

Spring  
2023

# Adult & Community Education Newsletter



*Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga, page 6*

## Finding a Voice Through Theatre



Voice Arts provides free access to drama-based creative programmes in Te Whanganui-a-Tara, but what makes them truly unique is their ethos of delivering to people within their own neighbourhoods and spaces. The programmes are led by theatre practitioners trained by Voice Arts in the use of applied improvisation, devised theatre, and storytelling. While they mainly work with older people, including those living with dementia, they also focus on supporting the cultural development of former refugees, new migrant youth and their parents and grandparents. Their aim is to give participants a voice and the

opportunity to feel seen and heard.

Director of Voice Arts, Nicola Pauling, has many years' experience developing people and communities through play and performance and has led more than 50 successful participatory performance projects working with children, teens, at risk youth, former refugees and new migrants, prisoners, seniors and elders.

Nicola cites research from 2020 that shows Kiwis aged over 70 were less likely than average to participate in the arts. This is despite research showing the arts can have a profound, positive impact on older people's cognitive function, memory, and

emotional, physical and psychological health. Voice Arts works to turn that situation around by making the arts accessible, fun and easy for older people, and with that comes the benefits of participation.

Voice Arts also works with refugees and young people to explore multi-generational opportunities to express cultural identity through theatre.

"The opportunity to join together, laugh, have fun and explore emotions through theatre can't be underestimated and it's great to be able to bring these programmes out to people and see the difference they make," Nicola says.

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## Changes in ACE Aotearoa Leadership

ACE Aotearoa has undergone an interim change of leadership with Analiese Robertson stepping down from her role as Director ACE Aotearoa to focus on a secondment role with ACE Aotearoa Focus. Hannah Pia Baral has been appointed interim Director until 1 March 2024.

### Hannah Pia Baral – Interim Director

Hannah Pia Baral will be familiar to many within the ACE community. Along with past roles with ACE Aotearoa, Hannah has completed ASPBAE's Basic Leadership Development Course and maintained connections with ASPBAE for over a decade. More recently Hannah has been working in Australia, where for the past three years she has held the position of CEO of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Association of NSW (P&C Federation). P&C Federation is the peak body and membership association that provides professional development and advocacy to its 1800 association members (7000 + volunteers) who take on roles very similar to Boards of Trustees in Aotearoa.

During her 14 years in Australia, Hannah also earned her MBA from the University of Newcastle and held volunteer roles with a number LGBTIQ+ organisations, including a board position and expert advisory roles.

"You will be aware that we have recently completed a survey with our ACE community to help identify priorities for 2024 work planning. We received some great feedback," Hannah says. "I look forward to working with the team to incorporate this into our 2024 strategic planning process which will commence shortly. Thank you to everyone who participated in this survey. You are at the heart of what we do so your ideas and input are crucial to our planning."

"I always enjoy the opportunity to meet with our learners and our educators, so what better way to experience this than the Festival of Adult Learning. I was fortunate enough to attend celebrations on Waiheke Island and in Ōtautahi, Christchurch. It is events like these that remind us of the value of the work we do and the impact this has on our communities and their wellbeing. Thank you to all of you for making this such a



Hannah Pia Baral

Whakataukī

*Mauri tū mauri ora.*

*An active soul is  
a healthy soul.*



Hannah at the CWEA



memorable week of celebration. There are some great stories on events that took place across the motu in this issue of the newsletter.

"I will be working closely with TEC to plan for the next funding period, and I have already held initial meetings with the agency. I am feeling very positive about our discussions to date and what we can do as an organisation next year.

"On a more serious note, Covid and the impacts of adverse weather events are still impacting services in several regions, with organisations struggling to rebuild services and facilities post these major events. I want to gain a better understanding of how ACE fits into the rebuild picture and how we can support those organisations facing ongoing challenges.

"My 90-day plan is essentially broken down into gaining a good understanding of our strategic priorities and operational systems and getting to know the team in the first 30 days, getting on top of our commitments and plans for the rest of the year in the second 30-day slot and then starting to plan for 2024 in the third 30-day slot. So, there is a great deal to learn and achieve and all these require us working as a team in the office."

Hannah will also be focusing on ensuring delivery of our ongoing programme of activities and events.

"Relationships, advocacy and engagement are at the heart of our success, and I want to ensure that I commit and invest sufficient time to getting these priorities right. I am passionate about adult education and lifelong learning, and I am delighted that I can once again engage in this space," says Hannah.



Hannah with a Hagley Adult Literacy Centre learner

## Analiese Robertson – AA Focus



Analiese Robertson

Analiese Robertson, previously Director of ACE Aotearoa, has moved into a secondment role with AA Focus, a subsidiary company of ACE Aotearoa. Analiese was previously the Professional Development and Networks Manager from August 2010 – May 2021 before becoming the Director, a position held until August 2023 upon acceptance of the secondment.

