



February 2006

Welcome to the New Year – one filled with excitement and promise for the Dreamers.

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Primary School Graduation Event

This was the highlight of our programme over the past 3 years! We had over 350 people packed into the wonderful Manhattan function hall, to celebrate this major milestone for the Dreamers. Our fantastic Project Coordinator, Coach Ant, gave a speech on “overcoming obstacles to your Dream” that demonstrated why the kids (and their families) love and respect him so much.

Ant laid out three rows of small fences (to represent obstacles) on the floor, and put signs up on each fence listing the challenges that each of our Dreamers will face on their path through adolescence into adulthood. These included gangs, learning difficulties, racism, drugs, family breakdown, teenage pregnancy, low expectations, ESL issues, etc. He then asked Mikaele (a Dreamer) to come up, who then promptly leapt across the first fence! However, Ant explained how Mikaele would need assistance to clear all of these obstacles, so various groups (family, teachers, fellow Dreamers, tutors, mentors) were asked to come up and assist him over each fence as seen in the photo below.

The evening progressed from this vitally important message to one that was equally well-received: One of NZ's top Hip-Hop artists Che Fu performing some of his soulful hip-hop songs. The teachers then lead the most important part of the evening – recognizing each of the graduating Dreamers. It was an emotional evening. We have a video of the event available on DVD if you'd like to see it.



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Another Donation of PCs & Desks Warmly Received

Late last year we were thrilled to receive a donation of five PCs from Diana Hutchinson of APC Logistics Ltd. She'd been told about the programme by their computer reseller, Edtech, who looks after our computer network. This was a timely donation, as some of the older computers that were donated to us in 2003 are starting to fail. We have put PCs into each of the Dreamers' homes, which is a great way of extending the programme's benefits to the families. A special thanks is also extended to Anne O'Hanlon and Susie Barrington from Orion Systems International who donated us 15 second-hand desks from their office this month for the “Computer Lab” in our new Dreamer Centre (as seen in the photo on page 2). They were just what we needed!

We still need more PCs, especially for the expanded facilities in the new Dreamer Centre. So if you are aware of a company upgrading their computers, please think of us as a worthy home for those used computers!

Official Opening of our new Dreamer Centre

Saturday 25th February @10am, 778 Sandringham Rd Extension, Mt Roskill, Auckland.



You can see in these photos above that we are very lucky to have such a spacious and useful building. We will be based here for the next 7 years, as the Dreamers prepare for high school, university or other tertiary study. It offers a computer lab, plus dedicated areas for homework, tutoring, and "chilling out." It also has a library, a kitchen, and an office for Ant.

With the Dreamers off to Intermediate School (they're spread out over 11 schools!), it's great that the Centre is located at a central point for most of our Dreamers' homes. Please do come along on Sat 25th Feb to help us celebrate the opening.

New Van - Pimp my Ride!



Because some of the Dreamers will be attending other Intermediate Schools, we realized that we needed a van to transport them. As you can see in these photos, we will be a moving billboard for the Dream! Everyone will now see us coming!

Volunteer Profile

We are searching for 35+ Mentors, so have decided to profile another one of our wonderful crop of people who have already signed up.

Tracey Yearbury claims that "visiting the Dreamers is one of the highlights of my week". She has been tutoring for the past six months, and has now signed up to be a Mentor. In fact, she's even introduced a new Mentor to us, after explaining the joy that she feels from the smiles she receives when she walks into the room.



Tracey grew up in Manurewa, and understands some of the issues that face these kids. Being a latch-key kid with a solo Mum isn't fun, so she determined at an early age that she wanted to escape the poverty trap and has now gone on to attain for herself a fulfilling career. She now sees a chance to help other kids do the same.

Quote of The Day

Rather than a single quote, I want to point you to an article that I found fascinating. Charles Handy is a noted commentator on business, politics and education. This interview, available on the web at www.pfdf.org/leaderbooks/L2L/summer97/handy.html, contains some excellent insights into some key issues facing society, especially leadership and the "search for meaning." Please read it!

"The "I Have a Dream"® Programme helps children from low-income areas reach their education and career goals by providing a long-term program of mentoring, tutoring, and enrichment, with an assured opportunity for higher education."