

Welcome to the LIMELIGHT

November 2017

All the latest news from the Ako Academy of Tertiary Teaching Excellence,
the organisation of national tertiary teaching award winners

A note from the President

Tēnā koutou and welcome to the second issue of *Limelight* for 2017. *Limelight* provides the Ako Aotearoa Academy of Tertiary Teaching Excellence the opportunity to share news, inspiring stories and innovative teaching strategies from the New Zealand tertiary teaching sector.

We welcomed twelve wonderful new national tertiary teaching excellence award winners to the Academy in early August. Award recipients and their supporters and whānau were invited to meet the Academy Executive Committee at an afternoon tea. Later that day, Prime Minister Bill English was on hand to present the awards at a banquet at Parliament.

The Executive has been working on its annual meeting, which this year is called *Talking Teaching*, to be held in Dunedin in late November. It departs from our past practice of hosting symposia in Wellington, and the Committee hopes to continue to rotate locations in the future, for the benefit of teachers in diverse geographical areas. The conference is modestly priced and open to all, and has a great line-up of Academy and non-Academy presenters. We already have more than 120 registered participants and hope to see you there.

Ngā mihi,
Selene Mize



Talking Teaching 2017

Tony Zaharic, University of Otago

The Academy, in association with Ako Aotearoa, University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic, is proud to present *Talking Teaching: a conference on tertiary teaching practice and research*. Planning is well underway for this capstone event in the annual business of the Academy. Talking Teaching will take place on 27 & 28 November at the historic St Margaret's College, University of Otago, Dunedin.

Talking Teaching is a conference for the whole tertiary sector, and is expected to draw a diverse range of teachers and researchers from around New Zealand, leading to a stimulating exchange of ideas. The Academy's vision for Talking Teaching is that the combined practice and research focus will not only invigorate participants in terms of their current activities, but open new pathways and collaborations for teaching practice and research.

An online call for presentation proposals ran for six weeks in August and September. The organising committee was thrilled with the large number of high-quality proposals submitted. A total of 42 proposals were received. They include a mix of oral presentations, panel sessions and practical workshops. In addition to these parallel presentations there are three confirmed keynote speakers: 2016's supreme winner Jacinta Ruru (Otago University), Welby Ings (AUT), and Australian guest Dr Stephen Billet, Professor of Adult and Vocational Education in the School of Education and Professional Studies at Griffith University. Read about their keynote presentations on the website www.akoacademy.ac.nz.

Talking
Teaching 2017
A conference on tertiary teaching practice and research

Inspire and be inspired

Sam Honey, Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology

On Friday 13 October, with sponsorship from Ako Aotearoa Northern Hub, Toi Ohomai Academy members ran a truly successful one-day teaching and learning symposium 'Inspire and Be Inspired'.

83 participants attended the day, including Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology staff from Whakatane, Rotorua, and Tauranga, and colleagues from other regional institutions. The programme included a student panel.

The keynote presenter was Welby Ings (AUT) who wowed participants at the start of the day with his story-led presentation around embracing disobedient teaching for the success of our students. He set the scene for the day and the 12 workshops that followed. The workshops ranged from 'Supporting gifted students', to 'Interactive 360 video for content rich learning'.

Evaluations from the day were all extremely positive with the majority of participants saying the symposium met their expectations and that they would definitely use the information, resources and ideas in their future practice. Comments included: 'inspiring', 'inquiry based learning made perfect sense', 'loved the inclusion of students in the sessions', 'best PD in ages', 'energised for the final term', 'great keynote speaker and inspiring student panel', 'the day was a great learning experience'.



Writing the Cambridge handbook for computing education research

Anthony Robins, University of Otago



This is an interesting time for computing education research. Programming and related precursor topics such as 'computational thinking' are making their way into the earliest years of the school curriculum in New Zealand and other countries around the world. Yet many of the central questions of computing education research and practice remain unanswered. At what age is it best to start teaching programming? Is there a best language or style of language to teach? Why do so many students at tertiary level have difficulty learning to program, while others find it easy? How should the tertiary curriculum be structured?

