVSG Family, as Pamela and Raelene have become the latest addition. Pamela has sealed her membership further with a tattoo.

SVSG President acknowledges on behalf of the Patron, the hearts of these ladies to volunteer for SVSG. “As the first ever volunteers to be recognized for ‘Outstanding Volunteer’ work, you should be proud of yourselves, just like how we are proud of you both.” Siliniu Lina Chang.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN OUR SERVICE

SQA Training Site Visit
As part of the Samoa Qualification Authority process to assess SVSG’s application for its ‘Introduction to Caregivers Training’ to have Recognition as Non Formal Learning, a site visit was carried out late January.

The site visit is part of SQA’s evaluation process to assess if SVSG has all the learning resources and facilities in place to cater for its trainings.

SQA’s Report on the Site Visit together with the Preliminary Assessment of SVSG’s processes in place to support its application, will determine if it approves recognition of SVSG’s Introduction to Caregiver as Non Formal Learning.

This is all part of SVSG’s plans to train its members in a target population in the community to care for our aged population, people with disabilities and the ones with high medical needs.
Pearl MedSpa Representative Re-visited

Leuso McKenzie from Portland in America is a man of a few words but with a big heart. Following his visits in 2016, he kept coming back to visit and to discuss how best he and his colleagues at the Pearl MedSpa in America, can better support SVSG.

Besides coordinating the Seattle Fundraiser late 2016 with Carolyn Robbins, he puts up his hand to support urgent needs whenever he is around. During his visit in February, he donated USD200.00 for the office and another USD500.00 to assist with volunteer allowance.

As a proud supporter, he defended SVSG from allegations as he has seen for himself the work that we do. Thank you Leuso, Carol Robbins and the Team at Pearl MedSpa for all that you do for SVSG.

Volunteering from the Heart

Their smile says it all, as Pamela Andrewartha and Raelene Granthon received their Certificate of Recognition for being ‘Outstanding Volunteers’ with Samoa Victim Support Group. And these two childhood friends from Canberra and South Australia have a reason to be all smiles, as they are the first ever volunteers with SVSG to have received such honorary recognition, and well deserved one at that.

Proud in their flora locally made dresses, Pamela and Raelene shared with SVSG on why they kept coming back to help out at the Campus of Hope; Pamela being her third time and Raelene’s second time. Says Pamela, “I remembered when I first came in 2015, and how I was put on the spot from the start, that this is Samoa, not Australia.

I did not realize the relevance of that reminder until I worked at the nursery shelter, and seeing the marvelous job these people were doing with the meager resources they have. Simply amazing!”

6. SVSG Village Representatives

6.1 Advocacy Training for the Nofotane Project

Close to 150 SVSG village representatives who are village and church leaders in the 4 constituencies of Falealili, Vaimauga West, Faleata East and Faleata West in Upolu, completed Advocacy Trainings in January and February.

The training sessions form part of the first component of the gender equality project SVSG is currently implementing with UN Women Fund for Gender Equality. Improving the capacity of SVSG village representatives will assist them in advocating to their respective village leaders to recognize and support women’s economic contributions and participation in family and community matters.

SVSG is humbled by the response from the SVSG village representatives as they took time out to complete these training sessions.
6.2 Consultation on Family Violence Inquiry with the Ombudsman’s Office

The Office of the Ombudsman requested a consultation with the SVSG village representatives as part of its National Inquiry on Family Violence. For the Upolu representatives, the consultation took place late February at the TATTE Conference Room.

According to a representative from the Ombudsman’s Office, “the purpose of the meeting with the village reps is to inform them of the national inquiry on family violence and the consultations (for the inquiry) that we will be coming out to do from March to May, and request their assistance in informing and encouraging people in their communities to join the consultations.”

SVSG is proud of the turn up from the Upolu SVSG village representatives and their contribution as village reps to the National Inquiry.

6.3 Case Referral/Help Line support

During January and February, the SVSG village representatives throughout Upolu and Savaii have assisted with referring 6 cases, ranging from sexual/domestic abuse and parental assistance to welfare support. [Refer Sexual Case Highlight].

As SVSG’s support network in the village communities, these proud village representatives have been the voice of the vulnerable and abused children, saving lives through their volunteerism.

Nofotane Project Success Story:

A woman who moved from Upolu to Savaii to live with her husband’s family continually suffered from self esteem issues as her husband’s family is always pointing out what she did wrong. Her job was mainly cleaning the house, and feeding the pigs. She never had any money on her person. However since entering this programme, she set up a stall selling pork buns. From that start, she is now the proud owner of a small retail shop in her village. She has money in her pocket and for her family. She feels empowered and is no longer the recipient of continual negative comments from her husband’s family. She continues to improve herself and provide for her family.

UNICEF Pacific: Child Protection Project

With UNICEF being the only donor for SVSG’s child protection work, SVSG had the opportunity to meet with the new head of UNICEF Pacific, Mr. Sheldon Yett, Representative, Pacific Island Countries as well as the UNICEF Child Protection Officer during February.

The Child Protection Officer undertook a site visit of the Campus of Hope as part of these meetings. SVSG acknowledges the support from UNICEF Pacific which enabled the employment of 3 staff to deal specifically with children’s cases.

STAR FOUNDATION: With and For Girls Award

As part of the Award from the Star Foundation for SVSG’s work with the girls, SVSG received USD50,000 or ST122,776.78 from the Star Foundation, through the Tide Foundation, the donor specifically for this award. This is flexible funding used to improve SVSG’s activities and work for the sheltered girls.

