# engage

A CELEBRATION OF WORLD-CLASS BUSINESS, RESEARCH AND EDUCATION 2016/17



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## How the future of HR is all about experiences

HR is on the move - shifting from transactional compliance related tasks to creating meaningful employee experiences.

If businesses want to attract and retain the best talent, including millennials who are looking for modern organisations to work for, Humankind insists that those businesses need to think about the employee experience.

"We believe HR will shift even further away from its risk, compliance, and process roots, towards being about experiences," managing director Samantha Gadd says. "Employee experience drives customer experience. Therefore, focusing on your employees drives better business results.

"For organisations to attract and retain the best people, every aspect of the employee experience must be deliberately designed and executed with care. From the moment prospective employees learn about your brand, to what it feels like to work in your organisation," explains Gadd. "Focusing on employee experiences is more important than ever because the war for talent is real. HR is changing and so are we."

Formerly known as HR Shop, Humankind is a company looking to create tailored solutions for managing people. They recognise that adaptation is key to surviving disruption, and that in order for

"For organisations to attract and retain the best people, every aspect of the employee experience must be deliberately designed and executed with care. From the moment prospective employees learn about your brand, to what it feels like to work in your organisation."

companies to thrive in today's work environment, they need to be able to build great cultures with a remote workforce using tools such as social technology and Cloud based software.

As a finalist in the last year's Wellington Gold Awards, this year's Westpac Auckland Business Awards and the AUT Business School Excellence



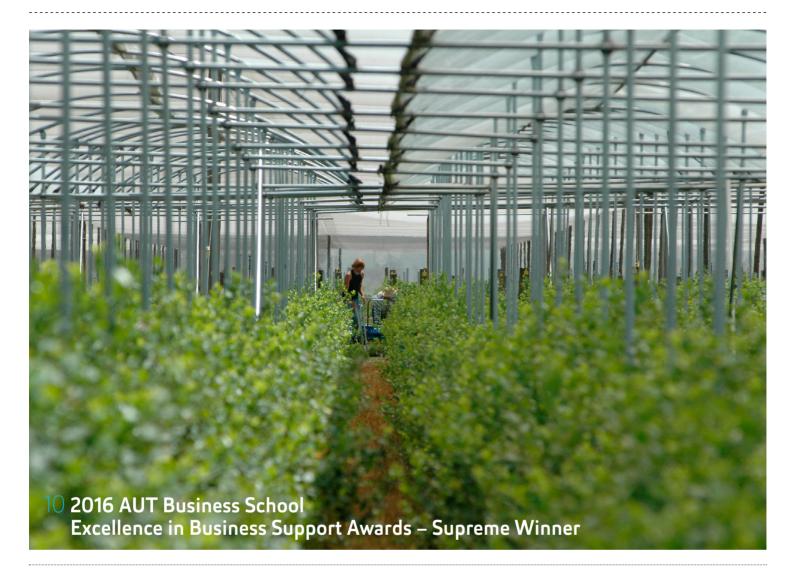
in Business Support awards, success is something Humankind is used to. With eyes on how leadership is changing and on new models for organising and structuring businesses, one could argue that Humankind has responded well to changes from within the industry. In just four years, Humankind has already landed itself in the Deloitte Fast 50, but it's certainly not planning to rest on its laurels.

If companies are able to adapt to an everchanging work environment, then they won't just survive, but thrive in their respective industries. This, Gadd says, is where Humankind can help the most. "New Zealand businesses need more from HR. We want to work with organisations who agree workplaces of the future can provide more to both employers and employees." •

To see if HumanKind can help you build a better workplace, visit www.humankind.nz or call 0508 477467









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Put 75 business leaders, 75 AUT students, and 75 high school students together for a day and you get a big dose of inspiration and practical insight.

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# **BNZ Partners: Taking Business Further**

To be the best versions of themselves, businesses need a source of support and advice they can rely on. Since establishing BNZ Partners in 2008 to help businesses grow, BNZ's unparalleled commitment to the country's fastest growing companies is helping industry leaders go further.



In 1861, BNZ first opened its doors, and has since been helping New Zealanders "be good with money" for over 150 years. As well as helping everyday Kiwis deal with their banking needs, BNZ has also been a pillar for businesses. The bank, which was first started by Thomas Russell after he was unable to get funding for his projects from existing institutions, has retained its core entrepreneurial spirit, supporting everything from New Zealand's fledgling start-ups to its successful corporates.

Shelley Ruha, Director of BNZ Partners, says that growing businesses face a multitude of challenges every day. "In order for businesses to continue to grow, they often need access to capital and different types of lending products," says Ruha. "Our job is to understand our customer's business and provide the right solution at the right stage of that growth."

Established in 2008, the Partners model is underpinned by a number of strong relationships and links with organisations. It provides its customers with access to products and relationships across the bank, as well as access to their wider network, to support them in achieving their goals.

Relationships such as The Icehouse, the Aucklandbased fast growth ecosystem, which has worked with over 5,000 businesses and start-ups. "On average, businesses who work with The Icehouse have grown quicker than the New Zealand norm, and our relationship with them, which goes back 15 years as a founding partner, reflects our joint commitment to helping businesses grow," says Ruha.

The Deloitte Fast 50 then celebrates the success of those fast growing companies. Now in its 16th year, BNZ have been a partner for the last three. "It's more than just an opportunity to recognise the success of these businesses; the Deloitte



Fast 50 also provides an opportunity to learn and think about their next stage of growth, and that's something we're proud to be part of".

In fact, nearly half of the Deloitte Fast 50 winners are BNZ customers, and that's because BNZ understands what a business needs from a bank in order to grow.

Ruha explains that whatever the business, the main focus of BNZ is to provide expertise and unique solutions for effective growth. "Different industries have different challenges. Our partners work with a team of specialists to provide a whole range of products and solutions specifically aimed at helping Kiwi businesses reach their aspirations."

To find out how BNZ Partners can support your business' growth, call 0800 273 916 or visit www.bnz.co.nz







Engage is our way of celebrating the research work being done across AUT's Faculty of Business, Economics and Law by emerging and established academics. In this issue we have profiled a diverse range of researchers who are all doing "research that matters" in different areas.

We strive for that new understanding that comes with original research.

From the use of data to create better workplaces, to new approaches to law, from the importance of sustainability to the stigmatisation of failure, each story relates a tremendous piece of research, a

clear connection with the business world and a strong sense of collaboration.

You will notice the strong connection with business and the professions, whether you are reading a story about research or our engagement with business.

We pride ourselves on adding value through research. We also work to add value through our ongoing engagement with business and the legal world and the AUT Business School Excellence in Business Support Awards are a great example of this.

2016 is the 11th anniversary of the Awards, where we name and celebrate the individuals and organisations who are going above and

beyond to provide excellent support to New Zealand businesses.

Each year our pool of finalists goes from strength to strength. I'm delighted we have attracted entries from many strong, innovative New Zealand companies doing things in a uniquely Kiwi way.

Enjoy reading about the achievements of the Awards winners and finding out about some of the important research and industry engagement happening in the AUT Faculty of Business, Economics and Law.

J Elony

# Years of benchmarking excellence

The AUT Business School is proud to recognise and celebrate the best quality support available to the New Zealand business sector and the part these services and products play in the development of world-class businesses.

#### **ABOUT THE AWARDS**

2016 marks the eleventh year of the Excellence in Business Support Awards, which were set up to celebrate those who are contributing to the development of a robust business environment. As an innovative provider of business education focused on developing highly capable graduates who are well prepared to work in industry, AUT Business School is a natural fit for the Awards.

The Awards provide a unique opportunity for business support organisations to benchmark their performance against others in their sector and to give a mark of quality to their organisation. The robust entry and evaluation process of the Awards enables finalists to reflect on how effectively their organisation achieves business excellence in all key areas.

#### THE EVALUATION PROCESS

Evaluation of entries in the ten categories is done by academics from the AUT Business School in partnership with the New Zealand Business Excellence Foundation (NZBEF). Excellence is assessed using the long-standing and internationally recognised Baldrige criteria. The evaluators analyse finalists' full submissions, identify any gaps and then arrange to interview the finalists to discuss their application in more detail.

Undertaking an assessment with an applicant provides a valuable opportunity to see first-hand how businesses at the top of their field are operating. On-site visits let the evaluators verify that the written submission accurately reflects the organisation's systems and processes.

Once the site visits are done, evaluators score across five assessment sections. They include: leadership, understanding of customer and market needs, development and delivery of services and products, and an organisation's evaluation of its own performance. The heaviest weighting, however, is reserved for evidence of results in terms of the business support they provide.

## Award evaluation themes:

- Leadership and vision with identified key objectives
- Robust and well-communicated business plan
- Understanding of customers and their needs
- Development and delivery of products and services
- Having the right people with the right competencies
- Monitoring and evaluation of one's performance
- Result

#### Platinum accessibility rating

The AUT Business School Excellence in Business Support Awards has for the second year achieved the highest Platinum rating for accessibility. This continues the Awards' tradition of continuous improvement in accessibility, with a Bronze rating in 2012, Silver in 2013, Gold in 2014 and Platinum in 2015. The Platinum rating from Be.Accessible recognises a sustained effort by AUT Business

School to make the event as accessible and welcoming as possible. 2015 was the first time Be. Accessible bestowed this accolade on a New Zealand organisation.



## 2016 AUT Business School Excellence in Business Support Awards

## **FINALISTS**

### IMNZ BUSINESS < \$5M T/O MANAGEMENT SERVICES

- Energy Solution Providers (ESP)
- · Advisory.Works
- Humankind
- New Zealand Dispute Resolution Centre

#### ICG BUSINESS < \$5M T/O

#### **SALES & MARKETING**

- · Max Marketing
- · Mint Design
- · Intelligent Ink

#### IBM BUSINESS \$5M - \$20M T/O

- Sandfield
- TRA
- DNA
- Vehicle Inspection NZ

#### **FUII XEROX** LARGE BUSINESS

- Orbit World Travel
- · Leading Edge NZ
- Jasmax

### COLAB DESIGN AND CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

- DNA
- Intuto

#### **IDEALOG** SUSTAINABILITY SUPPORT

- Energy Solution Providers (ESP)
- Packaging Forum Inc Glass Packaging Scheme
- Envirocon ( Bright Technologies Ltd)
- Sustainable Business Network
- lasmax

#### NEW ZEALAND BUSINESS EXCELLENCE FOUNDATION NOT FOR PROFIT

- Packaging Forum Inc Glass Packaging Scheme
- Motu Economic and Public Policy Research Trust
- · Sustainable Business Network
- Careerforce

#### **DRAKE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT**

- Plant & Food Research
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority EECA BUSINESS
- ATEED
- NZECO (New Zealand Export Credit Office)

#### **AUT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

#### EXPORT SUPPORT

- · Bank of New Zealand
- NZECO (New Zealand Export Credit Office)

#### **FUJI XEROX** LEADERSHIP

- Wayne Norrie Revera
- Brett O'Riley ATEED
- Dr Adam Jaffe Motu Economic and Public Policy Research
- Helen Robinson















PACIFIC BUSINESS

## 2016 AUT Business School Excellence in Business Support Awards

## Winner profiles

IMNZ BUSINESS < \$5M T/O MANAGEMENT SERVICES

#### **Advisory.Works**

Advisory. Works partners with many of New Zealand's leading companies to gain clarity, execute strategy and develop leaders to achieve success.

Advisory. Works aims to disrupt traditional and ineffective business advisory. Client success is at the centre of what it does by taking businesses through a focused, carefully-guided, inspiring and interactive process to really understand the business. Advisory. Works specialises in the gap between strategy and results.

