

# Adult & Community Education Newsletter



Tauranga's Incubator Creative Hub dumpling workshop, see story page 6.

**Festival  
of Adult  
Learning**  
Ahurei Ākonga

SEPTEMBER 2-8 2024



## Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga

The first week of September was a flurry of activity within the ACE sector with groups the length and breadth of the country taking time to celebrate the benefits and diversity of opportunities that adult learning offers every day to people in every place throughout Aotearoa. Here are some of their stories.

### Small Island Big Ideas

Probably one of our more remote festival activities took place on Aotea Great Barrier Island. Situated 90 kilometres from Auckland City – a 30-minute plane ride – Great Barrier Island is on the outer edge of the Hauraki Gulf in New Zealand's only national marine park. Over 70% of the land is protected conservation park and the island is a dark sky sanctuary. Small Island Big Ideas is the generic name given to a range of festival events that have been held on this island since 2015, and this year it was incorporated into the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga 2024.

Tim Higham and Sandy Burgham are co-directors of the festival and according to Sandy the current Small Island Big Ideas festival format started in response to COVID.

"We realised that the festival had to be about bringing new thinking to the island; we needed to look at other ways to deliver festival events after COVID, so our first one was a monthly fireside chat with authors. There is a lot of creative and artistic talent on the island, so we try and highlight that. Then the year after, we hosted the world premiere of the short film *Hawaiki*. Later in 2023 we hosted the Inaugural Writers' Festival."

*Hawaiki* was shot largely on Aotea by New Zealand artist Nova Paul (Te Uriroroī, Te Parawhau, and Te Māhurehure ki Whatitiri, Ngāpuhi). In 2023 it was selected for the

Sundance Film Festival with the world premiere being held on the island in January that year. *Hawaiki* is about trees, and Nova used an early 19th century film-making technique, where she boiled down puriri and pōhutukawa leaves to create an acidic solution she could use as a film developer.

This year, festival organisers once again shifted their thinking to make sure what they delivered was appropriate for the times and that they "arouse curiosity and conversation that takes our world and communities forward". They took a literal translation of the festival name – Small Island Big Ideas.

"We are a tiny island with around 1250 people living here and like every small/tiny island in the world we are unique," Sandy says.

"We wanted to look at transformational ideas that have been explored by other similar sized islands around the



Tim Higham and Sandy Burgham.

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*Whakatauki*

*Ehara taku toa  
i te toa takitahi,  
engari he toa takitini"*

*Success is not the work  
of an individual, but the  
work of many.*

world and deliver these in a series of podcasts. The first podcast was launched during the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga, as we realised the links and goals that we share with the ACE Festival."

The organisers put out a call on their local radio station, Aotea Radio, asking listeners from other islands what they would like to hear about, and interviews took place over the phone, with podcasts developed from there. About 12 "other island" stories will be completed as part of the project.

One episode is released each week and broadcast on Aotea FM and the Small Island Big Ideas website, with the first one airing during the Festival of Adult Learning. Each episode is 60 minutes long. The aim is to identify "big ideas" that have created a social and economic reset for the community – things that have helped communities flourish and inspired others about the benefits of an off-grid lifestyle.

Sandy says the series of podcasts also focuses on leadership within communities.

"There's a lot of learning about what it takes to be a visionary leader and what we have found is that they come from within the community. It is about 'conscious maturity' which is needed to navigate the complexity of living within a small community. How do you unite the fans, the fence sitters and the naysayers? What our interviews have shown, and what we delivered in the podcasts, is the idea that leaders demonstrate conscious maturity that respects all perspectives and listens to all voices. Another key learning from the interviews is the importance of slowing down and relishing the small conversations."

Sandy says the festival organisers were very thankful for the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga funding that enabled them to complete and launch this important and valuable work that will hopefully contribute to thinking on the island.

## AKO Aotearoa Southern

Ako Aotearoa Southern celebrated Adult and Community Education tutors and learners at this year's Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga event. During an evening function of shared kai and achievements, ACE Aotearoa CEO, Hannah Pia Baral presented certificates to well-deserving achievers from a range of providers in Ōtautahi. Congratulations to all those acknowledged.



## The Riverlutionaries!

Riverlution took a revolutionary approach to the Festival of Learning with an action-packed day of events in the Christchurch Red Zone on Saturday 7 September. The journey to get here has been long, and one of commitment, innovation and a lot of mahi from the community and a group of dedicated volunteers.

What started out as the Richmond Community Garden Trust in 2014 on a one-acre block of land bordering the city's Red Zone is now a three-acre enterprise with a group of volunteers taking a holistic, sustainable and environmental approach to managing their land and activities. In 2021, LINZ (Land Information New Zealand) donated a house from the Red Zone to the charity, which was named Riverlution. The house now serves as a collaborative workspace for multiple non-profit organisations.

Riverlution projects include clean-ups, trapping projects, composting, Riverlution Precious Plastic, various educational and collaborative workshops, and they host a monthly Repair Café and other sustainable initiatives in the Riverlution Eco Hub building. The group also does an annual olive harvest from trees in the Ōtākaro Avon River Corridor and from properties of local residents, with the oil, pressed by the gardening team, available for purchase at the Hub's Little Shop.

The native garden, mud house and potager gardens are open 24/7 to enable the community to access fresh food, and the collective welcomes input and engagement from a wide range of like-minded community initiatives.

Another recent activity is Precious Plastics, which has been a few years in the making and has enabled the collective to gather reusable plastics from across the city and transform plastic number 2 into pots for indoor plants, while work is also underway to transform plastic number 5 into a reusable product (plastic number 2 and 5 smaller than a yogurt pottle). The project works with a range of other groups, including Climate Action Campus who are featured later in this newsletter, with money made from the sales of pots being used to further fund community solutions.

