

## Obituary

### Remembering: A life Dedicated to Science and Health, Dr. Jimione Samisoni, PhD, MBBS 1932 – 2007



The passing away of Dr. Jimione Samisoni allows us to reflect on an outstanding achievements and contribution to science and health, to the people of Fiji and to the region. Although he is best known for his final role in medicine as the former Dean of the Fiji School of Medicine, he will also be remembered for his warm personality, intuitiveness and human touch. It is through these human qualities that he was able to travel his extraordinary journey of science, health and medical education.

Dr Samisoni has a passion for science an early age demonstrated when he joined the Central Medical School in 1953. After completing 3 years of study at the Fiji School of medicine, he was the first Fijian to receive a WHO fellowship in to study physiology at the University of Otago. In 1959, he graduated with a Bachelor of Medical Science (Physiology). While at Otago he also distinguished himself by knocking out the All Blacks University heavy weight champion and then quickly retired from boxing. He returned to the Fiji School of Medicine from 1960-1961 where he as an Assistant Lecturer teaching medical, dental and dietetic students. He endeared himself to many of his students who later went on later to become influential leaders in health throughout the Pacific.

In pursuing his interest in science, he went to the University of Queensland where he acquired his Master of Science in 1959. Following this, he did part-time studies and during this period studied for his Doctor of Philosophy which he received in 1972. He was also completing the last 3 years of his Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree with which he graduated in 1973. From 1973 to 1979, he worked with the South Queensland Hospital Board in various capacities as a House Surgeon. Later, he joined the Griffith University in Brisbane as a Senior Lecturer. It is from this time that Dr. Samisoni developed a major interest in Medical Education. He was an important part of a team that developed and established the curriculum for the Physiology Department.

He returned to Fiji in 1980 and joined the Fiji School of Medicine as a Chief Medical Officer and Deputy Dean. He was responsible for Basic Science teaching to undergraduates and Primary Healthcare students. In 1984, he did consultancy work for the UNICEF and WHO. In this regional role, he rapidly became aware of the needs of pacific people with respect to primary healthcare.

In 1987, Dr. Samisoni joined the John A. Burns School of Medicine at the University of Hawaii as an Assistant Clinical Professor. The John A Burns School of Medicine at that time was funded by the US

