

# Adult & Community Education Newsletter



## Adult Learners' Week He Tangata Mātauranga 2017

Adult Learners' Week He Tangata Mātauranga 2017 was celebrated from the 4th to the 10th of September. This year the launch was in Wellington, at a Parliamentary Breakfast.

ACE Aotearoa kaumatua, Peter Jackson opened the proceedings with a mihi. He was followed by Tracey Shepherd, the ACE Aotearoa Tangata Tiriti co-chair who told those gathered that the Week is a UNESCO sponsored event, which is held in more than 40 countries world-wide. It is a celebration which reminds us that we are global citizens, part of a huge global movement working to empower adults and ensure they realise their potential and are able to take their rightful place in their communities, countries and in the world. In Aotearoa Adult Learners' Week He Tangata Mātauranga is supported by the TEC and used as an opportunity to celebrate the successes and achievements of everyone participating in adult and community education, whether it's improving literacy and numeracy, taking up more formal courses or learning for fun.

Grant Robertson MP for Wellington Central hosted the event. In his address he acknowledged the work that ACE Aotearoa has been doing on setting standards for quality adult and community education. Everyone in New Zealand, he said, has a right to quality education. This will be especially



*Grant Robertson, MP for Wellington Central hosting the launch of Adult Learners' Week He Tangata Mātauranga 2017 at a parliamentary breakfast in Wellington.*



*At the Adult Learners' Week He Tangata Mātauranga launch*

important given the impact of technology on the future of work. If accessible and high quality lifelong learning opportunities are available we will have a resilient and adaptable population.

Tracey Shepherd then introduced five adult learners, each of whom told their story.

# Contents

- 1 Adult Learners' Week  
He Tangata Mātauranga 2017
- 4 Common Unity Project  
Aotearoa: together we grow
- 6 Whau ACE: taking up the  
challenge
- 7 Southern REAP: changing the  
self-talk
- 10 Rural fire cadet training:  
"a good investment"
- 11 Vege-cation in Blenheim
- 12 Marlborough REAP and  
Pasifika
- 13 Auckland Women's Centre  
Te Rōpū Wāhine o Tāmaki  
Makaurau: meeting a need
- 13 REAP research
- 14 *International: Bristol -  
becoming a Learning City*
- 15 *Book review: Southern  
Transformation: Searching for  
educational success in South  
Auckland*
- 15 *Our people: Gail Harrison*
- 16 *ACE News*

Quotation:

## *E tipu, e rea: Grow and keep growing*

*This is part of a longer pepeha that  
was written by the great Ta Apirana  
Ngata in 1949. For the full saying go to  
[www.donology.net/writes/grow-and-keep-growing](http://www.donology.net/writes/grow-and-keep-growing)*



### **April Green and Ara's Next Steps Centre for Women**

April was born in 1963 to a family of fifteen and was whangai (adopted) at birth. For many years she was subject to serious violence and abuse. It was not until she was turning 50 and her daughter was ready to leave home that she realised that she was depressed and "didn't have a life." So she enrolled in an 8-week course called New Outlook for Women at the Next Steps Centre for Women at CPIT (now Ara). "This is when I realised my true passion," she said. "I learnt that my past is nothing to be ashamed of "it was actually my resume." April then did the Centre's Updating Skills course "to action my new found passion to enter the field of domestic violence and use my life experience to help others lead a non-violent life." In 2013 she won a Next Steps Centre scholarship and went on to complete her Certificate in Human Services, leading to employment as a Women's Refuge Peer Support Specialist for Domestic Violence: "Now I could walk beside women and Māori men," she said, "using my life experience to help them help themselves." She returns to the centre each year to share her story with the new students motivating them "to make more of their lives, and also very importantly to provide a vehicle for support from domestic violence." April concluded by saying: "If I could leave you with one thing this morning, I hope my story has illustrated how valuable and important adult and community education is throughout New Zealand and how much it needs to remain."



### **Manjula Patel and Wellington High School's Community Education Centre - and Literacy Wellington**

Manjula Patel is both a teacher and student of ACE. She has been a cooking teacher at Wellington High School's Community Education Centre for around eight years - sharing her skills and culture. She loves teaching and helping all of her class gain in confidence and reach their goals. But writing up the recipes was difficult. Manjula had left school early to help her family financially and as an adult she found reading and writing hard. She didn't want to go back to classes and "be told off". But eventually she enrolled with Literacy Wellington and, she said, "it was nothing like I expected. I walked in and everyone was smiling and laughing and it was so nice. I was only going to come for a short while but I have been studying for several years now. Each year I get more confident. At the end of the first year I got my first certificate. It blew me away that I had something with my name on it that I had achieved. I went on to learn literacy, maths, computers - anything that was going. I now have my National Certificate in Employment Skills. Through Literacy Wellington I have access to tutors and resources. I can use the computers and get help when I need it. My learning was a hard journey and I fell down a few times. The writing I am doing now makes me so happy. My tutor says I have nailed it."



### Rakky Alexander and ĀKAU

Rakky dropped out of school when she was 15. She was, she said, disruptive, often missed classes and had no goals. It was her mother who saw a poster about ĀKAU (an architecture studio and youth program where young people get to work on real projects inside their community) and signed her daughter up. Reluctant at first, it was a game changer. “During the ĀKAU programme,” she said, “I gained my level 2 credits and found it was a lot different from school. It offered amazing experiences that schools didn’t have. I was involved in real life projects inside my community, where we got to see our concepts being developed. While doing projects ĀKAU was always pushing us to do better because they knew we could and kept challenging us. During this process of doing projects, I became more socially involved and connected to my community.” Rakky found she was good at public speaking and used this talent by doing the presentations for their work such as one about the architectural concepts for the redevelopment of a local marae that the young people designed. With ĀKAU she went on some inspiring hikoi - traveling to Auckland to visit other architectural practices and a university. It was this experience that helped her decide that university was for her. Now an intern with ĀKAU Rakky is working towards a career in design. In the meantime ĀKAU is helping her prepare for university by supporting her through the classes she is doing with Te Kura Pounamu. “From three years ago, just looking for a good time, to now where I am speaking inside Parliament, I think I’ve done pretty well at ĀKAU.”



### Majed Burhan and English Language Partners

Majed is from Syria, where she was a mother and studied Arabic literature. She has been in New Zealand for one and a half years. She came here as a refugee with her family, fleeing a war zone: “I never thought I would have to leave Syria, she said, “but suddenly I faced building a new life in a different country and leaving everything familiar behind. The hardest part to life in New Zealand has been learning English. I went to English Language Partners: I like the education programme there because it not only helped me to learn English but also taught me a lot about life in New Zealand like places, shopping, weather, doctors, schools and much more. This was helpful because it was hard to find that information ourselves with not much English. In addition I made friends, which was very important to me because when I arrived I didn’t know anyone. Add to that that English Language Partners assigned an English language volunteer home tutor who we can ask for help about anything like homework, explaining a letter in the mail or just talking over a cup of tea. Now, after one and a half years learning, I can communicate with people, attend a level 3 English course in Whitireia Polytechnic and even give a speech in Parliament. It has even given me the language to get a job at Pomegranate Kitchen. I thank English Language Partners and my friendly teachers there, and also ACE Aotearoa for supporting adult learning.”



