

MINISTER MCCULLY VISITS TEREORA COLLEGE



College principal Tania Morgan with Minister McCully pose for photos after the official unveiling of the stage one redevelopment billboard.

Minister Murray McCully (centre) flanked by Minister Mark Brown (left) and NZ High Commissioner Nick Hurley (right) during the guard of honour.

Tereora College students lined the road forming a guard of honour to welcome New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Murray McCully, his delegation and invited guests onto the school grounds on Wednesday, March 30th. Minister McCully visited the school to unveil the stage one billboard of the National College's redevelopment plan along with school Principal Tania Morgan.

"We are a proud nation and a proud college", said Mrs Morgan in her speech thanking the New Zealand Government for its investment in the education of Cook Island students.

The New Zealand Government gifted \$11.7 million towards the redevelopment project during last year's 50th celebrations. She is confident the new structure and improved facilities will allow the school to

create more opportunities for their students. The technology rebuild will also mean that the school will meet mandatory requirements enabling them to offer higher levels of courses including hospitality, trades and building classes.

For Minister McCully having the new school building operational as soon as possible is a priority, "there is no more important investment than this", he said as he thanked the students and staff for the warm welcome.

During his speech to the assembly Cook Islands Minister of Finance Mark Brown joked, "Minister McCully is not a patient man so it won't be long till students are in those classrooms".

After the formalities senior students were given the opportunity to meet Minister McCully while students performed a cultural show for their guests.

NEW FINANCE DIRECTOR APPOINTED AT MOE

The Ministry of Education has appointed a new Director for its Finance division and he's no stranger to the team. Farish Ali has worked for the Ministry as a Financial Accountant since April 2013 and is primed and ready to lead his team of nine.

"It is a challenging role and I am looking forward to take up the new challenges and contribute to MoE's vision", he said.

Since September of last year Mr Ali was the acting Director of Finance before being offered the position permanently. The Ministry wishes Mr Ali many congratulations and all the best in his new position.



IMANUELA STRENGTHENS MAORI IN THE SCHOOL

Imanuela Akatemia School has given its students the opportunity to build their Maori language skills. The school requested the assistance of secondary school advisor Ngavaevae Papatua and primary school advisor Tuteretere Moetaua to help with the transition to reading and writing in Maori at Year 4.

Unlike other schools on the island Imanuela uses the Accelerated Christian Education curriculum. This curriculum does not include Maori as a subject so the school has to ensure that this part of the Cook Islands curriculum is met.

"It's great to see the schools interest in Te Reo and teaching it to their students," said Papatua who is encouraged by the working relationship the transition has established between the Ministry and the school.

At the primary level the first phase of support included the introduction of the 'Kia Ka To Rama – Ei Tarai Enuu', a teacher's guide to teaching the Maori phonics, curriculum overviews for phonics and printing. In the second phase Mrs Moetaua worked with the

Year 4 teacher demonstrating how to administer the Vaitonga Kite Tatau Maori, analyse the results gathered using the National Maori Literacy Expectancy Matrix and group students according to their literacy needs. From there a reading programme to suit each group's need was developed.

For the secondary teachers Mr Papatua developed integrated units of work combining Maori with existing standards within the Social Sciences curriculum. To get the teachers started he designed daily lesson plans for term 1 as well as working with the teachers to record student achievement in line with learning outcomes and how to evaluate student work to ensure the literacy needs of all students were being met. Both advisors will continue to provide support to the school where needed.

"It's a big challenge for the Maori teachers at the school but it's great to see that they have taken up the challenge and we wish them all the best in their endeavour to retain Te Reo," said Mr Papatua.