AA Focus was established in 2017 by ACE Aotearoa to create a diversified funding model for the organisation and assist with ensuring organisational sustainability.

"It was always the long-term plan to have a business entity that focused on building a financial base outside of our government tertiary contract," says Analiese.

"AA Focus has three core income streams that we have worked hard to mature. These include a project with Foundation North|Pūtea Hāpai Oranga, an organisation that provides community support funding for projects and initiatives that create positive change. AA Focus provides specific tailored support to over 120 Pacific organisations to build organisation capability.

The second programme of work is with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to provide diplomatic cultural training for High Commissioners and their staff posted to Pacific countries in the Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga, Kiribati, and Samoa. Our third income stream comes from ACE House which is our largest asset and one that provides a steady income stream from rents."

During the past seven years, Analiese has worked across both ACE Aotearoa and AA Focus. AA Focus has been largely dependent on the recognised expertise, reputation, and relationship management of Analiese. The secondment position will enable growth and provide a dedicated resource for AA Focus Ltd.

"The focus of my secondment role is going to be on increasing our financial base to enable ACE to continue to deliver to our communities on our terms and I'm looking forward to the challenge."



*The Alexandra community enjoying learning new moves*

## Hui Fono Leads to Community Dance Classes



Attendance at the ACE Hui Fono Regional Workshop in Alexandra, October 2021 provided an opportunity for Emma McLean from Central Otago REAP to explore opportunities within her community to bring people of all cultures together to share and celebrate the richness of diversity through dance, music, food and storytelling. Emma says the Hui Fono regional workshop was an opportunity to learn and connect with the Pasifika way, and it was inspiring.

Over the last 20 years Central Otago has evolved into a multi-cultural community, which creates an opportunity to embrace and learn from each other. The Pasifika community is an active and growing part of Central Otago and a vital component of Aotearoa's seasonal workforce.

Following the Hui Fono regional workshop and a South East Asian Festival held in Alexandra, Heather Harries of Welcoming Communities and Emma collaborated to create more opportunities for the community to share culture and stories in a safe and welcoming environment. This was kicked-off with a

Bollywood dance session. It demonstrated a thirst in the community to engage in such activities as the room was full of women of all ages and fitness abilities. It was also a profound experience for the dance tutor Manisha Gautam; she expressed a huge depth of gratitude to share her passion and skill with the community she was now living in and said it gave her a true sense of belonging.

Heather and Emma then approached long-term Central Otago resident and Pasifika Central leader Kusitina Colailago to see if she'd be keen to be involved in a Pasifika workshop. The answer





was a resounding yes. Kusitina says that to embrace a community you must bring your culture and share yourself. "Receiving an invitation like this opens a new understanding about each other and a sense of acceptance. Post Covid there has been a sense of vulnerability in the community and this event provided an opportunity to share our stories and strengthen our links."

These discussions resulted in 30 people turning up and participating in a Pasifika dance class in Alexandra where there was a great deal of laughter, dance and shared food. Learners brought their smiles, wore lavalava over their clothing and leis around their necks as they learnt new dance moves, followed by cake made from cassava and coconut milk.

"The event was so valuable on many different levels," reports Heather. "It was not only fun and engaging for those who attended, it was equally significant for the dance tutor Meraine Rotaria who works as a care worker at a local rest home." The residents and carers from the home made up half of the participants, and this meant that Meraine was able to display her talent and culture with the residents who have only ever known her in uniform. "Now they see her in a different light," says Heather, "as they see the person behind the uniform."

Since the Pasifika dance workshop, Welcoming Communities and Central Otago REAP have run a series of cultural capability workshops for a range of organisations and education facilities, including the Choices programme. This is just the beginning – watch this space for what lies ahead!



*The Hear Our Story Team*

## Hear Our Story

At the ACE Conference in Tāmaki Makaurau in June, Caroline Taripo-Keith, Russell Su'a, Donna Southworth and Susie Talimalo-Ikhele shared their voyage of Wayfinding leadership which is based on the art of traditional Polynesian navigation.

Donna and Russell were both Resource Teachers Learning & Behaviour and attended a Wayfinding Leadership course run by Dr Chellie Spiller, the lead facilitator on Wayfinding Leadership programmes in Aotearoa. In April 2022 the two decided to live their wayfinding learnings and both left their teaching roles to establish Hear Our Story Ltd alongside Susie Talimalo-Ikhele. The focus of the business is on nurturing authentic wayfinding leaders through empowering learners to step into their potential through leadership development, coaching, mentoring, critical awareness, collaboration and storytelling.

The team takes an unashamedly Pacific Nations' focus to their work with a goal of nurturing authentic leaders, equipping and inspiring learners. Recent work has been with Fonua Ola in terms of self-care, identity and wayfinding leadership. Fonua Ola provides social work support, counselling, youth programmes, building financial capability, family violence intervention, whānau ora support and group parenting programmes targeting the large Pacific Nations communities in Tāmaki Makaurau.