### Leah Olsen and the Porirua Whānau Centre

Leah was raised by a solo mother in an environment surrounded by drugs, alcohol, gangs and abuse. She dropped out of school at 14 and when she was 15 her mother died. She hit rock bottom. She was, she said, “in the wrong crowds, doing the wrong stuff, and making the wrong decisions.” Then she was referred to an employment skills course, loved it and got her first job. She married at 18 and by the time she was 20 she had two children and was “reliving the exact life I had been brought up in.” So she went to see the social workers at the Porirua Whānau Centre and was referred to the Parenting Course and the HIPPY programme: “I learnt how to manage my life, organise myself and how to react calmly to stressful situations. It gave me a boost of confidence and turned that light back on for me.” The family then returned to Murupara “to get an understanding of who I was, and where I came from and I wanted to teach my kids our reo.” Back in Porirua two years later things began to fall part again and both she and her husband joined the Parenting Programme. “It’s made us better people, better parents and a stronger unit. I am more involved in the community and feel more confident in myself. We now have a plan, a goal, and a vision for our whānau.” Leah is now a HIPPY tutor, her children are thriving, and she is motivated. “I think,” she told the audience in the Grand Hall at Parliament, “that knowledge is power.”

This year the New Zealand Commission for UNESCO filmed the learners who spoke at the launch. We will be uploading the video onto our website.



# Common Unity Project Aotearoa: together we grow

In Waiwhetu, Lower Hutt, a revolution is brewing. For five years it has been transforming the community, whānau and individual lives through 'new' systems. 'New' because what this community-driven project is creating is based on age-old ways of doing things, and age-old values of reciprocity and doing things together so that everyone can flourish.

It started with an acre of vegetable garden at the Epuni Primary School and now it has expanded to an enterprise hub, the Waiwhetu ReMakery which is increasingly serving people living in greater Wellington - supporting start-up businesses, learning opportunities, intergenerational respect, healthy lifestyles, and social cohesion.

Julia Milne is the driving force behind this revolution. Her charitable trust, Common Unity Aotearoa, is the umbrella organisation for about 14 different initiatives and programmes which are coming on stream all the time. They receive no central government funding. They have had support from the Hutt City Council, a Give a Little site, many partners and donors, some philanthropic funding –

and they are propelled by the engine of reciprocity. The aim is to be self-sufficient. And that's not long away. Community Unity Project Aotearoa is currently a NZ Sustainable Business Network Award 2017 finalist.

Julia Milne took some precious time out to talk with us on the phone and tell us where they've come from and where they are going.

## Beginnings

"It started because we wanted to create a local food system for Epuni. It is unfathomable to me that children in this country do not have enough good food. So we were able to use an old football field at Epuni Primary school and create an organic urban farm. Now all of the children at the school work in the garden on Tuesdays (parents and care givers are encouraged to join in and have some fun) and it is family gardening time on Saturdays, from 10.00 am - 1.00 pm. The garden produces enough food to make a large contribution to hot school lunches for the children three days a week. The school gets donations of food to provide what else is needed and every participating family can take home the vegetables that they need for that week.

"At the school we have had our Koha Kitchen, where we have been running a community cooking school each Wednesday. Darmiati Amin manages our weekly Koha Kitchen session where we prepare cooked meals for the children three days a week. People who come to help in the kitchen have an opportunity to learn new skills, connect with one another and contribute to the health and wellbeing of our children. They also get to take home an evening meal for their families, plus a share of any leftover ingredients.

"I think that the garden has had a huge impact on the community, not only through providing healthy



*“The whole project is held by strong values – particularly around reciprocity and sharing. One of my favourite values is courage. If you have the safety of one another you can be creative and courageous.”*

food, but the parents are learning to provide mutual support and the children are witnessing the amount of cooperation and love that goes into their lunches – and they are part of that. It’s putting children back into the heart of our village.

“We also run a sewing group at the school on Friday mornings, where people who have those skills can pass them on to others. People from the community come into the school to teach the children to knit. They make small squares which they then learn how to sew together to make blankets that they can donate to people who need them.

“And we have Project Sunshine Aotearoa. Each year the children at the school grow hundreds of sunflowers. They dry the heads, collect the seeds and put them into beautiful seed packets and post them off to anyone around the country who wants them.

“Some time ago we started programmes outside of the school. Ngahere Kai (Forest Food) is a collaboration between us and Hutt City Council. We both want to make locally grown food available within walking distance of all families of Lower Hutt. So in 2016 we gave 250 heritage fruit trees to the city and in turn they provided nine different community parks which can become community fruit forests. We had community groups planting them on Father’s Day that year. Recently Khaled, our Syrian orchardist who works for us, grew 500 berry bushes for these community forests.

“Then a while ago, having listened to what some of the dads at the school were asking for, we started our Beeple Honey Collective. We have provided training and tools and we have employed AI, a local beekeeper to be their mentor. Last year they produced 100 kilos of honey. This year it was over 350 kilos from around 50 hives which are located all over the Wellington region. The honey can be shared in the community or sold to fund other community projects.

“Epuni Primary school has been incredibly supportive of what we do, but once we started projects that serve the wider community and started needing a lot more space we could see that we would have to start moving outside of the school. The beekeeping is a case in point. We need a space to manufacture our hives and extract and store our honey. The Beeple Honey Collective project is now just one of our community owned enterprises.

“So we have leased a building in Waiwhetu, just down the road from the school.

### **The ReMakery – a place to grow change**

“Everything we do is based on waste re-incarnation and re-making what we have around us. Our Sew Good Collective is a good example of this. In 2016 we started our small business employing refugee and migrant women to make supermarket and school lunch bags out of old corporate uniforms. This reduces our reliance on plastic, and gives the women the chance to learn skills that may lead to employment. Currently they are overwhelmed with orders for food bags. The work certainly helps them get more confidence and integrate into our community. We are Living Wage Employers, so all the women can earn a living from this work. This group is now also working from the new hub. Soon there will be a shop on site.

“Now we are preparing to build an off-grid community kitchen at the ReMakery with the vision of getting to 2500 meals a day from our local food networks – so that these meals can be sent out to those most in need.

“Reciprocity is one of our important values. All recipients of what we produce are encouraged to give back to the community. ‘Together we grow’ is our strap line. To help this process we are setting up Timebanking and a new project called The Kete Food Share.

“We are also working on another partnership to provide Gateway courses. There are a lot of young people in our community not involved in work or training, and we plan to provide NZCA qualifications. Our first group of students are working on possum traps, building our community tables and are very keen to help us with our tiny house project. We have worked a lot with Corrections and Probation, particularly with up-grading our building. Some of this has led to us employing people that come to us via Community Service... Another one of our values is that no one is left behind. We like Edgar Kahn’s saying – ‘No throw away planet; no throw away people.’

“We are also just testing a new curriculum that we developed on beekeeping so we hope that young people, including those still at school, can get a qualification in honey production.

“At the moment we have rounded up a bunch of people who are helping us make a fuel from waste food. It can be done in a quite simple way. It has been happening for quite a long time in third world countries. Our dream is to be able to run the kitchen from fuel made from food waste.