My main project currently is editing, with Professor Sally Fincher (Kent, UK), the forthcoming *Cambridge Handbook of Computing Education Research*. Around 40 academics from institutions and countries all over the world are contributing to the volume, which consists of 31 chapters and an annotated bibliography. We are using Google Docs to write and edit shared chapter documents so as to facilitate a

high degree of collaboration and peer review. The *Handbook* is due to be published in 2018.

We hope that the *Handbook* will contribute both an introduction to research methods and tools (such as research study and experimental design, statistical methods, qualitative methods) and an overview of active research topics (including established results and currently open questions). It has been an interesting and exciting project to be involved with, and we hope that it will make a real contribution to this important and timely field.

Devising theatre for young audiences with young artists

James McKinnon, Victoria University of Wellington

In October a team of 19 undergraduates led by VUW PhD candidate Kerryn Palmer premiered two new plays for young audiences, *Moonlight* and *In the Attic*. Palmer's project challenges the traditions and truisms of both tertiary theatre studies and Theatre for Young Audiences, by engaging young artists and young audiences in the creative process. Palmer is one of Wellington's most respected theatre directors, and argues that Theatre for Young Audiences is undervalued and underdeveloped in Aotearoa.

Too often, theatre made for children reflects low expectations and aspirations: it relies on retreads of fairy tales, and forgoes aesthetic excellence in favour of transmitting bland didactic messages. The result is often dull, derivative theatre that turns children off because it does not respond to their needs. At the same time, tertiary theatre studies often reproduce the hierarchies of teacher-centered classrooms, when instructors pick the scripts, cast the students, and direct the play, leaving few opportunities for the student actors to develop or exert creative agency.

Palmer's project responded to both of these problems simultaneously: instead of performing scripts chosen by her, the actors made their own plays, in direct consultation with their target audience. At the beginning of the term, Palmer took her THEA 311 class to two local schools, where she and her students engaged directly with groups of younger students, aged 5-6 and 9-12. After these encounters, the THEA 311 class split into two groups, each devising a play for one of the two age groups. Halfway through the creative process, the younger students came to Victoria to see the work in progress and give feedback on it. The students in the 9-12 age group significantly influenced the outcome of *In the Attic* by stating their preference for a dark, ambiguous conclusion instead of a conventional happy resolution.

In addition to representing part of her doctoral research, Palmer's project also contributes to a global practice-as-research project called Paper Boats (<http://www.thepaperboats.com/>), an international partnership in making theatre for young audiences, with other contributors coming from Australia, the US, and Singapore. All the contributing groups use the same basic model of collaborative, community-engaged creative process, and each shares its material with the others: the archival video of THEA 311's creative process will become the raw material for future contributors. Thus, in addition to the excitement of creating new work for their young audience, Victoria students enjoyed the opportunity to engage in an international project, where their work will be seen – and used – by other emerging artists from around the world.



Pictured: Jasmin Golding (L) and Georgia Ball (R)

Lifelong learners in a connected world

Paul Robinson, Ara Institute of Canterbury

Teaching involves offering meaningful opportunities to enable learners to reach their potential.

I began my teaching as a qualified chef, and passed on my skills and knowledge with an accredited 'on the job training programme'. Subsequently, after working for Air New Zealand, I moved to Christchurch Polytechnic. As a tertiary educator I now teach Professional Cookery skills at Ara City Campus in the Canterbury region.

To enhance student engagement and motivation to become lifelong learners is synonymous with excellence in teaching, so as Ako academy members we are continually looking for meaningful ways to engage our next cohort of students. I was blessed to organize and moderate 'Farmlands Muster Chef Schools Challenge 2017', a cooking competition for six district schools at the Ellesmere Agricultural Show.

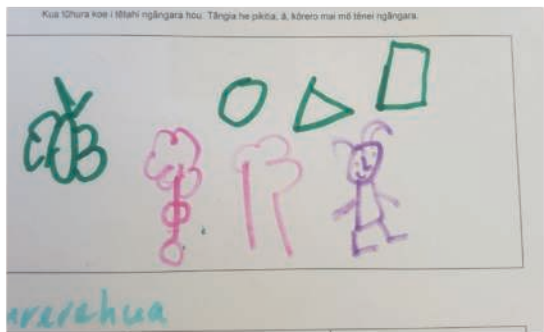
This was an innovative opportunity to involve students with whanau support, and connect teachers and learners in an annual community event that demonstrates the rich history and culture of rural New Zealand. We were able to work closely with the next generation of tertiary learners at ground floor level. Each school team presented a poster based on 'Celebrating Diversity' prior to cooking.

