Sir Edmund Hillary Scholarship Newsletter

Inspiring excellence, all-round development and leadership

July 2015

From the VC

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Sir Edmund Hillary Programme which has been fostering talented young New Zealanders.

The Sir Edmund Hillary Programme supports new and current students wishing to develop their skills in leadership, sport or the creative and performing arts. As a sports fan and regular attendee of art exhibitions and performances, I am inspired by the level of talent and achievement displayed by our Hillary scholars.

I enjoyed being involved with the 10-year anniversary celebrations in May. We were fortunate to share this occasion with Lady June Hillary, Peter Hillary and Sarah Hillary, who joined us for the afternoon.

Peter gave a moving account of being on Everest when the Nepal earthquake struck and our thoughts are with the people there. Hillary scholars are making their contribution by raising funds for the Himalayan Trust Rebuild Appeal. To date, they’ve raised more than $5,200.

The University takes a strategic approach to high performance sport and scholars continue to engage with local and national sporting organisations. The accomplishments of Hana-Rae Seifert who was awarded an internship with IMG and Shannon O’Donnell completing her PhD with Kia Magic are just two examples of how our scholars bridge the gap between theory and practice.

The talent pool among the student body extends also to music and art. This talent includes the accomplished Quatro quartet who are the first all-cello group to win the ROSL (Royal Over-Seas League) International Chamber Music Scholarship Competition.

I thank the sponsors of the Sir Edmund Hillary Programme, Calder and Lawson Orbit Corporate Travel, the Gallagher Group and ULeisure, for their continued support in making this programme a successful initiative. I also thank our sporting partners and arts advisers for their continued support.

Professor Neil Quigley
Vice-Chancellor

Hillary family attends 10-year celebrations

Lady June Hillary and Sir Edmund’s son and daughter, Peter and Sarah Hillary, were among 130 guests at the Sir Edmund Hillary Scholarship Programme 10th anniversary celebration.

The afternoon event was hosted by Vice-Chancellor Professor Neil Quigley at the Gallagher Academy of Performing Arts to give scholars, partners, supporters and contributors to the programme an opportunity to commemorate what has been a successful initiative for developing future leaders.

Peter Hillary praised the programme and thanked guests for their continued support of the Himalayan Trust, founded by Sir Edmund Hillary in 1960. He and his sister Sarah were in the Waikato area after the opening of the 460-hectare Ed Hillary Hope Reserve near Raglan earlier that morning.

Peter was trekking 3km south of the Everest Base Camp when the Nepal earthquake struck. He said “it felt as if the whole of the Himalayas was being shaken and in danger of coming apart”.

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Sir Edmund Hillary Scholarship programme

WHO CAN APPLY?
» Students who excel academically and in sports or creative and performing arts
» School leavers
» Current tertiary students
» Students intending to study at the University of Waikato at either the Hamilton or Tauranga campus.

WHAT DO YOU RECEIVE?
» Full domestic fees scholarship for study at Waikato University
» Personalised academic support
» Leading coaches/tutors or skills development support in your specialist sport/art
» A Leadership and Personal Development Plan
» Free gym membership and physical conditioning and more.

Scholar assistance contact:
Greg O’Carroll – High Performance Student Manager
Email: highperformance@waikato.ac.nz
Phone: 07 838 4264

Scholarship applications
Application forms for 2016 are available via waikato.ac.nz/hillary

Hillary Scholarship applications close
Friday 18 September 2015
Phone: 07 858 5277
Toll Free: 0800 WAIKATO
Email: scholarships@waikato.ac.nz
waikato.ac.nz/scholarships

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**Teeing off her career with IMG**

Golf scholar Hana-Rae Seifert has been offered an internship with IMG’s golf clients division in London starting in June.

Lydia Ko and Novak Djokovic are just a couple of sports stars Hana-Rae could be working with during her nine-week internship with international sports management giant IMG.

“The internship is the perfect opportunity to combine both my practical experience as an athlete and my theoretical knowledge learnt through my law and sports degree,” says Hana-Rae. “It epitomises what the Hillary Scholarship has allowed me to do in the past four years and I will be forever grateful for its flexibility and support.”

It’s been a five-month application process for Hana-Rae, including various written applications and gruelling Skype interviews all at hours of the morning. “One morning I had to get up at 1.30am to do a 20-minute presentation on how IMG could acquire new golf clients,” she says.

