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LBJ Diabetes Program and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Medical Mission Team Host Church Service

"By fostering a collaborative approach, we can significantly prioritize preventive measures and effectively manage this illness"

The LBJ Diabetes Program and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Medical Mission team organized a church service in commemoration of National Diabetes Awareness Month in November. The event took place at the Matu'u and Faganeanea EFKAS Church under the leadership of Reverend Elder Fouvale Asiata, drawing the active participation of various

religious congregations including the Futiga Methodist Church, Iliili Roman Catholic, and CCJS Kokoland.

The service, held on October 29, 2023, at 2:00 p.m., was centered around the theme "Educate to Protect Tomorrow; Access to Diabetes Care." The Honorable Acting Governor, Talauega E. V. Ale was invited to deliver his special remarks to the congregation. In his address, Acting Governor Talauega E. V. Ale acknowledged the collective efforts of the dedicated team striving to educate the community about diabetes prevention and management. Highlighting the severity of the issue, he emphasized that American Samoa currently ranks 12th in the world for the highest prevalence of diabetes cases per capita, a statistic that demands urgent attention and action from all members of the community.

"The impact of diabetes in our lives is a challenge," stated Acting Governor Talauega E. V. Ale. "We witness its devastating effects on our families and friends. It deeply saddens me to see even young children as young as 14 facing the consequences of this illness in our local dialysis center. We must acknowledge our role in exacerbating this issue through excessive consumption and unhealthy lifestyles. If we continue down this path, we risk climbing the ranks to the top 10 within the next five years. However, we possess the necessary tools to combat and ultimately eradicate this disease."

Acting Governor Talauega E. V. Ale urged the healthcare professionals not to lose hope, encouraging continuous efforts in educating communities through various platforms, including churches, schools, and villages. "By fostering a collaborative approach, we can significantly prioritize preventive measures and effectively manage this illness," he added.

The program featured the reading of the Proclamation by Sisters Allison Carter and Kellie Walker, alongside a thorough exploration and discussion of the designated theme by the sister missionaries. The church service resonated with unity, harmonized through heartfelt music and earnest prayers. Rev. Elder Asiata concluded the event with a profound message of encouragement and caution, underscoring the significance of collective efforts in safeguarding the well-being of American Samoa's people.

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