During the festival event, a range of activities were held on site to share learnings and techniques with community members. It was a glorious day and over 100 people



attended the event.

Learning events on the day included weaving sessions where people were taught how to use willow, cracked willow and walnut to weave natural fences. Two natural fences were built on site with participants enjoying the opportunity to get hands on experience. Everyone loved watching the hazel fence take shape, and in just a few hours, a beautiful fence had been created to surround the seating area and give it a cosy vibe.

And, if you have ever had problems picking out and separating small seedlings ready for planting, then the gardening "pricking out and replanting" activity session would have helped solve those problems.

The white room, which is used for neurodiverse activities, featured an art cart and lessons were held on birch tapping, which is similar to making maple syrup but using birch trees.

Hub Operations Manager Morgane Honore says one of the day's highlights was the opening of the new Riverlution café. "The café is in a portacom on site, offering a social enterprise that helps fund Riverlution and which will enable our group to become independent and exit the requirement to access community funding. This then means that other initiatives can access some of the limited funding streams available to volunteer community groups in the city."

During spring, the café will be open during weekends and Mondays and Wednesdays. "We've teamed up with local businesses providing organic kai and we'll also work with Hohepa and MSD to provide work experience and employment opportunities for people in our community. Avebury House, a community house located close by, has offered us the use of their commercial kitchen which has been great. On the day of the festival event people said they loved the "one-stop shop" experience—dropping off their plastic 2 and 5, Tetra Pak, then grabbing a coffee and some kai, all while having learning options available," Morgane says.

The Hub also has a stormwater and rain garden at their Riverlution Eco Park with tours available during the Festival.

"We are managing our greywater, rainwater and stormwater sustainably from the café so the learning festival provided an ideal opportunity to showcase how people can explore these options in their own gardens."



## Pathways Awarua – Encouraging Festival Learning

Learning isn't just a week-long exercise; it's a lifelong journey. That's why Pathways Awarua extended its Festival of Adult Learning activities to enable learners to make the most of their learning content throughout the year.

Pathways Awarua celebrated the Festival of Adult Learning by inviting all learners to participate in daily prize competitions based on the points they'd accumulated across the platform throughout the year. Daily prizes included supermarket vouchers, and the main draw at the end of the week featured a Samsung Galaxy tablet.

Pathways Awarua is a free learning resource available to any adult and young adult who wants to improve their reading, writing or maths skills for work and life. There are six learner pathways that focus on literacy and numeracy, as well as five applied learner pathways that deliver content for driver licences, safety requirements for the workplace, and personal money management, while at the same time strengthening literacy and numeracy competencies.

Michael Grawe, Pathways Awarua Professional Learning Manager says each pathway module completed earns learners a certain number of points, with modules designed to be completed in 20 to 30 minutes.

"The pathways are designed for people who are starting their learning journey and come to us with a range of skills and backgrounds. We've been operating since 2011, and in that time we've reached over 230,000 learners," he says.

"Our learning is designed so that learners pick up literacy and numeracy skills as they focus on topics that excite and interest them, with literacy and numeracy built into the modules. During the Festival of Adult Learning, we kept all our learners engaged with updates via our social media channels, including Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn."

To motivate learners to begin, extend, or continue their learning journey, Pathways Awarua gave away seven prizes during festival week. Six \$100 Woolworths gift cards were raffled among all learners who completed between 100 and 500 points within a set module, and a Samsung Galaxy tablet was awarded to one lucky learner who completed more than 1000 points across all modules.

Michael reminds ACE members that following festival week Pathways Awarua is offering two free professional development courses. These webinars cover an introduction to Pathways Awarua, including the learner interface and educator dashboard, as well as strategies for learner engagement.



You can find out more and register online or contact Michael directly at [michael@pathwaysawarua.com](mailto:michael@pathwaysawarua.com)



## Rural Youth and Adult Literacy Trust

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga provided a great opportunity for Rural Youth and Adult Literacy Trust (RYALT) to launch its newly published collection of student writing that celebrates their achievements while also providing a valuable literacy resource for other learners.

The collection is made up of 43 diverse stories from learners throughout Aotearoa with the youngest aged 14 and the oldest aged 63. A total of 200 copies of the student writing booklet named by the learners, "A Word from Us" were printed and distributed both to learners and coaches, made possible by the generous funding from ACE Aotearoa.

RYALT primarily operates online, with 80% of all learning taking place via zoom or Google Meet. The remaining 20% of sessions are face to face, catering to learners who are unable to get internet access or with limited access to technology.

The stories included in the collection were all written over the past year with every learner having an opportunity to share their story.

This booklet not only highlights the progress of RYALT learners, it also highlights the Trust's commitment to celebrating learners' success and inspire others to start their literacy journey.

## Creative Mindscapes: Exploring Art for Mental Wellbeing

Selwyn Community Education celebrated the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga on Sunday 8 September with a session called Creative Mindscapes: Exploring Art for Mental Wellbeing.

Anne Cave, Director of Selwyn Community Education, said the session was designed to establish a space where creativity meets mental wellness.

“Creative Mindscapes was designed to reveal how short art courses can elevate mental wellbeing. It provided an opportunity for learners to explore and participate in a range of art forms from painting and drawing through to mosaics and explore the therapeutic benefits of creative expression.”

Anne says workshops were all led by experienced artists and mental health professionals who shared personal techniques and insights around the power of art in guiding personal growth and emotional balance.

In addition to the workshops, the Selwyn College event included an art exhibition of works created by tutors and others, and an international food stall with food prepared by the local refugee community who are learning English at Selwyn.



## CNSST

CNSST (formerly the Chinese New Settlers Services Trust) had a full day of celebrations on Friday 6 September to acknowledge the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga. Three core elements formed the focus of the day including celebrating lifelong learning, acknowledging age friendly Auckland and promoting their elder abuse hotline.