“Because of the way we work, leaders emerge naturally and different people from the community move into project coordinator or mentoring roles. We also have someone on staff dedicated to assisting people setting up their own businesses. We are business incubators, helping people get themselves up and running using our business model.

“When the community heard that there was a building, we had an approach from some Māori in the community. They wanted to come and practise their kapa haka here, and some are doing carving. So now there are more Māori youth using the building too. They are looking for things to do – we are keen to help those that have been left behind by the schooling system into training and employment. We are excited about the development of urban entrepreneurs and small local enterprises that are linked to the well-being of our planet and each other.

“The whole project is held by strong values – particularly around reciprocity and sharing. One of my favourite values is courage. If you have the safety of one another you can be creative and courageous. With poverty and hardship there is an erosion of self-belief, so you stop thinking about courage and trying things in a new way. We encourage our project members to give and receive, acknowledging that everyone has something to offer and that we honour one another when we ask others to step forward and participate.”

Well over 300 people are currently in a Common Unity Project.

# Whau ACE: taking up the challenge

At the ACE Conference 2017 Andy Jackson, the Ministry of Education key note speaker, referred to the Productivity Commission's findings and the need to look at each level of the tertiary education system and ask what we can do to encourage innovation, while maintaining a focus on quality, to improve outcomes for learners. The theme of the conference was The Challenge of Change, and Andy ended his presentation with a slide that asked the question: So where is ACE heading?

It has been a question that Whau ACE has been grappling with for the last four years, and while they haven't come up with all the answers what they have done is get some professional help, researched some basic issues, come to some conclusions about what the barriers are and where opportunities exist, and got to work - while still keeping a focus on what else needs to happen.

Finding themselves at just about rock bottom in 2013 was a catalyst for change. In 2010 they lost their ACE funding, as did most of the other ACE providers in West Auckland. They struggled on with user pays and found what others found, a decline in the number of people enrolling in ACE programmes. One by one all the schools that tried to keep going, dropped their courses. Now it is just Rutherford College providing school ACE in West Auckland. Their programme is TEC-funded. It not only survives - it has a dynamic and inclusive programme.

Then in January 2014 the Whau ACE Board appointed Theresa Christie as the new manager. With a community organisation background (she was the Manager of Training and Education for the Waipareira Trust for many years), Theresa was given a free hand to help lift the organisation. One of the first things she did, with the Board's support, was take up an offer by the Tindall Grass Roots Giving Fund for help in kind. Trevor Grey came and reviewed the organisation - their governance, management and marketing. After his review he worked with Theresa and they did an organisational audit. The

fundamentals had been attended to.

The Board's vision is that Whau ACE will empower adults through community-based learning and become the epicentre of adult education for New Lynn and its surrounding communities guiding adults on self-reliance, through pathways into employment, education and or self-employment: No real surprises, but renewed determination.

Armed with information about the declining learner numbers experienced by other surviving ACE providers, Theresa decided it was time to find out where all the learners had gone - and why Māori, Pasifika and Asian in particular, were not enrolling. They applied to Lotteries, got some funding, found the money to employ someone to keep the centre going while Theresa was out in the community, and did a survey by visiting places where these groups gather: markets, local organisations and churches, and public events.

The research had the following main findings: The large majority of Māori and Pasifika had not done any formal learning within the last ten years. The main barrier for Māori and Pasifika was funding: even \$50.00 was too much to pay for a programme, and many were wary of the cost of travel. The main barrier for Asians was time. They also found that those in work could not afford to stop work to attend education or training programmes; evening courses were often not considered because people had to, they said, spend some time with their children. The top three programmes that they would like to enrol in if they could were: language (te reo Māori, ESOL for Asians and Pasifika); digital skills, and life-skills such as cooking on a budget.

As part of her fact finding Theresa also found a 2015 study by the Department of Labour about unemployment for the over forty-five age group. She started thinking about what Whau ACE could do to make a difference.

## Response

In terms of what they were already offering, the research in their community confirmed

that they were meeting needs, so they have continued with their programme. They have te reo and ESOL classes, art, weaving and an introduction to computers and technology. Numbers are still not high but they are committed to meeting learner needs, and run them so long as there are more than six people enrolled. The ILETS course runs when the demand is there.

Where Whau ACE has made a change is in their new focus on older, unemployed Māori and Pasifika.

To Theresa (Māori - Ngāpuhi and Pasifika - Samoan) it is obvious that it takes a village to raise a child: That is everyone - especially the elders. And, she says, as a group they are 'broken'.

"That spells disaster," Theresa says. "Young people growing up need their parents and grandparents to support them, and wrap around them. They are the backbone of the community. These days they are left out of the equation. Without empowered elders we are putting our youth of today into 'foster care'. It is not just skills that this older age group needs, they must have mental and spiritual stability. Many of them are depressed."

The answer that she came up with is the 45+ Club.

The 45+ Club is not a set course. Whau ACE has a sign outside their door and people just come in. When they do they are warmly greeted and invited to register. That means they can have a good long chat with Lovey Dvorkin (a qualified social worker and counsellor who works with Whau ACE on a voluntary basis) or Theresa about where they are at. There might be fifteen over 45s there at one time and in the informal 'club' environment, peer to peer support grows.

"Their self-image changes," says Theresa. "It happens just because there are people believing in them, believing in them sincerely. Apart from the informal time together, we help them focus on what they can do to get work. We know that today it is often only the managerial class that has a 40 hour a week job, and we tell them that. We also tell them that qualifications and experience in a lot of cases only gets them



to the starting gate. We help our people understand what it is that employers are looking for. We don't make it sound easy. We work on their confidence so they can take the hard knocks. Then they are ready for job hunting, ready for interviews, ready for learning. We are helping people redesign themselves. We take many over the road to Literacy Waitakere – they are very warm and inviting. Others we might take to a PTE. We buddy with organisations that will look after them. We always support them to take the next step. Work options are discussed and there are four computers available and if they want to they are helped to job search. Some find a part time job, others are given one-on-one support to start their own small business.”

Everyone who is looking for work is helped to write a good cv. Inspired by the key note address by Professor Paul Spoonley at the ACE Conference this year, the Whau ACE team is now working on identifying the soft skills that people might already have, or those they have built up during their time with Whau ACE. For example, says Theresa, people who regularly attend a course, like art, te reo or digital skills, can demonstrate soft skills such as determination, patience, and a keenness to learn. “We help them understand that these skills are valuable, and we help them write a cv that reflects these skills. We are eliminating as many barriers as possible to self-reliance.”

For many financial capability is a barrier, so Whau ACE is addressing that through a partnership with the Waipareira Trust. Together they will be running financial literacy workshops, helping people repair their debt and understand the impact of a bad credit rating. “With a bad credit rating,” says Theresa, “it is hard to get a job because people see you as

## Southern REAP: changing the self-talk

Young parent education programmes are not new to Southern REAP. Back in 2012 Southern REAP established a Young Mum's NCEA programme in Gore. It evolved from a play group of mothers referred by Strengthening Families into a committed group of young women who were helped back into education and work. ACE Aotearoa included an article about this programme in our Winter 2014 newsletter.

