

young designer awards

The next generation of designers, engineers and technologists are about to receive a big boost, thanks to a new partnership between Futureintech and the Young Designer Awards.



The Young Designer Awards are New Zealand's premier national design competition for secondary schools. It offers a range of categories for students to enter, including electronics, communication, fashion, products, landscape and built environment.

Since starting in 1990 the Awards have gone on to become highly successful, prestigious, and popular amongst schools and students. The awards are based around encouraging young people to promote their creativity in a way which can eventually be employment related, and by enlisting industry support they have helped show students a range of different career possibilities.

Many previous winners have received tertiary scholarships, and there are many more examples of students who have entered the event and come out with renewed confidence and self-esteem.

It's the kind of programme ideally suited to Futureintech, given that it encourages practical learning, innovation and links with outside industry.

Futureintech will be promoting and supporting the Young Designer Awards in schools along with other key programmes - CREST, Bright Sparks and the Neighbourhood Engineers Award.

A big year ahead

2005 is a big year for Futureintech: it's when we move from start-up phase to full implementation.

Our three new Facilitators have now started work (see their profiles on page three) giving us coverage across the whole country. By the end of the year more and more schools will have taken up our programmes and built meaningful connections with industry.

The ultimate aim is that more young people will have had a taste of what engineers, technologists and scientists actually do, and will have been inspired to study those areas at tertiary level.

Changing attitudes and stereotypes towards hi-tech careers is going to be a long-term project, but the first crucial steps are well underway.

The VIP scheme in action at CPIT

go to page 2

Futureintech's three new facilitators

go to page 3

Futureintech on the move

go to page 4

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broadcast education

Futureintech's VIP scheme is in full swing, helping connect the worlds of academia and industry. The latest example comes from the Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT), where BCL communications consultant Ian Williamson spent three weeks working with staff and students thanks to funding from Futureintech.

Helping a student stuck against a "brick wall" was one of the highlights of Ian Williamson's time spent at the CPIT.

"The poor guy had been stuck on a problem with his project for months and was getting nowhere.

Building connections

As a specialist in radio communications Ian Williamson's expertise was used for guest lectures, moderating marking, helping students with research projects and advising on curriculum content.

"We wanted Ian because of his breadth of experience," says Paul Wilson, Dean of Design and Engineering. "He has international experience and a really good appreciation of where the industry is, and where it's going."

The relationship has already provided many benefits for both staff and students.

"Ian helped us with curriculum content, making sure it is up to date and relevant. Already we've made some minor changes for 2005.

"It's also given our students real-world experience, helping to reinforce the tutoring and instruction they're receiving. It puts what they're learning into the context of what's actually happening in industry."

"It puts what [students] are learning into the context of what's actually happening in private industry."

Paul Wilson, Dean of Engineering and Design, CPIT



"I didn't solve it for him – he did that himself - but I was able to act as a mentor to bounce ideas off. I've worked on similar projects before so we were able to run through a checklist of things to look at. Finally it hit him one night when he was lying in bed; he came in the next day, rewired it and the whole thing worked.

"That was brilliant, that one moment alone made the whole thing worthwhile for me."

Futureintech VIP application round

The next round of applications for the Futureintech VIP has now been called for. Funding is available for industry leaders to spend up to three weeks in a tertiary institute, helping with research, teaching, and/or course development. It's a great chance to share your knowledge with students and academics and help build valuable relationships.

Applications close on 5 March 2005, and up to \$5,000 is available for each project.

To find out more visit www.futureintech.org.nz or contact Phil Rennie, email prennie@futureintech.org.nz, phone 0-4-473 2026.

A rewarding experience

For his part, Ian says the VIP scheme was a fulfilling project with which to be involved.

"I just loved it! I've always enjoyed teaching so this was a great opportunity. I've been around a bit and worked on a lot of different projects, so I think it was very informative for the students and tutors to have real-world scenarios. I'd love to do it again."



futureintech's new facilitators

Central North Island



Margaret Brunton

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Margaret Brunton's Masters thesis has given her the perfect background for Futureintech: she studied industry-school linkages, with a focus on biotechnology and rural schools.

