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VISIT FROM MOE

After attending a national AE conference near the end of 2022. Minister vows to pay us a visit!



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**PRIZEGIVING CELEBRATION
2023. ACKNOWLEDGING OUR
ACES RANGATAHI**

ACES students excel in our ACES kaupapa. Find out who got the top awards for 2023.

NEWSLETTER '23

ACES: ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION | December 2023



Pataka kai students made these wonderful re-claimed wooden Christmas trees. Students then donated these to ACES, The Re-Creators, Massey Hub and Salvation Army. Year 9 student Luca Hilliard made the tree center stage here in our newsletter. Awesome work Luca!



JO, Muay Thai (Richie Hardcore), Theatre Project - ATC and Toitoti Collective. TAPAC (The Auckland Performing Arts Centre) at Western Springs, the Re-creators (founder Ger Tew), NRL and KNOXFIT (Business Partners Heather Reed and Kerry Knox Directors of KnoxFit Hauora). As we celebrate the achievements of this year, we acknowledge that it was truly a collective effort. To each and every one of you, our valued partners, we extend our sincerest gratitude. Thank you for investing your time, talents, and resources in our students and educators. You are more than just collaborators; you are an integral part of the ACES whanau, and your impact will continue to resonate with our rangatahi for years to come.

Lastly, we thank you Karyl, our ACES Manager for your unwavering purpose, passion and support for ACES kaupapa and for us, the ACES Team and our rangatahi. In your speech at our Prize-giving you openly expressed that the start of the year challenging that *hope seemed far away*. But now you looked to the people around you past and present, who inspired you, given you a new hope for your whanau, staff and for our students. This is just one of the countless examples of your dedication in all that you give to AE, you inspire and empower us all! With heart-felt appreciation, tēnā koe.

Ngā mihi nui!



AS THE YEAR DRAWS TO A CLOSE, AND SUMMER'S WARM EMBRACE BECKONS...

We all can't help but feel an immense sense of pride and gratitude as we reflect on the incredible journey our alternative education school has taken in 2023. It's been a year brimming with triumphs, challenges, and moments of pure connection that solidified our belief in the transformative power of the outside of the box approach that alternative education can bring.

We witnessed our students soar in diverse areas, proving that learning thrives when nurtured in an environment that celebrates individuality and whakawhanaungatanga, fostering a love for self-discovery and exploration. None of this could have been achieved without the passion of our ACES staff across all departments, and to those amazing people who have worked alongside us throughout the year in the following electives and projects: *Breakthrough* (former Olympic coach Cam Todd & Alexis Pritchard), *Creative Labs*, *TST* (The Spreading Tree Dance Academy (founder Michelle Chua founder, choreographers Andy Ha & William Boquiron), *Hustle Hard Project - Milestone Event with Enterprise panel at BIZDO-*

IMPACTFUL AE 2022 CONFERENCE RESULTS IN A MOE VISIT AT THE START OF 2023

ACES MADE A HUGE IMPACT AT THE NATIONAL AE CONFERENCE BACK IN SEPTEMBER 2022. SO MUCH SO, THEN LABOUR MINISTER, JAN TINETTI WAS SO IMPRESSED WITH THE ACES PRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE AND THE WORK OF ACES AE THAT SHE PROMISED TO COME VISIT US!

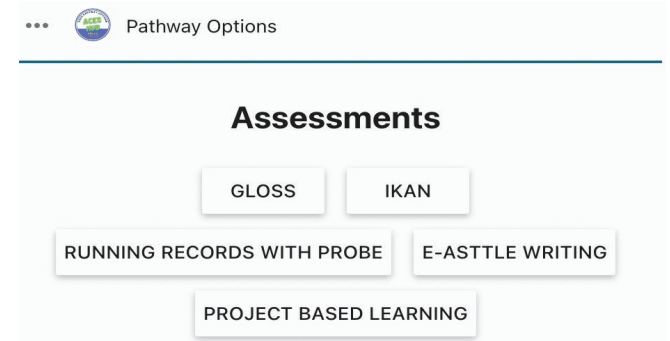
She lived up to that promise and came in February, when up on MOE business. The minister was super impressed with the tour of the ACES Maungawhau site, particularly as it was led by our student leaders. One of these leaders was student Tupo Aloniū (seen far right in photo below). Tupo excelled in all areas of ACES kaupapa and personal development. Deservedly, Tupo was awarded Dux (Top Student) for 2022 and went on to successfully transition to further study at NZMA. The Minister was beyond impressed with how these students spoke candidly and so eloquently about the challenges they'd overcome and now on a path they'd chosen.



The Minister went on to say "We are so impressed with the impact that ACES is having on rangatahi and the innovative PBL curriculum. Thank you Karyl and team for the invite and Thelo for organizing."

The visit was a huge success and a poignant one as this was the first time a Minister had visited ACES.

ACES would like to thank Jan Tinetti for her visit and recognizing the work at ACES AE and other AE's nationally really does make an impact on young lives.



ONLINE PATHWAYS STUDENTS CONTINUE TO SHINE

THIS LAST TERM WE HAD AN UNPRECEDENTED NUMBER OF STUDENTS ON PATHWAYS OPTIONS (ONLINE).

These students engaged with regular school-work through Te Kura, up-skilling through Pathways Awarua, and Passion Projects which allowed them to play a role in designing and developing a specialized course which allowed them to follow a goal, hobby, interest, or general inquisition which culminated in a project at the end of the year.

Previous students have illustrated and written comic books, hosted radio shows, written short stories, started music groups, and dove headfirst into hobbies like painting and art history.

