

## Enterprise ready for another exciting year with BCI

On Thursday February 25th, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of Education and the Bank of the Cook Islands allowing BCI to continue their financial literacy and enterprise initiatives within schools for the coming year.

Over the last 4 years the bank has held an annual Y10 Business Challenge creating a platform for young entrepreneurs to not only showcase their ideas but materialise those ideas into a finished product ready for market.

This year organisers are changing the competition to a trade fair to allow public involvement. This will provide students first-hand experience with selling their products and ideas to the general public as opposed to solely a panel of judges. It will also allow the public a chance to vote for their favourite product and team alongside the bank.

Enterprise and Financial Literacy Advisor Janet Woodger says the experience gained by the students will be invaluable, "it gives depth to their understanding of being in business."

The revised competition, now called the BCI Enterprise Trade Fair, will run over 2 days from July 19th -20th where students can display and sell their creations to the public and get real feedback giving substance to their enterprise experience.

This year BCI and MoE want to give more young entrepreneurs the opportunity to experiment with their



From left BCI Managing Director Vaine Nooana-Arioka with Secretary of Education Gail Townsend after signing the MOU.

ideas and experience the world of business by inviting multiple teams from each school to take part. Woodger is expecting up to 20 school teams to take part as opposed to having a single team representing each school as in previous competitions. Students will be well motivated to put their best ideas forward with a \$700 first prize, \$500 second prize and \$300 third prize to share among themselves.

There is also an innovation prize of \$200 for the team who has a great idea but lacks in the development and execution of the concept. Last year's winning team was a group of young women from Mangaia School who combined their creativity to create beautiful shell and pandanus photo frames.

## Apii Ruamanu to celebrate 60 years of learning

It's been 60 years since Apii Ruamanu first opened its classroom doors to the eager young minds on the island of Manihiki back in 1956.

School principal Anna Rauru said the school will celebrate the milestone this term with a range of fun activities for all to enjoy including a thanks-giving service, picnic and an open day. The school is also organising a commemorative t-shirt for those wanting a keepsake to mark the event. Rauru says the milestone is set to be a great opportunity for the people of Tauhunu, ex-students of the school and the people of Manihiki to come together and celebrate.



Ruamanu students and the mayor of Manihiki pose with visiting members of the New Zealand army last year.

# PACIFIC SCIENCE FOR HEALTH AND LITERACY PROJECT

**Director of LENSceince, Jacquie Bay, and her team from the Liggins Institute, University of Auckland, recently did their field visit to continue work on the PSHLP programme. The visit which preceded the Ministry of Health NCDs Awareness Week was a timely reminder of the impact of NCDs on our young people. Here is what Jacquie had to say following the workshop.**

The Pacific Science for Health Literacy Project (PSHLP) team started the year with a workshop supporting teachers to empower young people to “be the change” as they explore the challenges of obesity, heart disease and type 2 diabetes in the Cook Islands. Funded by NZAid, PSHLP brings together the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and the University of Auckland’s Liggins Institute to provide programmes linking health to Science, Social Studies, Health and PE and English that empower young people to explore the Non Communicable Diseases and be agents of change for their families and the community. Teachers and Public Health staff explored feedback from participating students. They learnt that the most valuable part of the programme for Year 11 students was being able to explore actual health data from the Cook Islands.

***“If we had not seen this we would not know about how diabetes is affecting our population,”***

To ensure students in 2016 will be able to explore the latest evidence Tania Avare from Public Health updated teachers with the latest STEPS data. With increasing rates of adult overweight, obesity and diabetes this community-wide challenge is not getting easier. Tania also shared data showing that overweight and obesity in primary and secondary students is similarly increasing. The workshop heard that students want to make changes in their diet and lifestyle as a result of exploring the evidence – but are challenged by issues such

as lack of sports opportunities for the ‘not so sporty’ and the cost of food.

