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FNU wins prestigious 2011 Inter-University Debate

Fiji National University won the 2011 round of the prestigious, European Union-sponsored Fiji Inter-University Debate at its Pasifika Campus in Suva last night, following on from a strong start as the top-scoring of the four teams to make it into the finals.

FNU also walked away with another title in the three-way tournament between FNU, the University of the South Pacific and the University of Fiji. Media and Journalism student Indrani Krishna won the Best Debater award, accompanied by Navneet Narayan, Shanistika Shivalni, Abdul Mufeez, Demayble Pasoni and Mereani Rakesau, all of whom made up two FNU teams.

Facing off in last night's semi final against the University of the South Pacific team over the theme "Climate Change is not Real", the FNU team debated University of Fiji in the finals over the topic "Sex Work Should be Decriminalised".

The team scored highly on the judges' cards with a strong display of confidence, clarity of argument, and passion for the issue, as the negative team.

"I think we deserved to win after the hard work we put in the preparation," said Ms Krishna. "The whole thing was about advocating on issues we were given."

Acting Head of the Department of Communication, Language and Literature (CLL), Shailesh Lal said this was FNU's second appearance at the competition.

"We learnt from our earlier mistakes. The debate team members found the experience exhilarating and the win, a very humbling experience."

Mr Lal said College Dean Dr Eci Nabalarua, CLL lecturers Reggie Dutt, Bhagwan Bhindi, HOD Media, Elia Vesikula and HOD Social Sciences, Makereta Mua, were actively involved in preparing the team, chosen from an internal debate competition held a month ago.

FNU debaters have won attractive internships with the global environmental organization, WWF, and the Pacific Regional Rights Resource Team.

Last night's semi-finals and finals followed rounds one and two of the competition on Tuesday.

The inaugural Europa Shield Tournament was held in 2010.