This year one student chose the history and techniques of kick-boxing. This project allowed the student to examine the various geographical regions kick-boxing was inspired by, and the historical details of those individual martial arts (e.g. their leaders, their techniques, what made them special) and how they helped modern kick-boxing evolve. This took a topic of interest and allowed the student to also learn about history, geography, and other cultures and tie this knowledge into written work.

Another student opted to study Horror Movies. After watching and reviewing a few different films to identify characters, plot points, twists, and structures, they wrote a synopsis of



“PROJECTS ALLOW STUDENTS TO HAVE CONTROL OVER THEIR LESSONS AND IT HELPS TO ENSURE BUY-IN FROM STUDENTS THAT MIGHT NOT FIT WITH MORE TRADITIONAL PEDAGOGICAL PATHS”

a novel spooky tale, and followed it up with character design, and began a storyboard. This allowed them to tie in their interests and creativity into a project where they could practice their creative writing, planning, brainstorming, and artistic skills. These projects allow students to have control over their lessons and it helps to ensure buy-in from students that might not fit with more traditional pedagogical paths. These are especially useful for students who

are only on Pathways for a short period of time and might not see benefit from more traditional options in such a short period. This keeps them active, engaged, and having fun all while increasing their skills subconsciously in various academic areas.

- Bryant Ahrenburg (Pathway Options Tutor)

STUDENT VOICE

“ I can’t get over how ACES look after me, they take care of me, feed me, help me make good decisions and keep me safe. ”

- Vea

LET'S MEET SOME OF THE NEW STAFF THAT JOINED ACES THIS YEAR

ACES WAS FORTUNATE IN HIRING A HIGH CALIBER OF TALENTED NEW STAFF MEMBERS AT OUR MAUNGAREI AND MAUNGAWHAU CAMPUSES.

Malo e lelei! My name is Salome Ma'u. I was born and raised in central Auckland and now live in East Auckland. I am of Tongan descent and married with four beautiful children. I returned to ACES after being on maternity leave. I felt my time with high school aged students was not done. I started at a primary school which was great but was not for me. I checked out ACES Maungarei and fortunately for me there was an opportunity for me. It had been a long time since I

served my community and but was well overdue. My philosophy is “no child/student is a hard student” and have always believed that every student should have an opportunity to learn, grow and move forward. Can the role of working with our rangatahi be challenging, yes, but when putting in real mahi never have I felt unable to connect with these young people, whether with Talanoa, school work or even on our off-campus excursions for projects or electives. If I can help with



**SALOME MA'U
MAUNGAREI AE TUTOR**

creating self-awareness around manners or assisting with student transitioning to further their education or gain employment, I know I will have done my part on awhi for them to be a better version of themselves.

Malo 'aupito



**SUA ARONA
MAUNGAREI
AE TUTOR**

Malo le Soifua, I'm Sua Arona, and I'm excited to share a little about myself with all of you at ACES. I've always been deeply passionate about community development and creating positive change in people's lives.

Throughout my journey, I've had the privilege of working in various community-based projects and experienced firsthand the power of education in empowering individuals and communities. As an advocate for alternative education, I firmly believe that every student deserves an opportunity

to flourish in an environment that supports their unique strengths and interests. Working with the talented and diverse team at ACES, I'm inspired to explore innovative ways to engage students in their learning journey and empower them to become confident, compassionate, and successful individuals.

Beyond the classroom, you can often find me exploring the local community and connecting with people from all walks of life. In my spare time, I enjoy im-

mersing myself in cultural experiences, trying new cuisines, and exploring the natural beauty Aotearoa has to offer

I'm truly thrilled to be a member of the ACES family, and I'm eager to collaborate with all of you in making a lasting impact on the lives of our students. Thank you for welcoming me into this inspiring community, and I look forward to embarking on this meaningful journey together!

Ia Manuia.

Hello, I'm Isaak! With a background in youth work and a deep commitment to making a positive impact, I recently joined the team at ACES Alternative Education. I bring with me a wealth of knowledge and a genuine passion for helping students thrive. Before becoming part of ACES, my journey revolved around youth work, where I had the opportunity to engage with young people in schools. Working with Revolution Tour, I would “Inspire Hope, Build Resilience & Empower Change,” and it was during this time that I knew I had found my true mission.

Now at ACES, I am proud to be an instrumental part of the team, fully embracing the unique opportunities that alternative education offers. My innovative ideas and dedication to nurturing students' individual strengths have become my strongest assets. When I'm not championing the students, you can find me exploring the world of cinematography and Film Production. I also enjoy playing volleyball with friends and family, and spending quality time with loved ones.

**ISAAK POHIO
MAUNGAREI
AE TUTOR**

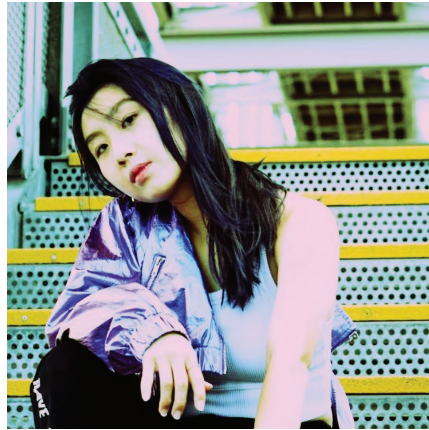


I'm grateful for the opportunity to shape the future of ACES Alternative Education and leave a positive impact on the lives of our students. If you see me around the campus, don't hesitate to say hello!

ACES is so grateful to have these talented, passionate and inspiring tutors on board as we engage with our rangatahi in 2024.

