



Left to right: Te Tumatakuru O'Connell, te kaiwawao – senior manager (Māori), Massey University, Wellington; Ngahiwi Apanui, kaihautū Māori Ako Aotearoa; Dr Peter Coolbear, director Ako Aotearoa; Selwyn Katene, director Manu Ao Academy, Office of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori & Pasifika), Massey University; and Koro Bill Herbert, kaumātua.

## Introducing Ngahiwi Apanui – our kaihautū Māori

Ako Aotearoa is delighted to announce the appointment of Ngahiwi Apanui (Ngāti Porou, Te Whanau-ā-Apanui, and Ngāti Hine) as our kaihautū Māori – senior Māori development manager. Ngahiwi was welcomed on Monday 13 July, with a powhiri at Te Kuratini Marae, Massey University, Wellington.

Ngahiwi will support the work of Ako Aotearoa's Māori caucus in building a strategy to further Māori aspirations in tertiary education. He will lead the operationalisation of that strategy as an integral part of Ako Aotearoa's overall work as a Treaty of Waitangi-based organisation.

Ngahiwi has a background in tertiary education and broadcasting. He has held senior management positions with the seafood and Skills Active industry training organisations and has a Māori Language Commission translator's licence. Ngahiwi, who is also a musician, is a board member of the New Zealand Music Commission and chairs the Pūtatangi Music Committee of Toi Māori Aotearoa. We are delighted to have him join the team at Ako Aotearoa.

## Welcome

On Tuesday 21 July at the Beehive, we celebrated the eighth round of the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards, recognising 10 of the country's best tertiary teachers. It was a great event and is reported in full on page 3. Congratulations to the awardees, especially Selene Mize from the University of Otago who won the Prime Minister's Supreme Award. Particular thanks to the Minister for Tertiary Education, the Hon Anne Tolley, for hosting the event and the Associate Minister for Tertiary Education, the Hon Dr Wayne Mapp, for his support.

One thing was reinforced for me as we recognised the sustained excellence demonstrated by such a diverse group of teachers working in different fields with different students: all the awardees share an utter commitment and concern for student success, and they all explore innovative ways to achieve that success.

For me, these 10 awardees are exemplars of what the scholarship of teaching and learning is all about: they have won their awards by demonstrating the evidence base for the success of their innovative, student-focused practice.

Another of our activities has also excited me tremendously over the past few days. Again, it is to do with building a sound evidence base for improving teaching practice. It was a privilege to support the New Zealand Student Engagement Forum hosted by The University of Auckland and the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).

This forum was designed to explore how the data collected through the Australasian Universities Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE) might be used to enhance the student experience. Almost all the New Zealand universities have now trialled this instrument and discovered it to be an immensely valuable multi-dimensional diagnostic providing data on how students learn that can be benchmarked against other groups of institutions. It seeks to track both learner interactions and educational outcomes and provides a wealth of rich, complex data. We were delighted by the level of interest in the forum and the enthusiastic response from attendees. We have made a commitment to further this work in New Zealand: watch this space!

With very best wishes

**Dr Peter Coolbear**

Director, Ako Aotearoa

# Good Practice Publication Grants 2009

The 2009 round of the Good Practice Publications Grants scheme closed on Friday 28 August. With 20 grants available, our top priority has been to communicate the need for applications to demonstrate evidence of how their practice benefits learners.

Kirsty Weir, Ako Aotearoa's research manager overseeing the scheme, repeats the advice she has been giving to those interested in applying, "We want to see greater evidence of learner benefit in the practices we publish, and we will highlight the demonstrated benefits to learners of each practice. This evidence may come from learner evaluations triangulated against learner achievement data or from independent evaluations or research."

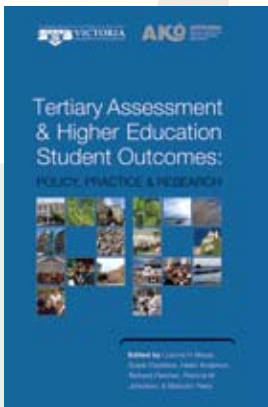
The grant is a one-stage application process, and all applicants will be notified of the results on Friday, 2 October 2009.