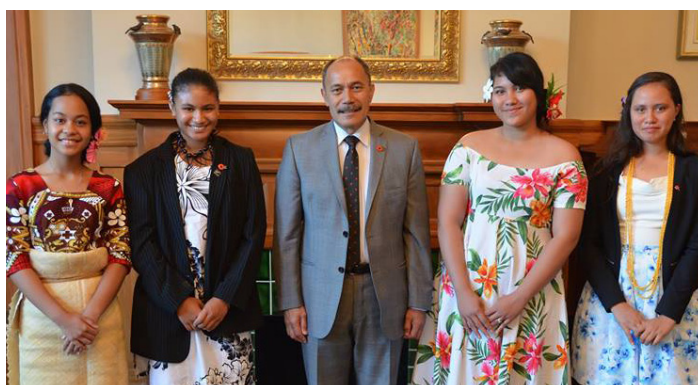
ANZAC COMMEMORATION COMPETITION

The New Zealand High Commission is again running its annual ANZAC speech and essay competition for primary and secondary level students.

The competitions are being run with the help of the Ministry of Education, Cook Islands Police Service and Cook Islands Returned Services Association.

Both competitions commemorate the sacrifices of Pacific troops, in particular the 500 Cook Islands soldiers that served alongside Maori troops in the Pioneer Battalion in France from 1916 and their contributions to the war effort.

Primary level students in Years 5-8 are tasked to write a 500 words essay or poem on how they feel about the sacrifices made by the 500 Cook Islands soldiers. It can be fiction or non-fiction. The lucky prize winner will take home a Nextbook Android 4.4 16GB 7inch tablet. For the senior competition, students in Years 11 – 13 (must be 16 years of age by September 1st) are asked to deliver a four minute speech on the same



2015 speech winner Moeroa Ben (second from right) with the NZ Governor General and winners from Tonga, Samoa and Niue.

topic as the primary competition.

Students will need to hit their history books and do their research to impress the judges as the winner of the senior competition will join speech winners from Niue, Samoa and Tonga to attend the Somme commemorations in France. Students wanting help with their speeches or essays in the way of coaching or proofreading should contact Jane Taurairii at the MoE.

As well as providing student support two Ministry advisors will be shortlisting essays for the judging panel. The Ministry's Director of Learning and Teaching Ina Herrmann will join the judging panel for the essay competition and Secretary of Education Gail Townsend will join the judging team for the speech competition. The closing date for the essay competition is Wednesday, April 13th and the speech competition will be held at 5pm on Thursday, April 21st at the NZ High Commissioners residence in Ngatipa.

HEALTH SCREENING

There will be a Rheumatic Heart Disease Screening for students aged from 5 to 15 years old starting April 4th, through to April 15th. A team of health officials will be going into the schools to conduct the screenings starting with Takitumu, St Joseph/ Nukutere, Avarua and Nikao schools. Only children whose parents have given consent will be screened. For more information contact the Ministry of Health or your child's school.

COMMUNITY GARDENING PROJECT EXPANDS

The team behind the Community Home Garden project have extended their venture to include an Organic Home Gardening for Working Mothers programme. The programme is run by Karen Tairea from the Ministry of Health, Brian Tairea from the Ministry of Agriculture and Eitiare Vano from the Ministry of Education and keeps in mind the space and time constraints faced by working mothers. Participants are provided with simple but practical



Eitiare Vano and Brian Tairea.

ways to start and maintain their own home gardens, how to create their own compost pit and natural remedies to control pests and plant disease. Though the programme is targeted at working mothers, anyone with a keen interest to learn the skills and knowledge needed to successfully grow a food garden were welcome. The programme is expected to run over six weeks and is a condensed version of the larger Community Gardening project currently running. Participants have received seedlings and information packets to kick start their home gardens.

The keen gardeners were given the chance to get their hands dirty when Brian gave them a live demonstration during the first class on Wednesday, March 9th at the CFWA office.

The office now boasts a healthy vegetable garden out back thanks to the weekly meetings where participants use the CFWA garden as a hands on learning environment and receive weekly information packets.



NFA SURVEY RESPONSE - A SUCCESS

The response rate from the recent National Focus Areas survey was positive with a mixture of feedback from both principals and classroom teachers, across secondary and primary schools. While participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous, the Planning and Development team were encouraged by the high number of responses and additional comments submitted by teachers and principals in the Pa Enua. In recognition of these efforts, all those who completed the survey and provided their

mobile numbers were gifted a \$20 Bluesky mobile top-up. Planning and Development have since compiled the survey responses and will be using the information collected to support the final reports relating to Quality Learning Programmes, Student Wellbeing and Teacher Professional Development Programmes. These reports will be published and released to schools shortly. Meitaki maata to all those who participated in the survey and those who contributed to the national focus area analysis.