"We chose the name Hear Our Story because people love to share their stories, and through sharing you create connection. It's important to honour and value our stories," Donna says.

*If you want to find out more about Hear our Story Ltd, please email: [hearourstory3@gmail.com](mailto:hearourstory3@gmail.com)*

# Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga Celebrates Community Responsiveness

## Introduction

From 4–10 September Aotearoa celebrated the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga with events hosted across the country to highlight the crucial role that adult and community education plays in fostering personal and societal growth, and how community learning providers respond proactively to the ever-changing demands of communities.

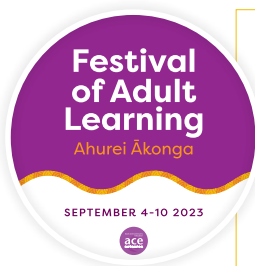
The festival provides the opportunity to highlight learner achievements, promotes accessible learning for all and facilitates connection between providers, educators and learners.

ACE Aotearoa received 14 applications for funding of events from Invercargill in the south to Kaitia in the north. Activities on offer ranged from sharing kai, building butterflies, and public speaking courses to sharing the all-important question about why people are motivated to complete adult education and the benefits that come from sharing the experience.

The Festival of Adult Learning is a UNESCO initiative with more than 40 countries participating. It includes International Literacy Day on 8 September.

ACE Sector Capability Manager Tai Samaeli says, "Our commitment to the community is rooted in the belief that adult and community education should be accessible to all and that learning should never stop. The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga is a testament to the responsiveness of our communities and the value of collaboration. Together, we can make a positive impact and build a resilient and empowered society."

In this issue we share some of the events and stories that contributed to another successful week for the ACE community.



## Koha Kai – a garden to the plate philosophy

Based in Murihiku, Koha Kai works with people who live with the challenges of disability. The organisation has been operating since 2014 and its success in that time has been well documented. As Koha Kai has evolved so has its teaching programme, and in 2022 the team launched a refreshed integrated teaching programme that reflects the way Koha Kai learners want the programme to look for them.

Koha Kai takes a garden-to-plate approach to learning with training programmes targeted at people interested in entry-level hospitality and horticulture. The training programme and associated workbook have been designed to be accessible for all learners, with the book using pictures and illustrations to accommodate non-readers.

The Koha Kai Festival event opened the training programme to members of the public to experience the course and pick up new ways of teaching adult learners with learning needs.

Janice Lee, Pouārahi (Founder and CEO) of Koha Kai, says their purpose is to enable good lives with their teaching underpinned by a Te Ao Māori philosophy.

Koha Kai has three programmes of learning:

- Ako te Kaha, which emphasises the strength of learning wherever you are in your learning journey
- Ako te Mahi, which supports learners in their transition to work
- Ako te Rangatira, with a focus on leadership skill, planning and aspirations.

Koha Kai has learners from the age of 14 through to 60 years, with learners able to stay as long as they need to. Their approach has achieved significant success. Janice shared a recent example of a young learner with Aspergers who experienced severe anxiety when he first joined the programme but who now works full time for Koha Kai, has achieved his primary ITO level 1-3 in horticulture and is now on the Ako te Rangatira programme.

"The festival event allowed us to open our doors and our programme to the wider community in Murihiku and to give them an opportunity to experience the garden-to-plate philosophy and to get a feel for our learner-based philosophy," Janice said.

The festival event was facilitated by Pōu Hōtaka (Training Manager) Sammii Lee and Zara Erskine, Whānau Ora Navigator.

"We had a good turn out to the event and feedback from those that attended was that they learnt some great new techniques to create rapport with adult learners with a disability and some tips for engagement," said Zara.



*The community enjoyed the opportunity to take on new learning techniques*

## "My Learning Why" – "Tōku Akoranga, he aha āi?"

It was a warm spring night in Ōtautahi when a group of adult learners from across the city came together to celebrate and share their 'Why'. As part of Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga, the Canterbury Workers Educational Association (WEA) hosted a festival event, coordinated by Canterbury WEA Director Lottie Vinson, Group Service Lead with SkillWise Frank Manzano and Jennifer Leahy of Ako Aotearoa.

My Learning Why – Tōku Akoranga, he aha āi? – enabled the sharing of why adult education holds such importance to so many in the community. The event was a celebration of learner success, providing the opportunity to raise the profile of community education and share the benefits among a diverse group.

"Every learner has a unique 'why' behind their learning journeys. Whether it's a personal passion, a career

aspiration, or a desire for personal growth.

Understanding each learner's 'why' is key to unlocking their full potential," says Frank.