CNSST was established in 1998 and recently celebrated its 26th anniversary. The Trust provides culturally and linguistically appropriate social services, education, social housing and international exchange programmes, annually empowering migrant community members from over 20 ethnic groups.

CNSST Education Institutes (MoE 7158) is committed to providing equitable tertiary learning opportunities to ethnic learners and courses include English literacy and numeracy, cultural competency, workforce and employment skills, and vocational training.

As part of the festival, CNSST offered two rounds of “taster” events to participants. Each event lasted 45 minutes and gave attendees the chance to get a flavour of what is on offer from the Trust throughout the year.

“We held four session topics including an introduction to our Chinese Cultural Competency programme, MYOB accounting, workplace literacy and numeracy and an introduction to food safety course. The Chinese Cultural Competency workshop was designed to help people better understand how to engage with, and develop effective communications with, Chinese communities in Auckland,” said Gloria Yaping Gao, Chief Operations Manager.

“The Workplace Literacy and numeracy course is designed for new immigrants at work with limited English. We hope that through attending one of the taster events, people might come back and enrol for the programme on a more sustained basis. This just gives them the opportunity to check out if the course is relevant for them.”

After the taster courses attendees were invited to join a combined painting activity under the theme of Moon Festival, and access information on other courses and services offered by CNSST. This included, among other things, age friendly and elder abuse prevention information as well as barista courses. Annually CNSST supports over 15,000 people in their community.





## Tauranga's Arts and Culture Hub – The collision between arts and people

Last year, Tauranga's Incubator Creative Hub celebrated its tenth anniversary. Established in 2013 by Simone Anderson, the Hub is located in the Historic Village in Tauranga South. The vision of the Hub is that the creative arts are nurtured, encouraged and showcased, making creative experiences accessible to all from the grassroots up.

The first step in achieving this vision was the acquisition of the "big red barn" which was converted into The Incubator Gallery and studio spaces for artists. Community volunteers gave long hours to make sure the space, leased from Historic Village, was suitable and from there followed a series of 16 other studios and spaces, as well as the Creative Community Campus, the Village Community Cinema, the Jam Factory for music performances, the Pot House for ceramics and pottery work and the Artists Window Gallery that provides a retail space for artists' work.

The intent of the Incubator was to provide a tangible, vibrant and diverse destination where creatives and community arts groups could meet to practise, celebrate, showcase and experience art and culture. It generates opportunities for participation, knowledge and education while demonstrating the importance of arts practice in everyday life.

Ruth O'Connell, Workshop Coordinator and one of the campus managers, says the Incubator helps to connect people and communities and create a sense of wellbeing.

"From very early on there was always the intention that we would create a campus with multiple workshop spaces offering a wide variety of courses and opportunities to learn. Lots of courses are tutored by past and present resident artists and community collaborators, which provides them with additional income and facilitates community engagement. One of our goals is to enable artists to share their knowledge in bite-sized workshops for the community to experience."

Adult learning courses provided by the Incubator are diverse and designed to attract and engage with a wide

community group.

"Originally our workshops mostly had a visual arts focus, but as we have evolved and grown, we have been able to extend our offerings and we now provide a broader range of courses, including things like cooking and baking, Rongoā balm workshops, rug tufting, and pendant and jewellery making. We try to keep the costs of attending reasonable, while at the same time providing opportunities for artists to build their revenue streams and pass on their skills," Ruth says.

Courses on offer can be one-on-one learning opportunities or small workshops of up to five people through to larger groups, with courses taking place over two hours or 12 hour/four week more intensive learning. Each month there are between 15 and 20 courses on offer through the Incubator.

The Incubator takes a strong values base to their approach, including:

- Houtupu – we are real. Everything we do is authentic. We are transparent. We live our values.
- Kaha – we are courageous. We are poised for action – ready to seize opportunities as they arise. We celebrate thinking differently. We are flexible, reactive and responsive.
- Whakamana – we are empowering. We treat all our people with warmth, dignity and respect. We foster growth and transformation. We encourage collaboration and generosity.

Ruth says the feedback they receive from adult learners reflects delivery on their values base and reinforces their ethos that grass roots art and community art can be made accessible.

"We give people a taster and we hope they come back for more if they like it. Importantly, the Incubator provides a community space that is intergenerational and is open to the wider community. It helps create connection and friendships and it grows skills as well as enabling connections for our artists."

# Learn, Connect and Share



*Jan, one of the mentors and TJ her student.*



*Mentors and drivers at the Thames Community Centre.*

The Thames region has been particularly hard hit with weather woes and ongoing roading network issues over the past 12 months and it's times like this that pay testament to a community's resilience and spirit. The Thames Community Centre stepped up operations during this period to offer community programmes and learning that are additional to their traditional offerings.

The Centre has been operating since 1992 and in their 30-plus years they have always been responsive to community needs. At the heart of the organisation lie the principles of 'to learn, to connect and to share' and they truly put these principles into action.

Centre Manager Jeff Whitfield says that while their major workstreams are their Driver Licence and associated Volunteer Placement programme, post cyclone Gabrielle they have initiated several new courses, including mindfulness, therapeutic drumming, technology, arts classes and a money matters budgeting service.

"Our driver licence programme offers free support to individuals who are undertaking various stages of their driver's licence, including learners, restricted, defensive driving and full licence," Jeff says.

The Centre pays for all costs associated with each of these stages and also provides mentors and a vehicle for learner-driver use. "In return we have an expectation that learners will give back to the community. Support for them to sit their licence is a gift from the community and in return we expect them to connect back and share. This is an important part of our culture and there is an expectation that they will give back an equivalent number of hours to our investment."