ICG BUSINESS < \$5M T/O SALES & MARKETING

#### Mint Design

Mint Design is a creative digital design agency helping businesses grow.

It builds beautiful, functional websites and runs results-driven online marketing campaigns through email marketing, social media marketing and search engine marketing.

Mint is one of only two agencies in New Zealand who are licensed by Google to resell Google Street View Trusted Tours, and was noted as one of the fastest growing tech companies in the Asia-Pacific region in 2015.

IBM BUSINESS \$5M - \$20M T/O

TRA is the largest independently owned research and data analytics business in New Zealand, delivering insight and guidance to leading companies and Government organisations.

While making use of research, data analytics, strategy and planning tools, TRA's distinguishing feature is its understanding of human behaviour to identify opportunities for businesses to grow.

TRA was born in 2007 with a desire to 'shake up those resting on their laurels by launching a new, highly innovative challenger brand into the local research and data analytics market.

Since then, the business has been recognised as a true leader in the marketing services space showing outstanding revenue and profit growth.

### FUJI XEROX BUSINESS LARGE BUSINESS lasmax

Jasmax is one of New Zealand's largest multidiscipline architecture and design practices, providing architecture, interior design, landscape architecture and urban design services from four national studios. Its 50 years of experience is unique within New Zealand, with projects including Britomart Transport Centre, Te Papa Tongarewa and, currently in progress, Auckland's transformational City Rail Link. Jasmax's unique Quality Assurance Framework and its progress in sustainable design allows the organisation to be a leader and advocate across the industry. Its knowledge of and passion for sustainability extends to its designs, internal behaviours, and the continued education it provides to its people, clients and the wider industry supply chain.

### IDEALOG SUSTAINABILITY SUPPORT Sustainable Business Network

The Sustainable Business Network is the largest and longest-standing organisation dedicated to sustainable business in New Zealand. It is a membership-based social enterprise that connects, inspires and mobilises businesses to transform New Zealand's business future.

Established in 2002, its vision is to make New Zealand a model sustainable nation by helping members to succeed sustainably and to progress their role towards contributing to this vision.

Members are encouraged to actively participate, be bold, lead their sectors with innovative business models and reshape profit to include wider definitions than simply financial.

COLAB DESIGN AND CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

#### DNA

DNA is a customer-led innovation consultancy, delivering business value and effect by designing best in market customer experiences.













DNA's client work traverses the public and private sector. It's a design company at heart, using design thinking, design strategy and design delivery in customer multi-channel execution (retail, digital and media) to improve the ways organisations interface with customers, as well as create and deliver products and services.

#### **NEW ZEALAND BUSINESS EXCELLENCE FOUNDATION NOT FOR PROFIT**

#### Careerforce

As an industry training organisation that enables workplace learning, Careerforce knows that a person-centred, thinking and skilled workforce will impact positively on the health and wellbeing of New Zealanders.

It is the government appointed body that sets skill standards and develops and facilitates achievement of NZQA qualifications across all sectors. By supporting organisations to implement workplace training, it enables employees to achieve recognised New Zealand qualifications.

#### **DRAKE NEW ZEALAND GOVERNMENT** Plant & Food Research

Plant & Food Research is a Crown Research Institute that delivers 'The science of Premium' to its customers across the country's multi-billion dollar agri-food economy.

It focuses on market-led as well as productionoriented opportunities, taking a proactive leadership role in pursuit of impact and in building New Zealand's competitive advantage for the future.

The impact of its science is measured through the industry sectors that its work underpins, namely the horticulture, wine, arable and seafood industries of New Zealand. Together these industries make a significant contribution to national wealth and well-being, with a combined annual turnover of more than \$10 billion. Plant & Food's research is helping to increase this contribution, particularly through growth in the volume and value of exports.

#### **AUT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

**EXPORT SUPPORT** 

#### The New Zealand Export Credit Office (NZECO)

The New Zealand Export Credit Office helps exporters manage payment risk, secure sales and access trade finance by providing buyer insurance and financial quarantees.

NZECO is a commercial unit within the Treasury, and reports to the Minister of Finance, while maintaining close relationships with the Ministers of Trade, Foreign Affairs and Economic Development.

Its international profile and connections provide a valuable source of country and buyer risk information, and other in-market and technical expertise enabling it to provide helpful feedback to local exporters. NZECO performs a critical role in

providing intermediate support for growing SMEs to secure, insure and/or fund the particular export contract(s).

#### **FUJI XEROX** LEADERSHIP

#### Wayne Norrie

Following a successful career in the technology industry, Norrie is passionate about helping others in governance, leadership and strategy.

As co-owner and self-proclaimed Chief Enthusiasm Officer of technology company Revera, Norrie refocused the strategy from selling hardware to providing cloud-based computing and changed the culture for competitive advantage.

Since the sale of Revera, he's held numerous directorships and chaired many boards. He is an accredited fellow of The Institute of Directors.

Norrie has helped companies 'raise the bar' on governance, assisted others to change and manage their culture, inspired leadership and motivated staff. He assists technology companies with disruption in a fast-moving age and mentors many CEOs in the ability to lead themselves as well as their company to produce a powerful business outcome.

**AUT BUSINESS SCHOOL SUPREME WINNER** 

Plant & Food Research

See profile on following page.











Plant & Food Research has been awarded the Supreme Award in the 2016 AUT Business School Excellence in Business Support Awards. Formed in 2008, its research is used to add value to New Zealand's plant and food industries. And, in an effort to maximise that impact, it's proven itself as a leader of best practice.

New Zealand prides itself on delivering quality, world-class exports. The horticultural, arable, seafood, and food and beverage industries lead the way in that regard and, with a combined turnover of \$10 billion, they make a significant contribution to the nation's wealth and well-being.

Adding value to those products is Plant & Food Research, which uses its resources and research to enable its industry partners to produce a greater volume of better products with reduced environmental impacts and fewer inputs.

In order to touch multiple parts of the supply chain and optimise its partners' success, those research

areas include breeding and genomics, bioprotection, sustainable production, food innovation and seafood technologies.

Professional scientific research aiding agriculture and horticulture in New Zealand dates back to the early 1900s, but it wasn't until 2008 that Plant & Food Research was formed. Since then, its research services, tools, technologies, cultivars and other products it has developed have become fundamental to the operation of many of New Zealand's leading primary industries.

#### **MEASURING SUCCESS**

Charged with supporting New Zealand's plant and food industries, the success of Plant & Food Research is based on the impact it has on those industries. To do this, it uses performance measures such as export growth, industry profitability and sustainability, as well as feedback from key industry leaders via the governance frameworks that oversee the research investment process.

"It's about the benefit that our research has for New Zealand," CEO Peter Landon–Lane (over) says. "So it's not just research for its own sake. How we measure our success is how our research makes other organisations or other people successful."

Plant & Food Research is Pipfruit New Zealand's primary research partner, and its CEO Alan Pollard called Plant & Food Research a "world leading innovative organisation".

"Without its support and application, the industry would not be where it is today."

Further customer feedback supports Pollard's statement, with Plant & Food Research being described as competent, expert, professional, approachable and collaborative in an MBIE survey.

#### **HOW IT WORKS**

In order to maximise the impact of its work, Landon–Lane says it needs to figure out what research needs to be done in the first place, and that comes from its very strong customer focus.

"We work with them and find out what their objectives are, what their strategy is and what the research is that can best help them achieve that," he says.







This customer focus is one of the aspects that sets Plant & Food Research apart from other research institutes. Often research institutes are investigation-led to support education, which Landon-Lane says is excellent, but not suited to Plant & Food Research's work.

He says it's had customers from around the world find it hard to believe they can get exactly what they want from Plant & Food Research and have it delivered on time

"We benchmark ourselves against the best research institutes that we can find around the world. We are up there with the best."

A key example of Plant & Food Research's work is its response to the discovery of the kiwifruit disease PSA in New Zealand. Alongside Zespri and other collaborators, Plant & Food Research instigated a large research programme that supported the industry in maintaining a strong export position, including orchard management protocols, disease control and new cultivar development targets. The breeding programme led to the commercialisation of 'Gold3' (ZespriSunGold), a new cultivar now performing well on world markets in place of its predecessor.

For this effort, Zespri CEO Lain Jager commended Plant & Food Research for making a huge contribution to the kiwifruit industry's remarkable turnaround since the discovery.

We benchmark
ourselves against the best
research institutes that
we can find around the
world. We are up there
with the best.

CEO PETER LANDON-LANE

#### **BETTERING ITSELF**

Despite its evident success, Plant & Food Research strives for continuous improvement. Landon–Lane says it's an important part of its culture and how it works, because "if you think about it, science or scientific research, by nature is about continuous improvement".

"So it's an easy fit, to have a continuous improvement mindset in the company because it's how our work works."

That improvement includes investing its profits into new science capabilities and testing them through its Future Science Programme in order to anticipate what the market will require from it and its expertise.

It also includes improvement to its facilities, but most important is its investment in its staff.

"We are a service organisation. We don't have a big manufacturing plant churning out products. We have people, our product is knowledge and knowhow, advice and technology," Landon-Lane says. "So investing in our people would be the equivalent of Fonterra investing in the latest processing equipment."

#### **BEHIND THE SCENES**

Plant & Food Research has over 800 staff across 15 sites in Australia and New Zealand, and underpinning its performance is a commitment to fostering a positive workplace culture.

The culture is characterised by three shared values: (1) the creative application of its knowledge, (2) relationships based on honesty, mutual respect and trust, and (3) achievement through leadership.

All staff are offered professional development and encouraged to grow their careers through in-house leadership programmes, recognition and reward, as well as support for academic and professional qualifications.

Alongside this, all vacancies are advertised internally to provide opportunities for career advancement contributing to an annual staff turnover rate of 4.91 percent.

#### **KEY TO SUCCESS**

Landon–Lane summarises his key to success with the words "people, partnership and performance".

While he doesn't disregard the importance of scientific research, he says in order to maximise the impact it will have on other people and organisations, Plant & Food Research has to have the right culture.

He says "partnership" refers to working effectively with the people it's trying to benefit as well as its research partners, while "performance" sums up the delivery of its research and "running of a good ship".

He credits all Plant & Research staff for going above and beyond, both in research and for its partners. ◆



# Managing the risks of exporting with NZECO

Over the last 30 years, New Zealand has transformed into one of the most free-market based economies in the world. With exports accounting for around 30 percent of the country's GDP, the New Zealand Export Credit Office (NZECO) is giving Kiwi companies the confidence to achieve their export ambitions.

hen a leading Taiwanese retailer sought out high end drinks company NZ Natural Juice, it was the Napier-based company's biggest export opportunity yet. But even for the small \$50,000 shipment, 'payment-up-front' wasn't an option, and a loss of that size for a small growing business wasn't a risk the company were willing to make. They reached out to the private sector for insurance, but were soon referred to the New Zealand Export Credit Office (NZECO), a government agency which helps exporters manage payment risk, secure sales and access trade finance by providing buyer insurance and financial guarantees.

As one of several government export promotion agencies, which include NZ Trade and Enterprise, MFAT, MPI, and Callaghan Innovation, NZECO assists exporters when private insurers or banks may not have the capacity or appetite to support a certain business. In NZ Natural Juice's case, they were referred to NZECO by private insurers because of the small size of their shipment. "We got the financials of the buyer and made our credit assessment, and when we went back to NZ Natural Juice, we said we'd be prepared to take risk on this buyer," explains Head of NZECO Chris Chapman.

"We were happy to provide insurance which gave them the confidence to send their first shipment up to Taiwan with the view that if they're paid well and the Taiwanese retailer sell their goods well, it might be the beginning of a fruitful trading relationship."

