

# the RISING FOUNDATION NEWS

## TERM ONE 2020

10<sup>+</sup>  
YEARS  
SERVING NEW ZEALAND YOUTH

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Many Thanks

Many of you will be asking how a programme such as ours, thrives during this unprecedented lockdown phase of New Zealand's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Three words Determination, Ingenuity and Compassion.

During these unsettling and uncertain times, our team has taken the opportunity to focus on the things they do best, building deep and honest relationships with the young people entrusted to their care. Using social networks and video chats, we are able to reach into our students' isolation bubbles with words of encouragement and support.

We focus on the emotional well-being of students who may have parents that have lost their jobs, be on restricted wages or are in essential roles. Some of our students are feeling extra lonely, and students who live in homes where relationships were not the best prior to the commencement of the lockdown, need to know that there are positive and consistent adults close by, who they can open up to safely and express their fears and frustrations.

The service that TRF provides is just as critical for our community now as it is in normal times!

As you will be aware, we do rely heavily on the generosity of various Trusts that provide us with support. In turn many of them are funded from the proceeds of gaming machines. Obviously those premises are in lockdown and the source of revenue has totally dried up for those Trusts.

Eventually that loss of revenue will impact on income for us as a Foundation, so we expect to struggle with funding in the immediate future. Unfortunately, due to the virus, we were also very disappointed to have to defer our major fund raiser for the year, being our race day at Ellerslie Race Course.

We have taken all of the action that you would expect of any prudent organisation, by focussing on cash flow and maintaining a strict cost down focus. Having said that though, we need to retain our staff (who are all directly programme focussed) to ensure that we continue to support our current cohort of 250 young students.

In these testing times, I know there are many organisations looking for support but if any of you do have an inclination to support us through this very difficult time, the following is our bank account details 02- 0191-0320727 -000. Any assistance that you can give would be most appreciated.

As we move through the lockdown period, please do remember take care, stay safe AND be nice to each other.

*John*

John Bongard ONZM, CRSNZ  
Board Chairman, The Rising Foundation



Unlocking Your Potential



# Wonderful Wendy

Malo e lelei, Kia Orana! A little bit about me:

My name is **Wendy Savieti** and I am 21 years old. I am half Tongan, from my Father's side and half Cook-Island from my Mother. Dad comes from a village in Tonga called Talafo'ou and Mum was born in notorious Otara. By fate, both of my parents' families eventually moved to Papakura, which has been all of our stomping grounds for over 25 years.

I am your typical Papakura old-girl, because I attended all the local Papakura schools. From Edmund Hillary Primary School, Kelvin Road Primary School, Mansell Intermediate then hearty Papakura High School, where I graduated in 2016.

It has been a privilege to witness what my community looks like through a variety of lenses—as a local student, as a voice on the Papakura Youth Council and as a member of the Papakura Rugby Football Club, playing rugby for our Women's team. I believe a lot of who I am is a testament to the place I come from.

I started with The Rising Foundation in 2013 as a Year 10 student. One of my first memories of being in The Rising, was going to my first meeting and listening in on an activity called “extraction”. Forming deeper meanings and evaluating the bigger picture. I remember buzzing out on different insights students had on pictures which I thought were “straightforward”. Ever since that meeting, I found myself drawn to TRF for two reasons.

1. I was in awe of how confident and well-spoken the Senior students in TRF Papakura were and
2. I wanted to become good at extracting.

Not even realising the deeper effect that it had on me, I learnt to develop an opinion, to acknowledge different perspectives and to always seek better understanding in all things. It is a tool that I'm very fortunate to gain and carry with me forever.

*Wendy*



2

Unlocking Your Potential



# REST & REFLECTION CAMP

The Summer R&R camp is a special time for TRF. It is an experience we offer to a select few students from each school who have shown a high level of commitment to the TRF programme, and to students who don't, for whatever reason, get to do much during the Christmas holiday break.

Back in 2016, The Rising Foundation ran a Respite camp at one of our Coordinators whanau homestead in Waipapa, and here in 2020 four years on, we returned to this beautiful whenua with a fresh bunch of students.

The Rihari whanau homestead is situated 10 minutes from the Kerikeri township and 15 minutes from the stunning Porirua Peninsula, on the East Coast of the North Island. The rural three acre block has rows of macadamia nut trees, oranges, plums, pears, and a huge open field to play on.