The Centre's Driver Licence and Volunteer Placement programme was recognised nationally last year and was awarded the Driving Change – Most Outstanding Community Driving Programme for their unique approach that focuses on recipients giving back time for their education rather than fees. This philosophy impressed the judges and set the Centre apart from other providers.

Volunteer placements are made across a wide range of Thames community organisations, including the SPCA, local schools, kohanga reo, the community garden and the Seagull Centre – the local recycling group.

Last year the Centre had about 100 drivers go through its programme, with each student giving back between

12 and 60 hours, dependent on their learning journey and the support they received.

"Often people give back their required hours and they find so much enjoyment in it that they then choose to play a longer-term role," Jeff says. "Our current 'Need Tech' volunteer is a great example of this. The tutor was one of our learner drivers who now contributes several hours once a week to assist and help individuals needing tech assistance."

In general, the other courses offered by the Community Centre are oversubscribed as residents look to build their wellbeing through art and other new learnings.

The Thames Community Centre was a 2023 recipient of an ACE Professional Development grant with the funds used to build capability with the 12 volunteers who are mentors on the driver training programme.

"The mentors provide one-on-one learning for those on a learner licence wanting to move to their restricted. We have use of a car which was donated by a local company, and we pair the mentors with learners. It was great that they were able to come together and connect and increase their skills and knowledge," Jeff says.

# Growing Kūmara, Foraging and a Garden to Table Approach

Climate Action Campus in Ōtautahi was co-founded in 2019 by ex-Christchurch mayor Vicki Buck following the Christchurch earthquakes. The site was established in 4.5 acres of red-zoned land on the banks of the Avon River, close to the city centre in the grounds of what was Avonside Girls' High School. The old school grounds are now home to gardens, greenhouses, water connections, solar panels, butterfly habitats, street art and all things horticultural.

The campus was initially established, and still is, as a satellite school linked to Ao Tawhiti Unlimited Discovery school in the central city. The goal was to provide a range of opportunities for school-aged learners to explore aspects of climate change. While this is still the focus of Climate Action Campus, Learning Advisor Rachel Cummins says as the facilities have become more established, the campus team has embraced a range of learning opportunities designed for the wider community.

"This year we were lucky enough to receive a sustainability grant from the Christchurch City Council which has allowed us to extend our offering and provide a range of community courses. The grant funds the cost of tutors for our adult courses."

One of the courses on the agenda is Garden Horticulture, tutored by Sandi Bobkova who is Head Horticulturalist.

"We've covered a range of topics including how to successfully grow kūmara in Christchurch, from starting your slips to harvesting and storage. We have also run courses

on the secrets of seed saving, developing garden plans, and producing homemade teas to help gardens grow," Sandi says.

Other campus courses include successful foraging and back yard edibles with Inga the Forager and composting from the Compost Princess, Kaitlyn Lamb. The campus team has also joined with Christchurch City Council park rangers and University of Canterbury entomologists to run a workshop on invertebrates. Future courses include a garden-to-table cooking class with chef Simon Marshall to help people learn how to prepare and cook foraged and home-grown foods.

Rachel, a qualified teacher, says each session has about a dozen attendees with most classes held in the weekends. "Classes are free to attend and last from two to three hours, and we try to schedule at least two adult learning classes each month. At the moment, attendance is largely via word of mouth and we are gradually building a following."

She says holding classes and learning activities outside in the natural environment takes away some mystery for adult learners. "It's a non-threatening environment, we're in the open air and it's hands on. Many of our adult learners didn't enjoy or thrive at school and our classes and environment are certainly helping to break down learning barriers. After completing courses, several adult learners have chosen to give back to the campus and contribute their time to help some of the younger learners with alternative skills like woodwork or sewing."

Tutor Sandi says that the courses have attracted a great





range of adult learners from across the city.

"We largely have had two types of learners attend the courses. The first is those people who are starting their gardening journey or starting to grow their own food and wanting to learn more and the second is those people interested in starting horticulture as a career and wanting to gain a bit of confidence before starting out on a more formal course. A couple of our adult learners have gone on to start their Level 3 and 4 certificates in horticulture, which has been great."

In addition to the community classes, Climate Action Campus runs weekly classes for migrants and refugees from Hagley Community College.

The campus has recently established A-maze-ink with the Christchurch City Council graffiti team. Street artists have been invited to paint the campus prefabs, and Rachel says this has created an enormous sense of community and has given young artists the opportunity to paint and develop street art, with the older artists providing mentoring and support.

And the most recent project is the establishment of "Pollination Street" with the planting of mānuka and kānuka to attract a range of pollinators.



## Lifelong Learning

The theme of the ACE Sector Conference in June was storytelling and it's not just tutors who had stories to share about their learning journey. Joan Cardno is a self-confessed lifelong learner. There have been very few times in her life when she wasn't learning new skills or passing her expertise and learnings on to others, and she weaves storytelling into her experience.

More recently, that desire to learn new skills saw Joan complete a seven-week Mediterranean Cooking Class through Christchurch's Papanui High School ACE programme.

"As you get older it's good to keep learning," says Joan. "It's very easy to give up, but I felt inspired to learn a new style of cooking and was pleased by the opportunity to participate." She had met Mark McCracken, the course tutor, at her god daughter's birthday party where he was the caterer.

"When I got talking to him, he told me that he taught classes at the Papanui High School programme. I had read a bit about the benefits of a Mediterranean diet and Mark had such a calm relaxed approach about him that I thought his classes would be great to try, so I enrolled. Mark took that same flexible attitude through to his teaching, so it made for an enjoyable experience."

Joan, who is now in her early eighties, has taught in primary and secondary schools in New Zealand and lectured at Christchurch Teachers' College. She has also taught in Hong Kong and lectured in Singapore.

