

## **Speech by Stefan Szegedi at Brilliant Star Montessori School 24 August 2022**

Talofa and Good Morning,  
Yassamin, Fereidoun Yazdani and family,  
Marie Innes Kappenberger the Consul of Chile to Samoa and your husband  
Marco,  
Damon Moors from Lodge Calliope 252,  
Parents, Teachers and Students from Brilliant Star Montessori School  
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is wonderful for me as a representative of the German Consul to Samoa as well as a former student of Brilliant Star Montessori School to be here with you today for this special occasion. I come together with my mother the German Consul to Samoa Christa Szegedi, my father Stefan Szegedi and my lovely Anastasia and several friends to celebrate the successful conclusion of this partnership project.

This project was made possible with the generous support from His Excellency Stefan Krawielicki the Former Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany in New Zealand. I also want to acknowledge and express my sincere thank you to Mrs Debora Yaakoby from the Embassy in Wellington for her support towards this project.

Being able to do this project is really special for me. When I was around 2 and half years old in 1987 I became one of first students to attend Brilliant Star Montessori. This is where I actually started my important formal education and learning pathway until master's level at university. Even all these years later I still have several fond and happy memories from my time here as a student.

I just want to say a few words how this project came about. In 2021 during the world peace celebration at the Bahai Temple, I got a chance to meet with Yassi and Fredo again after some time. Being a former student I happened to ask how things were at the school. Yassi informed me that they had to do these important renovations at the school especially to the floor due the damage caused by termites. She explained that she feared in the coming months the floor will become more unsafe for the children and teachers.

So that brings us here today. From this conversation and in following months the German Embassy was able to provide \$30,000.00 Samoan Tala worth of materials for the renovation of the floor for this school hall. Brilliant Star Montessori was then able to contribute the remaining \$20,000 towards the renovation. This renovation to the school hall will ensure a safer learning environment for the children, teachers and visiting parents. The hall also serves many different purposes; children use it to play when the outside weather is not good, a learning space for activities like singing, dancing, painting and the main dining area for the children to eat fruits. That is why it was so important to renovate this school hall so that the important work of educating the children can continue in a safe environment.

I want to use this opportunity to thank and congratulate Yassi for not just your work with the project but also for your wonderful years of service to Brilliant Star Montessori. Thank you also to Fredo, it has been clear to me for several months now that you and your good lady work great as a team. I also would like to welcome your sons Shamim, Naeem and your families back to the real paradise of Samoa. It's wonderful after so many years to be able to meet up again. Lastly I want to thank J & F Enterprise for the wonderful work they have done to the hall.

Brilliant Star Montessori School is actually the first school project from seven we were able to undertake as far in 2022. As a result it is the first project we were able to complete for this year and have this wonderful ceremony. It is also the 13<sup>th</sup> project overall we were able to support for Samoa with the assistance from the German Embassy in Wellington since 2019. Being the 13<sup>th</sup> project since 2019 is a real testament and commitment shown by Germany in supporting Samoa especially in the area of education.

We have a small but dedicated team in place that all have important roles to play. Christa as the German Consul provides the direction; Stefan Senior provides necessary and important guidance, Anastasia also supports in numerous ways and is always passionate about projects, whilst my role is project manager on behalf of the German consul.

Lastly I want to thank everyone for coming today to this special ceremony. I also want to thank Yassi, Fredo and your team for making today a really wonderful experience. The partnership that we have created together I am sure will continue in years to come. We will of course continue to work together for the betterment of the children and the school here at Brilliant Star Montessori.

Thank You