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New High Court of American Samoa Officially Opens with Dedication Ceremony

On August 7, 2024, the new High Court of American Samoa, located in Malaeoletalu Fagatogo, was officially opened with a dedication ceremony. Treasurer Tofa To'oto'o Malemo Tausaga, who is also an American Samoa Economic Development Authority (ASEDA) Board Member, served as the Master of Ceremony and welcomed esteemed guests. Among the attendees were the Honorable Governor Lemanu P.S. Mauga, Senate President Tuaolo Manaia Fruean, Congresswoman Uifa'atali Amata, the Deputy Chief Justice, High Court Judges, Fono members, and Cabinet members.

Reverend Iasepi Ulu of the Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa (CCCAS) Fagatogo led the opening prayer and delivered the spiritual thought. He shared a Bible passage about Joshua, highlighting that despite facing many challenges as a leader and judge, Joshua's unwavering belief in the Lord God Almighty remained constant. Reverend Iasepi encouraged everyone to maintain steadfast faith in God and commended former Governor Lolo Matalasi Moliga for initiating the new High Court building project during his administration. He also thanked Governor Lemanu for continuing and completing the project. Reverend Iasepi concluded by saying, "Let this new High Court building be a place where the justice and love of God reside, and as Joshua said, 'As for me and my house, we will serve and worship God.'"

Governor Lemanu had the privilege of delivering the special remarks during the dedication ceremony. He began by saying, "This morning is unique as we gather to express our gratitude for the completion of this significant building." Governor Lemanu praised his predecessor, former Governor Lolo, noting that construction began during his administration, and expressed his pride in completing what Lolo started. He emphasized that every administration aims to build or renew infrastructure to enhance services for the territory.

"Being proud is an understatement," Governor Lemanu said, referring to the outstanding work done by local contractors. "It is heartwarming to see the quality of work our local people can achieve. Looking at this new structure, we can proudly say it was built by our own hands; we do not need to hire overseas contractors because our people can do it." He thanked Nana's Incorporated, the contractors, for their dedication and hard work.

Governor Lemanu concluded his remarks by saying, "May the new courthouse be a place where the will of God is done, a place of righteousness and fair judgment for the people of American Samoa."

The Director for Public Works and ASEDA Chairwoman Faleosina Voigt briefly spoke about the project, describing it as one of the major government projects under the Bond Series (A) 2015 - 2021, which provided funding for construction. Director Faleosina mentioned the previous ASG departments that had buildings at this location, including DBAS, Agriculture, ASTCA, and noted that now the High Court has permanent roots here.

The new courthouse is two stories high, 160 feet long, and 60 feet wide, consisting of two conference rooms and two courtrooms. Under the Building Code Act, Director Faleosina presented Judge Mamea Sala with the Certificate of Occupancy. Judge Mamea spoke on behalf of Chief Justice Michael Kruse to convey their utmost gratitude to Governor Lemanu, ASG, and the contractors for constructing the new home for the American Samoa High Court.

President of Nana's Incorporated, Mrs. Fiapa'ipa'i Emelio Fruean, expressed her gratitude in her speech for the support of Governor Lemanu, ASEDA, and all the government agencies that entrusted their company to build the new High Court. Mrs. Fiapa'ipa'i stated, "When we were given the contract and blueprint, we followed it to the last inch because we know that this building is meant to serve our people. We hope that we have lived up to the expectation of serving our territory through construction."

First Lady Ella Mauga was given the honor of cutting the ribbon to officially inaugurate the building. All attendees were then invited to tour the new High Court of American Samoa.

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