Students were able to explore International influences and the foods of ethnic groups now well represented in New Zealand. They celebrated the incredible range and diversity of new ingredients, as well as the excellent quality of locally sourced ones. Opening a door to enhance the relationship between teachers as mentors as well as whanau support was very evident: these rising stars were all lifelong learners in the making.



Children, butterflies, and learning science at a kura

Azra Moeed, Victoria University of Wellington



Traditionally, kura are places of learning for Māori that embody the physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional teaching and learning of all participants. Modern day kura are coeducational immersion schools where the philosophy and practice reflect Māori cultural values, so as to revitalise Māori language, knowledge, and culture.

A challenge for most kura is to attract teachers who have been trained to teach science and are fluent in Te Reo Māori. Our collaborating kura whanau made the decision to allow science to be taught in English in the secondary classes, which was a huge compromise for them. The teachers did not have a background in science but were keen to learn. After an initial session, they said they felt confident to start teaching two hours a week of Pūtaiao (Māori science) using some of the pedagogies that had been modelled.

The collaboration created a space for Pūtaiao teaching and learning in the kura. Although there are many examples of bicultural research in the mainstream education system, this project was

centred on Te Ao Māori by locating the project at the kura. The researchers were in the kura learning from the teachers' ideas about Pūtaiao and teachers were learning science and approaches to western science and investigation.

One of the teachers said that she felt we genuinely respected the philosophy and practices of the kura: 'You want for our kids what we want for them', more specifically, making it possible for the students to walk in both worlds – 'theirs' and 'the other'. An outcome of the research was that one of the participating teachers took on the responsibility of developing a science programme for years 1 to 10.

Our collaboration has led to ongoing research at the kura. With some of the award money I have received from Ako Aotearoa, we have created a butterfly enclosure to see how teachers use this space and the learning that follows. The project started after the kura teachers visited another school where a teacher uses a similar enclosure for her 5-year old students to learn the life cycle of a butterfly.

Our kura teachers are focussing on teaching the life cycle of a swan plant and that of a monarch butterfly. So far, the engagement is high. The picture shows a piece of the children's work. We will share the findings of our Learning Pūtaiao/science in a kura project at a later date.

Geoscience Education Rock Stars at UC

Ben Kennedy and Alison Jolley, University of Canterbury

The Christchurch earthquakes were a reminder of the crucial relationship between geology and society. At the time of the 22 February 2011 event, work had already begun in the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of Canterbury to integrate evidence-based approaches to geoscience pedagogies through the Ako Aotearoa Commissioned Project 'Transforming Tertiary Science Education' (in partnership with Massey University Biological Sciences).

With natural hazards thrust into the public sphere and ongoing logistical challenges with facilities at UC, this research took on a new sense of urgency. The success of the Commissioned Project heightened departmental awareness of active learning principles and demonstrated value in using evidence-based approaches to pedagogy. Geoscience Education has become an explicit research focus for the department, through designing curricula that are not only more interactive and engaging, but that situate content around the applied nature of the geosciences.

Change has been widespread at all levels of teaching, from 100-level through to new professional Master's programmes in Disaster Risk and Resilience and Engineering Geology. We work closely with Frontiers Abroad, a study programme for American students with significant emphasis on the field geology of New Zealand. Our research has highlighted the value that geology students and staff place on fieldwork, and the ways that we can translate this enthusiasm into learning.

Technological literacy is important for producing career-ready graduates, and we also focus on the integration of technology with geoscience learning. We created a videogame to introduce students to geothermal geology, we continue to integrate Leapfrog geological modelling software with all levels of teaching, and we are working with LEARNZ to implement their virtual field trip model in tertiary teaching.