We are in the final stages of editing the 2008 publications and expect to have them on our website by the end of September 2009.



## New resources published by Ako Aotearoa

One of Ako Aotearoa's roles is to provide easily accessible and relevant resources for tertiary practitioners and managers. Here are two of our most recent publications. The tertiary assessment-related book and summary document were launched on 30 July at a Victoria University of Wellington event hosted by Professor Luanna H Meyer, director, Jessie Hetherington Centre.



### Tertiary Assessment & Higher Education Student Outcomes: Policy, Practice & Research

This 300-page book is based on papers presented at the Symposium on Tertiary Assessment and Higher Education Student Outcomes in November 2008.

Editors are Luanna H Meyer, Susan Davidson (both from Victoria University of Wellington), Helen Anderson (Manukau Institute of Technology), Richard Fletcher (Massey University), Patricia M Johnston (Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī) and Malcolm Rees (Massey University).

Delegates who attended the 2008 symposium will shortly receive a free copy of both publications.

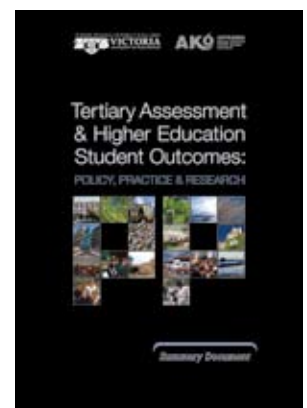
Email: [info@akoaooteaoroa.ac.nz](mailto:info@akoaooteaoroa.ac.nz) to order copies of this book at \$49.95 each.

*Note: The symposium and publication were supported by the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative, funded through Vote Education and administered by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research.*

### Tertiary Assessment & Higher Education Student Outcomes: Policy, Practice & Research – Summary Document

This 12-page summary document, prepared from the symposium by Lynanne McKenzie and Susan Davidson (Victoria University of Wellington), provides an excellent overview to the subject of tertiary assessment. It is designed for senior academic managers and academic boards that have responsibility for the development, implementation and quality assurance of assessment policy and practice in their tertiary education institutions and organisations.

Download this summary in pdf format, or email [info@akoaooteaoroa.ac.nz](mailto:info@akoaooteaoroa.ac.nz) to order hard copies free of charge.



# Awards celebrate inspirational tertiary teachers



The 2009 Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards recipients with the Minister for Tertiary Education at the ceremony on 21 July 2009. From left Dr Heather Kavan, Sam Honey, Paul Denny, the Hon Anne Tolley, Dr Rachel Fewster, Selene Mize, Professor Eric Pawson, Jean Crane, Judy Magee. (Absent: Associate Professor Christopher Marshall and Norman Meehan.)

The Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards ceremony, which the Minister for Tertiary Education the Hon Anne Tolley hosted this year, is an annual highlight that Ako Aotearoa is proud to organise. This ceremony brings together the most passionate and committed tertiary teachers, so we can reward them for their outstanding efforts. The ceremony also brings together a wide variety of people from across the tertiary sector to share in the celebration: supporting organisations, families, government and peak body representatives. This year, the atmosphere was particularly warm and relaxed with a strong sense of collegiality.

The 10 awardees, who each received a certificate of sustained excellence and a cheque for \$20,000, were:

- Jean Crane, tutor, Insight Learning Academy
- Paul Denny, senior tutor, Department of Computer Science, The University of Auckland
- Dr Rachel Fewster, senior lecturer, Department of Statistics, The University of Auckland
- Sam Honey, senior academic staff member and programme coordinator, Bay of Plenty Polytechnic
- Dr Heather Kavan, lecturer, Department of Communication, Journalism and Marketing, Massey University
- Judy Magee, senior lecturer, School of Foundation Learning, Otago Polytechnic
- Associate Professor Christopher Marshall, Religious Studies Programme, Victoria University of Wellington
- Norman Meehan, senior lecturer, New Zealand School of Music, Massey University
- Selene Mize, senior lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Otago
- Professor Eric Pawson, Department of Geography, University of Canterbury.