ECE ADVISOR VISIT TO MAUKE APII POTIKI

Towards the end of March the Ministry of Education's Early Childhood Education (ECE) advisor Tania Akai was in Mauke for Professional Development sessions with Mauke School's sole ECE teacher Vaine Oti. The sessions focussed on the holistic implementation of the ECE curriculum in the ECE centre looking at schemes, planning, setting up play learning corners with activities, portfolios, learning stories and hygiene.

All children at the ECE level learn through play and Mrs Oti utilises natural and recycled resources in ways that benefit the development of her students' skills. Akai was pleased with what she observed during class time and the teamwork between Oti and the parents of her students.

"Vaine is doing a marvellous job", said Mrs Akai

who also complimented the classroom setup that allows more play activities, the encouragement to eat healthy foods and the sheltered sand pit outside the centre. Mrs Akai said her time in Mauke went well and hopes that the advice and information given will support Mrs Oti's professional development and outcomes for the students.



It's all fun, play and lots of learning in Mrs Oti's ECE class.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

Inclusive Education Advisors



'Inclusive Education is a process of change. Within this process, all education stakeholders will work together to strengthen the capacity of our education system to reach out to all learners. All schools and learning institutions will need to make changes in order to recognise the diversity that all children as well as all members of the community bring with them to a school setting.'

Inclusive Education is about changing the system to suit the needs of all children.' - The Cook Islands Inclusive Education Policy, 2011

"We're in the business of growing people"

This year the Ministry of Education welcomed two new Inclusive Education Advisors, Kathryn Bradley and Eve Rea to carry on the work of their predecessor Sarah McCawe who left the Ministry at the end of last year. Between them they bring over 35 years of experience teaching to their advisory roles.

The pair agree that their work as IE advisors is not about fixing children with special needs or learning needs but rather to aid teachers in creating a safe environment within their classrooms to allow students the opportunity to contribute at all levels of learning.

"We believe that schools should teach children how to

be good, contributing members of society, that everyone has a place in that society and has something worthwhile to offer", said Ms Bradley.

Last month the pair returned from a two week trip to Aitutaki where they made introductions at all schools on the island and observed classes. Both were happy with what they saw in the classrooms.

Working with an open-door policy, both advisors would like to encourage principals, teachers and teacher aides to utilise the support they offer.

Check out their profiles below to know more about Kath and Eve.

KATHRYN ANNE BRADLEY



Kathryn Bradley came to the Ministry of Education from Raumati South School on the Kapiti Coast in New Zealand where she spent three and a half years as a senior teacher in charge of four Year 7-8 classes. Originally from the beachside village of Eastbourne in Wellington, she was

based in Paraparaumu on the Kapiti Coast and is no stranger to our shores.

She and her Cook Island partner have visited the island many times though this is the first time she has worked in the Cook Islands.

"When the job of Inclusive Education Advisor came up we both agreed that this would be a great job for me and for both of us to come and spend some time here with family and experience living here in Rarotonga", she said.

Being able to live and work in paradise is a big change from her usual environment but she's thoroughly enjoying every new experience, "like riding to work on my little motorbike", she added.

In the short time she's worked for the Ministry she's experienced many highlights most recently a trip to the outer island of Aitutaki as well as working with her colleague, proud Aitutakian Eve Rea.

Ms Bradley acknowledges the local insight Ms Rea brings to their work and the smooth working relationship the pair have developed.



EVE REEA

Local teacher Eve Reea kicked off her career at the Rarotonga based Teachers Training College after which she taught Years 1-3 at Te Uki Ou School, grade 3 at Avarua School and Grades 1 and 3 at St Joseph's schools before joining the Ministry of Education's Advisory team. Both her parents are Aitutakians with ties to Atiu, Mangaia and Palmerston. Since taking on her role she's enjoyed many highlights especially the recent introductory visit to her home island of Aitutaki



where she and her colleague Kathryn Bradley were fortunate to work with students, teachers and teacher aides at the different schools on the island.