IMG is a global leader in sports management and runs some of the world’s most recognised events, such as The Open Championship and Wimbledon, both of which Hana-Rae will be working at.

“There were thousands of applicants from all over the world and only one internship being offered in the golf clients division, so I feel extremely honoured to have been selected,” she says.

The internship will run for nine weeks from mid-June until the end of August but Hana-Rae hopes the opportunities won’t end there. “I feel like this is a step in the right direction for my future, I can definitely see myself following a career with IMG. Who knows, I might be Lydia Ko’s manager before you know it!”

Hana-Rae attributes many of her successes to the support and flexibility offered by Waikato’s Sir Edmund Hillary Scholarship Programme which has allowed her to follow both her passions for study and golf. “And of course I couldn’t have done any of this without the love and support from my family,” she says.

The former Head Girl of St Peter’s School, Cambridge, is currently in her sixth year studying Law and Sport and Leisure Studies.

Hana-Rae is in the New Zealand High Performance Squad for golf and a Waikato representative. Her recent golfing success includes an eight-week tournament campaign to the UK and Europe where she made the cut in all events.

**Doctoral student on the road with Kia Magic**

A Waikato doctoral student has been awarded a big scholarship to study with New Zealand’s most successful netball franchise.

Shannon O’Donnell is the recipient of the University of Waikato and the Kia Waikato Bay of Plenty Magic doctoral scholarship, which will give her a stipend of $22,000 a year for three years, plus domestic tuition fees, as she studies performance enhancement and recovery in elite netball players.

“It’s an amazing opportunity,” Shannon says. “I did a summer research scholarship looking at sleep patterns, recovery and performance with the Magic, and now I have the chance to dig even deeper into aspects of high performance sport – which is what I want to focus on in the future.”

The Hillary Scholar is a barefoot water skier and has played rep netball for Waikato and Bay of Plenty. She’s played with and against some of the netballers she’ll be studying.

“A lot of the research into the demands and performance of players is now outdated and doesn’t correspond to what we’re asking of netballers in the professional era, so I’ll be looking to update that and to develop new physical performance tests specifically designed for netball.”

Shannon’s been “on the road” with the Magic all season, attending all ANZ Championship games, home and away.

**BMXer off to Belgium**

Twelve-time national champion and first-year Hillary scholar Codi Merito is getting set for the UCI BMX World Championships in Belgium this July.

For Codi the best thing about BMX racing is the feeling of freedom he gets when he’s flying through the air. He’s amped for his upcoming trip to Belgium but says competing on the world stage is very different to racing at home.

“It’s exhilarating to meet and compete against people from all around the world but you don’t always know what to expect, which is a bit scary at times,” he says.

This will be Codi’s fourth time competing at the world championships where he made the quarter finals in the junior division last year in the Netherlands.

Codi’s been riding BMX since he was eight and says it’s a sport he’ll never get sick of. The former Hamilton Boys’ High School student has taken out 12 national titles and was the 2013 Waikato District Sportsman of the Year.

Codi is studying towards a Bachelor of Business Analysis majoring in agribusiness and finance, and he’s looking forward to furthering his academic and sporting experience at Waikato as a Hillary Scholar.

**Scholars set the stage**

Creative and performing arts scholars have been rehearsing since March for their 10th anniversary production of Blue Stockings by Jessica Swale.

The November show is an opportunity for 15 scholars to collaborate with peers and share their talents with the public. Director, Convenor and Senior Lecturer in Theatre Studies Gaye Poole, says it will be “the perfect blend of talents from a range of creative disciplines, including theatre, music (voice), graphic design, creative technologies and dance”.

Theatre scholar Missy Mooney says the characters encapsulate the qualities of bravery, determination and perseverance, which are “relevant to past, current and future Hillary scholars”.

The production takes place from 11-14 November, 7.30pm, at the Playhouse, Gallagher Academy of Performing Arts. Ticketing information available soon.
Quattro quartet: first of its kind

Cellist group Quattro are off to the UK for six weeks in July after winning the 2015 Royal Over-Seas League (ROSL) Chamber Music Scholarship.

Quattro is the youngest all-cello group in New Zealand and is made up of 18-year-old Jacky Siu, Sam Lucas, 19, Alexander Swale, 20, and Catherine Kwak who is only 17.

The ensemble was among 12 top university groups who competed in the ROSL Chamber Music Competition last year where they performed in two rounds and presented a 30-minute recital to a panel of judges.