This year, the prestigious Prime Minister's Supreme Award, worth an additional \$10,000, was presented to Selene Mize. The minister and the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards Committee selected Selene because of her exceptional portfolio that highlighted her passion for law over a 20-year career, her contribution to the international reputation of New Zealand legal education, and her absolute and unstinting commitment to her students and their success.

Selene has become both a national and an international figure in legal education. Her colleagues have described her creativity and thoughtfulness in course design and pedagogical methods as "inspirational". One of Selene's ex-students described her as "an irreplaceable gift to the legal profession".

Of the 10 awardees, the Hon Anne Tolley said, "these teachers have gone over and above just 'doing a job' and have made it their mission to give their students the tools to achieve in education and other areas of their lives".

Emeritus Professor Noeline Alcorn, chair of the Tertiary Teaching Awards Committee, considers the overall standard of applications was outstanding. The 10 awardees, in particular, demonstrated creativity and commitment in helping their students enjoy learning, and challenged them to achieve at levels higher than they ever imagined they could reach.

Dr Peter Coolbear, national director of Ako Aotearoa, comments, "Once again the panel had an inspiring, but difficult choice selecting 10 awardees from some stunning nominations. We are lucky to have such excellent teachers in our tertiary sector who are willing to put themselves forward for consideration. It was particularly pleasing to see an increase in interest from the private training establishment sector for these awards".

BY IAN ROWE

# News from the Central Hub

Welcome back to the Central Hub section of *Ako Aotearoa Alert*. In this issue we feature a completed project that helps teachers to critically assess their teaching practice in relation to student engagement, a current project supporting Māori learners through a mobile phone learning support system, and a welcome contribution from Central Hub Advisory Group member Flora Gilkison, principal of Pacific International Hotel Management School.



## Ako Aotearoa Central Hub

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## Central Hub—funded project – completed

*The Impact of Professional Supervision on Teaching Practice within a Tertiary Institution*  
– Janet Walke and Michael O’Connell, senior lecturers at the Universal College of Learning.

A key focus for Ako Aotearoa is to support inquiry into effective teaching and learning. Janet Walke and Michael O’Connell’s recently completed Central Hub project focuses on how to enable tertiary educators to examine their teaching practice critically. The project’s two key objectives are to assist participants to examine patterns of student engagement that may limit or hinder teaching effectiveness, and to enable them to examine more flexible and student-centred teaching methods.

A key feature of this project’s approach was small group work. According to Michael, the participants’ degree of openness was a carefully calculated and crucial element in the study. “Once participants understood they had ‘professional safety’ they were able to communicate more effectively and work to create a ‘community of practice’.”

Janet believes the project’s outcomes could expand into a standard for professional development. “Small groups bring issues to their group and make effective changes for teaching through open discussion. The project becomes sustainable through participation; increasing the ability of staff to teach well.”

The project report shows that deeper learning for students requires tertiary educators to be current in their practice and use techniques specific to the learners (such as e-learning, blended approaches, and problem-based learning). It also reveals how positive and constructive outcomes were gained from using group supervision as a vehicle for co-inquiry into teaching practice.

The four recommendations arising from this research are as follows:

- Tertiary educators need to have an appreciation and, where appropriate, an understanding of a wider range of



Central Hub—funded project team – Michael O’Connell and Janet Walke, senior lecturers, Universal College of Learning.

student behaviours (generational and otherwise) in order to fully engage students in learning.

- Institutions should pay particular attention to the potential challenges that students face within the “context of learning” and the “nature of curriculum content”. Additional levels of focused resourcing would enable educators to better support student learning.
- Professional support for tertiary educators is needed for enhanced relational skills with students. These might include decision processes about when, where, how much, and by whom pastoral care is provided.
- Critical conversations between tertiary educators about learner behaviour and cognitivity need to be overtly valued by tertiary institutions. Professional supervision groups are a vehicle for this to occur.