Since its inception, NZECO has underwritten over \$1 billion worth of risk, which has supported \$2.5 billion worth of export transactions into 82 countries. And with increasing numbers of New Zealand companies exporting, the need for firms to protect themselves in the international market has become more crucial than ever. "Exporters should be thinking about how much financial risk they can afford," says Chapman. "The type of risks we're talking about are where a buyer might say to them that they don't want to pay everything upfront, or that they'd like to receive the goods and then maybe pay once they arrive in the country."

Although a third of the companies NZECO has helped have been small businesses with turnovers of less than \$5 million, it's also supported some of New Zealand's larger exporters as well. "We're always very interested in helping proven companies who are looking to make a step change," says Chapman. "Often these are manufacturing or ICT companies that might get a project that takes them

several months or years to deliver, and with larger projects, the risks of non-payment or financing are key things to consider."

One such company was Christchurch design and manufacturing firm HydroWorks which had landed itself an \$8.5 million contract to refurbish a hydroelectric plant in Queensland, Australia. Bank guarantees were required by the buyer before they would release advance payments to help with HydroWorks' working capital. Their bank was unable to issue these guarantees without additional security, which is where NZECO stepped in.

"If a company approaches us, we've got a team that will go out and meet the company to discuss their objectives and what challenges they might face," says Chapman. "People often underestimate the cost and time it'll take to achieve these sales, so we provide our perspective and determine whether there's a role for NZECO to play to help these businesses go further."

To find out more about insuring your business, contact NZECO on (04) 9176060, email nzeco@treasury.govt.nz, or visit www.nzeco.govt.nz





Karl Schwarz stood out from 1,000 others to land a sought after KPMG graduate role for 2017.

"My goal has always been to work in the corporate sphere with the big companies," says Schwarz.

The determined graduate is promptly ticking goals off his list. Having just completed a Bachelor of Law and a Bachelor of Business he's set to make the most out of his tax consultant graduate position at KPMG.

Focussing on economics and commercial law during his degree, Schwarz has the best of both worlds ahead of him –working in business while sitting his Legal Professionals with the firm to become a qualified lawyer.

He says, "whatever way you go in business, whether its in legal or professional services, a win-win attitude sets you up for the future".

Beating 1,000 other graduates to a role at KPMG, Schwarz is excited to join a large corporate culture – he even attended a KPMG ball before his role began.

"It's a really good culture there and I'm looking forward to working at a place that supports youth development. The culture is just as important to me as the actual training."

My goal has always been to work in the corporate sphere with the big companies

Schwarz has already experienced corporate culture as part of a nine-week prerequisite placement at Sovereign Insurance, as part of AUT Business School's Co-operative Education programme.

Schwarz worked as a Commercial Arrangements Assistant as part of this workplace integrated learning and gained experience in risk compliance and analytics. He was then offered an extended

role at the company until the end of the year, before his graduate programme began.

"The business degree completely set me up for life in the corporate world. I wanted to get experience in a professional corporate environment, so my Co-operative Education has given me valuable experience."

Most importantly his expectations were adjusted to ready him for the corporate world.

"It's given me an advantage because going into my new role at KPMG I have experience working under high pressure, in a hierarchical system. I've developed new skills in a short time, so I feel like I'll be quite a step ahead of the other graduates."

As for the law side of his degree, Schwarz says this was essential to attain skills for a different side of business, broadening his horizons and giving him an edge over other career competitors.

Overall Schwarz enjoyed his time at AUT, with smaller classes, one-on-one attention and frequent feedback.

"The teaching style is really important; engagement with lecturers and professors is at every level, including lectures and workshops."

Schwarz took all opportunities that came his way. In 2014 he won the national Buddle Findlay Negotiation Competition with teammate Rebecca Cross, before going on to compete in Australia. He also held the position of President of the Law Students' Society while at AUT Law School.

"It is due to AUT's supportive environment that all that was possible. You're not just a number at AUT they support you personally and are always looking to engage with industry," he says. "You've got a sense of connectivity to the real world alongside going to class and learning the theory."

As Schwarz enters the world of the 'big four' accounting and business firms he's setting his sights even further. The international scope of KPMG, which encourages overseas secondments, is inspiring him to think big.

"The fact there is an office everywhere in the world means there is no limit to where you can work." •



With a relationship stretching back to 2012 when Advanced Security Group won their first ever Excellence in Business Support Award, donating an AUT Business School scholarship seemed like a natural choice for ASG's Executive Director Mike Marr. The ASG Bachelor of Business Scholarship, as it's formally known, gives students an opportunity to not only have their fees contributed to financially, but also to gain valuable experience through paid part-time employment at the company's headquarters in Auckland.

"We saw a need and desire to align ourselves with a university, so we thought the scholarship was a neat idea," says Marr, who's also involved in AUT Faculty of Business, Economics and Law's Shadow a Leader programme. "We want to give back to our community and help shape future leaders, and I think it's the responsibility of all businesses to do this."

For businesses hoping to shape the next generation's workforce, scholarships act as a great way to train and recruit future young talent.

Businesses can select their students through an application and interview process, and customize the scholarship to fit the company's wants and

## We want to give back to our community and help shape future leaders

needs. For ASG, Marr insists that having new scholarship recipients work at the company every year brings much needed innovation and freshness into the business, as well as providing invaluable experience for budding graduates.

"It gives them the opportunity to cut their teeth in the business world. They're able to be involved from the grassroots level and are able to see a business idea develop from scratch. While working with us, these students get experience with things like writing up press releases and using social media effectively. It's great because they're involved in the process from the beginning."

For 2016 scholarship recipient Matthew Twiname, working with ASG as their marketing intern

enabled him to learn directly from a successful business. "It provided me with real world applications for many of the theories I studied at university, and gave me real challenges to encounter," says Twiname. "This enabled me to quickly grow my skill set and improve through feedback from the team."

As part of the TPT Group, ASG's scholarship students also get the chance to be involved in other sectors of the organisation. For example, ASG Technology (formerly known as E-Guard) is a technology incubator charged with creating innovative ways to deliver enhanced security. "We're an entrepreneurial business," says Marr. "We want our students to be in an innovative, agile, and fast-paced environment

"We get significant value back from this because it brings a freshness back in organisationally. We have very smart students coming in from AUT every year, who not only have the right skill sets, but the right attitude and work ethic as well. Every student brings something different and there's constant reinvention. They're really able to challenge what we're doing as a business."

## **AUT South success**

The first year of the Bachelor of Law (LLB) programme at AUT's South Campus has been a resounding success, says senior lecturer Amy Benjamin.

The first year of the Bachelor of Law (LLB) programme at AUT's South Campus has been a resounding success – at least according to senior lecturer Amy Benjamin. "Overall the first year has gone very well," she says of the programme's inaugural year. "The relatively small class sizes have enabled very good student-student and student-lecturer interaction."

A solid pass rate was one of the biggest successes, Benjamin explains, which was especially gratifying because many of the students came from backgrounds where tertiary education was not commonplace. "Luckily there have been no real surprises, certainly no negative ones," she says. "We have been pleasantly surprised by the strong

interest in legal studies shown by the South Auckland community, as evidenced by the fact that actual enrolment numbers substantially exceeded expected enrolment numbers. We came away from our first year with the impression that targeted out-of-class support for our South students (such as the encouragement of the formation of informal study groups) will be an important aid to their learning and overall academic success."

That's also something AUT South Campus Executive Director Richard Hall agrees with. "The Law Degree provides an opportunity for the people of south Auckland to study this prestigious degree in their own community, removing the necessity of having to travel to the city centre," he explains.

With students continuing their law studies at South Campus in the next academic year, and more students beginning their studies, Benjamin says she believes the future is bright. "Increasing our

academic presence in South Auckland, which represents one of the largest and fastest growing communities in New Zealand, not only responds to this goal, but meets what seems to be the genuine longing of the South Auckland community for greater academic opportunities."



## **INTELLIGENT INK**

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## Changing the law



Professor Warren Brookbanks joined AUT as Professor of Criminal Law and Justice Studies in April 2016 and has already established his Centre for Non-Adversarial Justice.

Paperwork is piled high in Brookbanks' law school office, which is not surprising seeing as he directs the Centre for Non-Adversarial Justice alongside teaching, researching, book writing and keynote speaking.

He is a man on a mission. "My vision for the Centre is to provide leadership in the developing area of non-adversarial justice, working with legal professionals, academics and policy makers to explore and develop areas where non-adversarial

solutions can benefit consumers of legal services. People that are currently cut out of access to justice will have a better opportunity to have their issues resolved."

AUT's Charles Rickett says he regards Brookbanks highly and "jumped" at the opportunity for him to lead the Centre. "As Dean of the Law School, I see this as both a vehicle for the production of a high level of research and a meaningful contribution to problems in our society."

Referring to some court proceedings as "warfare", where issues are battled out in front of an umpire judge, he says the legal process can be draining and some cases need to focus on relationships rather than adversarial disputes.

Although Brookbanks calls himself "a black letter lawyer," he is leading the pack in seeking better legal solutions. The Centre is the first of its kind in New Zealand and is part of a global trend towards alternative legal systems.

As the Vice President of Auckland District Law Society and Principal at Pidgeon Law, Joanna Pidgeon, says: "Non-adversarial justice seems to be the way of the future ... With the Centre and research that is done there, I think the profession will be watching to see what ways we can introduce these practices."

For Brookbanks, an increased interest in alternatives to justice represents a "sea change" in the approach to legal problem solving.

Judge Lisa Tremewan and Judge Ema Aitken also recognised the need for change in establishing New Zealand's first adult Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment (AODT) Courts. They borrowed heavily from international best practice when the Courts were established and were "acutely aware" of the need for the country to grow its own research base on non-adversarial criminal approaches.

In a joint statement they say: "Our legal landscape is changing in a way which is fit for the 21st

century, but it will be important that we continually rigorously analyse our approaches. We already see significantly better outcomes from the AODT Court than the 'business as usual' approach for the cohort with whom we are dealing, but we will continue to seek the best possible outcomes both in the quality of the work, and its scope. The way to do this is primarily through ongoing research and evaluation."

Brookbanks says New Zealand is ahead in the world of restorative justice. Although problemsolving courts are relatively recent here, they have had large support.

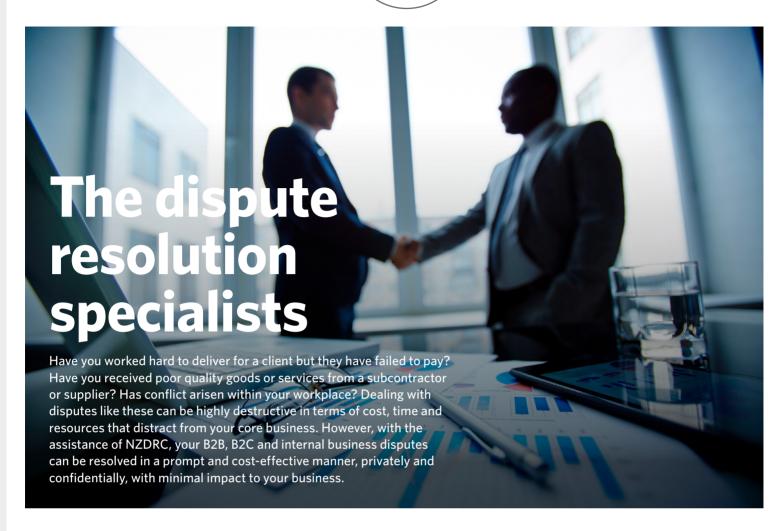
"We have embraced the model with a degree of enthusiasm that has left overseas commentators quite gobsmacked, both at the success of the model and the incredibly successful way the judges have accepted it and worked with it."