SHARING STORIES OF STUDENT SUCCESS AND THE AMAZING PEOPLE WHO WORK ALONGSIDE US

MICHELLE CHUA FOUNDER, DANCER AND CHOREOGRAPHER OF TST DANCE ACADEMY IS PROUD OF THE RELATIONSHIP THAT HAS BEEN BUILT WITH ACES STUDENTS AND TUTORS OVER THE LAST 2 TERMS. WE HAVE BEEN BLESSED TO HAVE 2 OF OUR BEST CHOREOGRAPHERS WILLIAM AND ANDY WORK WITH RANGATAHI, TEACHING THE FUNDAMENTALS OF DANCE AND HIP HOP.



What is the meaning of The Spreading Tree?

The Spreading Tree (shortened to TST) is inspired by mother nature and a reference to how a tree is grown simply from a small seed that is planted and nurtured well and with love. Our goal is to help and inspire dancers of all stages, but especially those at the start of their dance journey, to grow and be the best version of themselves. We see our studio as a safe place where dancers/artists can be themselves and grow at their own pace with our help.

What is the long term vision of TST Dance Studio?

To bring dancers/creative artists all around Auckland (and eventually NZ) in one space. To build connections and friendships with other communities outside dance. What has been the main highlight of the Partnership between ACES and TST through working with both William B and Andy? To be a part of ACES students' dance journey, and to be able to share the meaning of dance and how it can shape one's individuality.

Term 3 was led by talented Choreographer, Andy Ha who is excited to be working with both Campuses this term.

Thelo shared with me the

goal of preparing a dance item for the end of year Graduation, which will be an amazing goal. It's important for students to contribute input on the Choreography, for their milestone piece, as they will definitely own it. The idea is to understand the fundamentals of dance, know or learn how to piece the movements together into a fluid dance piece and then perform (do) it! Dance elective happens on Monday afternoons and Friday mornings at TST Dance academy this term, so students don't miss out!



WILLIAM BOQUIRON DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER

THEATRE : KO WAI AU, NO HEA AHAU, KEI HEA AHAU E HAERE ANA I ROTO I TE AO

WHO AM I, WHERE HAVE I COME FROM, WHERE AM I GOING?

The Theatre project was built around these three important Patai above. The Project was supported by amazing Kaiako and highly recognized theatre Companies. The key kaupapa was to introduce students to the tools of theatre as a medium for self expression and creativity.

OUR THEATRE LEADERS WERE

Sarah Tahere - Director of Toitoti Collective Production Company. Sieni Leo'o Olo aka Bubba, from Auckland Theatre Company.

Back In Term 3 - Theatre Project - Growing Legends welcomed two



new Facilitators from Auckland Theatre Company. Sam Phillips Director of Young Auckland Theatre Company is excited to announce that in Term 3, 2 of his highly skilled team, Taylor and Reuben will be leading ACES Rangatahi through their "Growing Legends" kaupapa. Reuben Butler Ngā Puhī, Ngāti Kahu. Actor Reuben Butler (Ngā Puhī, Ngāti Kahu) graduated from Te Kura Toi Whakaari o Aotearoa and has performed in The Under-

tow Series, The Hinepau Tour and at the Pop-Up Globe. He is currently a member of the Portrait of a Mongrel Artist: Rowley Habib ensemble. Taylor Rogers Te Aupōuri, Ngāi Takoto, Ngāti Kahu, Ngāti Kuri, Te Rarawa Taylor is stoked to be joining ATC's King Lear as a Teaching Artist this year. In 2019 Taylor graduated from Te Kura Toi Whakaari o Aotearoa with a Bachelor of Performing Arts. Since then, she has performed in works across the New Zealand

stage and screen industry, her most recent kaupapa being a core presenter on TVNZ's Toi Time. Like many actors, Taylor sees the importance of having many strings to her Artistic Bow and has had experience in producing, writing, acting coaching, directing, and teaching. When it comes to teaching, Taylor loves that she can combine her acting craft with her passion for working with young people.



SARAH TAHERE DIRECTOR OF TOITOTI COLLECTIVE PRODUCTION COMPANY



TAYLOR ROGERS AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY



SIENI LEO'O OLO AKA BUBBA AUCKLAND THEATRE COMPANY



REUBEN BUTLER ACTOR

STUDENT VOICE

I've only been at ACES for a term but I know what my goals are and what I need to do to achieve them. Our tutors are awesome! I've had heaps of fun.

- Charlie



GER TEW
THE RE-CREATORS FOUNDER

THE RE-CREATORS - TEACHING OUR ACES STUDENTS SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES

WHAT'S IN A NAME? KO WAI TATAU? WHO ARE WE?

There's an old marketing saying "do what it says on the tin". In entrepreneurship, Ger (Founder ReCreators) believes that a business name should help the customer know exactly what they do. We are upcyclers – which accounts for the RE (which means to repeat) this is the second life of the materials we use – and CREATOR(S) for the collective of creatives who work together with ACES.

joyed working with the students from ACES and in particular seeing those who have loved the craft grow as a person through challenging themselves, and accepting compliments for their creative efforts. We believe that making is a huge part of being a happy human. We all need to remember that using our hands to make something is very good soul food.