Five years later the programme is still flourishing in Gore with successful programmes now being facilitated in Winton and Nightcaps as well.

The Southern REAP approach is ideal for people living in small rural communities: it helps the young women successfully get NCEA credits through Te Aho o Te Kura Pounamu - The Correspondence School. The programmes are called NCEA 4 U.

There are currently over thirty young women (and one man), mostly between the ages of 18 and 28 enrolled in the programmes. Students meet weekly for two hours to study under the guidance of a tutor/mentor. Childcare is provided in a room next door. The Gore group meets at Southern REAP; the Winton group at the Salvation Army Hall; and the Nightcaps group at St Patricks Primary school.

We talked with Janine Walker, the ACE Manager at Southern REAP, and Shirley Pratt the award winning tutor for the Winton and Nightcaps groups, about the two newer programmes.



Whau English Conversation



untrustworthy.” And that's more wisdom to pass down to grandchildren and their children. Many parents of teenagers, says Theresa, often don't know how to support their children. “By working with our older age group we are helping to repair the whole family unit.”

Whau ACE operates on a tiny budget – they just have two paid staff. When she accepted the job Theresa felt unsure about how long she would stay. Now she is fully committed and excited by their progress. “The community sector is the backbone of our country and it is neglected. We can now see that our organisation has got wings, it always had potential. Now it is licensed to fly.”

### Getting started

The Winton programme grew out of a budget cooking programme. Janine and Louise Faithful (Winton Community Support Worker) who organised the classes in response to a need identified by the community, made a point of getting to know the women who were attending. It soon became apparent that for most of them school had been a negative experience. Janine talked with them about the possibility of getting help to get their NCEA credits and, she says “the course took on a life of its own. Some of the girls from the cooking class found other girls in the community who were keen, and we set up the first group in late 2014.”

There were fifteen young women in the Winton group last year. Some left, after completing their chosen NCEA subjects, and the 2016 year started with just nine. The students took ownership of promoting the programme and brainstormed ways to connect with possible new students. First they sat outside the local supermarket with leaflets and signed up one new person. The next step was Facebook, which drew in five more. Then Southern REAP held

an open day in May and several more have joined the group: enrolments are open and welcomed throughout the year.

Meanwhile Janine had been working in Nightcaps running programmes such as Computers in Homes. She could see that some of the young mothers might benefit from a similar programme and those she approached were open to the idea. The Nightcaps group was established with twelve on the programme for 2017.

Shirley's job includes managing the administrative work with Te Kura. The young women start each session with all the right papers in front of them and they are helped to meet all of their deadlines. Mentoring and support take up the rest of her time, both during and outside of the classes.

"We are very lucky with Shirley," says Janine, "she is not just their tutor. Shirley goes above and beyond for her students to ensure they are supported in their learning and personal lives – she guides them through lots of changes and difficulties in their lives."

Shirley describes how she runs the programme:

### Approach

"In 2015 it was really me finding my way. I wanted to make the environment as unlike school as possible. We provide coffee and there are no set breaks. I let them be themselves. We have a positive learning environment and it enables the students to learn to succeed rather than feeling a failure.

"In the first year I decided to get them to prepare a short speech on some aspect of their life and what happened as a result. There are always tears along the way during this learning. It is so personal and heartfelt. The talks have a double benefit: they share information about who they are, providing an opportunity for others who have faced similar situations to connect and an environment is created where sharing and supporting each other becomes the norm. When we start a session, if someone is coping with an issue, say to do with their parenting, it just tumbles out. We talk about it for a while and the other girls share ideas. They are usually incredibly practical. Sometimes, if someone is facing a difficult problem, we do a role play. Mostly we can keep the discussions quite short – then I say, now let's get back to work!

"Some new students take a while to settle in and get some confidence, but once they taste success they are motivated. One girl came back last year and I could scarcely keep up with her. She often produced two work books a week. She worked in every spare

minute. Such a great role model for her children!

"The most popular subjects in the programmes have been English, Accounting and Agriculture, (which is now called Primary Production). One of the girls has just been accepted for doing six months pre-nursing course with a view to enrolling in Nursing next year. Another has been accepted into Teachers' College. One young woman who started with us in 2015 would like to be a Social Worker. She is like glue in the community – she pulls people together. Several of them have also started volunteering in the community as well as studying.

"Sometimes they get together for study dates outside of session times because of their personal motivation to learn.

"I think the biggest thing I do apart from the work is that I change their head talk. Because they have this idea that they are a failure and can't do it. Sometimes, when someone is finding things difficult, I take them out of class and say – well, this is what it looks like to me! Don't keep telling yourself that. This is the truth. You can do it. And they find they can solve the problem and get back on track. It makes me look back on what I have done as a primary school teacher and wonder just how many I taught that have not succeeded...

"At the end of last year I was presented with a Kiwibank Local Hero Award. What I thought at the time was – really it is those girls who are the heroes."



Shirley Pratt (centre) Kiwibank Local Hero of the Year with Dawn Brocks Southern REAP Manager and Janine Walker ACE Manager.





## Going Back To School

*Written by Jessica Wright, from Southern REAP NCEA 4U programme as part of her L3 NCEA English course [abridged]*

We either hated school or liked it. Me, well I was there to hang out with my friends, and eat my lunch, well that's what my Mum would say. So I never really cared about my education. I was already working part time to pay for things I thought I really needed or wanted. So when it came to the education side of things it wasn't my top priority. I worked hard in my part time job as a cook so there really wasn't time for studying back then. With no study in my brain I went into exams not really knowing too much. So when the results came back, you guessed it, I failed miserably. To my mother's dismay I preferred the money, so I quit school in 2005, moved into a flat with my boyfriend, worked, worked, and worked some more.

Then snap I was 16 years old. I'm pregnant so no more education, no more work. Once I was seven months pregnant I had nothing to fall back on... When I became pregnant I wasn't capable of working in the job. I was a smoker. I was living off Welfare benefits even before I was 21. I had no high school qualifications and no opportunity for training.

To my surprise seven years later when I was 24 I got the chance of a lifetime, an opportunity to get an education to finish off my NCEA. This time I was ready. I knew that I could not mess this up. I need these qualifications to get the career I truly want. I totally understand why I needed it when I was younger as my life choices have been so limited without the qualifications so valued by employers.

Southern REAP have introduced a programme for young mums to achieve what they couldn't when they were younger or for those that have had problems at school. I would like to pass all 3 levels of NCEA. With the provision of a crèche to look after our children it made the decision to study easier because I was free to concentrate and ask for help if needed. Back in my youth I was so scared I didn't ask for help when I didn't understand study content. In my first year back studying it was hard. I talked lots because I didn't believe I could do it. In my second year I worked so hard and I tasted success as a student for the first time ever. I'm now in my third year of study. I've found my voice. I've found my identity. I know that I will have the qualifications that my future employer will be looking for.

To all those people who are at school hating it, I say, "When life's curve balls come your way, you're less likely to be a statistic, so stay at school. Ask for help. There's no point being ashamed. Get those qualifications and the future you deserve."

