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Please read this newsletter to learn how we've expanded the staffing resource at the Mt Roskill project, and an interesting suggestion on the vexatious issue of teacher pay-for-performance.

Contents

New Staff	1
25th Anniversary	1
Quote of the Day	1
A New Approach to Classroom Pay	2
Dreamer Achievements	2
Volunteer Profile	2

A New Staff Member Joins Our Team

We are thrilled to announce that we have hired a fantastic person as our Mentor Coordinator (the position we advertised in our last newsletter). Lynn Su'a is a trained teacher, with 5 years of classroom experience. In addition, she has spent the last 5 years with a community group called SENZ, mentoring young adults through the process of becoming trained teachers. Thus, she brings a wealth of highly applicable skills, experience and passion to the role. We are incredibly lucky to have found her, and very excited that she has joined the team to help guide our 53 Dreamers on their path towards High School graduation, tertiary education and becoming productive members of society.



From left: Scott, Mary, Ant, Nick and Vasa with IHAD founder Gene Lang (centre).



Nick Tuitasi speaking at the conference.



Outlook of NYC from the Rockefeller Centre.

IHAD 25th Anniversary

Monday, April 24th saw all of the IHAD NZ team (Ant, Vasa, Nick, Scott & Mary) attend the Gala Evening at the Rainbow Room, Radio City Hall, NYC, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the “I Have a Dream” programme. It was a magic experience for all of us, especially meeting the man who started it all, Gene Lang.

As you can see in the photo above, Gene is still going strong at 88, which is perhaps one of the best reasons for starting an IHAD project, i.e., working with young people, and supporting their Dreams, will keep you young!

You can view the six-minute video produced as an introduction to the 25th Anniversary gala programme online. The video highlights the “I Have a Dream” experience from the Sponsor, Project Coordinator, and Dreamer perspectives, as well as featuring founder and Chairman Emeritus Eugene M. Lang. To view the video, go to:

www.flywall.com/vid_ihad.html

Quote of the Day

You begin saving the world by saving one person at a time; all else is grandiose romanticism or politics.

- Charles Bukowski

Contact Details:

Project Coordinator:

Ant Backhouse

Project Sponsor:

Scott Gilmour

“I Have a Dream”®

Charitable Trust

P.O Box 27-501

Mt Roskill, Auckland

New Zealand

Ph: +64 9 620 5411

Fax: +64 9 620 5466

info@ihaveadream.org.nz

www.ihaveadream.org.nz

A New and Controversial Approach to Classroom Pay

Given the recent brouhaha raised by the "Perceptions of Teachers and Teaching" report prepared by Massey University for the Ministry of Education, this article is from the 29/4/06 Economist magazine raises an interesting proposal.

The step is small, but a revolutionary principle lies behind it. Since the beginning of the year, Denver's school district has been running a new salary system, ProComp, which is implicitly based on a simple notion: that some teachers do their job better than others, and should be paid for it. America's teachers' unions have long considered this idea heresy, but a majority of Denver's teachers backed it after several years of pilot projects convinced them that the right kinds of performance would be measured and rewarded.

ProComp went into effect after the city's voters backed a referendum that will boost property taxes by \$25m. All that money will go towards increasing teachers' pay under the new system, but the rise will only go to those who meet certain performance goals. Teachers who were already working in the school district can choose whether to enroll in the new pay system; 30% have joined so far. New teachers will not have a choice, and will be paid based on performance all through their careers.

The plan will work, says Brad Jupp - a former teacher and one of its architects - because it tries to measure several aspects of performance that, in combination, promote better learning. Instead of simply using test scores for an individual teacher's students, for example, Denver also looks at specific targets set for that teacher by the school principal. School-wide performance - measured objectively by the district - is also part of the mix, so that teachers will want to co-operate and principals will be encouraged to set high standards for them.

Besides paying more for good teaching, the new system rewards teachers who fill difficult or especially valuable positions. This includes not only working in tough schools, but also jobs, such as speech therapy or high-school maths, that have few qualified teachers and fast turnover. One reason such slots are hard to fill is because private schools and wealthy parents can pay more for teachers with rare skills who are in demand. So Denver pays them a little more to stay on in public schools. Radical stuff.

Dreamer Achievements

Congratulations to Dreamer Anoovi Marwah (pictured here) who has been assigned the Year 7 councillor on the student council for her school, Blockhouse Bay Intermediate. Recognized for her responsible attitude and leadership she now represents all the year 7 children in planning school events and activities on the council. This is a great recognition of Anoovi's maturity and pleasant demeanour, which will take her far in life. Anoovi also reached The Peak (the highest level) this term in our IHAD reward incentive scheme, and had the highest overall dreamer score from her teachers in her classroom effort evaluation form. Well done Anoovi - keep it up!



From left: Dreamers' Janita and Anoovi with their tutor Sarah Yen.

Volunteer Profile

Whenever people make disparaging remarks about the general malaise among today's youth, I encourage them to come and visit the Dreamer Centre during our After School Programme, so that they can witness the wonderful young people that come and tutor the Dreamers. These High School students, mostly from Mt Roskill Grammar, come along week in, week out, without any financial reward or public recognition, in an utterly selfless display of community spirit and noble generosity. We wish that we could profile every single one of them, because they make us feel very confident in the future of society. However, we have chosen to highlight the efforts of Sarah Yen (pictured above with her dreamers), because she exemplifies the kind of effort that is so helpful to the kids that are being tutored.

Every week Sarah prepares worksheets for her Dreamers, based on what they've been learning in school, or on areas in which they require additional help. Whenever Sarah is sick, or tied up with her own sporting and cultural activities, she arranges for her Mother to deliver the worksheets!

"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."