



## Newsletter - Issue 20



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The end of this year will signify the half way mark in our 10 year journey with the Dreamers through to graduation from high school. As I ponder on the 5 years that have passed I am reminded of that New Zealand cheese advert on TV where the catch phrase says "good things take time you know." As you'll see in this Newsletter there are many good things coming to fruition within our Dreamers' lives and also the lives of our volunteer relationships with them.

### *Dreamers Step Up to Leadership Roles*

We are thrilled to report that a number of the Dreamers have been appointed to leadership positions at their schools. Perhaps most compelling was the local school, Wesley Intermediate, where 35 of our Dreamers are currently in Year 8. The total roll in Year 8 is just over 90 students, so the Dreamers represent just over 1/3rd of the student population. The good news is that 7 of the 12 Prefects appointed this year are Dreamers, i.e., 60% of the total! Further good news came last term when Mosa'ati Mafile'o was appointed Head Boy, Leva'ula Matafai was appointed Deputy Head Boy, and Raela Varu appointed Deputy Head Girl.

It's an old axiom that success has many fathers, and we realise that the accomplishments of these Dreamers are primarily due to their parents and families, along with the influence from their schools, Churches, etc. However, we are extremely proud that these children are being recognised for their leadership abilities, and we look forward to supporting their further growth in this important area, so that they can take their leadership skills into their adult lives and their communities.

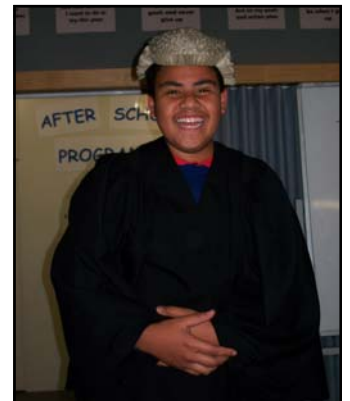
### *Guest Speakers*

We've had an excellent series of guest speakers presenting to the Dreamers during our After School Programme during the last term. First up was Sulu Devoe, Station Fire Chief in Auckland, who enthralled the Dreamers with his description of this vital job in the community. Even our PC, Ant, was pretty keen on the future career opportunities presented!

Then in the last week of the school term, Ant and Lynn organised a Careers Week. We had a wonderful line-up of speakers, who spoke passionately about their career, their education, and their life choices:

- Aloalii Ulu, a Barrister
- John Tuitama, a Youth Justice Coordinator
- Tevita (David) Paea, a Police Detective Constable
- Tovia Va'aelua, Server Group Manager at Microsoft

Each of these men provided a wonderful example to the Dreamers of people who had pursued their dreams and goals in life, often in the face of considerable difficulties.



Above: Mosa'ati Mafile'o not only made Head Boy at school this year, but also got to try out his attire for his future dream (a judge) during our guest speaker week.



Above: Even wearing a t-shirt labeled "perfect angel" didn't stop Mikaele from being handcuffed during a recent visit from the police during our career week.

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## *Mentoring is a Two-Way Street*

We heard some wonderful stories at our mentor training in Feb and March, at which some of our existing mentors came along to share their insights and experiences with the new mentors. Two anecdotes were especially memorable, because they prove the dictum in that great quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson: *It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.*

Spence, one of our first mentors, was telling Robert to think about his diet (i.e., to not eat so many pies and sweets), and indeed to think carefully about all of his choices in life. Robert, as cheeky young boys are wont to do, asked Spence what he was changing in his life ...??!! This caused Spence to stop and take stock of his own situation, to consider his own dreams, and his level of satisfaction with his current job .... which lead directly to his decision to resign from his research career and enroll in Chef School! We wish Spence all the best in his quest for further education and life improvement, and look forward to sampling some of his creations .... ☺

Brendan, another one of our early mentors, sadly lost his Mum late last year. In the midst of funeral preparations, personal grieving and family issues he omitted to tell Saeli and his family of his loss, assuming this was known to them through the IHAD community.

In fact Saeli and his family had been unaware of the death of Brendan's mum and were very upset that they had not been able to support Brendan and his family at the funeral when they learned of it later. In the week-end following the funeral Saeli and his mother, Naomi, joined Brendan on a visit to his mother's grave where they farewelled her with prayers, words of farewell and a hymn.

This was a pivotal event as the depth of their concern brought home to Brendan how he had become so important in their lives. For Brendan, it provided an unsought proof that what he was "giving" to Saeli was not only important and well received, but was part of a reciprocal relationship – a two-way giving of time, focus and love.

## *Mentor Recruitment*

Please be aware that our next Mentor Training starts on Thursday 9th August. We still need at least 10 men to take up the challenge and opportunity of guiding the life of a wonderful young man. As you can see in the above stories, mentoring offers you a chance to enrich a life, while also enriching your own.

The mentoring relationship is probably our "easiest" volunteering role, in that the scheduling is at your convenience, and the burden (once training is completed ☺) is relatively light. Please help us recruit 10 more good men for this important role!

## *Giving Back*



Above: Ali gets to meet Santa, Junior gets his Spiderman face paint and other pre-schoolers enjoy their turn at pin the tail on the donkey & magnetic fishing.

Giving Back is not only something we ask of our volunteers, but something we ask of our Dreamers as well. If every person in this world stopped thinking about themselves for a little while and took a moment to look over their shoulder and give back a little love to someone else then our world would be a much better, brighter place to live in. So on Friday the 15th of May that's exactly what our Dreamers organised themselves to do by hosting a mid-winter Christmas party at our Dreamers Centre for all the pre-school kids and relatives in their neighborhood. The event was a huge success with nearly 50 preschoolers enjoying face painting, children's games and activities plus a free present and photo session with our very own Santa! Our Dreamers youth group committee summed up the event by saying "it felt really good to do something for somebody else."

