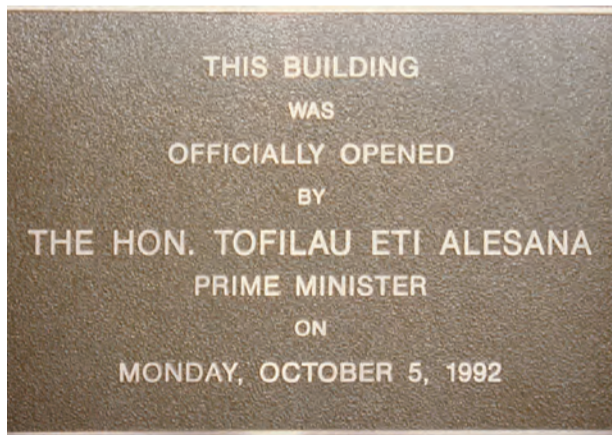




Yazaki Kizuna Foundation – The Legacy and the Bond

The Japanese word ‘Kizuna’ means the enduring bonds between people—close relationships forged through mutual trust and support.

It all began in 1991 when the Yazaki Corporation (YC), the Japanese company that manufactures automotive parts, started their wire harness operations in schools and churches, the next year established Vaitele factory in 1992. Starting was not easy as it took the company a lot of time to train the local employees and get them accustomed to the manufacturing work ethics. As its operations got on track and stabilised, YES (Yazaki EDS Samoa Ltd) became the biggest manufacturing company in Samoa employing more than 3,800 of Samoans at its peak. Not many people know this but the current President of YC, Riku Yazaki was stationed in Samoa in 1993 to work at Vaitele factory fostering relationships and strengthening the bond with Samoa. Between 1996 and 2000, 527 YC employees came as their part of training programme.



However, the changes in the business environment, YC had to make a difficult decision of closing down YES operations in 2017. Before YES closed, YES started to support staffs for reemployment. A total of 13 training courses were offered to over 600 employees. Training courses included driver’s license for cars, trucks, forklifts

and sewing, dying, computer literate, hospitality training. On 25th August of 2017, YES eventually closed down, however a bond between YES and Samoa had already been established. This bond was unbreakable and this gave an opportunity for the company to continue helping Samoa and Samoans. 359 employees were able to find new employment in other businesses with YES skills. One starting their own called “Tie Dye and Fashion”, three employees joined the parent company in Japan (YC) and they are still working. In January 2018, the Yazaki Kizuna Foundation (YKF) was established. YKF is currently engaged in two kinds of activity in Samoa. One is a scholarship program for students at NUS. The other activity is grants for small businesses in Samoa. YKF has provided grants to Women in Business Development Inc., Lakapi Samoa and lately for the Samoa Conservation Society on 17th November 2023.