***“My Auntie bought 4 oranges and it was \$16 - so like \$4 each. Imagine what you can buy - how many corned beef for \$16. That is why people do not eat fruit because it is very expensive compared to things like corned beef”.***

Focus groups revealed that while students loved playing sports such as netball when they were younger, they feel there is no place for them now as they are “not good enough for the teams”. Comments also highlighted the maturity of Year 11 students, who noticed that the long working hours their parents put in make it difficult for many adults to get regular exercise.

Associate Professor Mark Vickers, a scientist at the Liggins Institute whose work helping to understand how we can reduce obesity and diabetes rates is explored in the learning programmes, was in Rarotonga for the week to work with the team. Mark took participants on a ‘deep dive’ into the science behind why changing eating and exercise habits in children and adolescents is key to addressing the obesity epidemic. Mark’s work has shown that the food both mum and dad eat before a pregnancy, as well as what mum eats during the pregnancy and what mum and dad feed their children has a very strong impact on the risk of the children developing obesity and diabetes later in life. Combined with evidence that we develop habits for life as teenagers, the workshop heard a very clear message that young people, if they are supported, hold the key to better health for our population.

The workshop finished with evidence of the positive impact of the programme on student learning. Delaney Yaqona, Deputy Principal of Nukutere College explained how by linking learning in English, Science and Maori, Year 11 students had used their exploration of Te Maki Toto Vene to support NCEA achievement standards in all three subjects.

Ina Herrmann, Director of Learning and Teaching encouraged teachers to make the links between the real world and the classroom as we know this will support young people to engage in schooling and become life-long learners.







SPOTLIGHT  
ON...

# Apīi Te Uki Ou Principal



## Brendon Fiebig

Apīi Te Uki Ou began the new school year under the direction of new school Principal Brendon Fiebig. It's been a home coming of sorts for Brendon having previously lived and worked in the Cook Islands from January 2011 through to December 2012 as a Teaching and Learning Advisor for the Ministry of Education.

He returned with his wife Janine, and two children George (7) and Emily (6). Janine has rejoined the teaching staff at Apīi Te Uki Ou, where she worked during their last period here.

Brendon's previous role as an educational advisor for the Ministry allowed him to develop working

relationships with schools around the Cook Islands as well as Ministry staff that will benefit him in his new role.

Due to family reasons Brendon and his family made the tough decision to leave the island and return to New Zealand however they never really settled back into their old life. So when the opportunity presented itself to return he leapt at the chance!

"The Cook Islands, and Cook Islanders, maintain a very special place in our family's hearts and lives," he said.

Brendon is looking forward to leading Apīi Te Uki Ou through a period of global educational change. "This

is an exciting time for education, largely due to the rapid change in society and its needs; academically, socially, and vocationally. The challenge for schools in the 21st century is to keep up with this change, remain relevant, and continue to engage students, and provide them with what they need to succeed in this ever-changing world".

Brendon is also looking forward to immersing himself back into the community. "I was involved with the cricket scene during my last stint here and would love to continue that, as well as many of the other activities available here, it will be a busy time indeed," he said.

## RUTAKI ENTERPRISE DAY A SUCCESS

One man's trash is another man's treasure, or at least that's what the Enterprising students of Apīi Rutaki had in mind in term 4 of last year when students merged their creativity with their entrepreneurial knowledge to create re-purposed products from rubbish.

The chosen topic 'Junk 2 Funk' meant all classes were to use recycled products from within their community and revitalize it by giving it a new outlook with an opportunity for the community to purchase the

finished products.

"We created an entrepreneur vibe by hosting a school gala and giving the students the opportunity to observe how money can be made from items we may easily have put in the bin or burnt," said a member of the schools staff.

The Enterprise Day was described as a great learning experience for all who participated and saw the potential in seemingly useless rubbish. Thanks to the support from the community and family members the

school raised an excess of \$2000 which would be put back into the school in the form of resources for the students.



# COMMUNITY HOME GARDENING PROJECT

Over the last 3 weeks 20 households across Rarotonga have been getting their hands dirty with the beginnings of their very own fruits and vegetables garden thanks to an initiative by the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture. The Community Homes Gardening project is free to all participants and is the first of its kind between the 3 ministries.