"I returned to New Zealand from Hong Kong and taught at Elmwood Normal School. I then went to Canterbury University full time and completed a BA degree. I followed this with several years lecturing at Christchurch Teachers College before I decided to do an MA in Applied Linguistics at Essex University in England."

Joan says when she returned home there was very little work available in ESOL so she decided to take up a two-year contract at the Institute of Education in Singapore. "Once I returned to New Zealand I enjoyed teaching ESOL in Christchurch. My international experience contributed to my enjoyment of new foods and my desire to learn new cooking styles.

"Successful learning includes a great teacher which we were lucky enough to have on this course and you also have to independently have the desire to learn which isn't an issue for me."

# The Big 30!



Hagley Adult Literacy Centre (HALC) celebrated its thirtieth birthday in August with an open day for learners and the wider community at their Champion Street Campus in Ōtautahi. Over their 30-year history, the Centre has changed many lives for the better as people seek out new skills to enable them to pursue a greater range of life opportunities.

It was 1994 when the Education and Training Support Agency approached Hagley College to develop a proposal for a literacy and numeracy training programme for unemployed adults. Once the formalities were complete, the College established the Hagley Learning Centre in one of the cottages on the College Campus and 18 students were enrolled to start their learning journey. Today the Centre has more than 700 learners and operates from seven hubs around the city, as well as the main centre on Champion Street.

HALC continued operating from Hagley College Campus for its first 25 years, but during a campus rebuild they relocated to the Champion Street site. The team is looking forward to being back at Hagley in 2025, once site renovations are complete.

Joanna Fox has been the manager of HALC for the past 11 years and was a tutor at the school prior to that. She says it has been rewarding to see the growth of the Centre over the years but more importantly, to know that people

have changed their lives because of the opportunities HALC provides.

“Our Workplace Literacy and Numeracy programmes offer one-on-one coaching, and we see the biggest gains in these learners in the shortest times. Often these learners have not been supported in previous learning journeys and coming to us opens their eyes to what can be achieved. Seeing their confidence and belief in themselves grow is a highlight for me,” Joanna says.

“I also feel inspired when I see some of our migrant learners using their new-found skills to gain qualifications and move into more satisfying employment opportunities that are better suited to their skill base and previous training.”

HALC also offers Literacy Pathways for Youths aged 16 to 20 years old, First Steps Literacy and Numeracy courses for people with intellectual impairments, community-based literacy and numeracy programmes in English for Speakers of Other Languages, and Heavy Truck Learner Licence Class 2 training. The Centre currently has 29 staff and more than 50 volunteers who, Joanna says, are “amazing and committed”.

“We have a great range of volunteers who contribute their time and come from a wide range of backgrounds. The diversity in our staff, learners and the courses we offer contributes to our success and is one of the things we are celebrating this year.”



There’s a wide range of reasons why learners join the HALC Literacy Pathways Courses. Some come for a short time to complete NCEA Level 1 and others come for longer as they seek new skills to get employment and re-engage with the community. All learners are on an individual learning plan and are welcome to stay for as long as needed to achieve their goals.

Many learners have spent years in refugee camps prior to coming to New Zealand and need to improve their English for everyday life, and some move on to another ACE provider course once they have achieved their goals at HALC. Learners on the Literacy and Numeracy Pathways courses in the community complete a minimum of six hours learning each week and a maximum of 20 hours.

Joanna says those on the Youth Literacy Pathways course attend the HALC course for 20 hours a week for up to a year, after which they are often

at the stage where they can transition back to mainstream school, or on to further tertiary study, or into the workforce.

“Many learners in the youth class stopped school during COVID and disengaged from learning completely. Others are neurodiverse learners requiring more individual attention. We have a maximum of 10 students in class with one tutor, one assistant and generally a volunteer, so they receive one-on-one attention.”

HALC also runs ACE courses at Hagley in the evenings which allows adult former refugees and migrants to attend courses twice a week while their children attend study support for primary and secondary students. On offer are courses including cooking, learner driver’s licence, basic computing skills, beginner English and conversation classes.

“These classes work well and seeing learner confidence grow and lives change is a highlight for our team. We are successful for learners because we take time and treat everyone as an individual. We don’t all learn the same way and our tutoring acknowledges this. Often learners just need one small success to gain confidence and take steps to change their lives. Many haven’t experienced this in the traditional school system and that’s where we can make a difference.”

During Joanna’s 11 years at the helm, she says highlights have included receiving the Dyslexia Friendly Qualmark that recognises and acknowledges the skills of the team, the learner success for people who have previously had negative experiences within the mainstream system, and receiving an award at the 2023 ACE Sector Conference for Community Based Programme of the Year.

Courses at HALC are free for adult learners who are New Zealand citizens or New Zealand residents.

Here’s to the next 30 years!

## Ministerial Submission

In August the ACE Sector Strategic Group (ASSG) prepared feedback for the Minister for Tertiary Education and Skills, Hon Penny Simmonds, on a range of proposed variations to current funding determinations. The proposed variations are scheduled to come into effect on 1 January 2025 and it is important that our views and voice are heard during deliberations.

Our submission highlighted our role as critical partner in the education system, with a history of engaging with and changing the lives of New Zealanders who are sometimes socially and economically marginalised, as well as meeting intergenerational needs that can at times inhibit success in education and employment.

We noted that the current funding requirements for our sector can be onerous for many of our small and new sector members, many of whom are reliant on volunteer contributions and small grants and donations. The parameters of the funding process administered by the TEC are narrow and often with excessive requirements that can be inappropriate for the level of funding being sought.

We also advocated for greater social investment by Government to create a broader view of outcomes, providing greater value for money and, through effective local solutions, enabling reduced benefit dependency and effective support for people going back to work.

