

Ambassadors in demand

It's only four weeks into the year, but Futureintech Ambassadors are already in high demand throughout the country. So, if you're considering making use of Futureintech Ambassadors in your classroom, make your request fast!

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Civil engineer Sarah Stevenson makes a splash at Bellevue School.

Easing into the new school year doesn't seem to be on the agenda, as Futureintech Facilitators around the country are already reporting huge demand for Ambassador involvement.

Both teachers with existing relationships with Futureintech and those new to the initiative were contacting local Facilitators before the start of term one, in what South/East Auckland Facilitator Gay Watson describes as "a bumper start to the year." Here are just two examples of what is happening in classrooms nation-wide.

Universal technological practice

At Bellevue School in Wellington, Year 5 and 6 technology students are beginning a project on pop-up books as part of a unit on structures and mechanisms. While print publishing and civil and electronic engineering may appear worlds apart, two newly trained Ambassadors were able to demonstrate the planning, process and design stages which are essential to any successful project.

Sarah Stevenson, a civil engineer with Brian Perry Civil, is currently working on

a water reservoir for a new subdivision in Tawa. As she explained to the students, planning for the reservoir began several years ago, but must also incorporate the building stage and consider the working life of the reservoir after completion. In the same way, the students were encouraged to think through how their books would work once finished, rather than running away with an idea.

"I was like that as a kid," says Sarah. "You just jump in there and do something without thinking it through and then it all falls over."

Sarah and Josh Bell, an electronic engineer at Kordia, also showed the students the possibility of completing several aspects of a project simultaneously, by having several teams working in parallel with each other. Again, this was applicable in general terms to any technology project.

The perceptiveness of the questions came as a welcome surprise to the new Ambassadors.

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"The questions were amazing for the size of the kids," Sarah comments. "For example I was showing them pictures of the water tank, and one of them asked how it copes in an earthquake – something we hadn't even touched on."

Engineering a career

Meanwhile in Christchurch a group of home-schooled children kicked off a programme of learning about careers in technology, engineering and science with a visit from civil engineer and Futureintech Ambassador Ryan Strugnell from Opus.

Ryan described the different branches of engineering, his own first impressions of it as a career, his university course and current responsibilities and examples of engineering both now and in the past, such as bridges and aqueducts.



The students also discussed a current project involving a proposed school and its potential impact on the local road network.

"Using a case study as a basis for our time together allowed for a wide range of discussion, from noise

Ryan Strugnell explains engineering to home-schooled students.

pollution to public transportation systems," says Ryan. "I found interacting with a smaller group provided the opportunity to pursue students' queries in greater depth."

Who wants a trip to the Sunshine Coast?

Sustainable energy may have to compete with teenagers' usual lists of worries, but it is increasingly cited as something which concerns them. Fortunately for those with scientific inclinations, it may be one worry they can do something about.

The International Hydrogen and Fuel Cells Education Forum invites four New Zealand students and their teacher to participate in a conference in Brisbane from 16-19 June. Aimed at 15 year-olds, the forum consists of

lectures, workshops and presentations from scientists working in the field of renewable energy. Students will also be given the opportunity to work on practical activities geared towards the design, construction and performance

testing of real-world applications of hydrogen technology.

Also part of the programme are visits to Australia Zoo and the Sunshine Coast, including a presentation on topical environmental issues.

Students from a diverse range of countries are expected to attend and Futureintech is delighted to be working with the Royal Society to offer the opportunity to four students to represent New Zealand. The students must be from the same school and accompanied by a teacher.

Funding towards travel and accommodation will be provided. Applications close on Friday 2 May 2008. For further details and an application form, please see www.futureintech.org.nz/fuel-cells.cfm



*The fuel of the future?
A hydrogen-powered car.*

Futureintechnews

Ambassador training

Training sessions have taken place over the past month in Wellington, Auckland and Hastings, and will be held during March in Dunedin, Christchurch and Taupo, increasing the range of careers for which Futureintech can provide students with a first-person perspective.

Many new Ambassadors are already in classrooms, including surveyor Lonnie Dalzell of Projenz, who is giving three presentations in Dunedin next week on the links between high school maths and surveying. "It's bit overwhelming, but I will see how it goes!" he says.

Factfile on cadetships: A new factfile for industries is now available from Futureintech, showcasing the benefits to both students and industries of professional cadetships. As a means of studying while being paid and gaining on the job experience, as well as the security of a guaranteed job after training, cadetships have multiple advantages for students. The factfile looks at a range of companies who have made the concept work for them.

Career paths poster: Students wondering what career options are possible with maths, science and technology will soon have a way of finding out. A new poster showing the subjects necessary for 24 different careers, all illustrated by Futureintech Ambassadors, is currently being finalised and will shortly be available to teachers and careers advisors.

New-look e-news: We are currently redesigning e-news. The next issue will look radically different and incorporate an easy-to-use interface more suited to on-screen browsing.

Futureintech Facilitators

Welcome back to the new school year from the Futureintech Facilitators. We look forward to working with you.



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