MAGDA SMOLIRA
CRAFTER & SEWER

Both Magda and Ger have thoroughly en-



STUDENT VOICE

Whakawhanaungatanga

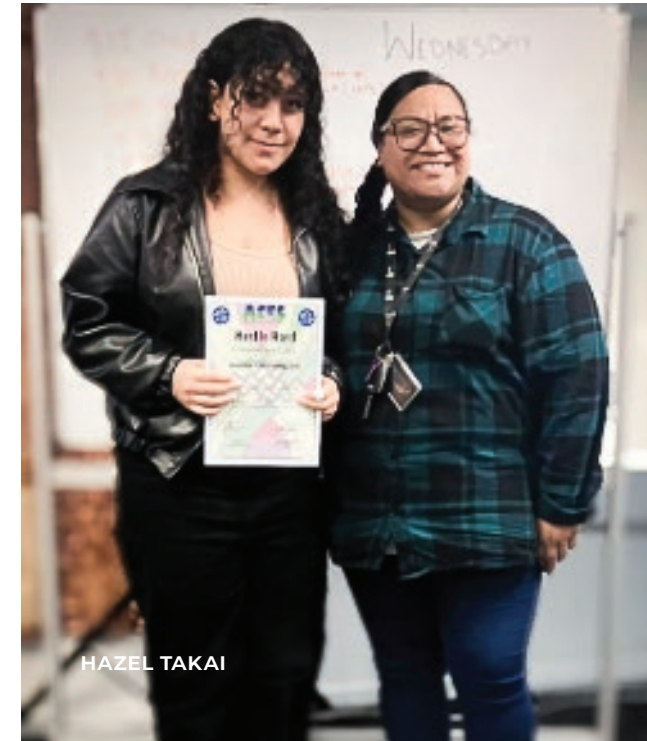


- Rhymez

UNUSUAL THINGS ABOUT GER & MAGDA

Ger and Magda are immigrants to New Zealand. Ger (short for Geraldine) is from Ireland and Magda is from Poland. Ger has worked in the past with former refugees and has a passion for human rights. In her spare time she loves tramping and connecting with nature. Magda has worked with guide dogs in training them and is also a bee keeper in her spare time.

ACES STUDENTS WORK IN PHOTO WHICH WAS AT A VERY HIGH STANDARD. ALL ITEMS HANDMADE FROM UP-CYCLED MATERIALS.



HAZEL TAKAI

HUSTLE HARD - ACES RANGATAHI BEGIN THEIR BUSINESS JOURNEYS

BASED AT MAUNGAWHAU THIS TERM PROJECT FACILITATOR THELO WAS IMPRESSED BY THE ENGAGEMENT OF ALL STUDENTS IN THE PROJECT BASED LEARNING PROGRAMME BUILT AROUND THE "HUSTLE HARD" BRAND AND TEE-SHIRT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT. THE DRIVING QUESTION WAS HOW DO I CREATE A SUCCESSFUL SMALL BUSINESS WITH THE RESOURCES I HAVE IN ACES?

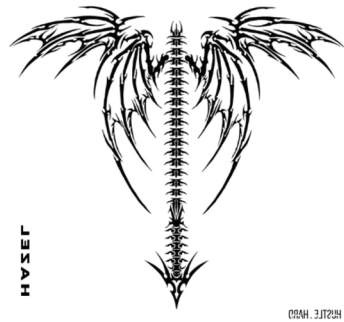
Business mentor Oz Jabor (Owner Futureco Apparel Company, CSN Media Company and General Manager Ahi Collective (Movie and Digital Marketing business) , says "I was so impressed with the work all students have done this term which has included, logo design, exploring competitors

brand storying and pricing, crafting a brand story, printing design, looking at budgets and also presenting a business plan to a panel consisting of CEOs and Directors at BizDojo in Ponsonby during milestone week. All students completed a digital portfolio and received recognition in a certificate ceremony. Outstanding achievers were: Hazel (Outstanding Achievement award with Campus Leader Eliza Lepou) and William (Outstanding Achievement award with Campus Leader Eliza Lepou) - Judges were super impressed with William's amazing flair for urban design and encourage him to pursue business. William actually presented to the Business panel at BuzDojo and overcame pressure to deliver.

So proud of these amazing people. Hazel's winning design will be produced by Oz and Thelo into a special edition uniform, commissioned by Karyl for ACES Maungawhau students, thereby immortalizing Hazel's amazing work.



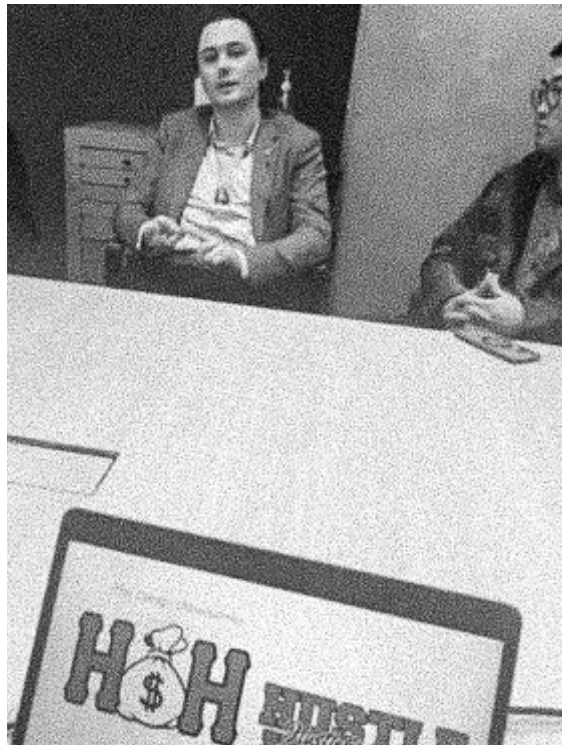
WILLIAM KOLOAMATANGI



They will be manufactured using recycled materials and ethical production mechanisms from Oz's production team in Bangladesh. Oz is passionate about the Circular economy and sustainability and he looks forward to teaching this kaupapa to future ACES Hustle Hard and Enterprise students.

also encouraged the young people, that he also struggled in mainstream school and now he is designing products for the American Rocket market and pitching for millions of dollars of Venture Capital for his 3D Business. During the term, one of the main tasks was learning about brand stories and perceived pricing. This involved visiting local mega retail stores like Culture Kings in Mount Wellington and getting expert advice from their Regional Manager Chase Joslin (center).