“..."The calibre of performances was really high which made it hard to keep topping our performance each time,” says Jacky. But top their performances they did.

Quattro was awarded the ROSL scholarship for getting top place, winning a fully-funded trip to the UK where they get to “act as professional musicians on tour”, playing and attending concerts and music festivals and meeting international musicians and teachers.

“We also get the opportunity to play solo which is a big chance for us to get exposed to international music schools,” says Sam.

The Bachelor of Music students rehearse together most days which means they’re very close. "..."The judges actually considered the chemistry of the group in their deliberations which makes sense if we’re going to be travelling together for six weeks in a foreign country," says Jacky.

Senior lecturer and cello tutor James Tennant applauds Quattro and their serious work ethic, saying that this trip will open many doors for this group of “extremely talented kids”.  

Hillary family attends 10-year celebrations

Managing Director of Orbit Travel Paul Forward also spoke about his experiences in Nepal when he accompanied the scholars awarded the first Step Higher award in 2013.

“It was an honour to see first-hand the contribution that Sir Ed made in the region and how his influence and drive can influence future Kiwis,” Paul said.

Former Hillary scholar Josh Blue spoke highly of the programme and said it opened many doors for him in his professional career as a lawyer at Russell McVeagh.

“The value that I got out of the relationships that were forged in my time on the programme will extend well beyond my years at university,” he said.

Inaugural scholar- and graduate scholar-pins were gifted to scholars and alumni in attendance and those who didn’t receive a pin should email gregoc@waikato.ac.nz

Guests also took part in auctions that raised about $2,200 for the Himalayan Trust’s Rebuild Appeal. Auction items included sports equipment and hampers. Shirts signed by the All Blacks and cricketer Daniel Vettori sold for a total of $750.

Screen and Media/Filmmaking scholar Ashton Ledger helped organise the 10th anniversary event and says the auction was just one of the initiatives undertaken by the Hillary scholars to raise money for Nepal.

“We also held the Hillary Scholars Club Bake Sale which raised more than $2,000. Not only was it a great fundraising exercise, but it was also a way of bonding as a team as many scholars met the night before for a big bake-off,” says Ashton.

After the formal 10-year celebrations, scholars and friends came together in the evening for food, refreshments and impromptu karaoke.

“The evening event was great fun and an excellent way to connect with fellow scholars and alumni in a less formal setting,” Ashton says. “More events like this need to happen as it is a great opportunity for scholars to come together and develop a greater sense of community.”

Determination: National swimming champ Helena Gasson is one of four scholars training hard for their trip to the World University Championships in Korea.

National swimming champ set for Olympiad

Twenty-two hours of training every week has paid off for national swimming champion Helena Gasson who is one of four scholars who is travelling to Korea for the World University Championships in July.

Helena won four national titles at the New Zealand Opens in April in butterfly and the individual medley and made qualifying times for every race. She knew she was close to qualifying but wasn’t expecting to make the cut in all four events.

“..."I wasn't expecting to qualify in my first race but when I did, it gave me confidence to keep pushing myself as the meet went on," says Helena.

Joining Helena at the World University Championships will be Hillary scholar Camille Buscombe (athletics) and Hillary alumni Mariah Ririnui (athletics) and Adelle Stead (rowing).

Staged in a different city every second year, the world champs are the third largest sporting event following the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup. Every year thousands of students compete for gold. Helena says it’s hard not to feel nervous.

“It’s like the Olympics but for university students. All sports are represented, and there’s even a village,” she says. “I’m so excited but I’m also pretty nervous... it’s so close now!”

Helena has dived into an intense training regime with 5.30am starts and averaging 6km swims each training. “I’m doing a lot of distance at the moment but as the event gets closer I’ll be doing shorter, faster stuff.”

Helena says the Sir Edmund Hillary Scholarship Programme has helped strengthen partnerships with external organisations such as Swimming Waikato and Swimming New Zealand. “These places offer a great support network and help with funding,” she says.
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2015 Sir Edmund Hillary Scholars

Correct at 4 June 2015

*HM denotes Sir Edmund Hillary Medalist.
*SHA denotes Step Higher Award recipient.
*PM means that the student has received a Prime Minister’s Scholarship.
*P2P denotes Pathways to Podium Athlete.

*HQ denotes Higher Qualification Hillary Scholar.