## *A Generous Society*

Through the efforts of our mentors and tutors, we are reminded daily of how generous people can be when they have the opportunity to help others. Volunteering is probably the most valuable form of giving, because it is giving up something that can never be replaced (an hour or more of your day).

You may also have heard about the recent research on charitable giving in NZ, which showed that many Kiwis give generously to charities, with cash donations totalling \$1.3B last year!

A third form of generosity, and one which probably doesn't get as much publicity, is the donation and/or discounting of goods and services. We have been blessed to receive many such instances during the past 5 years of running the "I Have a Dream" programme:

- The local Numberworks franchise has provided "two-for-one" lessons for two of our Dreamers, which greatly extends our resources, and further extends the benefits to the children struggling with their numeracy skills.
- Microsoft and HP have donated tens of thousands of dollars worth of software and hardware.
- Small companies and individuals have donated PCs and other goods through the DonateNZ web site, [www.donatenz.co.nz](http://www.donatenz.co.nz).
- Companies have donated or discounted services for our Field Trips, such as Fullers Ferries providing free tickets so the Dreamers could experience the beautiful islands of the Hauraki Gulf, and SkyCity Village cinemas helping us to recognise the efforts of our volunteers.
- Our accountant, Buchanan Macdonald Ltd, does our GST returns for free.
- Our law firm, Ayres Legal, discounts their services for the Charitable Trust.
- Our stock broker at First NZ Capital rebates us his commission on bond purchases.

We urge readers of this newsletter to consider what talents and resources that you could offer to non-profit groups in your communities. These services provide huge **value** to the recipient. Trust us, we know!

## *No Good Deed Goes Unpunished*

However, not all is sweetness and light in the land of giving ....

Shannon Brown, who has tutored the Dreamers, completed the mentor training, and even helped Scott plan the fund-raising campaign, is typical of our volunteers in going the extra mile once they get engaged in the lives of our young Dreamers. Tatara is a young man who has sometimes stretched and stressed our resources and patience, as he has some learning difficulties that make school and homework a problem for him. Shannon was not to be deterred, however, and kept working with and talking with Tatara, to discover his passions. It turns out that he had a desire to learn how to play the guitar, so Shannon sourced an instructor, liaised with Ant and Lynn to organize time off school, and even stepped up to drive Tatara to the lessons every Friday morning.

The first lesson went so well, and Shannon was so excited to see the enthusiasm on Tatara's face as she drove him back to school chatting away with him, that she completely forgot about daily concerns like speeding limits .....that was until she saw those flashing lights in her rear view mirror!

However, even bad situations can be turned to advantage, as Shannon recruited the young (good-looking, she said) policeman to consider becoming a Mentor because you guessed it....one of Tatara's dreams for the future is to be a policeman!

## *C'mon Dad Let's Go Fishing!*

As a way of getting more participation from our Dads in our IHAD programme, we organised a "Dads and Dreamers" fishing trip on a chartered boat in the Hauraki Gulf. The event turned out to be a great evening of fellowship amongst Dads and their Dreamers as together they overcame the challenges of baiting hooks, untangled fishing lines, and pulling in the big one! Congratulations went out to Dwayne who landed the biggest Snapper of the evening and won the prize (a refund of his money paid for the trip).



Above: Dwayne and his prize catch Snapper

## Once a Dreamer, Always a Dreamer

One of our Dreamers, Jamie Brown, moved to Australia with her Mother in 2005. Ant has visited Jamie in Australia once and stays in phone contact with her. She has also returned to NZ a couple of times. This extract from a recent email exchange shows that Jamie truly gets an important part of the IHAD programme:

**P.S. I will never forget that I am a dreamer and I also will never forget that you dreamers will always love people for who they are.**



Jamie and Coach Ant during their time together in Australia in 2006.

## Parents Meeting with the High Schools

Over 20 families turned up to meet with the leadership teams from our two local High Schools (Mt Albert Grammar and Mt Roskill Grammar) on Monday night, May 7th. This was a great evening, where the parents got to learn more about the schools, and the schools had a chance to engage with a group of closely involved parents. It is anticipated that by creating this opportunity and developing a relationship between IHAD and the schools that we can reduce the problems that often occur in the transition period to High School, which happens for us next year.



## Ouch!

"Go Dad you can do it" were the famous last words our project sponsor Scott Gilmour heard his son Ian say to him before breaking his back and 3 ribs at a mountain bike adventure park a few months back. But if you think a major accident like that can slow down our highly energetic Sponsor then think again! Scott spent the extra time he had in bed to write his high school graduation speech for the Dreamers (which is 5 years away!!).

Right: Sponsor Scott Gilmour shows off his battle scars!



## Volunteer Profile

It seems that the joy of giving is long-lasting. Ebony and Rashi volunteered from Mt Roskill High School to be tutors in our very first year, 2003. They generously gave many hours of assistance to us over the last two years of their High School careers, before heading off to Otago University to pursue their tertiary studies.

Having graduated, Ebony and Rashi are back in Auckland, starting out their careers, in Physiology and Dental Therapy respectively, and have resumed tutoring the Dreamers. It is great to see them back, and the Dreamers are once again feeding off their love, energy and enthusiasm for learning.

*Editorial Note: Otago University is the best university in the country, if not the world, according to people who had the good fortune to "study" there. It is our fervent wish that many of the Dreamers will study there, not least so I have a good excuse to go and visit them!*



Ebony, Jade and Raela in 2004



Rashi quizzes Siosaia and Mini

## Quote of The Day

If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap.  
 If you want happiness for a day, go fishing.  
 If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune.  
 If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody.

- Chinese proverb



McKayla loves Ebony's help

"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."