CEO of PrintGig Caleb Mcivor (left) and CFO of PrintGig Reese Chan (Hustle Hard Panel members below), were blown away by the Hustle Hard business presentations and



ACES MAUNGAREI STUDENTS COMPLETE NRL OFFICIATING COURSE AND BK, KAHU AND SUAVE HELP RUN A TOURNAMENT FOR EASTERN INTERMEDIATES

TOP NRL REF ROCHELLE TAMARUA (BELOW) TOOK TIME OUT OF HER BUSY SCHEDULE TO RUN AN OFFICIATING COURSE SO THAT STUDENTS CAN BE QUALIFIED REFS FOR ANY LEVEL OF KIWITAG PLAYED IN NEW ZEALAND. STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED THE CERTIFICATE WERE JODECI, KAHU, SUAVE AND BROOKLYN.

ACES Students Kahu, Brooklyn and Suave then

took time away from their study and electives to help Auckland Rugby League officiate an all day intermediate Kiwitag tournament for Year 7/8 students from Eastern schools at Point England. The day was a massive success with the ACES students becoming minor celebrities with the students. Auckland Development Manager Daniel Sterling says of the students, "Today was successful because of the tireless work of the ACES students, working through breaks, helping myself and Alamein make today a smooth and successful event for all. We have no hesitation in recommending these outstanding ACES students for any work they do in life. Mauri ora!"



STUDENT VOICE

“ For me the best thing about being at ACES has been making new friends, the best friends. I've had friends before but they weren't as supportive as the friends I've made here. I think it's because we connect on a different level. ”

- Nevaeh

STUDENT VOICE

“ I love going to the gym, you know it was actually my first time ever going to a public gym and I felt amazing after our workouts. I really liked the support I got from the other students because they encouraged me all the time to try my best and persist. I don't think I would have done this by myself. When I leave ACES I'll be studying at NZMA. I'm going to try to keep going to the gym with my friends because I know how good it is for me. ”

- Leilani



POINT ENGLAND SCHOOLS TAKE A RESTFUL BREAK AFTER A SUCCESSFUL KIWI-TAG TOURNAMENT

OUR ACES REFEREES DID VERY WELL IN CONNECTING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE FROM EAST AUCKLAND PRIMARY SCHOOLS, THEY ALSO WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND BY GIVING UP THEIR ELECTIVE TIME TO HELP REF THE FINALS ON THE DAY, WORKING FOR OVER 5 HOURS IN THE HOT SUN. WELL DONE!

BREAKTHROUGH

THE LEGACY OF COACH CAM LIVES IN THE NAME BREAKTHROUGH
THE END OF AN ERA AND THE EXCITING START OF A NEW ONE

It was with real sadness that we came to the end of an important era in the Breakthrough Programme, at the end of Term 3. Firstly, the Wreck Room as a gym and business shut its doors for the last time. This is because Former NZ Olympic Coach Cam Todd, has picked up a full time job Coaching the Fijian Olympic Boxing team over the next Olympic cycle and moved over to Fiji early July.



CAM TODD
FORMER OLYMPIC
BOXING COACH



ALEXIS PRITCHARD
JOINS NEW
ZEALAND OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

Also Alexis has also picked up a new job as Lead engagement manager for the NZ Olympic Committee, a very prestigious role and will mean she will have huge influence over many of NZ's top athletes and organizations. She still has a continued oversight role in the strategy of bringing the Breakthrough programme into mainstream schools Auckland wide with Thelo. Alexis says, "We are so happy to announce that in Term 3, one of Cam's top amateurs and now a top middleweight professional and Coach in his own right, Josh Francis, will lead the Breakthrough programme into the immediate future."

Breakthrough is now also being run out of the Te Hiko Consortium by one of Cam's former heavyweight champions Frank Masoe in South Auckland and we hope soon to be based in all schools in Auckland and one day New Zealand! We will always remember that the Foundational programme was built at ACES (Original Leadership Academy) and MAGS by Cam, myself and Thelo.

The Term 3 Programme will now be based at College Rifles Boxing, Josh's gym in Remuera.



A testament to Cam and Lex's impact on ACES students was demonstrated by 2 former ACES students Thor Paul and Andrew Graydon (both successfully transitioned back from ACES into mainstream at Lynfield College 2020 then onto full time work), visiting Cam for his last Breakthrough class, as a mark of respect. Both boys are working full time and also developing their own side business in car detailing. Thor is a talented boxer who will be training with Thelo at Pacific Boxing Academy, Cam predicts he will be a NZ champion boxer when he is ready.



Also at Cam's farewell (below right) dinner former ACES Dux Sauaso and Senior Leader ACES Maungawhau. Kaylah Morris (left below) also attended this as a mark of respect for the work he had contributed over the last 4 years to ACES Breakthrough.



A HEART WARMING MESSAGE OF THE IMPACT OF CAM ON KAYLAH'S LIFE IS SHARED BELOW...



