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## **“O Faiva e Tapuaia, e A’e Manuia”**

*Governor Lemanu delivers Keynote Address at the Manu’a High School Graduation*



The Honorable Lemanu P. S. Mauga, Governor of American Samoa delivered the Keynote Address at the Manu’a High School Commencement Ceremony on Friday, June 9, 2023 at the school’s Gymnasium in Ta’u, Manu’a:

*“Graduates, you have come to this pivotal chapter in your life, and I can see the anticipation of beginning the next part of life radiating from each of you. Today, as we celebrate your achievements and the culmination of years of hard work, it is essential that we take a moment to*

*express our heartfelt gratitude to those who have supported and guided you along this remarkable journey, as you have commemorated in your first theme of the day, 'O faiva e tapuaia, e a'e manuia.'*

*First, let us acknowledge and extend our sincerest gratitude to God, our Father who has seen you through to this day, from the day of your coming into this world. We look to your families: your parents and loved ones. They have clothed you, fed you, and taught you important values and traditions. They have been your unwavering pillars of strength, love, encouragement, and endless support throughout your academic pursuit. Furthermore, it is eminent to thank your second family: your church leaders and village leaders for their prayers and support. They have nurtured and inspired you, they have provided opportunities and contributed to shaping you into the individual you are today.*

*We extend our sincerest gratitude to the exceptional faculty and staff members of Manu'a High School. They have dedicated themselves to your education. Their passion and commitment to teaching have played a vital role in shaping your minds and expanding your horizons beyond the beautiful shores of Manu'atele. Thank you for your dedication.*

*Graduates, I am sure you have heard an abundance of counsel and guidance on how to begin your life as an adult, and you will hear much more after today. Nevertheless, I have a few of my own to give to you today, so that you may use them in your time of need.*

*As you embark on this new chapter of your lives, I encourage each of you to lead your new life with God at the forefront of your path. You will face many challenges, obstacles, and uncertainties. The Word says, '...For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.' Your journey will be a journey of choices. You choose the door that leads to life or you choose the one that leads to destruction. I encourage you to build a solid foundation rooted in faith and righteousness, it will equip you with the wisdom to choose, and the resilience and strength to overcome obstacles.*

*As you are preparing to enter adulthood, I want to remind you that the journey isn't the only focus; we must place an importance on the outcome as well. What is your goal? Where are you headed? What do you want to achieve in life? I advise you not to set an unrealistic goal, seek what is long lasting and fruitful.*

*Graduates, I urge you not to give up so easily, and do not lose faith. Like your theme, 'You are the master of your alia; But God is the captain of your journey;' the Alia is you and the ocean is the world you have to explore; I charge you to take with you all who have supported you and go forward in faith.*

*To conclude my address, although we envision a future filled with personal achievements, I implore each and every one of you to remember the importance of giving back and serving our people. As you venture into the world and achieve greatness in your chosen fields, I urge you to consider returning to American Samoa to contribute your skills, expertise, and resources to the betterment of our people. With that, I congratulate you on your achievements, and I wish you a successful journey.”*

A total graduating class of seventeen students received their diplomas, marking a significant milestone in their educational journey. Toasamoa Tuialu’ulu’u was awarded the Valedictorian for the highest academic achievement, and Melisa Arieta Filimigo Li’a was awarded Salutatorian.

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