*Jessica Wright*



*NCEA 4U graduation – Nightcaps*



# Rural fire cadet training: “a good investment”

Last year the Northern Rural Fire Authority, based in Kaikohe, ran a cadet programme. The idea was to get more young recruits into their service and to do something for their community where youth unemployment is high. It was the Authority’s first venture into community education. They planned a course that would run for two days a week for 16 weeks, during which time the cadets would complete up to six NZQA Unit Standards on firefighting techniques and safety. They decided not to advertise but to get a group of 16-24 year olds through WINZ. In many ways the programme didn’t turn out as planned but what it did show is that a programme that supports marginalised young men, mentoring them and helping them learn some basic skills can shift their pathway - for the better. Most of the ten young people who did the programme (most of whom came with a range of very complex needs) used the experience as the first step towards work or further education.

Clinton Lyall (Whakatohea), Deputy Principal Rural Fire Officer now with Fire and Emergency (the rural Fire Authority has now been amalgamated into Fire and Emergency New Zealand), was the man behind the programme. He talked to us about what they did:

“Our board was very supportive of this initiative. I had friends in the police and in the army and they were keen to get involved with these young people too: Inspector Chris McLellan and Constable Marco Van den Broek, NZ Police Northland and Staff Sargent Eddie Bellas NZ Army.

“We were aware of the KODE (Kaikohe Opportunities Dreams and Empowerment) project run the year before but were not in a position at the time to help out. So we set up our programme with quite a lot of community involvement. The Moko Foundation came on board before the programme began sponsoring running shoes and overalls. Patu Kaikohe provided free training sessions and facilities were made available for the cadets to use. Patu is an initiative supported by the northern Rural Fire Authority to help improve the health of its community. Kerikeri Community Fitness Centre carried out sessions for the cadets; Kerikeri Chemists sponsored toiletry product for each of the recruits; the Department of Conservation sponsored gear bags; Explore NZ Paihia provided transport to for a field trip; and Taratahi (a rural training provider), collaborated by offering two cadets keen to do a full week programme, the opportunity to come into their programme for three days each week.

“We knew we weren’t offering them a job at the end. Everyone has to go through a recruitment process, but we wanted to let them know that there is an opportunity for them to volunteer as a rural firefighter. We ran a couple of seminars for people that WINZ referred – telling them about the programme and ten signed up. We could have taken about 20. Some girls signed up but in the end they did not join the course.

“Quite early on we could see that they were not going to do the unit standards. We started them on it but they just didn’t know how to learn and we are not teachers. So we ran a programme that was really about mentoring them, and teaching them what is acceptable

behaviour: why people should respect you and why you should respect them. Right back to the basics really. WINZ had referred people on for literacy support. We had one guy who did have literacy problems and we worked with him independently. We got them involved in fitness training, and doing practical things based around firefighting and discipline. We also pushed that once you are in work, that’s where the benefit ends. If you don’t like that job you find another job before leaving. The benefit shouldn’t be a safe place to default to.

“We divided the programme up among our trades, but some of the basics are similar through our own professions. Discipline and fitness for example.

“One time Chris, Marco and Eddie took them to Urupukapuka Island for a search and rescue exercise, courtesy of Explore NZ which Chris had arranged. While travelling over there, they got to swim with dolphins. Which was totally left field for this group.

“Most of the time the attendance was good. It was somewhere for them to go instead of hanging out on the streets. They felt safe here. First we didn’t think we would provide food, but when we realised the situation that many of them were in we did. One young guy who I saw absolutely devouring some chicken told me that both of his parents were on a sickness benefit. He said we just can’t afford meat in our family – we just can’t afford it. He wanted a job so he can support his mum and dad and his other siblings. And after any exercise they were all off to have a hot shower. One guy lived in a house with no electricity – he washed in a stream. He just loved having a hot shower in the depot.

“For us it was a realisation of just how good these kids are. They were really fun to work with. They had a good sense of humour, they were enthusiastic and keen to learn even though sometimes it was like being in a room with a bunch of five-year olds! The trouble was many of them were on drugs. We drug tested them, but after a couple of weeks off drugs they became very irritable. We had lots of laughs. We were all in fits at times. They were just so amusing. We all learned.

“Because they were still young guys they still looked up to the police. Police still have mana. One guy who was quite fascinated with the police said he would like to join. He had no criminal record and Chris told him that if he got himself some education he could. He is still quite keen. The police took him out on patrol to see what it was like.

“I think some of them learned some leadership skills. I talked with one guy about becoming a mentor for young people, and he said do you mean I could be a mentor for my little brother? And I said, exactly. The thing is that a lot of women are stepping up in this community, but these young guys – they need to be next to men. They need good solid, male role models. I think our agencies can provide this. And we should provide it.

“The idea was to keep in touch with them, follow them up and help them into employment. But a lot of these guys are transient. They change their cell phone numbers all the time, and we lost



touch with them. But Jo Littin from WINZ tells me that most of them are now working or in courses. I know that the guy whose parents are on a sickness benefit is working in McDonalds, is loving it and is providing for his family, and another has become a scaffolder in Auckland. This is his second job since leaving the course as the first job, building, came to an end. He was 24 and had never had a full time job in his life. He tested positive for drugs when he started. By the time he left us he was clear of drugs in the system. He said he had been on drugs since he was 13. Just one guy became a fire

cadet. We gave him a 40 week contract.

“Chris and I had both discussed giving up our jobs to do this. But I pointed out, that what gets us through the door is our uniforms. Without our uniforms we would be just two guys.

“I don’t know whether under our amalgamated service we will be able to run the programme again, but if we did I would make it shorter and more intense. It only cost the Rural Fire Authority around 5k and my time. Not much. For that kind of investment, it was a good return.”



Clinton Lyall (left) with Marco Van den Broek on the Urupukapuka trip.



Fire cadets in training.

## Vege-cation in Blenheim

Working out how to engage with the hard-to-reach Pacific population can be a challenge.

A Marlborough PHO, Kimi Hauora Wairau Trust, has come up with an engagement tool and follow-up process that is not only improving family health, it is drawing Pacific adults who have not long settled in New Zealand, into other community education opportunities.

Sana Daunauda is the Pacific Health Development Manager for Marlborough PHO Trust. When he was appointed in 2010 the first thing he asked of the board was for some funding to do research into the health needs of the Pacific community. Sana wanted hard data.

At that time the Pacific community in Blenheim and surrounding area numbered around 670 and 90 percent were newly arrived, brought into the region to work in the vineyards.

The funding was found and Sana, along with Dr M. Cragg, started a Health Needs Analysis with some of the focus groups in homes. They identified four main barriers to accessing health services and wellbeing: the cost of health services/the cost of living; leadership in the community, where leaders often acted as gatekeepers to information and services; communication difficulties; and a lack of knowledge about services that are provided in their community.

One thing that Sana noticed when he was in their homes was that nearly all the families were living in houses with large, unused back yards. He came up with a plan.