My vision
for the centre is to
provide leadership in the
developing area of nonadversarial justice.

A sense of enthusiasm for the Centre has led to collaboration across disciplines. AUT Professor in Forensic Mental Health, Brian McKenna, says it is important that researchers like himself work with Brookbanks and address the court system from a mental health angle. "There are a whole lot of possibilities to explore with the interface of mental illness in criminal proceedings... It benefits people at the end of the day."

Collaboration is also inter-institutional. Senior Research Fellow at the Faculty for Medical and Health Sciences at the University of Auckland, Katey Thom, says: "There is a need for such a Centre that is multi-disciplined in focus as non-adversarial justice commands collaboration with professionals beyond law."

Brookbanks was semi-retired when he moved to AUT, but now he is setting-up a advisory board, website and conferences. Although he admits there is a lot of work to be done – and paper work to be filed – the Centre aims to engage with government departments and help develop policy once it is more established.



he New Zealand Dispute Resolution
Centre (NZDRC) is the leading provider
of private commercial dispute resolution
services in New Zealand, delivering end-to-end fully
administered services tailored to meet the needs of
domestic and global commercial parties.

Its clients can secure the immediate appointment of adjudicators, arbitrators, mediators and experts who are respected and recognised as leaders in dispute resolution both locally and internationally. NZDRC prides itself on supporting a wide range of businesses with fair, prompt, and cost-effective dispute resolution and conflict management services.

Director John Green says NZDRC's panellists are selected for their extensive knowledge and experience and comprise retired judges, leading

barristers, academics, and industry and dispute resolution experts.

"We choose to work with the very best," he says. "Inclusion on our panels is by invitation only."

NZDRC's website is the main portal of contact, providing extensive information about dispute resolution processes and the services on offer. Those services can be accessed by completing a simple online application form, which Green says will always be processed within 24 hours.

NZDRC then does the running around for you, by appointing one of its people to deal with the matter in accordance with its unique suite of rules and case managing the process through its private registry.

Those rules, governing NZDRC's services, have been developed to ensure its services are consistently delivered in accordance with domestic and international best practice. The rules are robust and certain, yet innovative in their commonsense approach to challenging issues such as appointment, urgent interim relief, expedited procedures, joinder, confidentiality, representation, mediation, expert evidence, appeals and costs.

With NZDRC constantly striving to remain at the cutting edge, it has invested significant resources into the 2016 review of the rules and a new suite will be launched later in the year.

"No business wants to use our services, but inevitably they will all need to at some point in time," Green says. "So to have access to that level of efficiency is really important to ensure there is cash flow in the business and certainty in relation to their business dealings."



## REIMAGINING THE CLASSROOM

### Integrating insights for 21st century business.

In an ever-shifting, fast-paced business environment, companies are looking more and more for multidisciplinary skill sets in future employees. In order to prepare students for this highly digital and technological world, AUT Business School has combined four separate business majors to create its newest and most innovative degree, known as Market Insights.

The recently introduced three-year course works on the premise that marketing, advertising, retailing and sales don't operate in isolation or in single marketplaces. Consumers and organisations are interacting in completely new ways and, to be able to compete in today's business environment, graduates need an understanding of all of these closely related fields.

"We realised that businesses want integrated generalists, so we thought we'd do it a different way," says Professor Roger Marshall, one of the leaders of the MI:MARS (for Marketing Insights: Marketing, Advertising, Retailing & Sales)
Programme. "For instance, you can't be a good advertising person unless you've got a good grasp behind the psychology of marketing management."

We realised that
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so we thought we'd do it
a different way.

The first year of Market Insights serves as an introduction to fundamental business concepts, while the second year equips students with the tools and ideas to go forward. The third year is all about applications, which is where Market Insights' dedicated studio comes in. The studio is

a space for students to study, learn, and work on their group projects.

"All the students are encouraged to do primary research, such as surveying their peers or surveying people online," says PhD student and Market Insights teaching assistant Drew Franklin. "They're also encouraged to do things like prototyping and concept testing. One group working on a sports drink have been prototyping bottle shapes and sizes, and then using the colour 3D printer to print and test these out."

Also in the third year, students are broken into teams of four where they're assigned to do a real

project alongside the help of a business mentor. "We've got over 40 business mentors and they keep the students grounded in reality by asking the hard questions, such as whether they have a sustainable supply chain," explains Professor Marshall. "Then at the end of the semester, we have a conference where all of the student teams present their projects to mentors, fellow students and staff. It's sort of a friendly Dragon's Den."

With real-life projects and workplace experiences, the course aims to reflect industry applicability, allowing students to be more effective when they hit the ground. "We have all sorts of industry involvement, from insurance to manufacturing, and they're able to lend a real tactical eye to the project," says Franklin, who brings his own marketing and media insights and experience to his teaching.

"It's got to be practical. As well as being business thought-leaders, we're training young people for business," adds Professor Marshall. "It's part of the university's approach to link more with business, and this is a very good way for students and academics to build a profile and find out what it is that the industry wants in new recruits."





# The great unknown of automation



Robots are yet to take over the workplace, but keep your eyes peeled, says Professor Jarrod Haar.



From shopping trolleys to smartphones, the daily and practical usage of artificial intelligence is no longer just a figment of imagination. In a survey this year, fifty-six per cent of New Zealanders reported that they

'definitely' thought their jobs would be impacted by Al and automation in the next 10 years, reflecting a very dystopian concern that robots will take over everyone's jobs.

Should we be concerned? Probably, according to Professor Jarrod Haar, AUT lecturer and Deputy Director of the NZ Work Research Institute. But because of the rapidly changing nature of technology and industry, it's hard to say for sure.

"We've had industrial revolutions where new jobs and sectors have emerged, like the service sector, for example. So if there's a fourth Industrial Revolution and robots take our jobs, new jobs and sectors for humans to work in might be created as well. But ultimately, it's still a great unknown."

One example where advanced automation may have an impact in is driving. With companies like Google and Tesla delving into the world of driverless cars, truck, taxi, and delivery drivers may all be undone by the power of robotics.

But that future may still be a way off. Earlier this year, the US reported its first driverless car related crash. The car's computer failed to pick up a truck with a white trailer passing in front, which it mistook for open space. Automation has also proved problematic with technologies we're already familiar with. In England, for example, high rates of theft have caused supermarket chains to discuss the possibility of eliminating self-checkout machines altogether.

"Robotics has become so advanced and dexterous that it's able to mimic intricate handling jobs that only humans used to be able to do," says Professor Haar. "But I think the reality is there's still a few things to be ironed out, and that ironing out might take five or ten years, maybe even more. We like to think of robotics as perfect answers to workplace challenges, but they may not necessarily be so perfect anyhow.

Robotics has become so advanced and dexterous that it's able to mimic intricate handling jobs that only humans used to be able to do

For universities, the challenges are equally as daunting. With the task of training the country's future workers, tertiary institutions will have to rethink their approach to learning. "There are suggestions we focus more on soft skills like adaptability, team work, social intelligence, critical thinking, and problem solving," says Professor Haar. "These are things we already teach, but we may find whole papers focusing around soft skills in the future."

Despite overriding fears over the future of robotics, Professor Haar insists that automation's positive effects must be remembered as well. "The US Navy is doing research of firefighting robots, which will help avoid putting lives at risk," he says. "Robotics can be used in really positive ways—it's not all necessarily negative and evil."

Ultimately, the lesson for all workers is a simple one: approach with caution. "You should be keeping an eye open and not just assuming that it'll never happen to you," he says. "Otherwise, you will run the risk of being blindsided."



## Nothing ventured, **NOTHING GAINED**

Daysha Tonumaipea has high hopes for her family treasures business, OliverTree. Offering items like framed family trees, she has big plans for her business and is banking on the AUT Venture Fund to help realise her vision.

"Going through AUT Venture Fund is like boot camp for a business startup. There's so much to do in so little time," she says. "I learnt how to refine a business plan, to present/pitch, and to capitalise on criticism and advice. I came into the AUT Venture Fund focused on one aspect of my business, and left with a shift in focus. This simple idea I had been holding onto for some time became a bit more realistic and attainable."

Roger Stokell, Associate Dean for International and Engagement at the AUT Faculty of Business, Economics and Law, says the Venture Fund exists precisely for people like Tonumaipea.

"It is a way for a young entrepreneur to get going," he explains. "We provide assistance beyond the product — especially in the formulation of a realistic business plan. Often a good idea fails because no logical way forward has been established — including a proper financial, marketing and even manufacturing plan. Some great products might even have to be developed overseas, which may need some crucial practical and professional advice."

Professional advice has been a big help for Nick Barrett, who runs a digital publishing company with an app called Imagistory. "There's no doubt about it, the Venture Fund played a vital role in helping Imagistory start and get to where it is today," he









says. "Not only with financial investment but with mentoring and business expertise support as well. Going through the competition process and having to write a business plan and pitch the idea to a panel of judges was also very helpful. The process forces you to think all aspects of the business through and to ask the hard questions, which is really important before you become too invested and it's hard to pivot or change."

Stokell says that's precisely the advantage the Venture Fund offers. "AUT brings together a huge amount of talent – firstly in the many students who come together on campus to study in the many fields and disciplines the university offers," he says. "And secondly in our staff, who bring such considerable knowledge and expertise and experience to these fields and disciplines. It feels

like entrepreneurship is now in the AUT DNA."

Barrett agrees. "Every business starts with an idea, and it is initiatives like the Venture Fund that help at that very early stage to kick-start the idea and transform it into a business," he explains. "Having some financial support and guidance when you have almost nothing but your idea, makes everything possible."

And Tonumaipea? "Joining a Venture Fund programme gives you the validation you need to know that, yes, you have something special and, yes, it could work!" she says. "Also, what do you have to lose? You are coming into an environment with people, who have the know-how and experience, that will allow you to see and do more with what you have." •

# The Pacific advantage

AUT Business School's Agnes Masoe believes Pacific people have a head start when it comes to professional careers like accounting, thanks to their upbringing.

As part of a Pacific community and family we learn from word go how to hold ourselves, manage ourselves and uphold the honour of our family and village.

We tend to grow up in a hierarchical communities with clear rules and a defined role for everyone. We know how to play our part in the group and how to respect others and the role they play.

There is usually a time to lead and a time to be led, a time to speak and a time to listen. So, much is common with a professional working environment.

Like many Pacific people, the weekends of my childhood were full of Sunday school and church events. There was no question that we would take part in countless skits and performances for our community, as well as achieving well in our religious studies. We practised and prepared hard for each of these, keen to represent our families to the best of our abilities.

#### PERFORMANCE CULTURE

In that setting, without realising it, we were cultivating strong public speaking skills and the confidence to present ideas to a group.

For me, and most Pacific people, this has always been just the way things are in our world. But my experiences as an accountant and now an accounting researcher and academic have led me to see this as more than our cultural heritage – it is a career advantage.

This new way of seeing the gifts of my upbringing first struck me when I was praised as a corporate accountant. My bosses liked the way I came to

meetings so well prepared, listened carefully to the views of others and waited for the right opportunity to share my own insights.

The upbringing I had experienced was now benefiting me in my professional career, probably equally as much as all the learning I had done at university. I was being recognised and promoted for how I conducted myself, something that I credit entirely to my traditional Samoan upbringing.

As a Samoan woman about to complete my third degree in accounting, my career choice has surprised more than a few people along the way. These reactions have made me wonder why accounting is often not seen as a natural career choice for Pacific people, particularly in light of the useful professional attributes like poise, confidence and humility that our cultures tend to gift us.