I cant make it. I got called into work early. But I have a few words to say. Sorry for not being able to make it. Cam is one of the best people I know. He taught me how to be a Lion, not a sheep. I never saw myself being a full time mum and a manager at Mcdonalds within 3 months of working there. He taught me to be grateful for life. He helped me survive through a lot of dark times. At first I didnt like Cam because he was really straight up and I am too 😂 But it was refreshing. I also hated all the bear crawls. Especially up the hill. One time my pants had ripped and he still made me train. He was....annoying at times 😂 If I could do it all over again I would. We're all going to miss Cam. He taught us that Family doesn't have to be blood and Ill always be in debt to him. Not only for saving my life countless times but for all the wisdom and knowledge I have today. He made me a better person. We all love you Cam

Oh and when he visits NZ tell him Ill actually buy him a coffee this time 😂



**TRIBUTE TO THE IMPACT OF CAM ON MY LIFE - KAYLAH MORRIS AND TAYLAH NEWTON SMITH (ACES FOUNDATION STUDENTS AND MEMBERS OF THE FIRST BREAKTHROUGH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY)
THE LEGACY OF COACH CAM LIVES IN THE NAME BREAKTHROUGH**

From: Tayla Rose Newton Smith
To: lex
Subject: What WreckRoom meant to me-

I attended the wreckroom for just under a year as part of ACES Maungawhau AE, when I first started going to WreckRoom I was in the middle of court cases against my step father, the jailing of my mother and being shifted into care of my grandmother, it was a tough time, on top of that I was struggling with depression, anxiety, low self confidence and binge eating disorder. After only my first session, I felt the burn of pushing my own limits deteriorate my stresses, everything felt so free, so calm, so quiet and so comfortable, I became addicted to the feeling. I went to the wreck room twice a week with my class, although I wasn't the best in the class I didn't feel any jealousy, any embarrassment, the wreck room just has this aura and this vibe that you are valid, respected and supported by everyone, the gym really is like a family. Each week Id do my absolute best, push

my limits, see if I can be better the next week- I started coming in my own time as well as with my school, the Wreckroom became a safe space where I can take out my angers, my sadness, my stresses and walk out the gym with a fresh start to the day or week. After moving away and not being able to attend the Wreck Room anymore, I find myself reminiscing on how absolutely amazing and incredible Wreckroom was for me, I walked out of that gym with a more positive outlook on life, I walked out with the skills and knowledge to deal with my own emotions independently, I walked out with confidence in myself and my abilities, I walked out with an irreplaceable gym family who I will carry in my heart for the rest of my years.

Thank you Cam and Lex!
Your unconditional support and kindness went far and never unnoticed.
Lots of love and hugs from
Tayla Rose Newton Smith :) =

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari kē he toa takitini

My success should not be bestowed onto me alone, it was not individual success but the success of a collective

This whakatauki acknowledges team effort, that one's success is due to the support and contribution of many. Just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes community/a team to enable an individual's success. It's a good whakatauki to use when wanting to acknowledge the support of many.

WE WISH CAM ALL THE BEST AT THE OLYMPICS AND HE HAS INVITED AN ACES GROUP TO VISIT FIJI AS A PROJECT AFTER THE PARIS OLYMPICS NEXT YEAR IN 2024, WITH A VIEW TO LEARNING ABOUT LOCAL VILLAGE LIFE AND TRAINING WITH THE FIJI NATIONAL

TEAM. BREAKTHROUGH PROGRAMME WILL ALWAYS CARRY THE VALUES HE ESPOUSES FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE HE HAS TRAINED OVER HIS 35 YEAR COACHING CAREER, "BE A LION NOT A SHEEP!". WATCH THIS SPACE!



PETER NIUMATA & KARYL PUKLOWSKI

ACES MANAGER, KARYL PUKLOWSKI CATCHES UP WITH A FORMER A STUDENT OF AE, PETER NIUMATA. IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE THEY LAST MET, IN FACT, IT'S BEEN NEARLY TWO DECADES.

On a sunny Winters day, on a busy construction site located in Whenuapai. Karyl steps gingerly along a mud laden path as she makes her way to a port-a-cabin to meet Peter Niumata. They meet each other with big smiles and a warm embrace. As old friends do. Peter's story is one, that reminds us of just how necessary providers in the community like Youth Alive Trust based in Mt Roskill made a real impact on young lives. He took part in an employment focus AE Programme developing skills for employment. The Programme Manager at that time, around 2005, was Levuka Hala. Peter, was a former student of Karyl's, now runs his own construction company and they met while currently contracted on this construction site, which is now the location of a new primary school in the Whenuapai area, soon to be finished.

Karyl and all at ACES wish you continued success in all your endeavors Peter. Chat again soon!

NOT ALL EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS ARE EQUAL. SEEING STUDENTS PUSH THROUGH ADVERSITY AND PAVE THEIR OWN PATH TO SUCCESS IS INSPIRATIONAL!



MEET KAHURANGI

Hi, my name is Kahurangi Waha-Rai. I live in Panama and attended the local schools. I am the sister to nine siblings and an aunt to three nephews. I am super excited to be involved within the community as a connector. Being part of the team will give me a chance to share ideas and impact positive change within our place we call home, Panama.

ACES STUDENT & NATURAL LEADER, KAHURANGI WAHA-RAI SUPPORTS HER LOCAL COMMUNITY THROUGH THE PANAMA COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

YEAR 9 STUDENT KAHURANGI RISES TO THE CHALLENGE AND GETS INVOLVED AS A COMMUNITY CONNECTOR FOR HER COMMUNITY PROJECT IN PANAMA.

Funded by the department of Internal Affairs (DIA) has allowed for a unique opportunity for the Panama neighborhood to come together to get involved by sharing ideas, offering solutions as part of a one year project.

"This project is about building on the strengths of Panama, creating connections across communities, and creating a hive of activity for

the people who live here to enjoy themselves and live a good life."

Kahurangi is one of our "Moving On" students, transition from ACES. She is about to embark on yet another challenge and continue her educational journey at Te Kura Summer school. We are so proud of you kahu!

