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### **Media Release**

#### **Miss Pacific Islands Australia PLUS proves that size does matter**

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Brisbane, AUSTRALIA: The current reigning Miss Pacific Islands Australia Plus has proven her critics that size does matter. Twenty-seven year old Brisbane-Tongan girl Sulieti Nuku went above and beyond to showcase that physical beauty is more than the image portrayed in popular culture and more about one's identity and being comfortable in one's own skin.

Miss Sulieti Nuku represented her home-city of Brisbane together with the support of Brisbane's Mamana Tongan Academy of Performing Arts to vying for the title of Miss Pacific Islands Australia Plus, which was held in Sydney, New South Wales.

"Although society and social media will argue differently and say that beauty is only a size 8-10 with blonde wavy hair and blue eyes, I strongly feel that being beautiful is being absolutely confident in your skin, scars and all, muffin top hanging over your jeans and all, whether you're losing your hair or whatever," Sulieti said.

"To truly love yourself and accept every bit of who you are, the exact way it is, is such a beautiful thing that to me, can outshine any Victoria Secret angel," Sulieti added.

Australia's very first ever Miss South Pacific Paustralia Plus pageant occurred in September 2017 in Sydney, Australia under the direction of Victoria Mua-Tuilau, a Samoan plus-size fashion designer for the label Tori Blu. A nation wide call out was made for women of Pacific heritage from Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane to join the pageant.

Sulieti explained that although she was the first runner up to Thelma Fetu, who was representing Samoa, she was recently handed the crown in April 2019 as Thelma has pursued a role in motherhood.

Bullying and issues associated with mental health play a large role impacting youth worldwide, including the Tongan youth in Australia.

"Mental health is a big big part of where I am today and why I'm so passionate about teaching our women to love themselves," Sulieti shared.

"I went through a horrible experience not long after I turned 18 where I found myself in a very dark place with some very dark thoughts that led to some dark actions I'm not very proud of," Sulieti continued.



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Sulieti's dislike for exercise and counting calories led to her proud promotion of self-love and the founding of two small businesses - Fro&Co Events specialising in event styling and interLASHional eyelash extensions service.

"I've grown so much more confidence after this pageant and not just on the physical sides of things, I've gotten a whole heap of confidence when it comes to my work that I do, the events that I style and lashes that I do, I've learnt that I am just as bomb as the next party planner or lash artist," Sulieti shared proudly.

The Miss Pacific Islands Australia Plus pageant is a platform for Polynesian women to love and embrace their bodies regardless of size or shape.

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Photos of Miss Pacific Islands Australia Plus – Miss Sulieti Nuku





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