Some people assume I went into accounting because I'm amazing at maths (I'm average). Others ask why a Samoan woman has chosen accounting (I love it). And plenty of people wonder aloud why I've gone as far as doing a PhD.

#### LOVING LEARNING

In my case, the love of accounting (and education in general) has been almost genetic. I am the product of a family that prizes education, and has its fair share of accountants.

Growing up in Samoa, our Sunday lunch conversations tended to revolve around accounting – my mother and her three accountant brothers often described the world in these terms, and the fact that my parents ran two family businesses meant business and accounting ideas surrounded me.

I found my own passion for accounting by helping out in my parents' businesses as a teenager, learning all about invoices, receipts and supplier payments in a real-world context.

So why don't more Pacific people tend to see accounting as a natural career choice? Having mentored Pacific students in accounting since college, I have realised that getting started in accounting can be difficult if the field and its language is not familiar.

But it's usually just a matter of learning the fundamentals and realising that accounting is another way of describing the world around us. I was lucky to have my mother, an accountant, to mentor me. She used the reality of daily life and our own family businesses to teach me all about accounting and I have in turn adopted her "real life" approach to help other Pacific students achieve their goals in accounting.

Once a student, Pacific or not, realises that accounting is just another way of thinking, things tend to fall into place pretty easily.

Finding a mentor is a great way 'in', and I am proud to work at the AUT Business School, where there is plenty of support and inspiration for all students, including those who are Pacific or Maori.

Accounting is an option for anyone who enjoys making sense of the world around them and if that person happens to also be Pacific I think they may just find they have an extra competitive advantage in accounting and other professional careers.

Agnes Masoe is a lecturer in accounting at the AUT Business School. From this year, students have been able complete a Bachelor of Business in Accounting at AUT's South Campus.



## **FUTURE PROOF**











AUT prides itself on producing not only business and law professionals, but also future leaders of industry. So, as part of the Shadow a Leader programme, it takes them out of the classroom and into the real world to show them what's in store when they graduate.

John F. Kennedy once said: "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other" and it's an idea that AUT is engraining in its students and the future leaders of New Zealand businesses with its Shadow a Leader day.

The industry focused, educational initiative is designed to offer students from the AUT Faculty of Business, Economics and Law a unique insight into the complexities, opportunities and challenges business leaders face, by allowing them to follow a business leader for a day.

The experience is extended to secondary school students from around Auckland, who see a future in business or law, and have proven themselves to be deserving based on achievement and leadership potential.

When the initiative started in 2012, there were just four teams involved, made up of a leader, an AUT student and a secondary school student. By 2013 the number of teams increased to over 50 and this year, 75 business leaders participated alongside 75 AUT students and 75 secondary school students.

Students get an insight into a wide range of industries including design, advertising and PR, construction and property, not for profit, technology and the professional services.

The day begins with a breakfast at AUT for all participants, where the students meet their leaders and hear from an inspiring young leader. In 2016, the keynote speaker was AUT Business School alumna, Co-founder, and Managing Director of The Pallet Kingdom, Adriana Avendano Christie.

I learnt that having a positive attitude is key, and that all experience is good experience.

I now feel more confident, inspired and motivated to finish my university degree and pursue a career in business.

AUT BUSINESS SCHOOL STUDENT, LAURA PERRY

Business leaders set the agenda for the day, students follow them into business planning and strategy meetings, sales and finance meetings, site visits, company marketing discussions, HR consultations, product manufacturing and factory tours, board and senior staff meetings.

For both AUT and high school students, these experiences provide important contacts for their future, as well as an understanding of what it takes to succeed in the leader's field of endeayour.

However, the benefits don't stop there. The day provides a liaison for AUT with Auckland secondary schools. Participating business leaders have the chance to make a contribution to the development of the future generation of leaders.

#### THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

One of those AUT Business Scool students was Laura Perry, who shadowed NZTE General Manager David Downs, and says the networking opportunities and advice she received throughout the day was invaluable.

"I learnt that having a positive attitude is key, and that all experience is good experience. I now feel more confident, inspired and motivated to finish my university degree and pursue a career in business."

Morgan MacFadyen had a similar experience while shadowing *Idealog* Co-founder Vincent Heeringa and says the insights she gained about the future of the media industry, and life in general, will be at the forefront of her mind when she enters the workforce.

For Elizabeth Mikhaylova, her experience shadowing Warehouse Stationary and Torpedo7 CEO Pejman Okhovat, not only gave her an insight into what a leader's day is comprised of, she got to see what goes on behind the scenes of the businesses.

"The day was full of excitement and gave me an unforgettable experience, not to mention how many interesting people I met during the day."

AUT students also had a chance to put their knowledge of their chosen area of study to the test by guiding their younger secondary school student team members.

#### A YOUNGER GENERATION

Sacred Heart College student John Gorham, describes his day shadowing BNZ Head of Enterprise Technology Services Aaron Toateleges, as one of the greatest opportunities he's had in his schooling years.

"To me as a student, the perfect day would provide excellent opportunities to learn, network and be inspired, and I have now an experience which ticks all three boxes."

Diocesan School for Girls student Katie Henry, also considers her time shadowing Diversity Works CEO Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie as inspirational. She learnt that achieving success does not have to mean abandoning morals.

"It was so reassuring for a young woman such as myself to see that many businesses within New Zealand are working hard to create workplaces that are rich in diversity and equality."

A similarly eye-opening experience was had by Long Bay College student Kayla Bergh, who says while shadowing Abano Healthcare CEO Richard Keys, she learned it's okay to not know where she wants to end up as this will change over the years. Instead she says: "as long as I stay true to myself and do what I love then I'll be fine".

After spending the day with Ministry for the Pacific Peoples Northern Regional Manager Fonoti Seti Talamaivao, Onehunga High Business School student Sabina Manu took away the lesson that "working towards your passion is more important than working for money" and hopes to apply that wisdom in the future.

Rangitoto College student Steven Su credits his leader, BNZ head of retail Tony Arthur, for strengthening his understanding of what makes great leadership.

"This experience taught me that being a leader is not just being able to connect and build relationships with people around you but also the ability to let go and trust them."

#### MORE THAN JUST A DAY

Many of the participating students now look forward to further correspondence with their leaders in the future, whether that be for advice or employment opportunities, something a 2014 Shadow a Leader student showed is possible.

Bin Xu, a graduate of AUT's Business School, followed Tony Gibson, CEO of Ports of Auckland, during Shadow a Leader and now works with him as Commercial Analyst at the port, promoting it to Chinese clients. He describes it as a "dream job" and says his Shadow a Leader experience opened the door for him.

While the theoretical aspects of learning are crucial, there's no substitute for the real thing. And AUT's strong industry connections allow its own students, and potential future AUT students, to learn the types of things you can only learn on the job.







# Getting the employability edge

In today's changing world, having the technical skills are no longer the only requirements to get a job. Instead, employers are looking beyond academic grades and into soft skills. Hoping to give its students the best chance of employment, the university is offering the chance to develop and show off those skills with the AUT Edge.

The AUT Edge Award launched in May 2016 and is already nearing its 800th sign up, with approximately one third of those students being from the AUT Business School.

The first stream requires students to complete 50 hours of verified volunteer work and so far, participating students have volunteered with the SPCA and helped out with bucket collections, beach clean ups and the hospice.

The next is the 'employability stream' during which, students must attend 10 workshops and events to improve their employability skills. There are four mandatory workshops designed to get CVs and LinkedIn profiles up to graduate standard, and teach the students about interviews and how to articulate who they are and what they are looking for. Six other employability workshops and presentations can be chosen from any put on by the university.

The third stream is 'leadership and challenge', which sees students attend a presentation on leadership and complete 18 hours in a role of responsibility. This role might include being the president or secretary of an AUT club, being a sports team captain, a peer mentor or student ambassador.

For those in the Faculty of Business, Economics and Law, Shadow a Leader is listed as a challenge, and leadership positions in one of its student clubs is considered a role of responsibility.



We have been out
to employers who have
said to us: 'We are not
just interested in
degrees.' They're looking
to see all those extra
things that those
students have done.

Once all streams are completed, the final step for students is to complete a reflection about their experiences across the streams and explore the soft skills they have developed.

Also referred to as C-skills, these include: collaboration, co-operation, community, curiosity and creativity. Alongside academic grades, these can set one applicant apart from another, however they cannot always be taught in a classroom. Instead, it's the experiences gained through

programmes such as AUT Edge that develops them in the students

They are then captured and evidenced on academic transcripts with the AUT Edge endorsement for employers to see.

"We have been out to employers who have said to us: We are not just interested in degrees;" Anna Williams, Director of Student Employability, says. "They're looking to see all those extra things that those students have done."

Having employability skills beyond academic grades is particularly the case for those in the Business School, as having technical knowledge is no longer the only requirement of employers.

David Trought, Director of Careers and Employability AUT Faculty of Business, Economics and Law, gives the example of those completing a Bachelor of Business and heading into accounting. People think of accountants as number crunchers, but they are not. Instead, they are business consultants and as part of that role, communication skills and creative thinking are essential.

While it is still in its infancy, the university is actively promoting AUT Edge to students. Trought says in time, AUT Edge should become something students self-select if they want to compete in the job market.

"Eventually we will see a point where an AUT student goes for a position and the employer will go 'why haven't you got an Edge Award, because this other applicant has;" he says.

Williams also credits the university and the award as giving its students the best chance of getting a job, which is why students are at university in the first place.

"It's just making our students a lot savvier and we believe that it will give them the edge and that is what we are looking to do."



STUDENT
EXPERIENCES
LAURA TOULMIN –
Third year: Conjoint
Bachelor of Arts and
Bachelor of Business,
Major in Event
Management and
Market Insights

#### Why did you sign up to AUT Edge?

AUT stresses employability and they said that this

would help develop those skills that employers are looking for.

#### What have you completed towards it so far?

I've completed all the leadership aspect, half of the employability and a bit of volunteering work for Auckland City Mission.

#### Were any of those activities things you were doing before you signed up to AUT Edge?

I've been volunteering quite a bit over the last few years anyway but it made me look at more social organisations — even though that wasn't a requirement it was just to give back to the community a bit. And for the leadership, I am a student ambassador and was already partaking in quite a few events within the school within AUT that in turn have ticked those boxes off.

#### Is it a manageable on top of your university work?

It's not a burden at all, it's acknowledging what I am already doing above my university work. I might be volunteering more than I was before, but that's not a bad thing.



JASON MOI –
Postgraduate
Diploma in Business
Administration
Why did you sign up
to AUT Edge?
It offers very
comprehensive

personal enrichment

that makes me

relevant to the New Zealand market. Not only does it have volunteering hours, it also offers me employability workshops and leadership opportunities that help me enhance my skills.

#### What have you completed towards it so far?

I have done my leadership hours, attended one leadership workshop, completed 18 hours of something out of my comfort zone, represented my club in contests and helped it organise some events – I am part of the Management Consultancy Club. I've also almost completed my employability workshops and am 25 hours into my volunteering. Right now, I am focusing on planting trees for Conservation New Zealand.

#### What is the biggest thing you will get out of the award?

It's a great opportunity to enrich your skill set and your networking capabilities, because by volunteering you get to meet so many people. If there is one takeaway from this award it's the volunteering activities I am doing. At first I thought it was a hassle, as you have to do 50 hours and I have a short time frame, but the more I do, the more self-driven I get because I meet so many interesting people and it's an

amazing experience.



HOLLY SUTICH – Second year: Conjoint Bachelor of Business and Bachelor of Communications

#### Why did you sign up to AUT Edge?

I thought it was a really good way to improve my soft skills, but also have all my skills collated in one award. So when I graduate it puts something extra on my transcript that will make me stand out from other graduates.