Key submissions on the proposed variations focused on the provision of greater clarification around the use of online and face-to-face learning. The proposed changes are quite explicit in requiring face-to-face delivery and it is our view that Synchronous Online Learning (a combination of online and face to face) maintains high levels of interaction between tutor and learners. It does not replace face-to-face provision, but it does enable greater reach and access to ACE and a variety of programmes for New Zealanders. We encouraged Minister Simmonds to consider this aspect in her final decision making.

We also requested that the Literacy and Numeracy Adult assessment Tool (LNAAT) that has been designed to assess adult reading, writing, numeracy, vocabulary and English proficiency be retained as the key criterion of assessment criteria for most Foundation-level funds and learners, except for ESOL and neurodiverse learners for whom LNAAT is not, or may not, be suitable.

Finally, our submission requested that any references to qualifications’ levels as a key criterion of assessment criteria for most Foundation-level funds be removed and that nine fields of study identified on the New Zealand Standard Classification of Education (NZSCED) be excluded from the definition – undergraduate, postgraduate, or Level 5 or above Qualification gained in New Zealand or that is listed on the NZQCF – allowing TEOs to seek written approval from TEC when applicable for learners. These include:

- 090314 Tikanga – Māori Customs
- 091502 Te Reo Māori
- 100101 Music
- 100103 Drama and Theatre Studies
- 100105 Dance
- 100106 Ngā Mahi a Rēhia (Māori Performing Arts)
- 100199 Performing Arts not elsewhere classified
- 100506 Ngā Mahi a te Whare Pora (Māori Weaving)
- 1003 Visual Arts and Crafts.

In conclusion, we reiterated to the Minister that as a critical partner in the education system we would value the opportunity for conversations with the Ministry of Education and the TEC to consider new and additional contributions of the ACE sector towards the current government agenda. If you want to read the full submission you can find it on the ACE Aotearoa website.

# Forging new relationships

The Upper North Island region of Playcentre Aotearoa undertook a pōwhiri and te ao Māori learning experience earlier this year, using an ACE Aotearoa professional development (PD) grant.

Rebekah Marcetic, centre member from Howick Playcentre, says 30 whānau, volunteers and staff from the regional office and local playcentres spent a Saturday at Te Pono o Tāmaki Marae, a community marae located in the grounds of Tamaki College in Glen Innes, Auckland.

“In the past we have visited local marae, but Te Pono o Tāmaki Marae were incredibly accommodating in terms of our needs and requirements, and it was great to start a relationship with one of our local high schools,” Rebekah says.

They were traditionally welcomed onto the marae by Matua Adrian and his high school ākonga. “Over the course of the day we deepened our understanding of pōwhiri and mihi whakatau, engaged in tī rākau (single

long-stick games), learnt new waiata mōteatea and waiata poi. We also learnt how to make poi, which was a highlight for our group and it provided a fun team building exercise. Matua Adrian covered lots of tikanga, explaining ways to keep ourselves safe – both in minds and bodies.”

“Regional Manager of Upper North Island Playcentre Kiri McCabe says it was wonderful to make that connection with the school and to feel the aroha from the students. “They made the event special and easy to attend and it added another dimension to the session as we explored and developed a new relationship with another learning institution.”

The Upper North Island region of Playcentre Aotearoa covers the area from North Waikato in the south to Awanui (north of Kaitaia) in the north. Many of the attendees were volunteers at their local playcentres so the ACE grant enabled them to experience a group PD exercise without cost constraints. The grant also enabled a

distribution of te ao Māori and Matariki resources to support with growing their te ao Māori mahi at centres, Kiri says.

“At the final kōrero everyone shared their current centre resources and practices and how they would implement their new knowledge and confidence – the opportunities were endless! The session gave our attendees the confidence to feel comfortable approaching their local marae to further explore opportunities to work together, and we will also be continuing our engagement with Tamaki College now that the relationship has been established. We are hoping that in term four we can attend a Maui performance put on by the high school ākonga.”

Kiri says other playcentres have been inspired to make contact with their local marae to see how they can explore relationships. “So, for us it wasn't just about the wonderful te ao Māori experience, but also about enabling us to explore new opportunities within our local communities.”



# Board Talk

A message from Co-chairs Jay Rupapera (Tangata Whenua Co-chair) and Kathryn Hazlewood (Tangata Tiriti Co-chair)

At the ACE Aotearoa AGM on 25 July, we sadly farewelled two members of the ACE Aotearoa Board, Charissa Waerea and Pale Sauni. Because we knew that we were losing some valued Board members, we structured the meeting in a way that reflected our commitment and leadership as a Tiriti-based organisation, which meant ensuring that the mana of those leaving us was enhanced and acknowledged as appropriate and that our new members were welcomed in a way that reflected our value of manaakitanga.

Charissa and Pale have made an outstanding contribution to the sector during their time on our Board and we thank them for that commitment. We know that although they are leaving their Board roles, the ACE kaupapa will continue to lean on their influence and expertise as we move through the next phase of our journey as a leading organisation in the adult learning environment.

A formal poroporoaki was included on the AGM agenda so that we could provide a fitting farewell to honour the valuable and valued contribution made by Charissa and Pale. While Pale was unable to attend on the day, Charissa shared with us all her views, highlights and learnings on the ACE sector. This was a wonderful insight and is included in this newsletter so that all our sector membership has an opportunity to hear her wise words.

The Board of ACE is left in good heart with two new Tangata Tiriti Board members joining us. We welcome Dr Edmond Samuel Feheko and Anne Diana Troy, and we know they will continue the tradition of providing strong governance leadership for the sector.

*We have included short bios of our new members and those we farewelled in acknowledgement of their mana and expertise.*



**Charissa Waerea**  
(Ngaati Rongomaiwahine, Ngaati Kahungunu, Taranaki ki Ngaaruahine, Tuwharetoa ki Taupō)

Charissa Waerea has been an unwavering champion of te reo and kaupapa Māori within our ACE Aotearoa whānau. Her dedication has created a strong and supportive environment for all of us to explore our te reo journey, regardless of where we are in our learning.