The full report for this innovative project is on the Ako Aotearoa website – <http://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/project-register/404>.

## Central Hub–funded project – current Affective Mobile Learning Support Systems for Māori Students

This interesting and unique Central Hub project is the brain child of Dr Tiong T Goh of the School of Management, Victoria University of Wellington. This project, based on established literature that explains that successful learning deals with emotions, attitudes, and encouragement, highlights this often-neglected aspect in learning for Māori students. It is proposed that a mobile phone learning support system will bring direct benefits to the Māori tertiary learning community, because interpersonal relations are highly valued in Māori learning.

The project will investigate Māori students' learning and ways that this new approach to student support can enhance that learning. Students will be able to interact in various aspects of their learning processes. For example, they will be able to receive reminders about exams, lectures, and tutorials; receive summaries of material; ask direct questions; and receive important motivational phrases to support their learning.

This approach will create a “virtual” culturally responsive environment that can be customised to the needs of all Māori students, not just ‘gifted’ students. First-year Māori students will be monitored and guided towards independent self-management and feel connected to a virtual whānau and community in their learning experience. I look forward to reporting on the outcomes of this project.

## Profile of a Central Hub Advisory Group member

By Flora Gilkison, principal, Pacific International Hotel Management School

Excellence in teaching and the consequential learning has long been a passion of mine. Teaching can happen in all aspects of life and all environments, and although the classroom may be the most convenient place, I am always looking for ways to assist excellent teaching to occur in “out of classroom” areas.

My role with the Ako Aotearoa Central Hub Advisory Group exposes me to the good teaching practice that already exists within our sector, and I am delighted to be involved in promoting and encouraging its further development.

I help review applications for research projects. The diversity of projects and the passion shown by the applicants are always fascinating. Ako Aotearoa is helping raise the standard of tertiary teaching, which in turn assists New Zealand to lift its productivity, increases inclusivity, and improves educational outcomes.

I enjoy my role as a principal in this ever-changing complex sector. It combines the need for strong academic leadership with commercial acumen. A popular Māori proverb encapsulates how I see the role of vocational education and industry engagement: nāku rourou, nāu te rourou ka ora te iwi (with your food basket and my food basket the people will thrive).

Students at the Pacific International Hotel Management School live and study in a unique hotel environment. The courses are all “hardwired” into industry; students are placed every six months into paid relevant industry work, usually in hotels. The students gain real industry experience, which is invaluable in their next semester when they integrate theory and practice.

We have students from all over the world, usually about a ratio of one to one between Kiwi and international students, with typically over 20 cultures represented. I am privileged to assist students to develop enquiring minds and their discovery and desire for learning.

*Flora is in the final stages of completing her doctorate of management and organisational leadership online through the University of Phoenix. Her research focus is group efficacy.*



Flora Gilkison, Ako Aotearoa Central Hub Advisory Group member and principal of the Pacific International Hotel Management School.

### Ian Rowe's top tip for teachers

A simple and effective way to get students thinking in a workshop or laboratory session

It is often very easy for teachers to do all the thinking for students. This is especially so if the teachers want to display their technical skills. One technique to stimulate student thinking is to tell them that as the teacher, for the next two hours you will only answer questions that can be answered by either yes or no:

- “If I cut this pipe more obliquely, will there be enough material to solder?” – No.
- “If I extend each measurement by 5 mm, will that work?” – Yes.

## National projects in focus

In this issue, we introduce you to two more of our 2008 funded national projects: Engaging Learners Effectively in Science, Technology and Engineering: The Pathway from Secondary to University Education led by Massey University, and Industry Training Organisation (ITO) Workplace Assessment Structures led by the Industry Training Federation.

Professor Tim Parkinson and his team from Massey University – collaborators from the College of Education, the College of Sciences, and the Centre for Academic Development – are exploring ways to effectively engage science, technology, and engineering students at university. The problem of engaging and retaining students in the sciences at a tertiary level, despite their apparent interest in the sciences at school, is longstanding. The Engaging Learners Effectively project aims to address this issue by examining the congruence between secondary and tertiary science education, and paying attention to students' decisions when they are considering transitioning into tertiary-level science.

