Navigating the Western School System in Jandals
Overview

• Introduction

• My STEM journey

• Existing barriers

• Some insights
Introduction

- BNZ - Tongan/Tokelau/Samoan
- Faith
- Socio-Economic background
STEM Journey

- Childhood fascination with science
- The parentals😊
- No excuses
Existing barriers

- Existing systemic disadvantages
- Limited/nil understanding of Mathematics and Science at intermediate level.
- Reduced/nil confidence by Year 9 (already behind/overwhelmed)
- Elitist view of STEM subjects in High School – “The Asian 5”

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Barriers contd

• Nil study habits established/normalised by Yr 11 and continues through out High School.

• Study space at home not always a reality for Pasifika students

• Family commitments to church/community events leaves limited time for meaningful/targeted study and revision.

• Parents do not understand the system..misinformed?

• Disempowered youth
What helped me

• The parentals

• Decolonisation/Critical analysis

• School teacher/s
Some suggestions😊

• Commit your time, energy, yourselves

• Know your Pasifika families at the grassroots...like really get to know them

• Seek advice from parents of successful STEM students regardless of their professional “titles”/qualification etc.

12/09/2017 Roneima Teumohenga
Poem

Rich in radiant red
Amongst the flowerbed
Lies internal beauty that bleeds
Golden pollen beads
For my heilala flowers
Holds many powers
Yet I hold back the feeling of being down
Like a smile hiding a frown
Unsure of what it is
It falls to bits
Poem continued

Reaching for a star
It hopes to stretch out far
Something holds it back
Like a mere heart attack
No root boosters to propel it forward
It feels like it is being tortured
Teuila also known as red ginger
The growth of it may hinder
Until I feel confident
I will face the consequent
Blooming during the season
Knowing I am Polynesian
I must stand out, without
A shadow of doubt
Displaying my culture
As a work of art, a sculpture
Showing the world the best I can be
All that it takes is to be me