PROMISING SPORTSMAN ACES STUDENT J.J. SPEAKS ABOUT HIS JOURNEY INTO VOLLEYBALL AND HIS PASSION FOR THE SPORT

TALOFA LAVA, MY NAME IS JAYJAY SAVEA AND I'M WRITING THIS ARTICLE BASED ON MY JOURNEY THROUGH MY VOLLEYBALL EXPERIENCE AS A CHILD UNTIL NOW.

the older generation, youths and elders who represented our church in comps held each year. I learned as a youngster about the sport: mentally, physically, and emotionally. I was able to learn how the sport of volleyball is played. Unfortunately, in this competition there is an age limit to play in our SDA (NEW LYNN SA-MOAN SEVENTH DAYS



I will be writing based on the October and the November tournaments that I was involved in with my church in the (Youth) department activities. I was involved in sports in our church where I was able to show my physical abilities, where I could hit the ball, pass, serve, spike, tip by using upper and lower body movements.

As a young child and growing up, me and my siblings would travel with my parents. I would watch my parents playing the sport as a youngster. Both of my parents are sports competitors. They love playing sports in our family, extended family and my church. In church, I was able to watch and learn from

ADVENTIST CHURCH) competition, especially down in the South Island because it is under our head office. The SDA Conference Northern organization organizes these special events every year for our North and South Island churches: the October tournament in Palmy is held each year down in Palmerston North and I was able to attend this year's competition. This is my first time being able to play at our South Reign volleyball competition at Palmerston North. I played in the position as a guard and hitter. There are rules, males cannot spike as we head to the front row of the net at the 3 meter lines at the back. Training was twice a week, on Tues-



day nights at Kelston between 7 and 9pm and On Sunday evenings, training was held at different locations like Waitakere College and Avondale College. On Saturdays, our training was held by coaches of our youth departments which are the social side of the team..

In our mixed B Grade there are 12 of us. We had 6 on and subs and we all rotated during games. Volleyball competitions, Westside West Auckland, North-western SDA volleyball competition and Feofani volleyball tournament involves 12 churches. These were held by all 12 SDA churches in Auckland with Samoan only and members only allowed to form teams to play in these competitions. Our church Pastor Giovanni Stowers and 12 of our Team Social members were the host of this event held on Sunday 8th November 2023. The event was at Westside Stadium, Pastor Giovanni Stowers and

other pastors from our 12 churches opened up our volleyball competition on the Saturday at our Papatoetoe SDA church. On the Saturday all churches did a "MEET and GREET" and fellowship as great competitors, in and out of court, spiritual guidance and last words of wisdom given to all churches and players. It was a great event that I went to with my siblings and other youth. In all, 42 churches could attend this competition however not all of them were able to attend the day. We had 3 mix teams (Grades A, B, C,) I was in the B Grade juniors (Saints Black), 1 men's A Grade, and 1 Women's team. Our church won the A Grade men's and the A Grade Mix women's runners 3, and us 3 runners up. Overall, it was a good outcome. Win or lose we are all champions. We won the overall comp in men's and mix A Grade Pools.



up on trying! Have faith. If you would like to see me and my teammates play, highlights can be seen in a full video on Youtube. Checkout the Feofani Competition. There is a full video of us celebrating our wins in the men's and other grades. Thank you for reading.

By Jayjay Savea

It was such a great event where I was able to use my skills. I played from October with two weeks training, after that to this tournament. It was full-on training preps. We had two training sessions just before Novembers' tournament. I was so tired from all the training and could not come to school sometimes! Training would be on Tuesday and Thursday night and another one Sunday. It is a big hype sport. It is very physical and movement has a lot to do with your upper and lower strength. It was good this year I was able to play alongside my siblings and cousins in different pools and grades.

Volleyball is not new to us as we grew up with it, so it was already in our genes. Every opportunity I get is motivation for myself and my siblings to be able to play a sport that we know about and are passionate about. I played in mixed B Grade juniors with my sister - we lost two games, made it to the quarter finals and sadly lost. It was good playing, learning about the game and just having fun. The best part is seeing my older brother and cousins' team win in the A Grade men's team. I was able to see, learn and support them. Next year I can play alongside the Men's grade which I am ready for and prepping towards. My advice is always give your best at all costs. In the beginning, I was scared to learn as I wasn't confident. As I learned and built my confidence I was able to defend at all cost, as I grew and learned more it then became a passion. Never give

ACES WELCOMES NEW AE SCHOOL NURSE, SOPHIA ZHOU



Nurse Sophia started with us in late term 3 of this year. Only with us a short time, she was quickly able engage with our students. From the off, Sophia built a rapport of ease and trust. More importantly, she has now created a safe space for our all students, to talk about any health or well-being concerns. We have witnessed Sophia going above and beyond for our ACES Rangatahi. Amazing! We love your mahi Sophia. Roll on 2024!

STUDENT VOICE



I liked working out at KnoxFit and working on my health.



- Jayden

MOVING ON FROM ACES

ACES SUPPORTS STUDENTS WITH THEIR TRANSITION JOURNEY

READ ABOUT CHRISTIAN MOALA & HARLEM UAEA CHOSEN PATHWAY OUTCOMES



I was a very quiet person when I started ACES and didn't want to make new acquaintances or talk to anyone until they spoke to me, therefore my time there will always stick in my memory. I started at Aces in 2021 because I wasn't going to school. Aces has been really helpful in helping me get over my phobia of being a quiet, shy child. I had no idea that

I would be able to overcome that phobia or find new friends when I first joined ACES. I've graduated from ACES 2022 and I feel more confident which has greatly aided me in my role as a retail assistant at Foot Locker starting off casual and now promoted to part time. Thank you ACES.

- Christian Moala

I had such a wonderful experience throughout my stay at ACES. When I started in term 3 of 2022, I got along with the students practically right away. The teachers and staff extended a warm welcome to each and every kid. I always had a great time working on exciting projects. With the students and tutors last year, there was never a dull time because we were constantly engaged in both on- and off-site activities. I've improved my social skills when interacting with strangers and have made progress on my own objectives thanks to ACES. My academic years in years 11 and 12 will always be the best I've ever had because

of ACES.