As part of the programme, the ACE in Ōtautahi network invited learners to share their 'why' in a series of short videos that were shared on Facebook. The video reels featured learners from Cuba to the Ukraine, Bhutan to Khalistan providing an insightful look into why learners learn.

Keri from the Christchurch City Mission Education programme said that "learning teaches me how to be unstuck, from being stuck, and my kids can see that".

The 'why' for Atsuko from Japan, who is studying at the Hagley Adult Literacy Centre, is all about learning English. After finishing her role in a souvenir shop, she was looking for an opportunity that enabled her to continue with her journey and she enjoys the conversations she now has with fellow learners.

Helen is learning pottery at Risingholme

Learning and says her 'why' is about finding a social outlet, learning new skills, slowing down and meeting new people.

MP for Christchurch East, Poto Williams, says her 'why' is about keeping up with new ideas and continuing to grow, and Maatakiwi Wakefield, Kaitakawaenga Māori from Christchurch City Libraries says her 'why' is about broadening her mind. "No matter how old I get, there's always something new to learn."

The Facebook videos were collated into a highlights' reel, shown at the launch event and learners received Festival of Adult Learning Outstanding Adult Learner certificates.

The celebration also enabled guests to share kai and network. It was a memorable event with MC Tai Samaeli summing up the universal why – because it creates, in the words of a learner, "a happy life".



*Event guests enjoyed sharing kai and their why.*



*Learners received Festival of Adult Learning Outstanding Adult Learner certificates.*



## Twenty Years of Service

Waiheke Adult Learning (WAL) combined two celebrations in September – the Festival of Adult Learning and acknowledgement of their 20 years' service as an incorporated society within the Waiheke community. To mark the occasion, an event was held at the centre on International Literacy Day, and students illustrated the office window and shared their stories of involvement.

Manager of WAL, Jo Nuttall says that although the incorporated society is 20 years old, their learning story stretches back much further, with volunteers providing support for foundation literacy needs as far back as the 1980s.

"We grew from literacy support to broadening our kaupapa to community education more widely. The diverse programme includes foundation skills, apprentice learning support, learning within te ao Māori, including te reo Māori, creative courses, employment skills such as first aid, alongside a range of other courses such as ukulele.

"There continues to be a focus on practical skills with one-on-one digital support provided for people needing help with smart phones and laptops. We are also home to Waiheke's community driving school, Wai Drive, with subsidised lessons offered to Waiheke residents."

One of those residents engaged in the te reo classes is Helen Duley who started attending with her daughter Kim.

"When Kim started coming to classes, that opened the door for me. I was brought up in an era when we were forbidden to speak te reo, so this is a beginning for me and an emotional and healing journey. I have waited 72 years to learn about rongoā (traditional Māori medicine) and I am finally doing that too. Together we are also upskilling in computing so we can stay up to date."



*It is never too late to learn. Happy Birthday Waiheke Adult Learning*



*Learners at Toastmasters enjoyed the opportunity to gain new skills*

## Confidence comes with being prepared

Toastmasters is an international organisation dedicated to communication and leadership skill development.

Through its worldwide network of clubs, Toastmasters helps people build their communication skills so they can gain confidence in leading others.

Toastmasters is a supportive and positive learning environment dedicated to helping people gain the skills, confidence and proficiency to effectively express themselves, says Janet Williams, one of the organisers of a Toastmasters Festival of Adult Learning event held at Melville Intermediate School in Hamilton.

"Great communication skills help people with their confidence and Toastmasters helps to develop those skills. We had an amazing festival event on Saturday 9 September with around 22 people attending and trying out Toastmasters for the first time," Janet says.

"People who chose to come along got a full-on slice of the Toastmasters' experience which started with a session on the importance of communication and public speaking. The learners then got to experience a Table Topic – a long-standing Toastmasters tradition that involves learning the skills of impromptu speaking. We also had one of our extremely experienced evaluators at the festival event so learners had an overview of the evaluation process."

Many of the participants at the event came from the Hamilton Combined Community Trust, which included Chinese, Filipino, Nepalese, Indian and Māori. Some of the participants were keen to visit one or more of the 11 Toastmasters clubs in the Waikato region to learn more. Feedback was positive, including, "I learned so much from all the speakers, it was truly inspiring."



## A long way in three years

An open day and a celebratory dinner were the highlights of festival week for the Dunedin Workers' Educational Association – Te Wāhi Ākoranga o Ōtepoti. Since opening its doors just three years ago with an offering of five art classes, the South Dunedin-based WEA now delivers a comprehensive range of courses, from te reo Māori and Māori raranga (weaving) through to slow cooking on a budget and photography classes. Nicola Pye from the Dunedin WEA said festival funding enabled the WEA to showcase its

eclectic range of courses and programmes to a group of potential new learners.