Based in Whakamaru, just south of Tokoroa, Margaret covers the central North Island and is hoping to put her thesis into action. She is excited about the possibilities to enhance learning in technology education, and to increase awareness and enthusiasm for careers in technology.

Outside work Margaret's family keeps her busy and involved in various water sports.

Otago/Southland



Bernadette Hannagan

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Covering the lower South Island is **Bernadette Hannagan**, based in Dunedin. Bernadette's previous role as liaison officer for Massey University introduced her to a wide range of schools and industry, connections that should be useful in her new role.

The chance to work on linking careers with learning was too good to pass up for Bernadette. She says she saw many young people ending up on inappropriate courses, simply through not knowing enough about different options available. Futureintech is a chance to help correct that, particularly through showing how subjects like maths and science can open doors.

South Auckland



Gay Watson

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South Auckland Facilitator **Gay Watson** is another former technology teacher.

Last year, Gay received a Royal Society Technology Teacher Fellowship which enabled her to spend a year in different workplaces studying technological practice. As well as spending time with lingerie and possum fur clothing companies, she worked on the movie set of *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*. One of her more unusual tasks was 'aging' the costumes, which meant spending hours scratching and creasing expensive new costumes to get the desired look. The attraction of Futureintech for Bernadette was the opportunity to engage students in real life education.



Operation Drive-By

Another example of Futureintech in action comes from Pahiatua school, where Room 10 students have been working on Operation Drive-By. With the help of two engineers – one a traffic engineer from Wellington, and the other locally-based – the students have been redesigning their drop-off area to make it safer.

Parents and the community have been consulted and a driver education programme is underway to make sure people understand the new signs and markings and use the drop-off zone properly.

Already the project has won the school a merit prize of \$500 in the ACC Think Safe Competition, and a merit award in the Neighbourhood Engineers Award.

Futureintechnews

A new look

A whole new set of publications have been prepared over summer by Futureintech. A newly designed brochure outlines what Futureintech is all about, while a series of posters have been printed, promoting engineering as a career and profiling some famous engineers.

For example – did you know that Boris Yeltsin, Rowan Atkinson (aka Mr Bean) and Yasser Arafat were all engineers? As was Scott Adams, the creator of the Dilbert cartoons.

Contact Futureintech (see details below) if you'd like copies of the posters or brochures.

Career choices

A new study on the Christchurch ICT sector has thrown up some interesting results. Futureintech has been working on a Growth Pilot project seeking to better understand skills shortages in the ICT sector – in particular what the rewards of such careers are and how/why students make their career choices.

In particular the study (although still in draft stage) has noted the importance of parental influence, which tends to be the key driver of career choice. Having a parent or family member involved in a technological career can be an important factor for students.

Futureintech's Advisory Group

A new Advisory Group is being set up to provide Futureintech with some high level input. The highly-qualified members will review, advise, and generally act as a sounding board for Futureintech's ideas and direction.

The members include Prue Kelly, Principal of Wellington High School; Andrew Cleland, Chief Executive of the Institute of Professional Engineers; Peter Spratt, Senior Manager for Science and Education at the Royal Society; and Craig Taylor of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise.

Futureintech on the move

Futureintech is moving to a new location on March 5, along with the entire IPENZ office. We are moving from our current home on Molesworth Street to the Terrace in central Wellington. The next edition of enews for industry will have our updated contact details.

Auckland Facilitator Angela Hart is also on the move; after a year at Genesis Research and Development she is moving to Traffic Design Group, who have kindly agreed to host her in 2005. A big thank you goes out to Genesis for their generosity and support.

Futureintech website

Futureintech's website contains a wealth of information for students, parents, teachers and careers advisors. It has profiles of young people working in technology, engineering and science, and the companies they work for, along with information on different courses, careers and scholarships available.

www.futureintech.org.nz

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