

Today, 22nd April 2021, marks the 10th Anniversary of the Global International Day of Girls in ICT (GICT) with the above theme. It is being celebrated in 166 countries around the world including Papua New Guinea through an expected 9,000 events involving over 300,000 girls and young women, according to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) GICTD Portal.

The Girls in ICT initiative of the ITU is a global effort to raise awareness on empowering and encouraging girls and young women to consider studies and careers in ICTs. The initiative is committed to celebrate and commemorate the International Girls in ICT Day on the fourth (4th) Thursday of every April as established by the ITU membership.

NICTA, in line with the aspirations of this international day has been celebrating and conducting various programs including essay competitions, awareness programs and open days since 2012 in various centers in the country with the overall aim to get the whole country to observe the Day in one's own way, on the 4th Thursday of April every year.

Furthermore, NICTA in achieving the main objective of the day of encouraging more girls and young women to take up careers in ICT is also implementing, since 2015, the NICTA Girls in ICT Tertiary Scholarship Programme where we are committed to support the education of girls who choose to develop a career in ICT in the country. To date NICTA has supported 20 girls and invested over K400,000.00 in building the nation's future ICT professionals.

Girls in ICT Scholarship Winners 2021

NICTA takes this opportunity to also announce the successful applicants that have been awarded the Girls in ICT Tertiary Scholarship 2021. Congratulations to the four new scholars –

- Miss Norelle MALALA** – Bachelor of Electrical Engineering, PNG University of Technology
- Miss Sonya LINNY** – Bachelor of Computer Science, PNG University of Technology
- Miss Jasmine NORMAN** – Bachelor of Electrical Engineering, PNG University of Technology
- Miss Euleily VULUPINDI** – Bachelor of Electrical Engineering, PNG University of Technology

We extend our sincere gratitude to others that applied and though were unsuccessful, are encouraged to keep pursuing careers in the exciting field of ICT.

Authorized by:

Kila Gulo-Vui
Chief Executive Officer

TESTIMONIALS: In further celebrating the International Girls in ICT Day 2021, NICTA is proud to feature two of our pioneer scholars who graduated in 2020 and three continuing scholarship holders. Other testimonials are available on the NICTA website at www.nicta.gov.pg



NAME: AMY ROMBUK
COURSE OF STUDY: ELECTRICAL & COMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING
INSTITUTION: PNG UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
YEAR GRADUATED: 2020
EMPLOYMENT: SOFTWARE DEVELOPER - SWITCHMAVEN

Today marks the International Girls in ICT Day, as a woman in ICT, my journey began when I chose to study engineering at the PNG University of Technology.

I was privileged to also be a recipient of the NICTA Girls in ICT Scholarship, which fully supports young girls pursuing a career in ICT. With aid from the scholarship and 4 years of hard work, I was able to successfully complete my studies by the end of 2019 and graduated in November 2020 with my Bachelors in Engineering in Electrical



NAME: TAIYANGKONAUNA KAFARE
COURSE OF STUDY: BACHELOR'S DEGREE OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS
INSTITUTION: DIVINE WORD UNIVERSITY
YEAR GRADUATED: 2020
EMPLOYMENT: GRADUATE TRAINEE – WESTERN PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

"...pursuing a career in ICT would be the best way for me to embrace the development of our country - keeping me on top of the changes and being a part of the developmental change in a bigger way."

I shared this in 2018 when I was asked to write about the motivation behind me pursuing a degree in an IT related field. When I wrote this, I had very little idea as to what the future held for me and whether I was going to be able to find an opportunity that would enable me to do just that. The 25th of May 2021 will mark my first anniversary with



NAME: ALISHA OFAE
COURSE OF STUDY: BACHELOR'S DEGREE OF MATHS & COMPUTER SCIENCE
INSTITUTION: DIVINE WORD UNIVERSITY
YEAR: 4TH YEAR

When I took ICT in secondary school (Kokopo Secondary) it was just to have an access to computers every day and learn how programs work, as I was fascinated by that. I eventually gained more interest leading me to choose to further my education by taking up Bachelor of Mathematics and Computing Science at Divine Word University. Taking up B/MCS, I see that there was a need for ICT in the nation as it has an immense economic, social and educational significance.



NAME: LAETITIA GAREITZ
COURSE OF STUDY: BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN MATHS & COMPUTER SCIENCE
INSTITUTION: DIVINE WORD UNIVERSITY
YEAR: 3RD YEAR

I first heard of the Girls in ICT Scholarship that NICTA was offering while in high school. I remember seeing advertisements in the newspapers for the scholarship. My ICT teacher then, Ms. Bargel, began encouraging me to apply, come grade 12. I did apply and here I am now, running my third lap in this journey in the care of the NICTA GICT scholarship.