"We put on an exhibition of work achieved by our current students in the South Dunedin Community Network rooms and invited the local community to view the display. We were delighted to have over 50 members of the community attend and what was even more exciting was that by the end of the day enrolments for many of our term four courses were full. One of the most popular courses was art journalling and we have had to open the course up to increased numbers to cope

with the demand.

"In the evening we ran a cookie decorating course for the committee and tutors which was lots of fun and then we shared a meal together at the local pub. This was one of the most valuable outcomes of the event because we all got to spend time together and got to know each other better. Because we are at WEA at different times, we don't all know each other, so the relationship-building aspect of the event was fantastic. All in all, it was a really good day."



*The Dunedin community came out in force to celebrate the Festival of Adult Learning*

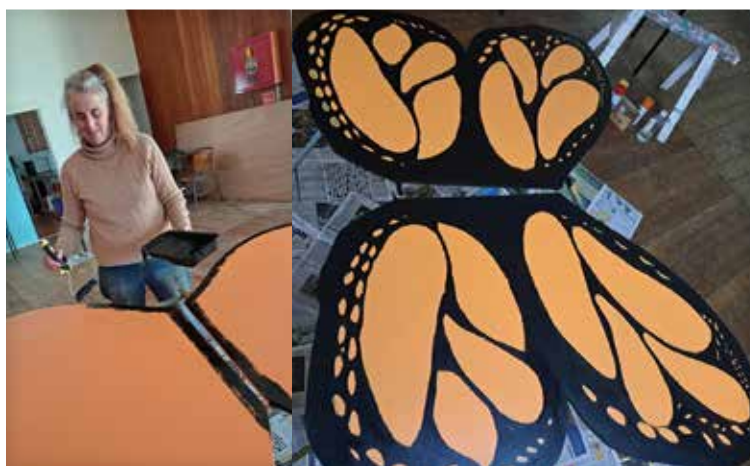
## Creating Butterflies – Rai Valley Festival Event

Armed with plywood, paint and a jigsaw, a group of learners in the Rai Valley turned their hand to the creation of colourful plywood butterflies that will eventually be displayed in a community space. The Festival of Adult Learning event was organised by the Rai Valley Cultural and Archives Trust, with help from the Rai Valley branch of Rural Women NZ.

One of the event organisers, Diane Payton, says the idea for the event was inspired by a trip to a Te Anau DOC reserve. Diane is a self-confessed recycler who enjoys inspiring and teaching others about the potential of upcycling. With most materials sourced from the local transfer station, the group of Rai Valley locals spent the day learning new and creative construction skills.

Diane says that butterflies have been a recurring theme in Rai Valley Festival Week events. “Four years ago, the Rai Valley Cultural and Archives Trust, with the aid of our local Rural Women’s branch ran a basic carpentry course. Participants built a butterfly-rearing enclosure on the Trust’s section where we grow swan plants, feed the caterpillars and release monarch butterflies. The enclosure is double coated with mesh to prevent the Asian Paper Wasps killing caterpillars.”

The group is planning a community celebration later this year to install the newly created wings and celebrate a successful learning experience at the village green in Rai Valley.



*Building butterflies in the Rai Valley*

## International: Festival Event

Analiese Robertson was invited by Jenny Macaffer, CEO of Adult Learning Australia, to join their organisation for the launch of Adult Learners' Week 2023 in Melbourne. The event provided Analiese with the opportunity to celebrate the launch and maintain valuable international relationships. The theme of the Australian Festival was 'It's never too late' a reminder that there's no use-by date when it comes to learning. Analiese says that the launch was a great reminder of the importance of shining a light on the impact ACE makes on people's lives as well as generating great conversations about the work we do.



“The launch function focused on sharing learning experiences with Karise Eden, winner of the first series of The Voice Australia in 2012, telling her story. Karise reengaged with learning after her win, when she recognised that she needed to learn a new skill set to survive in her new world. Other stories included an older migrant businessman telling his story of learning English to enable him to take over management of his family restaurant chain in Melbourne. He has subsequently gone on to run classes for older learners providing digital skills courses twice a week. It was refreshing to be part of an international celebration.”

*Image courtesy of Adult Learning Australia Ltd*





*A group of learners enjoying new skills.*

## Selwyn College's ACE programme: "something for everyone"

Each year Selwyn College in Kohimarama, Auckland, offers about 700 adult and community education courses, which are attended by more than 7000 people. These courses are delivered through their community education team, Selwyn Community Education (SCE).

The range of courses is wide and includes those designed to help people into employment, to improve their employment, or to develop business opportunities. Many of the classes are, quite simply, about the joy of learning, meeting new people, exploring one's creativity or interests, and perhaps even finding a hidden talent: all things that promote good mental health and wellbeing.