As the Tangata Whenua co-chair until 2021, Charissa provided outstanding leadership and support, guiding the ACE Aotearoa team through a wide range of events. Her expertise in tikanga Māori, and her deep connections to Māori communities have been instrumental in guiding our work, ensuring that our kaupapa remained grounded in Māori values and perspectives. This guidance has always ensured that the Board has committed to processes that enhance our mana and leadership as a Tiriti-based entity.

While Charissa may be stepping away from her formal role, we are confident that her commitment to the ACE kaupapa will continue. We look forward to staying connected and continuing to benefit from her wisdom and passion for our shared journey.



**Pale Sauni**

Pale Sauni is a highly respected leader in both the Pasifika community and the ACE sector. Many of you know him for the energy, passion and dedication he brings to our events, especially the annual ACE Sector conference. This same unwavering commitment has been a hallmark of his invaluable contributions to the Board over the years and his presence will undoubtedly be missed around our table.

Although Pale is stepping down from his formal role on the Board, we are heartened to know that his journey with us is far from over. We are grateful that he will continue to champion the ACE kaupapa among Pasifika communities and remain available in advisory roles that support the broader ACE community.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Pale for his years of service, dedication and energy. His influence has left a lasting impact and we look forward to continuing our collaboration in new and meaningful ways.



**David Do**

David Do completed his first term on the Board this year and we were determined not to lose his significant skills and expertise. As a result, the Board has made the decision to co-opt David to serve on the Board of ACE Aotearoa until the next AGM, as provided for in the Constitution. During his time on the Board David has led significant governance and policy projects, including a review of the constitution and subsequently conducting a series of webinars to help members understand the requirements for re-registration and proposed changes to the ACE Aotearoa constitution, a strategic plan review and development of the policy review plan and schedule. He has also been chair of the Policy and Communications subcommittee.

It is important that where appropriate we retain the skill base that contributes to our strong governance foundation. David has kindly agreed to remain on the Board as a co-opted member and we thank him for that commitment.

*As co-chairs we would like to welcome two new Board members, Dr Edmond Fehoko and Anne Troy.*



**Dr Edmond Samuel Fehoko**

Dr Fehoko (Tongan) was born and raised in Aotearoa and is passionate about serving his community and Pacific people across New Zealand. Dr Fehoko holds a PhD in Public Health from AUT University and is currently a Senior Lecturer in Human Nutrition and Associate Dean Pacific in the Division of Sciences at the University of Otago. Dr Fehoko has extensive knowledge of the sector and organisation. He has presented at ACE workshops and was on the steering committee for Hui Fono for ACE Aotearoa. Dr Fehoko brings a Pacific lens and expertise to support the organisation engage with Pacific peoples and communities.



**Anne Diana Troy**

Anne Troy has a deep knowledge of the ACE sector and has been involved for over a decade. She has a Master in TESOL leadership, a BSc and has completed the National Certificate in Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NCALNE). Anne is an ESOL tutor and funded course coordinator at Wellington High School Community Education Centre. Anne is also an accredited instructor of Mental Health First Aid Aotearoa with Te Pou.

**Poroporoaki  
Charissa Waerea**

*Charissa Waerea retired from the ACE Aotearoa Board at our AGM in July. Here are some final words that she left with us on her retirement.*

Tēnā tātou e huihui nei i  
rūnga i te kaupapa o Adult  
Community Education  
Aotearoa tēnei hui ā tau.  
Kei te mihi, kei te mihi,  
kei te mihi.  
Ko Charissa Waerea tōku īngoa  
Nō Rongomaiwahine  
Nō Kahungunu  
Nō Ngāruahinerangi  
Nō Tuwharetoa kei Taupō  
Tēnei uri e mihi atu nei.  
E whākārō ana ahau mō ngā  
mate kei rūnga i a tātou i tēnei  
wā, hāere, hāere, hōki atu!  
Hurinoa ki a tātou te hūngaora  
Tēnā kōutou kātōa  
Tihei mauri ora!

It is a sad but happy time for me to be retiring, concluding my tenure as a Board Member, past Tangata Whenua Co Chair, friend and colleague of the ACE Aotearoa Board, having now served my third and final term.

Officially I came onto the board in 2014. However, under the guidance of Ani Pahuru-Huriwai and the late Jo Lake, my very first meeting 12 years ago, which I recall vividly as they had set up a nursing cot in the board room and I combined meeting and breastfeeding my now 12 year old Iwimaire who was four months old at the time. (Image shown is me feeding Iwimaire at conference wharewaka 2012).

In my time on the Board I have been nothing but cared



for, over these many years. I have seen the swings and roundabouts and I have seen the changes of several successive governments and with it the highs and lows of these changes. I am grateful that ACE Aotearoa remains at the fore regardless.

There have been many national events and tragedies take place during my time including the Christchurch earthquakes, the many cyclones that hit my people of Te Tarāwhiti, the mosque attacks, and of course Covid-19, te mate Kanauna.

Affected personally with the death of my son Tuwhakararo, during the Covid-19 lockdown I attempted several times to leave the Board as I was not at capacity to contribute to my fullest ability, within my deep grief.

I thank the Board for having my back and supporting me through this – Jay and Kathryn, I am so pleased that I did not leave in the end and I persevered.

During this time of challenges and tragedies, the ACE communities were some of the quickest to respond and I want to thank and acknowledge you all.

I have several people to thank. The current Board, previous Board members, new Board members. Jay Rupapera, Kathryn Hazelwood, Lottie Vincent, David Do, Pale Sauni, Deleraine Puhara. The ACE Team and Staff who have been my

absolute backbone. The late Jo Lake (CE). Ani Pahuru-Huriwai, Analiese Robertson, Hannah Pia Baral, Carl Pascoe, Wendel Karaiti, Tracey Shepard.