She felt that returning home as an Inclusive Education Advisor had a positive impact on students, "it gave them hope

that one day they too can be something or someone if they put their minds to it, even if it seems impossible at the time".

Another highlight for her is the privilege of working with Ms Bradley and the 'A Team' under the direction of team leader Teresa Tararo and Director Ina Herrmann. Reea enjoys working with Bradley as both have similar thinking and work well together as they endeavour to support principals, teachers and teacher aides with Inclusive Education.

"We don't always agree but we are able to make professional decisions for the betterment of the students", she said. During her time with the Ministry Eve wants to encourage schools to take ownership of their students and the learning needs of each and every student.

"So many students are made to feel incompetent, when really all it is, is that they learn differently", said Reea.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

TEREORA COLLEGE



Tereora College principal Tania Morgan shares some insight into the National College's redevelopment plan.

The redevelopment plan for Tereora College is in full swing with the second round of community consultation meetings taking place during the second to last week of March. The process for the College has been a steady one with groundwork dating back to early last year. The redevelopment plan is broken up into phases and with



the granting of \$11.7 million from New Zealand going towards Phase one which will include a technology block, student research centre and school administration. With the ever increasing demand for technology within the curriculum this will provide the college with better equipped facilities. "The plan represents structural changes for the school in a world where our students need opportunities to compete on the international stage and it will also provide opportunities for our students that we haven't been able to offer in



the past", said Ms Morgan. The physical work for stage one will commence in December, however the planning stages for relocation is already underway to ensure students are in the new classrooms by 2018. New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Murray McCully visited the college to unveil the redevelopment billboard. The school is mindful of the benefits that will come from this project – and will be looking at ways in which it will benefit the wider community.

CITTI CUSTOMER SERVICE GRADUATION

The Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute held its graduation ceremony for the London City and Guilds International Introductory Award in Customer Service programme on Thursday, March 24th. Family and friends gathered at the CITTI's Ngatangia campus to witness participants from last year's course receive their certificates after completing the course led by tutor Michelle Williams-Mitchell. The programme was funded in part by Australian Aid and Cook Islands Tourism as part of its Kia Orana Values campaign. Images from the event can be found on the Ministry of Education's Facebook page.



Tourism Chief Executive Halatoa Fua, Secretary of Education Gail Townsend and CITTI Director Caroline Medway-Smith at the graduation ceremony.

IT'S 'BACK TO BASICS' FOR NUKUTERE COLLEGE STUDENTS

Nukutere College Principal, George Rasmussen, is on a mission to ensure all of his students are reading and writing at their respective levels as well as providing the opportunity for staff members to enhance their report writing skills. At the end of last year Rasmussen and Ministry of Education Advisor Kim Geddes collaborated to create a 'Back to Basics' Literacy (reading and writing) programme for students. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the students have Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). During this time selected senior students are paired with remedial readers from Years 8 – 10 for guided reading. Meanwhile, the proficient readers remain in the classroom reading under teacher supervision. Mrs Geddes takes the Year 7 remedial readers through reading support on Wednesday mornings. To help develop writing skills, students take part in compulsory Sustained Silent Writing (SSW) on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This involves planning and drafting in one session and presenting in the second

session. Though it's too early to gauge the success of the programme Rasmussen is pleased to see the effort being put in to its success. There is compulsory spelling for all levels made up of subject specific words from HODs and general words from Mrs Geddes. Words are given in form classes on Mondays and tested on Fridays. Rasmussen stresses the importance of reading and writing skills not being limited to English classes, "it's every subject's job", he said to ensure students are reading and writing at their levels. Quality report writing is a required skill for every teacher, therefore in order to help teachers improve, Geddes will run a structured series of workshops covering literacy, grammar and formal writing linked to report writing early in term 2.