SVSG acknowledges the support from NoVo Foundation, the project manager assigned to work with SVSG during this two year project, as well as Tide Foundation, the donor, and the Team at Star Foundation, for believing in the work of SVSG ‘With and For Girls’ Award.
The Baha’i Church has been the latest addition to the new partnerships SVSG has established in its work with the community. Members of the Baha’i Church and youth group visited the Campus of Hope with food supplies for the children as well as monetary contribution of $500.00 to assist with the daily needs of the children.

The partnership will see the Church assisting with the daily needs of the children from time to time, while its youth group had joined the SVSG Juniors and its programs. The Board of SVSG expresses its gratitude to members of the Bahai Church in Samoa for their thoughtful visit of the children and their kind donations with the work of SVSG.

**PROJECTS**

**UN Women Fund for Gender Equality: Nofotane Project**

A lot has happened for the Nofotane Project as we started work for 2017:

- The Advocacy training for the SVSG village representatives on the project continued for Vaimauga and Faleata Constituencies;
- The Bi-Annual Report 2 and the Quarterly Financial Report 4 requirement from UN Women FGE were submitted;
- The Project Advisory Committee for the project met in February to go over the project documents, ensuring that we are on target with implementation;
- SVSG called an update meeting with the UN Women Country Coordinator Suisala Mele Mauaiva to discuss progress of project and reporting requirements;
- The Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant for the project conducted an update workshop for the project team to assess timeline and implementation rate.

**CHALLENGES**

As a social service provider to our community, SVSG’s work always encounter challenges; some small, others big enough to test our faith. But we are well grounded, trusting our journey to the God of miracles who strengthens us and continues to provide for us.

**Resources:**

The biggest challenge in being the voice of the voiceless is resources. We operate with very limited resources where funding are restricted to projects while donations are usually for a specific purpose, leaving the administration costs to be a daily struggle. As such, everything we receive, whether is monetary, in kind or volunteer support is a blessing.

We recycle a lot of materials in the office such as paper, folders, envelopes etc, and reuse them again. The few paid staff we have worked voluntarily after hours and during the weekend at the Campus of Hope. The Executive and the Board also carry out their roles out of the goodness of their hearts, the reward is an extra life saved.

In addressing family violence, SVSG does not receive any form of assistance except for salaries paid by UNICEF for the protection of children. For our advocacy programmes for court referred offenders of violence, SVSG (Sydney) has assisted with the running of the programmes; facilitators from the church and village communities volunteer their times to conduct these programmes.

Subsistence allowances for the volunteers working at the Campus of Hope to care for the children either as matrons, as caregivers or as gate keepers, are covered by the SVSG (Queensland) and SVSG (Auckland) Dinner of Hope fundraisings every year. Despite the struggles to cater for those seeking help with SVSG, our doors are always open. Volunteers to assist with our work are always welcome.

Despite the struggles to cater for those seeking help with SVSG, our doors are always open. Volunteers to assist with our work are always welcome.
JANUARY & FEBRUARY PARTNERSHIPS

SVSG long ago realised the importance of establishing and maintaining genuine and durable partnerships, necessary to sustain its support services. While 2017 had extended SVSG’s support network through partnerships established with:

- Piula Theological College
- Peach Chapel Christian Fellowship
- Seventh Day Adventist Church Tiapapata
- Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints
- Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries
- Samoa Qualification Authority
- UN Women Fund for Gender Equality
- Little Angels Foundation of New Zealand
- Purchase Credit Ltd of Australia
- Pacific Ezy Money Transfer

January and February 2017 brought a mixture of faith based and government ministry partnerships, to help with the operation of the Campus of Hope shelter facilities, for the children survivors of violence and sexual abuse, abandoned and underprivileged.

**Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries**

The partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture was officially established when the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Hon. Laaulimalieotoa Leutea Polataivao, accompanied by the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry, Tilafofo David Hunter, met with the SVSG President at the Campus in February.

A special gardening project for the Campus has been something that SVSG applied to for a long time and now finally becomes a reality with the partnership. The staff from the MAF Crop Division at Nu’u took time out to plant fruit trees and showed the children how to maintain these. Next, the staff put up gardening tunnels and planted veggies for the children. With the new partnership, SVSG is grateful of its contribution to the sustainability of the shelter operations.

**Piula Theological College**

Early this year, SVSG received a letter from Reverend Dr. Mosese Ma’ilo, Principal of the Piula Theological College expressing the College’s interest to officiate its support of SVSG’s work through a partnership. A meeting was held between the Principal and the SVSG President, where the specific area of the partnership focus was discussed – the Campus of Hope. The partnership now sees the College helping out with the rehabilitation of the children through community visits, spiritual guidance, livelihood trainings and volunteer carers for the babies.

To mark the beginning of this partnership, the children cared for at the Campus of Hope were hosted by the Principal and the College during a visit at Piula in February. "There are critics and there are supporters, rest assured that God sees everything and all things that you do in your work to support our people in need. Piula has been a long-time supporter of your work, through prayers, this time, we want to be more involved.” Reverend Dr. Mosese Ma’ilo

The partnership with Piula Theological College has extended the support network SVSG continues to foster with the church community, as different denominations come forward to partner and to lend a hand. Monetary donations of $1,000, food and clothing supplies were presented to the children from the College during the visit.

SVSG President was grateful of the support from the Piula Theological College, in particular, the belief from those in leadership roles in the College, Reverend Dr. Mosese Ma’ilo and the Team. “Thank you for your sincerity as shown by the durable partnership now established with the College.”