Since leaving ACES, I studied hair and make-up at The Cut Above Academy and completed level 2. Next year I will continue working towards level 3 & 4.

- Harlem Uaea

CHRISTIAN & HARLEM STILL POP BACK INTO ACES WHEN THEY CAN. OFTEN THIS IS TO SUPPORT ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS WHETHER IT BE FOR LANGUAGE WEEKS OR ACES EVENTS LIKE OUR 2023 PRIZE-GIVING. HARLEM WAS AN AMAZING SUPPORT THIS AS SEEN IN WITH THELO (RIGHT).



WELL DONE HARLEM & CHRISTIAN WE ARE SO PROUD OF YOU BOTH AND ALL THAT YOU BOTH HAVE ACCOMPLISHED!



ACES is a caring, inclusive, values-based school where we nurture a learning culture via our school values of Whakawhanaungatanga (positive connections), Respecting self, others, and the environment. We take pride in our strong sense of family within our school, where young people will experience a vibrant learning environment. We use a holistic approach to teaching and learning which focuses on developing the full person in the pursuit of personal achievement. ACES students will receive excellent teaching and learning programmes in preparation for their future educational opportunities. - Campus Leader, Eliza Lepou



HEATHER REED, KNOXFIT



KERRY KNOX, KNOXFIT

BUSINESS PARTNERS HEATHER REED AND KERRY KNOX DIRECTORS OF KNOXFIT HAUORA, WERE BEYOND EXCITED WHEN THELO SPOKE TO THEM ABOUT WORKING ALONGSIDE ACES MAUNGAREI STUDENTS ON A COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROJECT BUILT AROUND ORGANIZING A FUN FITNESS DAY FOR YEAR SEVEN AND EIGHT STUDENTS FROM GLEN TAYLOR PRIMARY SCHOOL (WHICH WAS SET FOR WEEK 4 IN TERM 4).

Heather and Kerry said; "We are both stoked to be sharing our Kaupapa built on Whare tapa wha, with ACES students and in the process building communication, resilience and leadership. Also we are working closely with Thelo aligning our work to

build a framework, as the learning framework for ACES KnoxFit Games

Recently, Kerry posted on social media how humbled he was after working with the ACES team and Glen Taylor school. What he posted in Instagram is below, and captures perfectly the transformative impact on everyone involved in this project. ACES thanks you from the bottom of our hearts for bringing your kaupapa and changing the hearts of our students. Your passion and awesome mahi for our ranagahi has filled our hearts. Read Kerry's heartfelt account of work on this project.

"Some of the most important mahi I've done this year has been with our Team at ACES, who we worked with for the last 3 terms of the year. Sharing with these awesome kids the importance of moving our bodies, and using our time together each week to explore various ways of training, and learning many new exercises. It wasn't easy going for them, for any that know my coaching style you'll appreciate that these 14-15 yea old kids, showing up twice a week to get your butt handed to you isn't the most exciting prospect or way of spending your morning. But for our handful of regulars, we saw some truly incredible growth, and positive changes in these

young adults that we hope will continue well beyond the walls of our whare. Our milestone event was putting on a teams comp for the kids at Glen Taylor School, our team were given the responsibility of demonstrating movements, and supporting their assigned teams for the duration of each WOD in a big brother/sister type role. We've experienced some pretty big smiles and some awesome moments, but none as big as the day they got to experience the buzz of stepping up to help others do something cool like this. They were waaayyyy out of their comfort zone, but as we learned this year, that's where the magic happens. Massive thanks to the staff and

kids from Glen Taylor School, you guys were incredible and we hope we get to do more mahi like this with you in the new year! To my kids, to the amazing team from ACES and to Paige, thank you all so much for buying into our kaupapa, for being open to learning new things, and for showing up and supporting each other the whole way. My heart is very full and I'm extremely grateful for to have been given this opportunity. Last but certainly not least, Kor-dell. What an epic turn around my bro. I'm so incredibly proud of you what you've done and who you are becoming. We're only just getting started brother. That's us next year!

- Kerry Knox (Instagram)



**ACES ENDED OUR SCHOOL YEAR
WITH OUR ANNUAL PRIZEGIVING CEREMONY 2023**

WE WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE TWO STUDENTS, KORDELL BEESTON AND MAHUTA COOPER-STENNING AND CELEBRATE THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS IN ALL AREAS OF OUR ACES KAUPAPA.



**MAHUTA COOPER-STENNING WAS AWARDED
ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE FOR TOP
STUDENT FOR ACES MAUNGAWHAU CAMPUS**

Mahuta is a dual enrolled student with Lynfield College. Corey Todd, DP, Mount Albert Grammar School (Managing School of ACES) presented Mahuta with this award. Mahuta excelled in many areas such as Respecting ACES Values, leadership and his culture. In fact, he received several other awards on this day. Such an awesome achievement. Well done Mahuta!



**KORDELL BEASTON WAS AWARDED
ACHIEVEMENT WITH EXCELLENCE FOR TOP
STUDENT FOR ACES MAUNGAREI CAMPUS**

.Kordell's transformation and growth has been just awe inspiring for the ACES team to witness.. As you've just read, it's clear to see that Kordell has found his passion in fitness and has excelled far beyond all of our expectations. What an amazing achievement Kordell. Congratulations to you and keep up the amazing mahi!



**MERRY CHRISTMAS TO YOU ALL. THE ACES TEAM
VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ALL
IN THE WONDERFUL NEW YEAR, 2024**