LAUNCHPAD TIME TO MOVE WORKSHOP

Presenters from Gymnastics Australia and Gymsports New Zealand will be arriving on our shores this month to hold the LaunchPad Time to Move workshops, an initiative of Gymnastics Australia. The two day workshop starting on Monday, April 18th is aimed at giving Primary and Early Childhood teachers an understanding of fundamental movement and its relation to physical activity and brain development. Helping to coordinate the workshop are Ministry of Education advisors Kathleen Wilkie and Tania Akai. Working with the Primary teachers Mrs Wilkie said, "it's a really exciting opportunity because Gymnastics is a critical aspect of all fundamental movement".

Movement is an essential part of human development both physically, mentally and also socially, and teachers play an important role in providing students with the opportunity to explore and play with movement, helping them to learn about their environment and their place within it. Primary school teachers will

attend the first day of the workshop and the following day will be for Early Childhood teachers. Throughout both days participants will rotate in groups to complete two aspects of the workshop; the practical components as well as online modules that will help teachers to provide their students with learning opportunities that appeal and stimulates learning and self-esteem. From this workshop, Mrs Wilkie and the visiting presenters are hoping for multiple learning outcomes for the teachers. This includes adequate physical preparation and linking the fundamental movement activities to relevant learning outcomes within the Cook Islands curriculum. The workshop has been specifically designed to give Cook Islands teachers skills to add to their toolkit allowing them to do more in terms of the physical activity aspect of the curriculum. For more information on the workshop or to register interest contact Wilkie at the MoE office or via email kwilkie@education.gov.ck

FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAMMES FOR STUDENTS

The Bank of the South Pacific's (BSP) Head of Business and Consumer banking Chris Doran and the Secretary of Education Gail Townsend signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Wednesday, March 23rd. The MoU is an understanding between BSP and the Ministry of Education that allows the bank to run financial literacy programmes for Years 7-9 in schools around the Cook Islands. Before BSP took over from Westpac one of the initiatives Westpac ran was programmes such as The Money Basics and First Financial Steps in schools around Rarotonga and in the Pa Enua.

BSP will roll out its courses starting in April.



The signing of the MoU at the Ministry of Education office.

CITTI GRADUATES CELEBRATE SUCCESS

On the afternoon of Friday, March 18th a diverse group of determined, education minded people entered the National Auditorium grounds as graduands and left as the 2016 graduated class of the Cook Islands Tertiary Training Institute (CITTI). The ceremony was held outside the Auditorium under the dome and included invited guests Prime Minister as the Minister of Education the Honourable Henry Puna and Mrs Puna, the Queens Representative his Excellency Tom Marsters and Mrs Marsters, New Zealand High Commissioner Nick Hurley and Ina Herrmann representing the Ministry of Education. Institute Director Caroline Medway-Smith congratulated each and every student on reaching the end of their studies but encouraged them to carry on learning, both in and out of the classroom. She commended the effort students put in to their studies, in particular Tevairangi Napa, daughter of Piltz and Tarani Napa, who spoke to the assembly on behalf of the graduating student body. Mrs Medway-Smith used the example set by Napa, who along with her studies is a doting mother of one and runs her own business, to show that if you're determined enough and have the right attitude towards learning then continued education is possible.

The Prime Minister expressed his sincere gratitude to the New Zealand government for its ongoing support and interest in the education of Cook Islanders in the form of scholarship opportunities. However he said it is now time to take another look at the current system to ensure it caters for all learners in all areas to allow them the opportunity to travel overseas to further their education and someday return to the Cook Islands to share their knowledge.

"It is important that we continue with our educational journey because life is about learning", said Mr Puna. Mr Puna acknowledged CITTI for their ability in providing and maintaining courses to high standards, enabling the students graduating to build on the level of excellence in namely the country's Tourism and Hospitality industries among other others. After receiving their qualifications the newly graduated students were received by their families in true Cook Islands fashion covered in beautifully coloured ei's and proud shows of admiration.

The Ministry of Education would like to congratulate each and every student on their proud accomplishment. Images from the event can be found on our Facebook page.