The genuine excitement that this work has generated was clear at the project launch earlier in 2009. It was great to see the team and its wider support network at the launch, including senior management from Massey University and the project's reference group of experts from the compulsory and tertiary sectors. The reference group enables the team to examine student engagement at university level, but also to take into account students' prior learning experiences. This broad educational approach will enable the team to inform science educators on how to better engage and retain science students. It will also be interesting to see whether the lessons learned raise questions for other disciplines.

Nicholas Huntington from the Industry Training Federation and Dr Karen Vaughan from the New Zealand Council for Educational Research are leading the second project, ITO Workplace Assessment Structures. This collaboration involves the Industry Training Federation's Research Network, which includes the Retail Institute, Competenz, ETITO, Creative Trades ITO, and Careerforce. The project examines the ways in which ITOs manage workplace assessment and support workplace assessors. The project's overarching aim is to identify practices that ITOs can use to enhance the educational experiences of learners who are assessed on the job.

We are delighted to support this important area of work. Although on-job assessment affects a significant number of learners (eg, more than 180,000 learners are engaged in part-time on-the-job learning – *Industry Training Achievement*, Industry Training Federation, 2009) very little New Zealand research has focused on assessment in this

context. Nicholas Huntington comments, "Assessment in the workplace is not only an integral part of industry training, but has a longstanding history in other disciplines, and is increasingly being used in other parts of the tertiary system. Exploring the distinctive nature of workplace assessment and how it can be effectively supported will be of value not only to industry trainees, but also those pursuing other professionally focused education and training pathways with practicum or internship components".

The project started in March 2009, and already the team has produced a literature review that international experts have peer reviewed: *Workplace Learning Assessment Structures: Literature Review*. This initial piece of work will soon be available on the Ako Aotearoa website – [www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz](http://www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz). This work will also inform the project's next stages, which involve surveys and focus groups in 38 ITOs across New Zealand.

These two research projects will enhance our understanding of how to better engage tertiary students and identify effective assessment practices for the workplace. We look forward to bringing you more news about their progress.

*Two more 2008 projects funded through the National Project Fund were featured in our May issue: the AUT University-led, Te Kawai Kumara: A Pilot for the Synchronous Delivery of a Common Postgraduate Programme in te reo Māori across Multiple Sites, and Manukau Institute of Technology's Dedicated Education Unit: Enhancing Clinical Teaching and Learning.*



The official Massey University launch of Engaging Learners Effectively in Science, Technology and Engineering, an Ako Aotearoa National Project Fund project. From left Pru Kelley, Wellington High School; Barbara Evans, Rangitoto College; Nick Roskrige, kaiārahi Māori, College of Sciences; Melba Scott, Palmerston North Girls High School; Professor Mason Durie, assistant vice-chancellor (Māori & Pasifika); Professor Robert Anderson, pro-vice chancellor, College of Sciences; Steve Maharey, vice chancellor; Professor James Chapman, pro-vice chancellor, College of Education; Gordon Suddaby, director, Centre for Academic Development and Learning; Kirsty Weir, research manager, Ako Aotearoa; Bob Rosemergy, retired school careers counsellor; Marg Gilling, College of Education; Professor Tim Parkinson, project leader, College of Sciences; Helen Hughes, research associate, Stratum Consulting; and Bill McIntyre, College of Education. (Absent: Tim O'Connor, Palmerston North Boys High School.)

# National Project Fund workshops

*Dr Kirsty Weir reports on the success of the June National Project Fund workshops.*

Throughout June we travelled the length and breadth of the country, presenting workshops on the National Project Fund in preparation for the 2009 funding round. Our intention was for these workshops to provide additional support to project teams as they develop their 2009 bids. In particular, we wanted to clarify the fund's overarching objectives, discuss our position on research, and describe what the selection panels look for in applications.