Projects on hazard communication and virtual fieldtrips have been funded through Ako Aotearoa's National and Regional Project Funds, EQC and QuakeCore. Many of the faculty involved in Geoscience Education research have been recognised with awards at College, University, and National level. Students are heavily involved in our research, with about 25 research assistants, two completed PhD theses, and three postdoctoral research projects ongoing or completed in the last six years.

Geoscience education is a rapidly expanding field and it is perhaps not surprising that in a recent international poll geology students reported 'being the happiest with their choice of degree'. If you have an idea for a research collaboration or want to be a geology education rock star, please contact ben.kennedy@canterbury.ac.nz.



News from the Ako Aotearoa regional hubs

SOUTHERN HUB

Two events dominate the recent Southern Hub and Academy activities. The first is the region's success in the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards 2017, with seven of the twelve recipients— five from Dunedin and two from Christchurch. An event to welcome these new members of the Academy into their regional group of peers is planned.

A considerable amount of effort from both Academy members and the Southern Hub staff has gone into the second event, the Academy's *Talking Teaching* symposium for 2017 which will be held in Dunedin. This year, the symposium seeks to increase dialogue from across the tertiary sector about teaching practice and research. A description is on the first page of this edition of *Limelight*.

Immediately following *Talking Teaching*, there is an Ako Aotearoa, NZQA and Otago Polytechnic-sponsored conference entitled Assessing Learning from 29 November to 1 December: <https://alconference.ac.nz/about/> These two events make a professional learning and development trip to Dunedin well worth considering.

Neil Andersen, Regional Manager, Southern Hub

NORTHERN HUB

During October the Northern Hub held its annual Spotlight on Tertiary Teaching Excellence event in Auckland. The venue was filled to capacity with people from across the tertiary sector. Academy members who participated were Tracey McIntosh, Azra Moeed and James Oldfield. A video clip of a recent television interview with Welby Ings was also incorporated into the session.

Tracey moved us with her story of a young prison inmate who had been incarcerated since the age of 13, and moved to the adult facility at 16. She is now 22 and Tracey shared with us a little of this young woman's poetry, which was a response to the poetry of Maya Angelou. Learning takes place both within institutions and externally to them. Spaces for learning seemed to be a recurring theme, as Azra passed around plates of vegetables and fruit, and participants enjoyed a learning episode at the same time as observing a brilliant demonstration of excellent teaching. James Oldfield wowed everyone with his use of Plickers, using generic questions that all could relate to.

The video clip with Welby Ings on the AM Show was about open learning spaces. Only the next day I received an email from someone who was so impressed that they had used it for discussion in their staff meeting.

Another stimulating Academy/Northern Hub event was the Professional Learning and Development day held at Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology in Tauranga, and reported on page one. It was organised by Academy members James Paterson, Kelly Pender, Sam Honey and Amy Raymond. One of the Northern Hub's projects-in-progress – ePosts – was available for review and comment, and we look forward to its completion soon.

Ruth Peterson, Regional Manager, Northern Hub

CENTRAL HUB

The annual Tertiary Teaching Awards in parliament on Tuesday 8 August was again a wonderful occasion, meeting and enjoying the celebrations with the 2017 recipients.

From 2018 the nomination portfolios will be submitted electronically, which will level the playing field for nominees who previously might not have had the use of high end the printing and reproduction.

When spreading the word about the awards, be sure to mention the 'Excellence in Supporting Pacific Learners' endorsement which was instituted this year, but none of the 12 recipients had applied for it.

It has been a pleasure to have Academy members present 'Excellent Teaching Matters' seminars in Palmerston North, Napier, New Plymouth and Petone. There were superb examples of creative and engaging teaching strategies and helpful insights into portfolio preparation. Thanks go to Judith Bateup, Elana Curtis, Lis Ditzel, Paul Gummer, Marie McEntee, Richard Nyhof, Karyn Paringatai, Mike Scott, Matt Thompson, Lara Tookey, Adrian Woodhouse and Rachel Zajac.

Another feature of Academy members has been their enthusiastic mentoring of nominees. Without exception, each time I have put a nominee in touch with an Academy member acceptance was instant and the assistance highly valued.

Ian Rowe, Regional Manager, Central Hub

Academy Executive

The current Executive has seven members. Feel free to contact them at any time with any matters related to their portfolio or the Academy in general.



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