Sana: “These people were subsistence farmers in their home

islands - they know how to grow vegetables. So, we decided that the first stepping stone was to offer them vegetable seedlings to grow. We gave each family 20 plants and we asked them to choose at least some varieties that were new to them. It was our way of getting a foot through the door. To get the vegetables people had to register so we got a phone number and a legitimate address. We employed a Pacific Fānau Advocate, Mr. Lasike Kula who got to know each of the families. We allowed plenty of time for building up trust. It takes about six months to do that. As we were regularly in their homes we could observe issues that affect their family health, such as overcrowding. Then, after some months, we could sit down with them so they could tell us what their health issues were.

“When I first thought about helping them grow vegetables I considered using the community garden. But that meant that they had to travel, and that takes time and has a cost. Now we have a regular competition – who has the best vege garden and best clean home, inside and out.

“Because of this approach we now have 100 percent of our Pasifika families registered with GP services. Before only 20 percent were.

“We are actually working in four domains: health; economic; leadership/culture; and education. Education is the key to the success of other domains.

“Our PHO provides some education in the non-communicable diseases such as Diabetes, CVDRA etc. and once again we take these into homes. We have cooking classes called Taste and See, and in group of four families (16 all up) they prepare healthy nutritious



meals based on a budget. We also collaborate with the PHO Green Prescriptions Instructor working with mums who have just had a baby and put on a lot of weight. The instructor works with them and sets up an exercise programme that matches their current abilities. Each of the mums has a target weight loss to achieve by the end of the year.

“We also collaborate with other services. Some people have language barriers and we refer them on to ESOL classes. I work closely with Ailsa from the Marlborough REAP and some people have gone on to their programmes such as Computers in Homes and weaving classes for Tongan and Samoans. Some of the people who have been in our Vege-cation programme have gone on to get driving licences – including Fork Lift and Truck driving licences. One single mum with nine children who is still on the Vege-cation programme has done Administration Levels 1, 2 and 3 through NMIT. Another Tongan mum completed a Nursing Course through NMIT. She has now moved out of the region.

“Our Service Delivery Model is called “Talanoa Mo’ui” (Talking Health/Well-being). Pacific people like to talanoa, and they look



*Lasike Kula with family members at the beginning of the programme.*

forward to it. But our talanoa is deliberate and purposeful – we are seeking an outcome at the end of the conversation.

“I also believe that the silo mentality is good. We work within that cultural silo first and build trust in their way. Once they have confidence we can open them up to meet with others.

Vege-cation is funded by Pasifika Futures Whānau Ora. This year the programme won the People’s Choice Award and Best Presentation at the 2017 Nelson-Marlborough Health Quality Innovation Awards.

## Marlborough REAP and Pasifika

By Ailsa Carey, Community Education officer at Marlborough REAP

REAP Marlborough has worked closely with the Pasifika community for many years on a variety of projects designed to help them integrate confidently into the community. Our relationship with Sana Daunauda (PHO and Pasifika Trust) and Lapu Oliver (Pasifika Advocate) helps us to meet their needs.

In the early years of our association with the Pasifika community we ran monthly meetings where guest speakers shared information on topics that the Pasifika people asked for such as immigration issues, health, community law, education.

A project which has been going for about seven years is the Pasifika Homework Club which REAP Marlborough helped to set up with the support of Marlborough Boys’ and Girls’ Colleges and the Pasifika community. From funding which we all contribute to we are able to employ homework club mentors who work closely with the Pasifika students and their families. Through their performing arts activities they are able to gain extra NCEA credits.

REAP Marlborough has also supported these students at polyfests and one year supplied the boys’ lava lava. Leadership camps and visits to university open

days have also been subsidised by REAP Marlborough.

REAP Marlborough facilitated the Computers in Homes programme coming to Marlborough and many Pasifika families have benefitted from this wonderful course. Other REAP Marlborough funded adult courses include Samoan sewing, Samoan and Tongan weaving (with embedded literacy and numeracy), drivers’ licence, computer skills, ESOL and English language.

There are increasing numbers of Samoans and Tongans arriving in Marlborough through the Pasifika Access Quota scheme so REAP Marlborough paid for a very useful Council booklet called UCan (the dos and don’ts of living in Marlborough) to be translated into Tongan and Samoan. This is a good example of working with Sana and Lapu to make this happen.

Other activities with the Pasifika community include health expos, Adult Learners’ Week performances and youth performing arts mentoring opportunities.

REAP Marlborough values its relationship with Sana and Lapu and the wider Pasifika community.



# Auckland Women's Centre Te Rōpū Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau: meeting a need

They've been there since International Women's Year, 1975. The Auckland Women's Centre in Grey Lynn offers community education workshops and courses, as well as counselling, personal help, support groups and collective advocacy on women's issues.

The ACE programme includes 6-7 week courses such as the ever popular Amazing Assertiveness and an intermediate Tikanga and Te Reo Māori, and courses on yoga, dance, and knitting. Then there are workshops on cv and job interview skills, girl's self-defence and women's self-defence.

Ellie Lim who is the ACE coordinator at the centre says that women from as far away as Tauranga and Whangarei travel to the workshops. The courses attract local women - from a wide age range and mixed ethnicity. Fees are kept as low as possible, with special arrangements for people who are not in paid work.

Ellie: "While many of the women coming to our programmes might not identify as feminists, they know that the centre provides something special for them. When we are working with women in small groups something magic happens. It's because we have eliminated the competition that is present in mixed-gendered learning. We create a nurturing, safe space in which women can learn. They find they can be vulnerable with other women, share more and participate more.

"Often women gravitate to the centre because they have had

trauma in their life such as physical or sexual violence. This is not the case with everyone who participates in courses but there is certainly a percentage who find out about our community education programme because they might have used our Women's Support service our counselling service. They can come to a space where there are lots of visual images of powerful strong women and an organisation that has a commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi. We have lots of information here - on subjects like sexual health, general health issues, depression, counselling support, domestic violence support, beneficiaries rights and parenting. Women often say, it is like coming home."

Like all good ACE increased confidence is often the outcome.

In 2015/16 over 3,600 women from all over Tāmaki Makaurau used the centre.

Until the ACE funding was cut in 2009 the Auckland Women's Centre had TEC ACE funding through the allocation to secondary schools. Since then it has been a struggle to get philanthropic and trust grants and contracts with funders - but over the last 42 years the demand for a special space for women to learn has never gone away.



## Ako-funded research by three REAPS provides resources for the sector

Three REAPS (Wairarapa, Central Otago and East Bay) recently collaborated on a research project funded by Ako Aotearoa. Their report was published in February 2017 and the REAPS involved held a workshop at the ACE Conference this year.

The main aim of this project was "to discover how successful learning is defined by learners in the ACE sector and how this can inform the programme interventions and activities offered in this learning context". Forty-three learners, thirteen ACE tutors and fifteen other stakeholders working in the ACE environment took part in focus groups.

The research defined learner success from a learner perspective and provided indicators of learner success. Learners, tutors and other stakeholders identified challenges or barriers that learners faced. Learner support mechanisms were identified and there is a section on ACE tutor expectations, essential qualities, and professional development.

Overall the research found that "the ACE sector promotes and facilitates the engagement of adults in lifelong learning. It offers a range of community-based education activities and programmes that are flexible in nature and responsive to the learning needs of

communities and to individual learners," and that "a significant strength of the REAPS was the effectiveness of providing learners with a wrap-around service, that is, working in collaboration with other social services in the community."