For the first phase of the project around 240 seedlings were cultivated by Brian Tairea at the Ministry

of Agriculture - a mixture of cucumber, watermelon and bok choy seedlings – and were given to growers to kick start their home gardens. For the next phase that is set to roll out in late March, a new variety of seedlings will be delivered to each community leader who will then share them out to families involved in the project depending on what seedlings would best benefit that family. The third phase of the project will begin sometime in May.

The project has received positive feedback from the growers and, through word of mouth alone, the project now has 3 families on its waiting list and more expressing interest. Eitiare Vano from the Ministry of Education says the goal is to have up to 50-80 homes growing their own food by the end of June. Vano who is the Te Kakaia Co-Ordinator says the project not only helps families become more self-sufficient in providing for themselves but also helps ensure children are being fed nutritious food to help their learning. “It’s also part of their learning, helping their mamas and mums grow their veggies. It’s a lot of learning for the child as well.”

Vano and Tairea regularly visit the growers to check on their progress and advise them on how best to cultivate their gardens and answer any questions. Karen Tairea from the Ministry of Health will provide health support to each family by running food demonstration classes and supplying recipes. Vano will also be providing educational support in the way of classes with topics such as ‘grow me well’, ‘feed me well’ and ‘healthy food for a healthy brain.’

Any families interested in joining the program can register their interest by calling Vano on 29357 or Karen at the Ministry of Health or Brian at the Ministry of Agriculture.



Eitiare Vano and David Herman hold up the bok choy plants being grown by David's wife Rakera who is involved in the project.



## FIRST PRINCIPALS MEETING FOR THE YEAR

On Friday, February 12th principals from schools and educational institutions from around the island gathered at Titikaveka College for the first principals meeting of 2016. The monthly meetings give the principals a forum to voice any issues or concerns they have and a collective collaborate on how best to resolve them. One of the matters discussed surrounded concerns from principals and parents regarding the Cook Islands Football Association's inter-schools football tournament. In week 5 of the 1st term senior primary students participate in CIFA's afterschool round robin inter-school competition which runs over 5 weeks.

While CIFA's active involvement within the schools is appreciated, there were issues raised by parents as well as teachers regarding the program. Principals had budgeting concerns as they must provide transport for their students to and from the event meanwhile a shared concern for both the parents and schools was the lack of control the school would have in making sure students are going straight home after their games because the competitions are run outside of school hours. To resolve this issue the collective have suggested an alternative to CIFA and MoE and are awaiting confirmation before releasing details.





# SPOTLIGHT ON...

## ARAURA COLLEGE



**In this issue Araura College principal Tracy Spiers looks back on the year that has been and what's in store for 2016.**

2015 was a successful year for Araura College according to principal Tracy Spiers. The addition of three new staff members— Clare Shill in the technology department and Caroline Davey and Oa Mati as teacher aides - was the beginning of a great year for the college.

An Enviro Squad was established and together they have changed the way in which the island deals with its waste, no longer burning and burying but recycling and reusing instead. They have become environmental legends across the Cook Islands and were the stars of lagoon day – gaining excellence for all that they entered into. The squad also made a short video clip outlining several ways to protect the environment for lagoon day and are currently developing a model that all schools can use to make being environmentally friendly the easier option.

Senior student results last year were outstanding said Spiers.

“All of our level two students and almost all level one students (last year) successfully achieved their

NCEA certificates.”

Last year the school introduced two pathways - the first, a non-academic pathway, catered for students that are not intending to further their education at university or other educational institutes. This included practical hands-on subjects as well as a life skills type course. The second pathway catered for more academic students who plan to broaden their knowledge. The school offered courses via the correspondence school for subjects that they cannot offer due to not having the specialist subject teachers – this enabled students to travel along their chosen career path without leaving the island.