#### What have you completed towards it so far?

So far I have been focusing on the employability section and attending a lot of different workshops that AUT puts on. I went to one called a Match Ready Employability Event for marketing and communication students and it was a full day with lots of sessions in regards to different aspects of employability with people from our industry. For the challenge section, I am a student ambassador and involved in Co.Starters, which is an AUT business start-up programme. Both give me hours towards AUT Edge.

#### Is it manageable on top of your university work?

There is a lot of hours in total, but you can pace it over the course of your degree, so I'm not stressed about it. A lot of the stuff I enjoy doing and I want to do it because it helps me grow as a person and enchances my qualification when I leave university.

#### **Becoming Match Ready**

Match Ready, a student employability series, demonstrates the emphasis AUT is putting into supporting students' transition into successful careers, by helping them develop their C-skills and providing opportunities for them to network with future employers.

According to AUT Director of Special Initiatives and Match Ready host, Robert Bruce, the May event was the best in the series so far. It targeted students from across the Business School and Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies who are interested in entering the Marketing/Communications industry. The event received input from some of the biggest names in advertising, public relations, marketing and event

Each Match Ready workshop is customised according to the specific sector the students aims to work in. The half-day workshops then provide those preparing to enter the job market with an



opportunity to meet prospective employers and hear first-hand what they're looking for.

The interactive sessions support the AUT interNZ initiative, which matches students with paid internships in New Zealand and overseas (see story page 26). Inviting students to this 'hot house' employability event helps AUT to present employers with a strong pool of well-presented AUT talent. But the events have a wider appeal than just preparing students for internships offered through AUT interNZ. They are becoming an important part of AUT's cache of resources that prepare students to become job makers and job takers, says Anna Williams, Director Student Employability.

"Along with our core services supporting AUT students to enter the employment market, initiatives like Match Ready and the AUT Edge Award complement academic qualifications to create highly employable and well-rounded AUT graduates," she says.

The Match Ready initiative has gone from strength to strength since launching last year, says Bruce. "Its success has been largely due to the great collaboration between AUT staff, students, industry and the professions."

With more and more internships becoming available at AUT interNZ every week, any student interested in internship opportunities should be encouraged to create a profile at AUT interNZ.

### **EXPORT YOURSELF - STUDY OVERSEAS**



#### **ASHLEY THOMAS**

I would recommend going on an exchange in a heartbeat. Allow yourself the opportunity to create friendships within 24 hours that will last a lifetime. Attempt to learn the language. Open your eyes to the incredible world around us.



#### **LUKE CHIVERS**

It is incredible how doing a study exchange can give you a fresh perspective.

My semester on exchange expanded my knowledge of culture, history, people, as well as enabled me to delve into diverse papers which were cross-credited to my AUT degree.



#### **FREYA ODDY**

Moving to another country, you are exposed to so many situations that you wouldn't usually be exposed to by staying at home. Learning how to adapt to these situations gives you invaluable character building experience and a different kind of independence. I gained so much self-confidence through this.



#### MANLI HUANG

Hearnt so much academically, particularly from the different perspectives advocated by my lecturers and classmates. I have become a more independent individual and also had the opportunity to volunteer within a local neighbourhood.



#### LIAN THAY

My exchange allowed me to break out of my comfort zone, meet new people, and travel to over 20 different countries. So take the opportunity and go on a student exchange because you won't regret it!



#### **BRONSON WILSON**

It was a truly life changing experience that I would recommend to anyone wanting to broaden their horizons, meei lifelong friends from around the world and even learn a new language if you're up to it! Tot ziens!



#### **AUT BUSIN**

#### CANADA

- HEC Montréal
- · John Molson School of Business, Concordia University
- Faculty of Business Administration, Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Telfer School of Management, University of Ottawa

#### DENMARK

· Copenhagen Business School

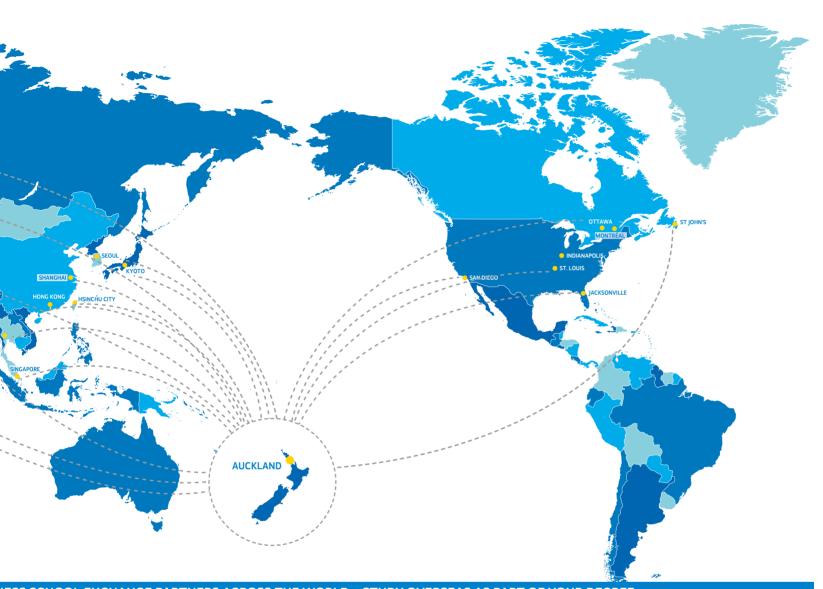
#### FINLAND

· School of Business, Aalto University

#### FRANCE

- KEDGE Business School (created by BEM and Euromed Management)
- Grenoble Ecole de Management
- Groupe ESSCA Angers
- HEC Paris





#### IESS SCHOOL EXCHANGE PARTNERS ACROSS THE WORLD – STUDY OVERSEAS AS PART OF YOUR DEGREE

#### GERMANY

- · Mannheim Business School, University of Mannheim
- WHU Otto Beisheim School of Management

#### HUNGARY

· Groupe ESSCA Budapest

#### INDIA

· Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Indore (for MBA students

#### JAPAN

College of Business Administration, Ritsumeikan University

#### KOREA

· Korea University Business School, Seoul

#### NORWAY

• BI Norwegian Business School, Oslo

#### PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

- · College of Business, City University of Hong Kong
- · Groupe ESSCA Shanghai

#### SINGAPORE

Nanyang Business School, Nanyang Technological University

· Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales, Universidad de Navarra

• Jönköping International Business School, Jönköping University

#### TAIWAN

· National Chiao Tung University

#### **THAILAND**

• Faculty of Commerce and Accountancy, Chulalongkorn University

#### THE NETHERLANDS

- School of Economics, Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam
- School of Business and Economics, Maastricht University

#### UNITED KINGDOM

· Strathclyde Business School, University of Strathclyde

#### **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

- · Coggin College of Business, University of North Florida
- College of Business, Butler University
- College of Business Administration, University of Missouri, St. Louis
- College of Business Administration, San Diego State University

To find out more about our International Exchange programme, visit www.aut.ac.nz/business/international-exchange



Human resources is changing.

Jarrod Haar, Professor of Human
Resource Management at AUT's
city campus, speaks to Engage about
what it all means.

**Engage:** What role does data play in mapping HR? What does that mean?

Jarrod Haar: Overall, this is an area that is growing – especially as organisations see the value in data and its potential. Not all organisations will have the size and capabilities to collect, analyse and understand data. But organisations that embrace the potential of data are likely to have a better understanding of their employees.

**Engage:** You've talked before about how HR has traditionally been seen as the "soft" side of business, but that data and analytics are changing that. In what ways are things changing?

Jarrod Haar: I guess HR gets called the 'soft side' and not because it's just about supporting and nurturing and helping organisations and employees. It doesn't have the 'hard' data that say an accounting balance sheet might have. So, HR analytics is about providing some hard data (numbers) on employee behaviours and attitudes and how these might influence the bottom line. For example, we might look at a large organisation with 50 sites and determine that the employees in

the top ten sites outperform the bottom ten sites by 25 percent. In this regard, HR can then have 'hard data' to show so they can get a better grasp about why personnel changes and training and development need to be introduced in, say, those bottom ten sites. So, HR analytics brings data to the forefront to aid decision making.

**Engage:** Is data the biggest trend we're seeing in HR at the moment? What are some other trends you foresee?

Jarrod Haar: It is definitely one of the biggest movers. In some respects, some firms have been doing this for a long time, but now others (competitors!) are trying to catch up. Other trends are the potential threat of robotics in the workplace and the potential for jobs to disappear and be done by robotics. We don't really know if this will happen but as a people researcher, I am definitely watching this area. On a more positive note is the growing importance of positive psychology in the workplace. Finally, stretching into the future here - we might see wearable devices that monitor employees' mood – and provide  $\ensuremath{\mathsf{HR}}$ and managers up to date metrics constantly that might aid decision making. For example, a manager might say, 'okay, I see from

the monitors that everyone's attention levels are dropping and it's time to finish the meeting. Let's reconvene next week to discuss options:"

**Engage:** What does all this data in HR mean for the

average supervisor and worker, especially when it comes to the all-important work-life balance?

Jarrod Haar: Well, the data demand might be a challenge! If we want hard data we have to collect it, and the easiest way to know an employee's mind is to ask them! That said, we can't survey them every day! Now, this hard data might include showing the importance of work-life balance – say for why employees might want to leave their organisation, so in this way, data might highlight things that can encourage an organisation to act on.

**Engage:** In what ways has being at AUT enabled you to pursue your research? How important has the support been?

Jarrod Haar: AUT has been very supportive of my research and provide concrete support, both financially, but also through supportive management – at the Faculty level and Department level – and colleagues. Good colleagues with interesting research ideas makes collaboration a lot of fun! ◆

Jarrod Haar is of Ngati Maniapoto and Ngati Mahuta descent and is a Professor of Human Resource Management at AUT's Business School. Contact him at jarrod.haar@aut.ac.nz.



We live in a world with more data than ever and many researchers and organisations are coming to terms with what it can be used for. AUT is already there, using data to influence decision making in health care, education and child welfare.

Earlier this year, AUT took a step forward to position itself as a leader in the data dominated world, by launching the Centre for Social Data Analytics (CSDA), which takes data and uses it for good.

Co-directed by Professor Tim Maloney, Head of Department of Economics, and Professor Rhema Vaithianathan, the Centre focuses on data analytics for social impact, with research based on accessing sets of linked data about a given population (including aspects like health, mental health, education, criminal history, housing etc.). Its aim is to analyse the data to draw conclusions that can advance knowledge about the determinants of poor outcomes as well as assist agencies with future decision-making.

Maloney said the recent rise in diverse, high quality linked administrative data provides an unprecedented opportunity for collaborating with policy agencies and researchers around the world to do things that previously couldn't be done.

Chair of Data Futures Working Group, Dame Diana Robertson, said AUT is taking a brave step into the new revolution to look into the ways it can improve and make people's lives better.

AUT also received praise from Deputy Prime Minister Bill English, who commended the university for organising itself in a way that is going to be supportive of the public good that the government is trying to achieve.

The CSDA's approach to data is unique in its emphasis on innovation according to Vaithianathan, who said the team is interested in "really difficult problems" that policy agencies and other partners might bring to it – "the things that no one's managed to solve?"

Those results didn't take long to show, with it prompting a \$7 million funding boost for the Government's 'Family Start' home visiting programme in May.

Vaithianathan led the research team, which was able to show 'Family Start' increases mothers' use of community-based mental health services, child immunisation rates and participation in early childhood education.

It also found that babies in the Family Start programme had a lower risk of sudden unexplained death in infancy.