The property also has a creek running through it, which was the students' bath for the week. It is the ideal spot for camping and relaxation, away from busy city living, perfect for the purpose of this camp.

This camp provided ample time for our Coordinators to have proper deep and searching conversations with their students. Reflecting on the year of 2019, from their many successes and failures to their regrets and their future goals. Our students had dedicated time to sit down, share their thoughts, settle their fears, adjust their attitude and prepare themselves for the challenges to come in 2020.

It was a time for our students to think about what kind of person they want to become, what goals and dreams they want to pursue, plan and make themselves more aware of what could potentially trip them up on their journey.

On top of the character building and vision planning for 2020, our students were able to visit some of New Zealand's most beautiful places. We swam at Matauri Bay, bathed in the Coca Cola Lakes, snorkelled in Matai Bay, and rode a sea biscuit on Rangiputa Harbour. We explored Mataroa and picked pipis at Wharengaere. Our students were given some extremely unique experiences, things that people from all over the world travel to Aotearoa to do.

By doing all these activities, and engaging in everyday practices of the tupuna, gathering kai and living off the land, the students began to reconnect to the whenua and moana. This served as a visceral reminder for them of their responsibility to be a kaitiaki, a guardian of the land, to protect it and to treat their kainga, their home, their school and their community with a greater level of respect for the benefit of our future generations.



Many of our students experienced snorkelling for the first time.



Students enjoyed Hangi preparation and lots of outdoor exercise.





More from **R & R**



A huge THANK YOU to  
**TRILLIAN**  
**Trust**  
SERIOUS ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY  
For making R&R possible.



# Feleti and Jordan's THAILAND ADVENTURE



## Feleti says:

On January 2nd, Jordan and myself were given the opportunity of a lifetime to head to Thailand with the Australian Charity, Hands Across the Water (HATW) and participate in one of their fundraising ventures.

Hands Across the Water is a charity that gives kids who've come from tough backgrounds access to a better life. Their mission is 'to create a life of choice for our kids, rather than one of chance', by ensuring the kids grow up in an environment where they have access to medication; food; and education, and an abundance of support and love. This involves raising funds in a variety of ways for seven projects, including five orphanages across the whole of Thailand. HATW host leadership conferences, and 800km bike rides across Thailand... that's what we were about to take part in!

Riding 800kms across the Isan Province of Thailand was nothing short of amazing. It really has been my most life changing experience. There are the obvious things such as visiting an exotic country and seeing and experiencing things that I couldn't in NZ. But then there are the more touching experiences such as seeing the amount of joy in these kids faces when you ride into their home village; seeing the passion of the staff members for the work they do in the

When you're riding 100kms plus a day, in 40 degree heat, a change of pace is welcome from time to time.



children's lives; and more personally, winning the mental and physical battle I fought with myself each day.



On this trip we met many inspiring people. Some had left homes surrounded by the Australian Bushfires to attend this ride. We met former kids of the orphanage who graduated with a Bachelor of Law, another who joined the Army and became an Officer and is now the Director of Ban Tham Nam Chai orphanage. We met a woman who created her own school to teach 'slum kids' while she was still a teenager, and then rose to become a Senator in the Thai Parliament and created an organisation that champions the rights of the Klong Toey slum community. We met a lady who saw growing number of children being marginalised in society, because they were born with HIV. She took them in and loved them all the same. What came through when I met these heroes, was that they were just ordinary people doing extraordinary things, and they did it because they knew **why** they were doing it. They had their **why** worked out, and they were teaching their students to find theirs too.

Thanks to the help of HATW and their teachers, it didn't matter if the children came from difficult backgrounds, they now have a belief in themselves, and that their dreams - to become flight attendants, or teachers of Thai culture, or farmers - can now become a reality.

It made me think back to the work in TRF and I grew a deeper appreciation for what we do. We also have a Board that is committed to ensuring our students get their best shot at life. They also work tirelessly to ensure that we can do the work that we do. We work with the most dedicated and loving staff, who give their all to our students. And the students we work with are equally amazing. Yes, some come from tough backgrounds, and we help pathway them into 'lives of choice'. We provide safe spaces where our students can be loved and appreciated for who they are, this refreshes my belief in my **why**.



**Jordan says:**

Personally, this trip was a massive, life-changing experience in all aspects. When I found out last October that I would be participating in an 800km bike ride in three months, I hadn't ridden a bike for about 11 years. I had to relearn how to ride

a bike. I had lots of doubts and fears about how difficult this bike ride was going to be.