Thirty percent of courses are funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). These are free, or course fees are heavily subsidised. They include subjects such as English for migrants, te reo Māori, financial and digital literacy, accounting, resilience, and job skills. Courses are routinely filled. Anne Cave, Selwyn Community

Education's Programme Director, reports their barista courses, for example, are always full. For many, including young people new to the job market, women re-entering the workforce, and those recovering from Covid-related job losses, a Selwyn Community Education course is a stepping stone to employment.

SCE also offers a selection of personal development courses on subjects such as Overcoming Obstacles to Creativity, Finding Your Voice and Identity as a Migrant Woman in NZ, Becoming Unstoppable, Career Clarity – Figure out Your Next Move, and Creating Your Future – Life and Work After 50. Art, cooking and exercise classes remain popular, as well as those on topics such as history, architecture and society. Pottery courses always fill. "There's a big waiting list for pottery classes," Anne says. "You can see the joy on their faces as they come out of their class with something they have created. They are feeling really happy."



Think Talks (suggested koha \$5.00) engage people's curiosity. In these monthly talks, talented and persuasive presenters address an audience for one hour on a diverse range of topics, such as law, medicine, politics, conservation, and the media. It's a similar format to TED Talks, and always sparks debate. In March 2023, it was Kids and Screens: the State of Play presented by a panel of health experts.



There's a place on the school's ACE website where customers can suggest a course. Also, Anne keeps an eye on what's being offered in other cities, such as Melbourne.

While most of the ACE courses are run on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, the college also has a smaller number of day-time English classes.

And 12 times a year, SCE opens the school for weekend classes, attracting up to 250 participants. April 2023's weekend programme offered 30 different courses, including English – Improve Your Pronunciation Skills, How to Use Facebook for Marketing, Korean Vegetarian Food, and Contemporary Textile Design.

As well as this significant adult and community education programme, Selwyn College offers a unique school-based programme for refugees called Refugee Education for Adults and Families (REAF). REAF delivery supports adults who are enrolled at the college as secondary students, and therefore the programme is funded through the Ministry of Education. The college provides a creche facility for the children of enrolled parents.

In the past, some ACE courses failed to get sufficient registrations and were cancelled. Anne says that has not been the case post-Covid. "People are just so glad to get back in the classroom and be part of a group again, English in particular. This year our numbers have skyrocketed. They disappeared because of Covid. Our learners lost confidence. Now their confidence has come back and they are telling their friends. Ninety percent of registrations are from word of mouth."

Anne says people come from all over Auckland to attend the programme, and even from other parts of Aotearoa. Before the funding cuts in 2009, there were 17 schools in Auckland funded for ACE. Now there are just six. These schools have formed the Auckland Schools Community Education Association. ASCEA has a website, members meet twice a year, share tutors and organise a two-day tutor training workshop. "We've become a support group, says Anne. "We share ideas and tutors. It's very collaborative, not competitive at all."

There are, of course, some challenges in running an ACE programme. Chief amongst them is attracting more men and more learners under 30. Most learners are women, and most are over 55. Anne would also like to increase their social media marketing, particularly with Instagram. Most of those joining courses either hear about the programme from friends or use Google.

But, large as the programme is, there are still opportunities for growth. There's nothing on

the North Shore and some of the people living in that community desperately want a te reo course, so the community education team of five is currently looking at where they might be able to hire facilities. They are also talking with libraries and community groups about providing other courses.

There's good evidence that the ACE programme gets good results.

Participants are asked to fill in the ACE Aotearoa Outcomes Tool. These ...results indicate that people attending complete their courses with more confidence, personally and when at work or seeking work.

One newly confident learner who completed two of Liz Draydon's Speaking with Confidence courses wrote in her feedback: *"I have been actively looking for a job for seven months and I had many job interviews but I was unsuccessful. I realised that I needed to be a more confident speaker, so I decided to do Liz's course. After successfully completing her Level 1 and Level 2 courses I was hired and now have my dream job. This was directly attributable to Liz, what I learned from her, the feedback she provided, the interaction with the class, and the confidence she inspired in me. Thank you once again for offering such a breadth of inspiring and awesome community education classes at Selwyn College. There really is something for everyone!"*

As education policy has changed, keeping night courses going at secondary schools can be a challenge. So we asked Selwyn College Principal Sheryl Ofner why her school still has an ACE programme. This is what she said:

*"Learning is a life-long process. By offering Adult and Community Education classes, Selwyn College is contributing to the enrichment of the lives of members of our wider community. It is wonderful to welcome a diverse range of people to our school to learn a huge array of new knowledge and skills. The affordable courses enhance their personal and working lives and help create new opportunities and possibilities. They bring the school to life after dark which we regard as a wonderful use of this valuable community resource."*



# Successfully Teaching Adults

Over the past few months, Jennifer Leahy of ACE Aotearoa has been running a series of workshops with a focus on successfully teaching adults. The immersive workshops are designed to share knowledge, skills and strategies to inspire and engage with the adult learning community. Taking a collaborative and interactive approach to the subject, the workshops delve deep into the art and science of teaching adults and the format encourages networking and knowledge sharing.