At the time, Vaithianathan welcomed the Government's decision to invest an additional 25 percent annually in Family Start.

"This outcome demonstrates the value that academic research can add when government is looking at where to invest taxpayer dollars for maximum impact," she said.

Other research includes a number of international projects, such as developing a predictive risk model for child abuse to be used by frontline staff in Allegheny County, Pittsburgh. It is also involved in a project with the Children's Data Network at the University of Southern California that will explore why some communities 'beat the odds' by achieving better outcomes than predicted by predictive risk modelling tools, and whether those differences can be replicated elsewhere.

Closer to home, in July, the CSDA became part of the INTERACT Centre of Technology Excellence, which seeks to drive the use of big data and analytics in New Zealand and provide opportunities for IT and data science graduates.

The opportunities for networking and collaboration INTERACT provides will support the CSDA's aim to provide innovative solutions to social problems by applying strong data science to linked administrative data.

# Sweet success for business alums

AUT Business School alums Maree Glading, Andrew McKechnie and Adriana Christie have all taken very different paths to success. But one thing they have in common is that their experiences at AUT helped get them to where they are today.



She's come a long way since starting her piemaking business I Love Pies at a local farmers' market, but AUT Business School alum **Maree Glading**, (left) says her schooling is what helped prepare her for the challenges of the modern marketplace.

"There are many challenges with a food business," she explains. "It is imperative to have a good supply chain network with good procedures and processes. You also have to ensure you keep your product innovation and branding fresh and up to date."

Glading launched her company with business partner Jessie Stanley in 2008, selling their products out of a stall at the Clevedon Farmers' Market. Since then, they've built a customer base throughout New Zealand, with plans to expand to Asia and Australia. "Both Jessie and I are passionate foodies who love to cook at home," she says. "Our careers have always been in food, myself in marketing and Jessie as a food technologist for big food corporates. Once we started having our own families, it made us think really hard about the food that we would be proud to give our own friends and family. We saw a great opportunity within pies, which at the time was large, relative unbranded, lacked innovation and was full of poor quality product."

And that, she says, is how I Love Pies was born. "It is important to understand and stay constantly ahead of food trends," she says. "You also have to be mindful of having a focus on two customers – your consumers (people who buy our pies) and our retail customers (supermarkets) each come with their own unique requirements and have different selling proposition."

Though the pie business is an unquestionably competitive industry in New Zealand, Glading believes her company's business model is what sets it apart. "We like to see ourselves as category disrupters," she explains. "We develop products in categories that already exist but try to make them better than what is currently available. For example, our premium pies were ground-breaking when they were first launched in supermarkets no one was making a chilled family pie, no one was using no preservatives, butter pastry or free-range meat. Then we did the same thing with frozen sausage rolls. We also think we have a really good understanding of the needs of our consumers partly because we are busy mums ourselves so we like to create products we want at home."

Positive customer feedback and a few prestigious awards, such as a Westpac Business Award for



Best Emerging Business and a New Zealand Food Award for their sausage rolls, has helped keep the business going over the past eight years. "It is amazing to be involved in all aspects of the business," says Glading. "It is also great to be involved in creating a brand that we feel passionate about that is offering a superior product. It is also amazing seeing consumers' good responses to our brand and new products. Being in the food industry isn't easy, and it is important that you have a level of tenacity and passion."

Glading earned a Bachelor of Business at AUT, an experience which she says laid the foundation for I Love Pies. "It gave me practical hands on experience in all aspects of business and was a great all round degree to do," she explains. "I specialised in advertising and marketing, where I got a passion for developing strong consumer insights and branding. Part of my degree was to complete a work placement for six months. I was fortunate enough to get one in a large food company, where my love of food and brands collided – I ended up getting a permanent role with this company as a result."

With plans on continuing to expand the I Love Pies brand, Glading is unapologetic – and somewhat cheeky – with her company's future plans. "Pies the limit!"

Glading is far from alone in being the only AUT Business School alum with sky high ambitions. Born in Kenya, cutting his teeth in Singapore in the early 2000s, and working in senior roles at massive New York ad agencies like DDB and Y&R, Andrew McKechnie was most recently head-hunted by



Apple, where he is creative director. His experiences at AUT helped prepare him for his globe-trotting career, he says. "I didn't have someone you could single out and go 'this person was instrumental in defining my career or leading me down a certain path," he explains. "But I think it was the process of going through the curriculum that ... enabled me to focus in a little bit more in terms of, 'Okay, there's an area that I'm really interested in and I'm really passionate about it, it seems to come naturally to me and maybe this is something that I could do as a job'. And that was probably the first time I felt really confident about my potential and the opportunities I could discover out in the real world. AUT grounded me – in a good



way – and scrubbed away those teenage years of cruising."  $\,$ 

Adriana Christie is another AUT Business School alum who has made the world her proverbial oyster. Raised in Colombia, she earned a Bachelor's in Business with a major in Management in 2013. From there, she started her own business, Pallet Kingdom, which recycles wooden pallets into furniture and also works with disadvantaged teens who have been referred by their parents or local District Health Board. "For me the last year at university was the best and being able to have that personal connection with the lecturers really did encourage me to seek advice and really want to learn."

I Love Pies' Glading isn't usually the type to look back on things, but like McKechnie and Christie there's another aspect of her schooling she's more than happy to reflect on, too. "AUT was also great to making lifelong friends and contacts, whom I am still in touch with today."

AUT now has a global alumni community of 70,000 and is providing more ways for them to connect with the university and each other.

#### Planting the Apple seed

Andrew McKechnie's connection to AUT continues today, and it led to an amazing experience at Apple for one student, Will Bowman, who spent the first four months of 2016 in Silicon Valley. "Through the AUT InterNZ programme I was lucky enough to be given the chance to join the marketing team at Apple where I was a copywriting intern and worked with other writers and designers on various products and their respective campaigns. We wrote headlines for billboard campaigns, scripts for TV advertisements, descriptions for in-store signage and ate many burgers."

He says it was an eye-opening experience. "I arrived thinking I knew what path I wanted to take and returned with a completely fresh perspective on what I wanted to do. It's hard to replicate the diversity of such an international office in New Zealand."



While the AUT Business School is a place to harbour the knowledge and skills used on the job, the experience of putting that into practice can't be gained in the

classroom.

To give its business students the best preparation for a career after study, AUT sends them into the workforce to spend nine weeks in their chosen discipline area. Not only is it a chance for them to put into practice what they've learned at university, it's an opportunity for them to go through the job application process and get a taste of the career they pursue.

Kate Coleman, Employer Relations Manager (Co-operative Education) for the Business School (above), says in the same way they would apply for a real job, the students go for interviews and may or may not be successful first time around. Once they have a position, maintaining it involves learning how to work in a business environment and behave professionally.

At the end of it, some students are offered jobs and others are shoulder tapped for graduate programmes.

"I've talked to employers who have hired a Co-operative Education student and they say they've had work ready knocked off them," says Coleman.

Participating organisations include Air New Zealand, DDB New Zealand, Ernst & Young, Vodafone NZ, Farmers Trading Ltd, Sovereign, The Warehouse and TVNZ.

## ENTERING THE WORKFORCE

Internationally, students have also sought positions with Cook Island Trading Company in Rarotonga, China Railway Group in Taiyuan, Ogilvy Healthworld in London and Voyager Med in New York. Others have travelled to Shanghai, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait City, Tokyo and Sydney.

#### STUDENT EXPERIENCES

#### The Warehouse Group, Employment Brand Coordinator – Chelsea Tobin

Not only did The Warehouse Group give me practical industry experience and the opportunity to apply theory and skills to a real-life workplace, it also provided a warm and encouraging environment where we Co-operative Education interns could learn how we work and 'tick' as part of an organisation.

During my job hunt, I found that a crucial factor in getting an interview (let alone a job!) was the work

experience Co-operative Education provided me. I now work as a Marketing Assistant at FUSION Entertainment and I'm grateful to Co-operative Education for setting me up with the skills and confidence to take on the role. Co-operative Education was one of the most fun, rewarding and insightful experiences of my university education.

#### Farmers Trading Company HR - Paresh Dayal

The Co-operative Education placement was a great way for me to apply my key learnings from the Bachelor of Business course and apply these learnings within a real world corporate working environment. I find myself to be quite the practical learner and love learning from 'doing'. I believe without this programme in place, I wouldn't have had the employment opportunities granted to me. Within four years I have had a vast amount of career progression throughout Farmers and believe without the Co-operative Education programme, I wouldn't be where I am today.







#### The Warehouse Group, Employment Brand team – Erica Whyte

From my experience I was able to gain a better understanding that marketing is so much more than product marketing, it works into all different aspects from a commercial online website to promoting people and the place of work.

I also learnt things that cannot be taught in the lecture room, such as email etiquette, what office life is really like and the different ways that people interact with each other to get the best out of each other.

From my placement I was able to gain a contract for three months. Without having been in a work place environment for nine weeks, this wouldn't have been possible. It allowed me to gain more work experience and gain more skills to take forward into my future career.

#### SKYCITY Marketing Department – Jordayna McDowell

I've had a handful of internships now, some that I have found myself and a couple set up through the university. SKYCITY certainly stood out as one of the best places I've had the chance to intern with. My manager was proactively invested in making sure I achieved what I wanted to take from my time with them. If I had an interest in the market research that was taking place, he would arrange for me to join in on their weekly meetings. I was also given some projects to work on independently and my contributions in group settings were always welcomed and

valued. The other members in my team were also pivotal to my experience, leading me patiently through all the work place processes and happily explaining different elements of the business.

The internship has helped me gain confidence in a lot of the workplace daily processes and operations, whether that be sending concise and helpful emails, writing up a brief for the creative team, working to deadlines, operating on social media platforms, understanding internal and external stakeholder needs and working collaboratively within a team. I met many amazing and talented people and have established some great relationships that will continue past my time at SKYCITY.

In terms of employment opportunities, I now have had a wide range of practical experience that puts me in a great position to be employed. Interviewers have commented on my wide and varied work experience, so I feel that my Co-operative Education placement has given me that one step ahead.

#### Air New Zealand - Xaviere Murray-Puhara

Over the course of my Co-operative Education placement, I was in three different teams: Distribution and Customer Solutions (DACS), Loyalty Proof of Concept and Innovations.

In the DACS team, I observed and worked on projects such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM), self-service kiosks and self-boarding gates. In the Loyalty Proof of Concept team I observed and worked on projects such as the Air New Zealand website upgrade and Airpoints for Business. In the Innovations team, I worked on the Airband technology for unaccompanied minors, where I was able to troubleshoot mobile app

problems at our overseas airports and train staff to use the mobile app and Near Field Communication (NFC) Airband technology at our Auckland airports.

I also developed great communication and networking skills whilst working at Air New Zealand. Being across three different teams allowed me to meet many people and foster great relationships. In addition to this, I was attending different networking events, helping me to further develop these skills, which are critical to success in the corporate world.

When I was nearing the end of my placement, I was asked to speak at the upcoming Co-operative Education employers evening. I decided to stray from my comfort zone and accept the challenge.

After successfully delivering the speech, I was approached by Vodafone, who encouraged me to meet and discuss their graduate programme. After an interview and some psychometric testing, I was offered a position in the Vodafone Discover Graduate programme, which I accepted.

#### Qotient Group Limited Marketing Associate – Morgan Jamieson

Throughout my placement I gained experience in multiple areas, from content writing, social media marketing, event planning, search engine optimisation to graphic design and website development.