As a result of the research two resources have been developed. The first is a learner-centric evaluation model establishing essential learner-centric practices, and key stakeholders providing and supporting these. The model is based on a description of learning success as described by the learner participants. The second resource is an evaluation review process as an integrated tool alongside other established ACE evaluation processes that can be used by ACE training providers to determine alignment between programme interventions and activities and ACE learners' views of successful learning. The process encompasses three evaluation and review templates, and is underpinned by the Learner-centric Evaluation Model.

---

*You can read the full report, and the two resources at <https://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/evaluation-and-review-to-support-sustained-learner-success>*

# International: Bristol – becoming a Learning City

By Tommy Jarvis, Learning City Manager, Bristol Learning City Partnership



Bristol is a vibrant and diverse city with an international reputation for innovation and success. There is a thriving arts scene, two successful universities and a highly educated and skilled workforce. Bristol has one of the highest GDP's per capita in the UK, and contributes £12.6 billion to the national economy.

However, many citizens struggle with a lack of affordability and sit below the poverty line. There are concentrations of significant deprivation, with 42 areas amongst the most deprived in the UK and more than 23 percent of children living in poverty. The rise in house prices is 13 percent higher than the national average and there is an increasing shortage of affordable housing. There are also significant challenges in health, education and employment.

For some, Bristol is a great place to learn, with local schools now exceeding the national average for attainment in secondary education. However, not everyone is achieving their potential; attainment varies from over 90 percent in some areas to only 35 percent in others. The city has two world class universities, but in some wards only 5% of young people attend university compared with 83 percent in others. The Learning City Partnership (LCP) was set up to ensure all citizens can benefit from the city's success by implementing initiatives aimed at reducing inequality in education.

The Learning City Partnership Board, chaired by the elected Mayor, was established at the beginning of 2015 and is made up of leaders from across the city's public, private and education sectors. The role of the board is to plan strategically, maximise resources and encourage innovation in learning. To support the partnership's strategic aims, Bristol City Council's constitution was amended in the summer of 2015 to allow the Mayor to make decisions about education at the LCP Board.

Three LCP challenge groups have been formed: Learning in Education, Learning for Work and Learning in the Community. Learning for Work focuses on supporting citizens into work and ensuring the local workforce is skilled and diverse. Learning in Education focuses on raising the attainment of all students through formal learning in early years, school, college and university. Learning in the Community encourages a culture in communities where learning is accessible and valued by everyone. As well as delivering projects, these three groups help the LCP board to focus on how they can help improve learning in all aspects of the city and help to concentrate on the areas that need it the most.

A number of significant partnership initiatives have been set up in the last two years to deliver our Learning City vision. The University of the West of England and the University of Bristol, in partnership with South Bristol Youth are aiming to increase

university attendance in some of the most deprived areas of the city.

The Futurequest programme with work with students to help address the barriers to higher education. This programme will dovetail with the University of Bristol innovative Scholars programme, which in its second year will provide university places on a reduced offer to those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

To deliver on the Mayor's pledge to provide a quality experience of work for every student in the city, the Bristol WORKS programme is working with businesses and educators to deliver a clear offer to students.

To support the work of the Partnership, Learning City Ambassadors have been recruited to share their passion for learning and education. Their role is to facilitate and promote accessible learning opportunities across Bristol and help others achieve their full potential by sharing personal experiences and knowledge. There are currently over 160 Ambassadors in the city, spanning a wide cross-section of the community. Learning Ambassadors provide a valuable insight into attitudes towards learning.

Learning City aims to promote learning in all its forms hosting a number of events throughout the year to draw attention to power of learning. In 2017 Learning City hosted its first Learning at Work Week promoting conventional and unconventional learning in the workplace. The week featured classes in creative writing, restorative approaches and laughter yoga. All classes were open to the public and supported by Learning City partners. The event aimed to show that learning can be fun, accessible and have many positive benefits.

Learning City aims to remove inequality in learning and education and to promote the power of learning to change lives, open doors, improve well-being and help people live longer, healthier lives. Through the WORKS programme, Bristol Learning City is seeking to create a skilled and local workforce that can respond to changes in the future labour market. Learning brings communities together, creating dynamic places for us to live, work and play. Through the work of Learning City we hope to encourage people to enjoy the positive impacts of a life-time of learning.

In September 2017 Bristol Learning City will be receiving an award from UNESCO to highlight the progress we have made over the last three years. There is much more to be done and with the continued support of our partners we are in a much better place to deliver our vision – a city where your life chances are not limited to where you live.

## Send in your news

**We want your contributions and ideas for articles.**

If you have a story to tell please contact the editor, Jo Lynch: [jolynch@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jolynch@xtra.co.nz)

If you want to change your address or be taken off or put on our distribution list please contact: [admin@aceatearora.org.nz](mailto:admin@aceatearora.org.nz)



# Book review: Southern Transformation: Searching for educational success in South Auckland

By Cherie Chu, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Education, Victoria University of Wellington.

Published by Victoria University Press, Bernadine Vester's *Southern Transformation: Searching for educational success in South Auckland* (2016), examines the differences in views of education between public policy makers and of people 'on the ground'. In terms of professional experience, Mrs Vester has been the foundation chief executive of the City of Manukau Education Trust (COMET), and has held many top level educational roles such as deputy chairperson of Teach First NZ and the chair of Te Tuhi Contemporary Art Trust.

The central argument made in the book is that South Auckland has been the centre of attention when it comes to public policy making and that policy makers have long held the view that if the problems of South Auckland were 'fixed', then Auckland and New Zealand would be much better off socially and economically. This book advocates for a community-centred approach to educational success and transformation and Vester offers a pragmatic analysis of the educational issues in South Auckland alongside an abundance of citations that point to her personal and professional experience in schools and communities. While this approach has some merit, I found so many details detracted from the central argument at times. The examination of South Auckland challenges were clearly apparent in her proposition and she illuminates the inequalities that stand in education, particularly in compulsory schooling. In her chapters Vester covers the failures of the free market; the learning challenges of poor communities; and the call for educational governance that brings people together in a collective manner.

Reading about challenges always make me slightly feel down. And reading about a tonne of challenges that have been around since the

1950s makes me frustrated. As an educationalist, I totally understand that challenges are always evident – especially for many of us who have been around it all our lives. I believe that challenges should definitely be debated and discussed in depth, and this is what this book offers for those who read it, generous topics for debate – whether we are the teachers, academics, organisations, students, community people, or policy makers. However, a deeper consideration or an appreciation of what works well in education should also balance out some of the issues-based arguments. So many of us are fatigued from the dialogue on challenges. Practically, it is time to attend to what can be done and focus on what is being done. Moreover, the voice of the younger generation also needs visibility when 'we' are discussing educational success. To add to the more hopeful possibilities in this book, I wanted to read about what students thought in terms of their own vision for education – and not just in a few paragraphs but in a more substantive way. Policy makers have not been the main change agents for disempowered groups of people in New Zealand and many of us cannot solely rely on public policy makers to change for educational transformation to occur.