Kia King was one of several attendees at the Blenheim course. Kia is a library assistant at Marlborough Library in Blenheim and one of several librarians involved in the Book a Librarian (BAL) service. This innovative programme offers Marlborough residents one-on-one training to get on top of using mobile devices. Learners have a 45–60-minute learning session that might include connecting to a new device or simply using a piece of new

technology. The service has been available to residents since 2016 with a Covid-induced pause as well as a pause when the Marlborough Library in Blenheim shifted to new premises in May 2023. August this year was one of the busiest months for BAL with 21 sessions completed in Blenheim and three in Picton.

The library has experienced an increased number of requests for assistance using Apps Borrowbox and Libby, as well as general digital e-book assistance.

Kia said she attended the course hoping to learn greater patience when working with some of her learners and said that one of the most valuable pieces of advice shared by Jennifer was for course participants to take note and learn from the tools that Jennifer shared.

"Jennifer told us to learn from what she did, take note of what worked for us and

use the techniques we liked and didn't like in our own teaching," said Kia.

"The session was very much centred on adoption of a learner-based approach to foster an enhanced learning environment. The other gem shared was the need to give learners the reason to learn themselves. If we can make our learners understand about learning and truly understanding, then they become more confident in exploring and solving problems themselves."

One of the techniques Kia will be taking back to the BAL service is to encourage their learners to pretend that they are actually teaching the tutor.

"If learners take the approach that they are actually giving a hands-on demonstration back to the tutor, the learning does tend to stick, rather than simply being shown what to do. I thoroughly enjoyed the course and felt quite energised by the day".



*Successfully Teaching Adults workshop in Blenheim*

# International: Women With Wheels

India's Azad Foundation provides livelihoods with dignity for resource-poor women living in urban areas in India. The Foundation is driven by the vision of a world where all women, in particular women from underprivileged backgrounds, enjoy full citizenship, earn with dignity and generate wealth and value. They are a professional feminist organisation working across religious and social divides to enable resource-poor women to empower themselves.

One of the Foundation's key programmes is Women With Wheels, a programme that works with young women, mostly aged 18–35, living in slums and resettlement colonies. The programme is challenging social and cultural gender norms and paving new paths for women across India. Women With Wheels started in 2008 in Delhi and since then it has expanded to Jaipur, Kolkata and Chennai. Azad has supported other civil society organisations to implement Women With Wheels – Jan Vikas in Ahmedabad and SAMAN in Indore amongst others. The programme provides technical, self-empowerment and self-development training to fully equip women to become self-sustaining professional drivers. Once qualified, the women drivers are transferred to Azad Foundation's partner organisation Sakha Consulting Wings, who then provide employment opportunities in private chauffeur placements and

Sakha Cabs by Women.

Most of the women in the programme are either out of work, or work in low-paid professions traditionally assigned to women. Many trainees have dropped out of formal education early, meaning their employment choices are limited. Many of these women have not been outside their neighbourhood and several live in abusive relationships.

The programme prepares and places women drivers as professional drivers, enabling socially excluded female members of society to move from the margins to the mainstream economy.

According to Meenu Vadera, Azad Foundation Founder and chief mentor, the programme has also helped alter public perceptions about women's participation in the public transportation sector and the role and status of women in society.

"Our aim is to level the employment field for young women by providing career options that then enhance their economic status and decision making within their families," says Meenu.

The learner centred training programme takes participants about six – eight months to complete and the team also assist the trainees to acquire citizenship documents and accident insurance, open a bank account and obtain a uniform and mobile phone.



*"When I was training, I would feel like I could stand on my own feet, I could do anything. Because of that I feel like I'm living my life freely today".*

*Reshma, Delhi*





Women with very little means are also offered financial and other support.

The programme also includes training modules on women's rights, protection from sexual harassment and violence, sexual and reproductive health and the Foundation facilitates a network of women drivers so they can support and learn from each other. Access is provided to counsellors to ensure women are accompanied throughout their journey and have somewhere to turn to if facing domestic violence.

Over the past 14 years Women With Wheels has enabled more than 4000 women to gain a professional qualification as a chauffeur.

More than 2500 women trained by the Azad Foundation are currently working as professional drivers and generating their own income.

Azad Foundation and partner Sakha Wings Consulting have placed their first women bus drivers with Delhi Transport Corporation. In 2021, after successfully advocating with the Delhi Government to modify rules for engaging women as public bus drivers, Azad has now 35+ alumni working as public bus drivers for the first time in the history of Delhi.

More than 5000 women have benefitted from training in women's rights, self-defence, sexual and reproductive health, English speaking, effective communications, first aid, grooming, and map reading and learning key roads and routes. The content and pedagogy have helped them to empower themselves and achieve personal transformation.