When I first started my placement at Qotient I really did think that the theories, concepts and frameworks I had learnt and written about a number of times during my assessments would be completed and applied to my work how they were in the text books. Soon enough I realised that these theories were really only a guideline and built a framework to guide my application. So Co-operative Education gives the opportunity to apply our knowledge and aspects of these theories to our work in a way that is relevant to the situation.

Overall, completing my placement at Qotient gave me proof that digital marketing and social media marketing is the future.



# Failed but NOT FINISHED

## Dr Smita Singh's research looks at the social stigma of entrepreneurial failure and how best to deal with it.

Search the word 'stigma' in the dictionary and the definition is less than appealing: "A mark of disgrace; a stain or reproach". Rarely is it used to describe startups or ventures, but its importance in understanding the nature of failure has been a focus of study for AUT management lecturer Dr Smita Singh. She's found there is a particular stigma prevalent among entrepreneurs, which she calls "the stigma of failure".

From interviews with dozens of entrepreneurs, Dr Singh has heard countless stories of loss and fear that have resulted from the social stigma of failure. Rather than these impacts remaining localised within the venture, entrepreneurs have often tended to perceive failure in a highly personalised way.

"One entrepreneur said she didn't feel attractive anymore," says Dr Singh. "She stopped dating after bankruptcy because there were such deep and personal implications of being judged as a failure."

Another entrepreneur whose venture failed didn't talk to his wife openly about it for almost 20 years.

"The interview he had with me was the first time that he really opened up about it," she says.

And the stigma of failure doesn't just stop there, it can spread far and wide into other aspects of the entrepreneur's life.

"Typically, the venture is their main source of income, so that means their families are also depending on that venture. If it's not there anymore,

you can start blaming yourself as a failed parent, life partner, or friend. The sense of failure is not just restricted to the venture."

Furthermore, there's a sense that a failed venture equals a failed entrepreneur, with many viewing failure as a reflection of one's own character or competence. But, Dr Singh says the nature of failure is far more complex.

"If you look around, it's not like ventures are only failing because entrepreneurs are making certain decisions," she says. "Failures can happen for reasons that are not in our control."

Dr Singh insists that the best method to deal with business failure is to use it to build personal resilience.

ends such as the legal obligations of the failed venture, or they have to find other sources of income to support their family. So, part of resilience is about entrepreneurs finding that emotional strength and motivation to juggle these balls on a day-to-day basis."

One surprising finding from the study within the hidden cost of failure were the health implications: mental illness, phobias, and hospitalisation.

"Somehow, with all the long hours entrepreneurs put into their businesses, health needs to be a higher priority," she says. "The core of resilience is also looking after yourself and the ones who are able to show these signs of stable functioning are the ones who are beginning to learn and pay attention to their emotional and physical

We know resilience is not this extraordinary trait that some have and some don't. Researchers now understand that resilience is a developable capacity. We need to think of entrepreneurial resilience as something that can develop by staying engaged.

"We know resilience is not this extraordinary trait that some have and some don't. Researchers now understand that resilience is a developable capacity. We need to think about entrepreneurial resilience as something that can develop by staying engaged with daily challenges, but also remaining focused on self-care. Entrepreneurs are juggling a number of things and they seem to have dropped one ball, which is the venture failing. But there are other balls that they have to still juggle with. For example, they're still trying to tie up loose

wellbeing. One can't go around trying to sort out all these problems if you're not actually considering your health and your body and mind is screaming for a break."

Essentially, we need a space where we can discuss both the destruction and opportunity that failure brings with it and make failure more well-accepted as a normal occurrence in entrepreneurship.

To have healthy businesses, we need to cultivate healthy attitudes towards failure.

# LOOKING AT THE STATE OF sustainability



When businesses truly 'get' the importance of sustainability, there's no stopping their progress, says Professor Marjo Lips-Wiersma.

Having been born on a small dairy farm in the north of Holland, Professor Marjo Lips-Wiersma was often confronted with the complexities of sustainability. For her, nature and work were simply one and the same.

Now in her role as Professor of Ethics and Sustainability Leadership at AUT, Professor Lips-Wiersma has a particular interest in employees' engagement in sustainability initiatives. She says sustainability doesn't automatically lead to increased employee engagement, but "when employees really get it, and the right conditions are put in place, there's no stopping them".

So, what are some of these conditions? One of the most important is having a good leader. Not necessarily because they know what to do next or because they're a source of inspiration, but because a leader is key to sustainability progress. "They frame what's important to talk about and to

put one's energy towards," says Professor Lips-Wiersma. "So if a leader shows they're knowledgeable about the issues facing humanity and the planet, it legitimises employees giving their time and energy to such issues".

The leader is also significant on a symbolic level. "When we interviewed sustainability managers of exemplary companies, they all reported to have regular access to key decision-makers," serving as an indicator that sustainability was being treated as a serious issue.

Another key point to sustainability progress is systems thinking. She says that sustainability innovations are not just product innovations, but innovations that happen throughout the supply chain. "In organisations that are at the forefront of sustainability, everybody gets it: the accountant, the marketing people, the cleaners, the sales agents and the HR assistant."

For an organisation to be ahead in the sustainability agenda, it needs to quickly elevate the conversation from waste management and eco-efficiency, to a conversation about whole systems thinking. This is when the sustainability buzz really starts to capture the imagination of employees.

While talking to sustainability managers on a recent trip to Europe, she recalls how she was struck by the amount of cross-company collaboration that was occurring. "In a space where everybody is still building bridges as they walk on it, collaboration is the key," she says. "Companies were working together to improve their supply chains, borrowing each other's key personnel to convince their own employees that things could be done, and CEOs and sustainability managers from different companies were often learning from each other."

In addition to her own research, Professor Lips-Wiersma also coordinates the Sustainable Enterprise degree at AUT. "We think it's irresponsible to tell students about everything that is wrong with the world, and then tell them their generation needs to somehow fix it," she says. "They need experience of fixing it in their little corner of the world, that is why we make sure that all students work on sustainability projects while still studying. This encourages a spirit of active hope, not just passive idealism.

As one of the first students to take the Sustainable Enterprise course, Roshen Kulwant (right) had the opportunity to do an applied project for his studies. He looked at the environmental Kuznets curve, which says that environmental degradation tends to get worse as modern economic growth occurs up until income reaches a certain point. "It was an extended update on previous work that only looked at 1992 to 2004. I was able to look until 2011 and I was surprised that my research pretty much supported the previous findings quite a bit," says Kulwant.

Now studying for his masters degree, Kulwant hopes to further investigate the links between sustainability and economics. He emphasises that businesses need to realise their intrinsic relation to their environment and community. "It's about getting back to the grassroots of business," says Kulwant. "Businesses should be sustainable, not creating waste."

## From learning to earning



As always, the talent on display in this year's *engage* magazine, whether the staff and students of AUT or those within the business community, inspires a huge amount of confidence in the state of New Zealand business.

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Academia plays a crucial role in pushing business forward, both in terms of industry collaboration with researchers and ensuring the staff that those businesses hire have the appropriate skills for the modern workplace. AUT's Faculty of Business, Economics and Law takes this important role very seriously and is deeply committed to maintaining a strong connection to the business sector.

SARAH TROTMAN

seriously and is deeply committed to maintaining a strong connection to the business sector.

For every outstanding New Zealand company, there are thousands more providing services to them. At AUT, we have long felt those businesses deserve acknowledgement for the role they play. The AUT Business School Excellence in Business Support Awards, once again, celebrate the winners and finalists that are all truly world-class.

Many of the people running those businesses also understand that sharing their knowledge is essential if they hope to develop the leaders of the future and many of those current leaders we work with have showed an amazing willingness to help our business, economics and law students improve their skills, believe in themselves and strive for greatness.

In a world that always seems to keep asking for more from less, these leaders are often extremely busy. But they always seem to find the time to give their expertise to the next generation in whatever way they can, from sitting on advisory boards that influence our students' learning, to allowing students (both from high school and from AUT) to follow them for a day as part of the ever-popular Shadow a Leader scheme, to creating internships that let AUT students learn the things that can only be learned through practical experience in the workplace.

These experiences are undoubtedly inspiring for students. But it goes both ways. The energy and enthusiasm of the students, their bold goals, their big ambitions and their natural tendency to challenge the status quo and innovate can also be inspiring for business leaders who are looking for insights into what the future might look like.

It really all boils down to embracing collaboration, which is essential in this ever–changing business environment. AUT's collaborative approach is at the heart of our teaching and research programmes. And in this issue of *engage*, we have attempted to showcase it through the cutting–edge research of our staff; the creation of new academic divisions, courses and practical experiences; the success stories of some of our alumni; and profiles of the emerging leaders who have been given the building blocks of business success.

I'm proud of what we do here at the Faculty of Business, Economics and Law. It is a place of energy, vision, ideas and connections. And I hope you get a sense from reading these stories that the future of New Zealand business is looking very bright indeed.

Your business will want to work with AUT. Contact Sarah Trotman strotman@aut.ac.nz.



Is management of your sales processes and customer service a pain point for your brand? Creating strong customer advocacy for your brand requires investment of both time and resources and this can take away from core business functions. However, with Leading Edge behind the scenes and its years of sales expertise at your disposal, your brand can shine.

eading Edge takes away the pain of the complexity of managing sales and services and in return creates strong customer advocates for your brand, to give it an 'edge'.

It's New Zealand's leading sales organisation with sales channels including telemarketing, call/contact centres, B2B, B2C, stores, face to face, online and outbound/inbound.

Through these, it delivers end-to-end customer experiences in the form of after-sales services, retention, lifecycle management, loyalty and referral programmes through its engaged team of sales and support people who pride themselves on delivering a fantastic experience.

That engagement comes from the company's belief that better sales begin with better relationships, so it prides itself on fostering deep connections between people and brands.

"People are helping with the experience of that brand, people are engaging with those end-customers and people are the centre of our service," group marketing manager Chloé Lomas says. "So if you've got better people and better relationships, you will get better sales performance."

With this in mind, Leading Edge has created a culture within its team that encourages them to do the best to be the best.

It's this emphasis on culture and putting people at the heart of the business that has seen Leading

Edge be a finalist in the last three years of IBM's Kenexa Best Workplaces.

Further engaging the team is strong and competent leadership, which Leading Edge sees as a business's key competitive advantage.

Group CEO Struan Abernethy says "building competitive advantage today is all about leadership – having the right people driving the bus is key, and ensuring these people are tightly aligned on values, ethics, and goals is paramount to success."

Facilitating its leadership is Leading Edge's unique leadership framework, created by the enablement team to measure and develop the leaders. It also hosts quarterly leaders' days, which all the leaders attend to ensure they return to their teams with a consistent approach to the role.

Developing strong leadership within its team has been a focus of Leading Edge over the years and during that time it has developed expert knowledge. "We've got this rhythm that works," Abernethy says. "And we know when something doesn't work because we've learnt and we've gone through those years to figure out what we want to run with in the future."

The benefits of that knowledge is something already experienced by Spark, for which Leading Edge is the largest sales channel partner.

Leading Edge services hundreds of thousands of Spark customers across 19 retail stores, 10 Business Hub locations as well as being Spark Digital's



Top Shop Awards 2015



Top Shop Awards 2014



Central Otago Spark retail team with Leading Edge's Group CEO



New Plymouth Spark store

nationwide sales channel partner.

With Leading Edge taking care of sales and service, Spark can focus on its other core business functions, including product innovation.

Its other partners, Foodzone and n3 - Business Buying Power, are also experiencing brand and loyalty growth from Leading Edge's methods and values because as Lomas says: "We sell and you succeed".

To get in touch with Leading Edge and see how they can give your brand the 'edge', visit LeadingEdgeGroup.co.nz or email hello@lecom.co.nz.



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