Spiers summarised 2015 happenings for the school as follows:

- Students participated in the Cook Islands Maths competition, the year 10 Enterprise Challenge and the Careers Expo all on Rarotonga. Students also won the essay competition.
- Joshua Ioane represented Aitutaki at the Pacific Games winning Bronze in sailing.
- Rayman Kiria competed Internationally for golf.
- The school celebrated its

culture by holding Araura College Dancer of the Year, Koni Raoni in term one raised over \$20,000 and traditional day (umu and traditional games).

- The school introduced Sustainable Communities (Terangi Tamati went to Korea and brought back ideas to introduce into classroom programmes).
- Students participated in the Australian Maths Comp producing not only credits and distinctions but also a prudence award, the science challenge, maths competition, spelling bee, writing competition, Go Green Day with BSP and our paddling team won Vaka Iti in Rarotonga.

This year the school has offered Y13 to those that wish to stay on the island and have introduced a new course - Environmental Education - for Y12's, as well as continuing with correspondence courses. Y7 and Y8 will be in home rooms (like primary school with one main teacher) rather than have a variety of teachers – this we are hoping will help improve the literacy and numeracy levels.

# 2016 FAST TRACK PROGRAMME



From left Fast Track Teachers Meremere Thomson, Saunaoa Joe, Anaseini Pokino and Meremere Daniel with the Ministry's Training and Development Advisor Ani Piri during one of their sessions.

The 2016 Fast Track Teacher Trainees programme is underway with 11 teachers in the making, 4 of whom have joined the programme this year.

The certificate programme has been running since 2011 and has since yielded positive results in training teachers and encouraging them to stay in the Cook Islands to put their newfound skills to use.

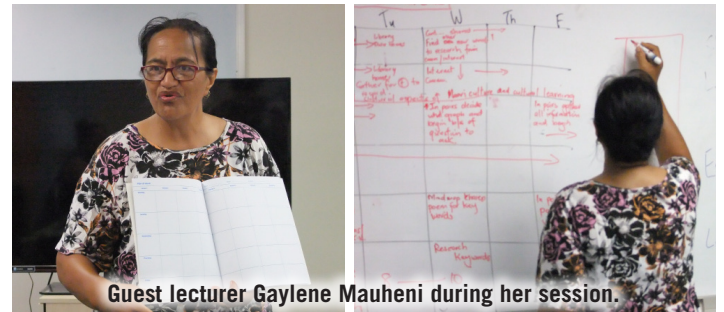
The 4 new trainees recently took part in a workshop held at the Ministry of Education building in Nikao that ran for 2 weeks. The workshop was an introduc-

tion to the basics and theory of teaching. Throughout the year the trainees will attend more workshops organized by the Ministry where, amongst other topics they will discuss and develop ideas on successful teaching, strengthen planning and create a positive learning environment.

The feedback from the new trainees was positive as they soaked in all the information and prepare themselves to mould young minds.

Various teaching professionals within the Ministry including the Secretary of Education Gail Townsend were guest speakers during the workshop sharing their knowledge and advice with the teachers in training.

The trainees will receive training over 2 - 3 years after which they will earn their Certificate in Teaching and be sent out into the schools to put what they've learnt into action.



Guest lecturer Gaylene Mauheni during her session.

## KORERO: THE RESEARCH JOURNAL FOR COOK ISLAND EDUCATORS

The third issue of 'Korero: The research journal for Cook Island Educators' has been published and distributed to schools throughout the Cook Island.

The first issue of the collection was released back in 2012 with only 4 articles and has since grown to feature 11 articles and 21 contributors. The journal is an initiative inspired by the Ministry's Education Master Plan and reflecting one of its goals which is to develop as a centre of excellence for all things Cook Islands. The aim of the publication is to have local research readily available to a wide audience as well as a means for educators in the Cook Islands to share their knowledge freely. Co-editor of the publication Kathryn Cheval describes the published works as being action research or more simply, "learning by doing." Teaching professionals often find themselves trouble shooting various ways to solve issues they experience regarding their teaching practice and will keep trying different pathways until they find one that resolves the issue and suits them.

"Action research is simply a way to formalize that process and then share the results with others", Cheval said.