Southern region – Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology: attendees at the National Project Fund “How to get funding” workshop.

Ako Aotearoa's regional hubs hosted the workshops, and we were delighted with attendees' interest and engagement. We held 22 workshops with about 340 attendees – what a turn out!

The key messages Dr Peter Coolbear and I stressed in our presentations was that applications must clearly communicate the evidence-based need for their project (ie, why the work should be done), and have a robust and appropriate method given the project's aims and goals. Moreover, successful projects will demonstrate their potential to affect our knowledge of tertiary teaching and learning and its impact on practice for learner benefit. Therefore, we have been stressing the need for applicants to think big and show how their project has relevance across different disciplines, or to different parts of the sector.

Remember that we are asking the panel to select projects that, if funded, will help to improve outcomes for learners and have the potential to impact broadly across the tertiary education sector in New Zealand.

*“successful projects will demonstrate their potential to affect our knowledge of tertiary teaching and learning and its impact on practice for learner benefit”*

We are looking forward to this year's round and supporting more projects under this initiative (two projects awarded funding in 2008 are discussed on page 6). The closing date for expressions of interest was 21 August 2009, and I have enjoyed acting as a sounding board for project ideas or reading through draft applications. There will be more news on the 2009 round in our next issue of Alert and I look forward to announcing the successful applicants later in the year.



Northern region – The University of Auckland: Dr Peter Coolbear follows up his presentation with an informal discussion with attendees.



Central region – Massey Wellington campus: Kathy Holloway of Whitireia Community Polytechnic talks with Dr Kirsty Weir after the main workshop presentation.

## Project spotlight: workplace learning

*In this regular feature Ako Aotearoa profiles projects it is supporting through its regional funding scheme that relate to a specific area of tertiary education.*



Members of the project team – Otago Polytechnic students Sarah Mockford, Renee Mercer, Nic Dymock, and Chris Gill with catering tutor Adrian Woodhouse (in white).

their images, narrative, and music into a digital storytelling software package and add any special effects.

Maxine and Adrian are also mentoring a group of colleagues to develop digital storytelling skills. Once their colleagues are familiar with the process, they will share their expertise with other colleagues and learners.

The project is due to be completed in December 2009. The project's results will be shared across and beyond Otago Polytechnic. Equally important, learners will showcase their digital stories at open forums at the polytechnic to which they will invite members from local private training establishments. Everyone involved in this project will continue to turn everyday experiences into meaningful learning opportunities.

### Supporting learning in the workplace

In July 2008, Adrian Woodhouse, a catering lecturer at Otago Polytechnic, became a Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award recipient. He went on to join the Ako Aotearoa Academy for Tertiary Teaching Excellence. By October, Adrian had teamed up with Maxine Alterio, a staff development coordinator and fiction writer at Otago Polytechnic, to work on their Southern Hub-funded project Creating Digital Stories to Enhance Vocational Learning.

The project's main aim is to support learners to develop vocational literacy skills and engage fully with course content by utilising their considerable technological skills to create focused, contextualised, and personalised learning stories.

An enthusiastic group of learners enrolled in a certificate of professional cookery programme is working with Maxine and Adrian to explore ways in which active involvement in the creation of digital stories can support and enhance learning.

Each learner chooses a theme such as "living off the land" or "cooking for flatmates". They then select and scan images that depict aspects of their theme. These images include photos, recipes, and menus. The next step involves each learner placing their images on a storyboard and using them to develop a storyline. During this stage, Maxine and Adrian use reflective conversations to help learners come up with possible narratives. Such conversations are invariably full of learning and laughter. As one learner commented, "You never truly know what you think and feel about an experience until you describe it to others".

Learners expand and enhance their vocational literacy skills as they share their ideas. Maxine and Adrian also facilitate group discussions based on the culinary terms and processes depicted in the storyboards. After learners develop their narratives, they each select a music track to help create the atmosphere they wish to evoke. They then load



Project partner – Maxine Alterio, staff development coordinator, Teaching and Learning, Otago Polytechnic.

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