## Our people

### Obituary – Peter Isaacs ONZM

*Iō, Iō! Te Atua i te rangi tuatini.  
Piri mai, taku maeti, taku maetā.  
Tu, tu, te rau tu, ha!*



Peter Isaacs, ONZM

This pe'e karakia is an ancient prayer chant that calls to our Atua to watch over everyone. It says we are all leaves of the same tree. Even when we fall, we return to the tree. Breathe, life. (provided by Analiese Robertson)

It is with deep sadness that we learnt in June of the passing of Peter Isaacs ONZM.

Peter was Tumuaki of Literacy from 1995 – 2004, alongside Bronwyn Yates. Peter passed away Saturday evening, 24 June.

During his tenure, Peter was a volunteer member of the then ACEA (ACE Aotearoa) Board, and successfully provided services to support one of the first iterations of the Governance Manual, as well as contributing to ACE research, and the development of the ACE sector professional development strategy and tools.

As a Pākehā man working in a Tiriti based organisation, Peter leveraged his leadership position to advocate for equity. He challenged racist attitudes for a more just organisation, sector and service to learners. He was an educator, researcher, business developer, data analyst and policy advisor.

### Bojana Rimbovska

Bojana Rimbovska has been appointed Community Liaison Coordinator with Risingholme Learning in Christchurch.

Bojana has two key aspects to her new role – liaising with the community and identifying needs – as well as gaining feedback for course development, and marketing and communications for Risingholme. In addition to her role at Risingholme, Bojana is completing her PhD in Art History and Theory at the University of Canterbury (UC). More recently she was curator at UC for two exhibitions showcasing archives from the UC collections as part of the university's 150th celebrations. Bojana says she enjoys building strong relationships between communities and organisations to enhance the cultural life of the city.



Bojana Rimbovska

### Adrian Kelly

Meet Adrian Kelly, the night co-ordinator for Fraser ACE in Hamilton. Adrian works the evening shift in the office at Fraser High School ACE programme, helping tutors and students with whatever they need assistance with – anything from urgent photocopying to troubleshooting uncooperative technology.

Adrian says her favourite part of the job is getting the feedback in the last weeks of class and seeing the amazing effects classes are having on learners. The feedback is usually overwhelmingly positive; the confidence gains, the sense of completion and achievement and the relationships students build with their tutors and other students around them.



Adrian Kelly

# ACE News

## 2024 Planning based on your priorities

Thank you to everyone who participated in the ACE Professional Development survey to help us identify and deliver on your top learning priorities. Your participation in this survey empowers us to shape our 2024 work plan based on the need and requirements of those we are here to assist. Over the coming weeks we will undertake further data interpretation and start to confirm our offering.

In the meantime, we want to share some of the initial results.

You told us that your top four priorities are:

- Embedding Tikanga/culture – how do we get it right?
- How to engage in community engagement
- Cultural competency
- Effective evidence and storytelling.

We were heartened to receive responses from across the motu, including Northland, Gisborne, West Coast and Southland, and responses were received from across organisational levels including managers and volunteers.

Other priorities you identified included addressing specific learning needs, fostering professional growth, managing disruptive behaviour, expanding outreach, securing funding, promoting self-directed learning, demonstrating social impact, embracing cultural diversity, enhancing digital literacy, prioritising mental wellness, and advocating for better funding and recognition of ACE within the tertiary sector in New Zealand.

### Correction

*In the winter ACE Newsletter, we inadvertently missed Peter Foese as a co-facilitator in the workshop session at conference that explored the challenges of developing and sustaining leaders within our Adult and Community Education Movement, based on ASPBAE's Basic Leadership Development Course workshop as part of the ACE Conference. Our apologies to Peter for this omission.*

# Noticeboard

## Unlocking Potential: Supporting Neurodiverse Learners Workshop

Are you passionate about creating inclusive learning environments where every individual's unique abilities are valued and nurtured? Join our informative "Supporting Neurodiverse Learners Workshop" and embark on a journey of empowerment, understanding, and innovation.

### Workshop Highlights:

Key Types of Neurodiversity

- Understanding Sensory and Cognitive Differences
- Myths and Misconceptions – Cutting Through the Misinformation
- Problems and Challenges Neurodiverse Learners Face
- Strategies You Can Use to Support Learner Success
- Hot Seat – Ask Me Anything at All – No Questions Will Be Off Limits!

### About the facilitator

Nigel Sutton has been involved in adult education for the past 17 years and he has worked across the sector. He has been in the ACE sector for the past seven years as Director at the Wellington High School and Community Education Centre. He is also the President of the Community Learning Association through Schools (CLASS).

*For more information and how to organise a workshop in your area please contact Tai Samaeli, ACE Sector Capability Manager, by email: [tai@aceaotearoa.org.nz](mailto:tai@aceaotearoa.org.nz)*