

Samoa celebrates World No Tobacco Day

The 31st of May every year highlights an important health event, that is, the commemoration of World No Tobacco Day. This prestigious celebration was established by the World Health Assembly in 1987 to draw global attention to the tobacco epidemic and its lethal effects.

The Official Launch of World No Tobacco Day 2011 was held at the Ministry of Health head quarters at Motoootua at 2.00 pm on Tuesday 31st May. The program included the Invocation by Rev. Dr. Siaosi Salesulu of the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa of Vaialele. The Hon. Minister of Health, Afioga Tuitama Dr. Leao Talalelei Tuitama, delivered the keynote address. He emphasized the theme of the day entitled the 'WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control' (FCTC) and its importance being the



The World Health Organization Representative, Dr. Baoping Yang presents the rugby jerseys to the Itu-Asau College in Savaii.

world's foremost tobacco control instrument. He mentioned that World Health Assembly adopted a resolution calling for an international framework convention on tobacco control. Since 2005, Samoa has been a party to the FCTC when it was ratified by the Prime Minister of Samoa at the time. Samoa's long standing participation is an indication of high level political commitment to this treaty. These achievements were made possible with the collaboration and assistance of other Government Ministries, Health Service Providers, NGOs and Academic Institutions. Despite these tremendous achievements through concerted efforts, there is still work that must be done. Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death. According to statistics, this year, more than 5 million people will die from a tobacco-related heart attack, stroke, cancer, lung ailment or other disease. That does not include the more than 600,000 people who will die from exposure to second-hand smoke. He then concluded that Samoa is obliged to protect people from exposure to tobacco smoke, ban tobacco advertising and sales to minors, put large health warnings on packages of tobacco, ban or limit additives to tobacco products, increase tobacco taxes and create a national coordinating mechanism for tobacco control.



MOH staff in blue, wearing red hibiscus as a sign of tobacco-use prevention

from Savaii and Lepa-Lotofaga College in Upolu.

World No Tobacco Day is celebrated every year on 31 May as a mandate of the World Health Assembly, the supreme decision-making body of WHO, which is comprised of the organization's Member States. World No Tobacco Day informs the public about the dangers of tobacco use, the business practices of tobacco companies, what WHO is doing to fight the tobacco epidemic and what people can do to claim their right to health and healthy living and to protect future generations.



L-R: Director General, Palanitina Tupuimatagi Toelupe, Rev. Dr. Siaosi Salesulu, Hon Minister of Health Tuitama Dr. Leao Talalelei Tuitama & his good lady, Lanuola Tuitama.



JICA Representative presents Lepa-Lotofaga College in Upolu with their rugby jerseys.



Some of the Health Sector partners who took part in the event