I first developed an interest in computer science while growing up. I was fascinated by the PCs that my dad would bring home. Taking ICT in high school, I fell in love with the subject. I wanted to know more and do more with computers and most importantly, technology. It was then that I figured I would take an ICT course. That is how I ended up taking Mathematics and Computing Science at Divine Word University. Over the years, life here in university has had its own turns. Studying at tertiary level is not so easy, especially in the MCS course. Every unit has its own challenges. With every year, there



NAME: ESTHER ISIMEL
COURSE OF STUDY: ELECTRICAL AND COMMUNICATION ENGINEERING
INSTITUTION: PNG UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
YEAR: 3RD YEAR

Being a curious minded person, I had a lot of questions about anything I come across. As far as I could recall back when I was still a child, I had simple questions like; why does a bread pop out of a toaster when it goes brown? Or why does the jug go off when the water gets hot? Or even I wondered how it was possible that we were able to watch something that was broadcasted at night from the television during daytime. I grew up being enticed by what technology could offer and it had a significant impression on me ever since. I realized how technology could transform anything into something much more convenient to use as it evolves from one stage to the other. Back in my secondary level, I was always excited to know if there were any updated feature added to already-existing tech-gadgets or even if there were any new electronic devices invented. With every information found from newspaper articles or TV shows had made me to realize, technology is a very powerful tool that we would need to endeavour our way into the future. This prompted me to take Electrical and Communication Engineering in the University of Technology, Lae.

In 2018, as we were preparing to do our choices, my dad looked through the newspaper and came across the NICTA Girls in ICT Scholarship Advertisement. The requirements seem to suite me very well as I was a female that wanted to take up an Information and

& Communications Engineering, majoring in Communications Engineering.

Today I work as a Software Developer with SwitchMaven, a software development company who specialize in web-applications and cloud infrastructure. I trained for 3 months under the company's training & development program - Pacifica Prime, where I learnt to program in the MERN stack (Mongo-Express-React-Node) as a JavaScript developer. My experience so far in the ICT industry has been fun and amazing but mostly a long learning process. I have met and engaged with powerful and inspirational PNG women in the ICT sector, who not only break barriers but pave the way for the younger female generation to follow. In honor of this International Girls in ICT Day, my encouragement to girls who wish to pursue a career in any ICT related field is that, you only need a strong passion to drive you to achieve it and the determination to see it through.

Happy International Girls in ICT Day!

the Western Pacific University as a Graduate Trainee in the academic space. I have been learning from some very well-established professionals, not only in IT but in academia and administration as well.

Being a part of the Western Pacific University has been very challenging for me, both personally and professionally. One of the biggest challenges for me is keeping current in the IT know-how while appreciating the opportunity to develop learning in new areas. I can say with confidence that the biggest virtue all these challenges test is my self-discipline.

On that note I would like to encourage any young girl considering a career in ICT to ensure two things: Self-discipline and to ensure that this has to be something you know you want to do, because then all that will be left of you to do, is to do it.

Happy Girls in ICT Day!

I came to know about the Girls in ICT scholarship in 2017 through my ICT teacher Mrs. Tukar, back in Kokopo Secondary School. She mentioned it once in our ICT class and I realised that this scholarship was an opportunity I couldn't pass so I worked extra hard to get good grades to apply and was selected as one of the candidate for the scholarship. Being selected for the scholarship is one thing and to maintain this scholarship is another.

After I graduate I look forward to finding employment, gain some experience and assets to start up an IT consultancy firm.

I encourage all young girls who are thinking of pursuing a career in ICT or ICT related career to keep on persevering their dream and interest.

Happy Girls in ICT Day!

is always a drop in the number of students in each class. At times, the challenge was when we girls would be lagging behind the boys. However, we would pick up with the help of the boys. Our class has a great team spirit!

I have always looked up to my ICT teachers and now my lecturers as my role models. I was taught by a number of female ICT teachers and lecturers. Each of them have had an impact on my life and have motivated me in my aspirations in ICT. I am looking forward to adding on to the number of women in IT within PNG. I believe that whatever knowledge and skills I acquire at the end of the four years will be utilized well. I would like to give back to my society and country in any way possible. Availing myself with what knowledge and skills I have acquired over the years, I will be one skilled person added onto the human resource of this beautiful country. I see myself employed after graduating. With any chance that comes to learn more and do further studies, I hope to grab it and make use. I would really love to see more girls take ICT or ICT related courses. I hope to be exemplary for more girls to follow. Finally, to any girls aspiring to take up ICT or any related course, anything is possible if you put your mind to it. When it gets tough, never give up. Perseverance is key. If at first you do not succeed, try; try again. Remember, girls rock it!

Happy Girls in ICT Day!

Communication Technology (ICT) related course. He urged me to sign up for it and I did. 2019, I was privileged to have been selected as one of the candidate for the program.

Electrical and Communication Engineering is both a challenging and intriguing course. I had faced a couple of difficulties along the way. Being a student who was never once been taught in a school with Computer lessons, I had difficulty in coping up and coding was very foreign to me at that stage. Fortunately, my course mates as well as my lecturers were helpful so I managed to get back on track. I am currently doing my third year now and my experience over the two years has put me in a position to realize that being computer literate at a very young age is compulsory. That goes to the extent of getting acquaintance with computer programs that are necessary for coding especially when you are interested in taking up either an engineering or an ICT related course. After I graduate from UNITECH in the year 2023, I would like to leave my options open. I am equally interested in going for further studies as well as gaining a lot of experience in my career as an Electrical Engineer majoring in Communication. Either way, I will completely utilize my knowledge, skills and experience gained to help Papua New Guinea create a conducive environment for technology to take root and flourish.

Finally, to all the young and talented girls out there, I would like to encourage you to take up an ICT related course. The physical world is transforming into a digitized one. You taking up an ICT course will be regarded as an asset to the country and there will be vast opportunities provided within the country and abroad for you.

Happy Girls in ICT Day!