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Karioi Project creating pathways for youth

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Karioi Maunga ki te Moana’s pilot programme at Raglan Area School is creating employment pathways and inspiring young conservationists.

Dayton Keremeta started the NCEA Manaaki Ao pilot programme as a Year 12 student graduating the course as a Year 13 last year, and this year he joined the Karioi Project team as a paid employee.

Being able to combine being outdoors with academic studies was the inspiration behind joining the pilot for Dayton and he says the enormity of the predator problem was a real eye-opener.

“Being able to work outdoors and getting rid of the pests is a good

feeling.”

With a Level 3 NCEA pass on all his subjects, he’s got his eyes set on university studies, but in the meantime Dayton’s loving going bush and playing his part in eradicating stoats, rats and feral cats around Whaingaroa.

Last year, all of the 12 students in the programme passed, which is designed to help students to grow in confidence, leadership and develop work-ready skills.

Manaaki Ao delivers practical, hands-on activities in challenging physical environments and with students working towards both NCEA Unit and Achievement Standards at Level 2 and 3.

Karioi Project tutors Annie Lorenzen, Duncan Mackay and Kristel van Houte, working alongside Raglan Area School teacher Angela Prain, introduce the students to a variety of local environmental issues and human impacts, and teams of students develop sustainable actions in response to these issues.

“Our vision is that through the project young people will have an enhanced curiosity in the natural world and will develop a love for nature – and that this will motivate

them to take action in caring for the environment and inspire and equip them to engage in environmental science study and work in their future lives or careers,” Kristel says.

Well on the way to making a local environmental impact, the student’s solutions to pest control have also translated to commercial initiatives with the Year 12 students setting up and managing a predator trapline at Xtreme Zero Waste.

“They now pay us for pest control because they reckon we can do a better job than previous contractors,” Duncan says.

Working collectively with partner organisations like Te Iwi Taahi Pest and Papa Taiao (the national partner organisation that provides NCEA accreditation) has been a strength of this project and in all aspects of Karioi’s conservation and education work, project manager Kristel says.

“For us its more than just about predator control or conservation even. Its about growing the next generation of kaitiaki. And its about taking people and our community on

a journey, exploring how how everything we do is interconnected and impacts on each other, and this applies to humanity as well as our environment, together we can explore, restore and reconnect. There’s this great saying – When you tug on a single thread in nature... you’ll find it attached to the rest of the world,” she says.

Janine Jackson



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