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Savina Nongebatu receives US Secretary of State's International Women of Courage Award



Photo Caption: U.S. Ambassador to PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu H.E. Teddy Taylor presenting the International Women of Courage Award to recipient Ms. Savina Nongebatu.

Ms. Savina Nongebatu is the Solomon Islands 2012 National Winner of the U.S. Secretary of State's Award for International Women of Courage. She has been

recognized for overcoming adversity and championing the cause of people living with disabilities in the Solomon Islands.

The Secretary of State's Award for International Women of Courage is presented annually to women around the world who have shown exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for women's rights and advancement.

U.S. Ambassador to PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu H.E. Teddy Taylor presented the award to Ms. Nongebatu at a brief ceremony in Honiara on March 29. "Advancing the status of women and girls is essential to achieving global peace and prosperity and is a cornerstone of our Foreign Policy," said Ambassador Taylor.

Ms. Nongebatu became a paraplegic when she was 31 years old and a single mother shortly after that when her marriage ended. Despite her personal difficulties, she has spent most of the last decade championing the cause of people with disabilities. Her volunteer work, leadership and relentless advocacy for the People with Disabilities Solomon Islands (PWDSI) as well as her initiative to encourage, mentor and provide leadership in PWDSI has made her "a great Ambassador for the Solomon Islands," Ambassador Taylor said.

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