E te tuakana Hauiti E mihi ana ahau ki a koe, Te Ataahia Hurihanganui, Peter Jackson, Rosina Tauaki, Bronwyn Yates, Aunty Sandy Morrison.

I would like to mihi also to my whānau who put me forward for the Board, Taranaki Māori ACE network, Whaea Mako Jones, Ruakere Hond, Mitchell Ritai, TPACE Taranaki Pasifika ACE.

I also want to acknowledge our elders or kaumātua most of whom have passed on now. Kuia June Jackson, Koro Sam Jackson and Koro Te Huirangi Waikerepuru. It is because of these elders I had the confidence in what I did, the jobs and roles I undertook, knowing that I had the backing of my elders.

I am excited about the future and the foundation that we are building together for future generations.

Ngā tamariki mokopuna mo āpōpō!

So that's the end of my acknowledgements, but I want to thank you all, the membership, for your support and awahi and I do want to acknowledge that yes Hauiti things on the Board have changed, the increased use of Te Reo Māori me ōnā tikanga, mana enhancing processes and

practices, as you speak about Kathryn, and teaching these things are my small contribution to the bigger picture that we are building together.

Highlights for me include:

- BCLD ASPBEY – Ho Chi Min – 2011
- Hui Fono PARIHAKA
- Hui Fono Ahipara
- Hui Fono Hokitika
- The Prime Ministers Tertiary Excellence Awards

And finally, meeting with several Members of Parliament and policy writers from both the Ministry of Education and the Tertiary Education Commission who truly care for the improved education, health and wellbeing outcomes for tangata whenua and all, telling our story and validating the great mahi that we do to serve our people and communities.

I end my speech with this whakataukī said by Te Whiti o Rongomai 1881 on the day of the ransack of Parihaka when the men were being arrested and taken away to the prisons in the South Island.

*“E Tū Tamawāhine i te wā o te kōre!  
Woman! Stand Strong in the face of Adversity!”*

Nō reira, tēnā kōutou, tēnā kōutou, tēnā kōutou kātoa.

# Events

## Online workshops:

**Facilitator:** Jennifer Leahy (Christchurch)

Jennifer has extensive experience in training and education across the University of Canterbury, Ara Institute, Department of Corrections, and community education programmes. She is the Southern Sector Services Manager for Ako Aotearoa, coordinating professional development for South Island tertiary educators, and advises ACE Aotearoa on ACE Teaching Standards.

### **The Feedback Loop: Leveraging Learner Experiences for Continuous Growth**

**10:30-11:30 am, September 26, 2024**

Click here to register <https://ace-ts-the-feedback-loop.lilregie.com/booking/attendees/new>

This one-hour workshop teaches how to use learner feedback to enhance teaching. Gain tools to transform learner insights into practical improvements, fostering continuous improvement in teaching and learning outcomes. ACE Teaching Standards covered:

- 4.1 Analysing learner experiences to identify progress and ongoing needs.
- 4.2 Using learner experiences for ongoing feedback and support.
- 4.3 Seeking peer feedback when necessary.

### **Mindful Design: Planning for Powerful Learning Sessions**

**10:30-11:30 am, October 17, 2024**

Click here to register <https://ace-ts-mindful-design.lilregie.com/booking/attendees/new>

Learn strategies for designing engaging learning sessions in this one-hour workshop. Focus on planning that effectively connects content knowledge with learning methods. ACE Teaching Standards:

- 5.1 Planning to link content with effective learning strategies.

### **Unleashing Effective Learning: Strategies, Secrets and Success Stories**

**10:30-11:30 am, November 14, 2024**

Click here to register <https://ace-ts-unleashing-effective-learning.lilregie.com/booking/attendees/new>

Enhance your teaching skills in this one-hour workshop by learning successful strategies and approaches to unlock learners' potential. ACE Teaching Standards:

Teaching Standards:

- 6.1 Linking teaching methods to content knowledge.

### **Mirrors of Growth: Reflective Practices in Teaching and Learning**

**10:30-11:30 am, December 12, 2024**

Click here to register <https://ace-ts-mirrors-of-growth.lilregie.com/booking/attendees/new>

Engage in reflective practices to enhance self-awareness and growth as an educator in this one-hour workshop.

Explore techniques that promote personal and professional development. ACE Teaching Standards:

- 7.1 Reflecting on teaching effectiveness using feedback and learner information.
- 7.2 Encouraging learners to reflect on their learning.

Visit the ACE Aotearoa website for the most up to date information on courses available [www.aceaotearoa.org.nz](http://www.aceaotearoa.org.nz)

## Noticeboard

### Stay up with the Play!

Membership of ACE Aotearoa offers significant benefits. You have access to our carefully curated and well-thought-through suite of courses that are ACE focused. You receive regular updates on the sector and initiatives that are changing the way we work; you can attend the annual ACE conference and your support helps us to deliver the advocacy and policy advice that keeps our sector strong. The cost of membership is extremely affordable and your support enables us to support you. You might also want to share membership benefits with other organisations and encourage them to join our movement.

To join please visit our website <https://www.aceaotearoa.org.nz/who-we-are/membership>

### Update our Mailing List and Send in Your News!

ACE Aotearoa currently sends out hard copies of the quarterly newsletter to those on our mailing list. But did you know the newsletter is also available on our website? If you want to save paper and postage costs and just download the newsletter from the website, then please email: [Vivienne.Reti@aceaotearoa.org.nz](mailto:Vivienne.Reti@aceaotearoa.org.nz) and we will remove your hard copy subscription.

If you have any stories you would like to share, please email the editor:

[jackie@cherryred.co.nz](mailto:jackie@cherryred.co.nz)

