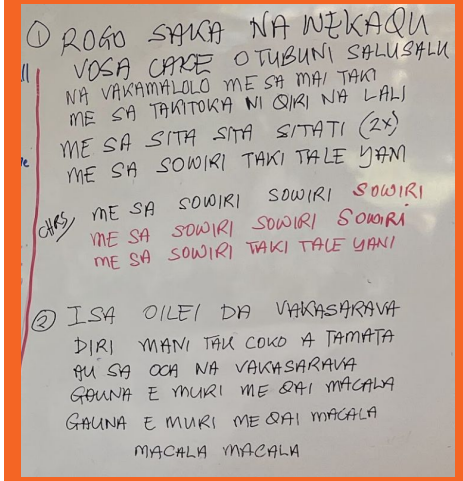
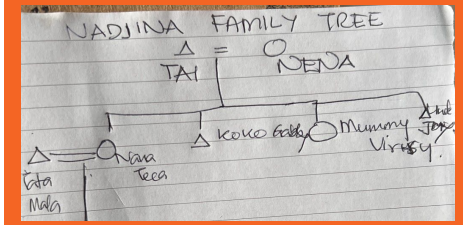
Leadership in Action with Think Pacific in Fiji

During Summer 2022, I received a great opportunity to volunteer in Fiji for six weeks under Think Pacific. I thank Laidlaw Scholars for the amazing opportunity that this initiative brought me.

We spent a few weeks dedicated to cultural immersion and participating in a youth-led workshop by the Alliance for Future Generations Fiji (AFG). In this workshop, youths aged between 16 and 35 were able to participate and learn about climate change. Throughout these daily workshops, we learned about how Pacific Islanders are impacted by climate change and what to do if a natural disaster occurs. We also spent time building trash bins for Toga (pronounce Ton-ga) to clean up the trash circulating throughout the village.

Alvalyn Dixon-Gardner

Laidlaw Scholars from across the world spent a couple of weeks building a health clinic for our village (Toga Village) alongside members of the Fijian community. This was a labor intensive process that taught me a significant amount about teamwork, leadership, and how to care for others. It was a true moment of gratitude to build this for a community that I admire and love.



I spent a significant amount of time learning Fijian through learning dances and games intended for young adolescents and from my host family (as pictured to the left and below). I truly felt like a daughter in my host family as partially portrayed in my Fijian family tree. I truly believe that I have a home away from home. The bottom picture is my entire family during a Sunday dinner.