For the latest issue of the journal the Ministry received help from Andy Duncan who kindly gave his time and knowledge to help the contributors with their articles as well as the editing team with the final product.



Director of Learning and Teaching Ina Herrmann with the latest Korero publication.



# EDUCATORS GATHER TO HEAR THE EFFECTS OF THE FAMILY LAW BILL ON TEACHERS

**Secretary of Internal Affairs Bredina Drollet recently explained how the family law bill will affect educators. Here's what she had to say.**

On 27 January 2016, teachers and principals took time out from the start of their school year preparations to attend a presentation by the Ministry of Internal Affairs on the proposed Family Law Bill and the new obligations that it will place on teachers. Secretary of Internal Affairs, Bredina Drollet, supported by Catherine Evans from the Crown Law Office, outlined that the broad objectives of the Bill were to ensure the best interests of the child and to modernise the current laws around family separation, care and protection of children and domestic violence. Teachers were advised that under the proposed Bill any person, including a teacher, could choose to notify the Ministry of Internal Affairs of cases where they suspect a child may be in need of care and protection. However, it will be mandatory for teachers, where in the course of their duties, paid or unpaid, to report any cases where they have a belief that a child is experiencing sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury. A maximum penalty of \$200 could be imposed where there is failure to notify. Drollet noted that in cases of sexual abuse, the Ministry has an obligation to report to the Police for criminal investigation and that there is a possibility that a teacher may be contacted by Police in such cases. Discussion centered on confidentiality and protection of the identity of the reporting teacher with Crown Law confirming that this was fundamental and that the Official Information Act 2008 provided the necessary legal protections, although the Court had the power to seek the identity if it wishes.



**All eyes were on the Secretary of Internal Affairs during the presentation.**

A further area of discussion was on whether teachers could bypass principals in reporting cases. Similar to current processes, however, the Ministry of Education considered that it is likely that reporting through the principal would still be important.

The range of new Court orders that could restrict parental access to children includes temporary care arrangements, safety warrants, care orders, protection orders and parenting orders. Teachers may be able to assist with compliance of these orders.

In addition, teachers were advised that they may be called on to participate in, or provide a report to, a uipa'anga kopu tangata (family group conference) relating to the child.

Drollet noted that the Parliamentary Select Committee had extended the period for public submissions to 31 March 2016. This gives schools sufficient time to consider the necessary operational systems and policies that would be needed for effective implementation or whether there were major issues with the proposed changes. Teachers are encouraged to review the Bill and provide comments to the Secretary of Education to form part of the Ministry of Education submission on the Bill.

## KIVA BOOK LAUNCH A SUCCESS

After the successful launch of KIVA Collection One book on December, 15th last year, discussions are already in place to hold another creative writing course for those interested in taking up the challenge. The book's name 'Kiva' is a story in itself as book contributor Teresa Tararo explained the meaning behind the name. "The title Kiva is symbolic of Te Moana Nui o Kiva (The big blue Pacific Ocean) that links each and every one of us. Collection One means, this is only the beginning", she said.

KIVA, the final product of a Creative Writing course

run in 2013, is a collection of contemporary writing by Maria Henderson, Turi Mataipo, Joan Gragg, Bobbiejo Healy, Ian George, Rachel Smith, Thomas Tarurongo Wynne, Teresa Tararo, Patricia Te Poe, Cowan Metzker and Mariana Powell Schmidt.

500 copies of the book were printed and distributed to schools throughout the Cook Islands. Funded by the Ministry of Education and New Zealand Aid, the course was run by Miria George, daughter of the late Ian George. "It is a beautifully printed book with stories and words to cherish and inspire," said Miria.



# CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL



Apii Te Uki Ou student ambassadors for 2016.

Handpicked students from schools around the Cook Islands were given the honour of becoming student leaders and student council members to their peers recently. They have been tasked to uphold their schools beliefs and practices amongst their peers and are challenged to set an example for others both inside and outside of the classroom. Here is a collection of images from schools including the Pa Enua. Congratulations to all student leaders and council members.