The missing piece of the puzzle for me – educational success ran solidly in the title of Vester's book. But, actually who defines this success and what are the measure for success? Where was the firm inquiry of 'success'? In summary, Bernadine Vester's book is full of factual material, full of experiences and full of interesting ideas. Her offering is a constellation of approaches in the conclusion chapter, which have value for all peoples of New Zealand.

## Our people: Community Educator Recognised for Inspirational Teaching

Whanganui Learning Centre Trust manager and community educator, Gail Harrison has received a national Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award (TTEA) for her sustained contribution to learners, communities and Aotearoa New Zealand. The Awards were presented at a celebration dinner at Parliament.

Gail has been an educator and tireless advocate for inter-generational change for over three decades. She is recognised as an inspirational leader and a fine exponent of participatory learning and strength-based approaches to learning and teaching.

As lead educator and manager at the Whanganui Learning Centre Trust, Gail has had responsibility for up to 500 learners a year, of whom approximately 80% are indigenous students or students of other ethnicities. Her primary focus has been addressing inequality of education provision for indigenous and low income groups, and her success in helping people transition towards a life of positive and transformational change has become legendary.

Adult and Community Education (ACE) Aotearoa Director, Colin McGregor says Gail has made a huge contribution to community

education in Aotearoa. She was Educator of the Year at the 2016 ACE Aotearoa Annual Awards and has shared her innovative practice at a number of ACE Conferences.

Colleagues have commented that Gail "gives students ownership of their learning processes and production," while students have described leaving Whanganui Learning Centre programmes with heads held high, grasping hold of future goals and dreams.

This is the sixteenth year of the national Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards (TTEA). They are administered by Ako Aotearoa – the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, and celebrate Aotearoa's finest tertiary teachers. The Awards are considered the pinnacle in recognition of tertiary teaching and learning. They provide opportunities for the winners to share their good teaching practice across Aotearoa and around the world while contributing significantly to their professional development and career opportunities.



# ACE news

## ACE Aotearoa Board

The Board met in August with a two day meeting. It was the first Board meeting with new Board Member Tracey Shepherd so the meeting had a focus on governance and planning. Wendel Kariti was thanked for her many years as co-chair. The Board confirmed Board Co-Chairs (Tracey Shepherd and Charissa Waerea) and membership of the three sub-committees – Policy, Communication and Finance and Audit.

The 2018 work plans were signed off. The Board considered a paper following up from the conference on positioning the ACE sector for the future, in particular with a focus on the Education Scotland Statement of Ambition ([education.gov.scot](http://education.gov.scot)). A review of the ACE Constitution has been agreed to by the Board. A paper will be going out for consultation with members. The plan is to do regional visits to discuss this with members. The intention is that there will be a revised constitution presented to the ACE AGM in 2018.

The meeting was addressed by Kathryn Hazelwood and David Do from TEC and Shelley Robertson from the Ministry of Education. The focus of these discussions was literacy and numeracy and the next steps for implementing the response of the Minister of Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment to the Productivity Commission Report on New Models of Tertiary Education.

## Professional Development

### Hui Fono 2018

**21 – 23 February 2018, Korou Kore marae, Ahipara, Te Taitokerau**

The theme is Te Ao Mātauranga, Our World, Our Wisdom – inviting participants on a learning journey with hosts in Te Taitokerau to explore effective learning spaces and consider how they have changed. Increasingly, learning spaces are flexible and networked, bringing together formal and informal activities in a seamless environment that acknowledges that learning can occur any place, at any time. Our learning journey will take us to Te Oneroa a Tōhe (90 Mile Beach) and Te Rerenga Wairua (Cape Reinga) where participants will experience community learning practice through exchange. This will involve applying the principle of ako and a strong learner-centric philosophy beginning with mutual respect, and emphasising interchangeable roles, shared learning and embedded literacy. Hui Fono 2018 will explore how every environment is a learning space of significance. We will also explore the notion that design is a process, not a product, involving all stakeholders – particularly learners. This is an exclusively event for Māori and Pasifika working in ACE.

## Professional Development Grants

Applications to the next round of the ACE Professional Development grants are open. Networks, groups and providers involved in adult and community education are eligible to apply. The next funding round closes 30 September 2017. You can download the grants application form and guidelines from our website.

### Professional Development: Tools for the Sector - Supporting Learners and their Learning Goals

This workshop will be an opportunity for providers and members to learn more about supporting learners and their learning goals. The workshop will explore the application of ACE Learner Pathways, ACE

Place and ACE Trace (learner outcomes) tools. The schedule is as follows:

**25 September – Hagley Adult Literacy Centre, Christchurch**

**13 October – Sharedspace Petridish, Dunedin**

**18 October – Hearing New Zealand, Invercargill**

**3 November – West REAP, Hokitika.**

*For more information and assistance, contact the Professional Development and Networks Manager [analiese.robertson@aceaotearoa.org.nz](mailto:analiese.robertson@aceaotearoa.org.nz) or phone 04 473 6622.*

*You can keep up to date by visiting our website ([www.aceaotearoa.org.nz](http://www.aceaotearoa.org.nz)), following us on Twitter (@ACE\_Aotearoa) or on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/ACE.Aotearoa](http://www.facebook.com/ACE.Aotearoa)).*

## ACE Sector Strategic Alliance

The Strategic Alliance is firing on all cylinders at present. A strategic plan has been signed off which will be available on the ACE Aotearoa website and will be published in limited edition hard copy. The next meeting will be held in October and it is planned to hear from TEC and Analiese Robertson about the review of Teaching Standards and get an update from the new Hui E ([huie.org.nz](http://huie.org.nz)) External Relations Manager Rojan Levers. Hui E have organised some thought provoking speakers in Wellington this year (including Minister Ngāro) and have regular events in Christchurch and Auckland. This will be the first post-election meeting and a chance to discuss the political landscape (whatever it might be) and think through what this means for the ACE sector. It will also be a chance to develop a more consultative approach to strategic planning and build on the information shared at the ACE Annual Conference in June this year.

## Future Strategy

At the June meeting the Alliance worked on a process for developing a 25 year strategy for the ACE sector. This strategy will be designed closely with the sector and would take a broader approach to encompass social investment and the living standards framework. This is particularly timely given that a new Tertiary Education Strategy needs to be in place from 2019 and would also build on the model used in Scotland which drives coherence across the tertiary sector. The Alliance view is that the tertiary education platform demonstrates that ACE delivery and infrastructure is equitable in value for individuals, whānau, communities and the New Zealand economy. Some suggestions for developing this plan include a brainstorming session at the ACE Annual Conference, regular workshops in regional centres and engagement with national organisations.

## Ako Aotearoa Update

Our Pacific forum is for all tertiary staff working with Pacific learners. This year's theme focuses on the learner journey and pathways through tertiary education. We look forward to seeing you there.

**Pacific Tertiary Education Forum**  
**28 – 29 September, Manukau Institute of Technology**

Registration fee \$200 (+ GST)

*Register now at: [www.akoaooteaora.ac.nz/pacific-tertiary-education-forum-2017](http://www.akoaooteaora.ac.nz/pacific-tertiary-education-forum-2017)*

This newsletter is produced and distributed by:



[aceaotearoa.org.nz](http://aceaotearoa.org.nz)