Araura College student leaders for 2016.



Apii Nikao student leaders.



New prefect for Nukutere College Emilean Pauka with her proud family.



Araura Primary leaders.



Apii Arorangi student leaders after their investiture ceremony.



Adorned in beautiful ei's these Rutaki student leaders are ready for the year ahead.



# STUDENT LEADERS FOR 2016



St Joseph school prefects.



These Avarua Primary students beamed with pride as they each received their badges.



Posing with the Secretary of Education Gail Townsend and school principal Gaylyn Lockington the Titikaveka prefects for 2016 are ready for the year ahead.



Araura Primary student leaders Mere and Vavia with their proud family after the investiture assembly.



Tauhunu School prefects for 2016.



Mangaia Schools 2016 student leaders.



Nukutere College prefects for 2016 outside the Catholic Church.



Takitumu Primary student leaders.



# THATS A WRAP FOR NCD AWARENESS WEEK

Primary and secondary students were given the chance to have their voices heard during this year's NCD awareness week with the chance to win \$200 for their school. Held at the Sinai hall on Friday March, 4th the prize giving ceremony wrapped up an eventful week of NCD awareness activities and included invited guests, the Deputy PM Teariki Heather, Minister of Health Nandi Glassie and Kaumaiti Nui Travel Tou.

The competition was a combined effort by members of Te Marae Ora, the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education and the Cook Islands Family Welfare Association in order to promote the importance of a healthy and an active lifestyle among students.

Nukutere College took out the senior category with their short TV advert reinforcing the mantra, 'the past cannot change, but you can change the future.' The

senior students were tasked with creating an advert using any medium to tell the importance of a healthy lifestyle. In the Primary School category the form 1 and 2 students from Apii Arorangi saw the humour in a healthy lifestyle producing a short performance in both English and Maori that had the assembly in fits of laughter. For Ministry of Education advisor Kathleen Wilkie the competition was a creative way to get youngsters involved in an otherwise tough subject.

"Students are now far more aware and empowered to take action for their own Health and to encourage their family and friends to take action," said Kathleen.

Judging by the positive feedback she's received from schools, Kathleen is confident the competition will run again next year with more preparation time given to students.



## NCEA ENGLISH WORKSHOP



NCEA English teachers were given the opportunity recently to take part in a 4 day workshop at the Ministry of Education with National Educator for Secondary English from the University of Otago, Nigel Mitchell. The NCEA English Professional Development and

Learning workshop looked at the close relationship with the curriculum and best practise teaching and learning model. The first day of the workshop was only for Year 13 specialists from Tereora College. As the national college, it is the only school on the island that provides classes at that year level. The remaining 3 days included Years 11 and 12 teachers from Enuamanu, Mangaia, Mauke Schools, Nukutere, Tereora, Araura and Titikaveka Colleges. Feedback from teachers was positive as they were able to get advice on issues they'd experienced with teaching programs. Tereora College teacher Linda Savage-Dunn described the workshop as enlightening and a welcomed opportunity for teachers to assess themselves and see if they were all on the same page in terms of teaching in the classroom, assessing the same way and how they

could better themselves.

"We were there to unpack the standards and curriculum but it was also a refresher course to up skill us and keep us current with New Zealand", Dunn said. The last workshop was held 3 years ago in 2013. However, with standards changing and newer versions being released, some teachers would like similar workshops to be held more frequently. Teachers were given evaluation forms to fill out after the workshop and the general consensus was changing their current practice to having more teaching time and fewer assessments, the importance of reading the assignment standards and its key ideas as well as contextualisation and creativity. Not wanting to overwhelm the participants, Mitchell used strategies to help the teachers process the information he had contextualised to teaching in the Cook Islands, focussing on standards appropriate to the students' capability and needs. One of the outcomes he hopes will eventuate from this workshop is the effective functioning of a Cook Islands English teachers' cluster for peer support. Mitchell will continue to offer his support via email and submission of the online newsletter to the teachers as well. "It was really great working with these teachers," he said.