I was really fortunate to be able to experience this with one of my TRF brothers. Feleti's encouragement and his "can do/just do it" attitude, really helped me to complete the ride. There's just something unique about riding your bike, you get to see and hear things that you wouldn't otherwise. I gained a new perspective of life in Thailand. The welcome, humility and kindness of the Thai people was a constant throughout the whole trip. They really were great hosts and they taught me a lot about serving and how important it is to be a good servant.

Visiting the orphanages in the second week of the trip was something I will never forget. The orphans all loved Feleti and me because there aren't many big or fat people in Thailand, so you can imagine their faces when they saw us for the first time!



The routine at the orphanages reminded me of being on a TRF Camp. I loved the huge gardens they kept, where they teach the children to grow their own fruit and vegies and make a living out of their work. I will never forget the stories and conversations we shared with each orphanage leader. The heart that they have for the children in their care is beautiful.

This trip to Thailand has taught me to never waste another day, it opened my eyes to how many things in life I take for granted. Physically I learned that nothing is too hard for me, if I can do 800km across Thailand on a bike! Emotionally I missed my family and I learned to cherish every moment I get with them now. Spiritually I learned to be a servant, then a teacher.

Thank you so much everyone who played a part in giving Feleti and I this once in a lifetime opportunity to really challenge us to get outside of our comfort zones. All of these experiences and lessons that we have learnt through this trip, has lit a new flame of passion and motivation in us to show even more love and support towards TRF and our students. Thank you to all who made this trip what it was, everyone we met in Thailand, and especially to John Bongard, Kay Spencer and NARTA who made this all possible for us! Sawasdee kaap!

# TRANSITION

## meaningful work for our rising generation

The restrictions placed on the world during the Covid-19 pandemic, have forced our team to be more creative in the methods that we use to deliver our programme while still keeping it meaningful and engaging for our students.

As a team, we have been creating 'e-Dream boards' as visual representations of Students future pathways. These are great discussion starters and form a tangible starting point for our Employment Pathway Plans, as well as a constant motivator as our students pursue their aspirations.

We have created online content that our students can access. For those that cannot, we are working with the Spark Foundation and their Skinny JUMP programme that the Ministry of Education is utilising. This will bring internet access into more homes, so that our students are able to do their school work, participate in our initiative and still plan and build towards their futures with us.

We have had great buy-in on our Instagram page from the students who love to participate in our daily activities. If you are able to, please check out our page by searching @the\_rising\_foundation and follow and participate too!

All driver's licencing has been placed on hold but we are still educating our students on the theory side of the drivers training.

Once everything gets back to normal, our students will have a head start on their theory tests.

As an essential service, KiwiHarvest has given us the chance to continue providing food and checking in on our needy families from a safe distance and in an approved no-touch process. Thanks also to the team at KidsCan for some extra food support at this vital time for our community.

We wanted to give you a glimpse into the lives of young people we are helping. Two of our 2019 JB Graduates wanted to share about their experience over the past three months as they adjust to the real world:

### Timo Toafia:

At the beginning of this year I had it all worked out, I knew what I wanted to do. Music is my passion so I applied to MAINZ (Music and Audio Institute New Zealand) to get my Degree in music, travel the world and book gigs. That was Plan A.



But then I was faced with a big decision that affected me and also my family. My Dad asked me to get a job because he was going to retire and I would become the main breadwinner in the home. This was a big change of direction for me, but it was for my family so I was OK with it and I got a great full-time job at FMI Building Innovation based in Mt Wellington.

Then I was given the opportunity to play in our church band! Music still plays a big role in my life and this became a blessing. Now I have a good job, I'm providing for my family, and I'm keeping my music goals and dreams alive. So make plans, create goals, do your very best in everything and be ready for Plan B!



Feleti, Maria and Wendy, The T2 Team.

We work hard behind the scenes to raise the running costs of our excellent programme. Will you partner with us?

Download the app and find us on ...



# Unlocking Your Potential





### Paea Veatupu

My transition from High school to University was hectic. I really struggled to decide what I wanted to do with my life. After changing my mind so many times and seeking advice from T2, I finally decided to study PE at the University of Auckland.

I struggled with my enrollment and transition into University. The best choice I

made was going to our TRF staff for guidance. Feleti and Wendy had a massive impact with my enrollment this year, helping me sort out my classes, and getting ID requirements from birth certificates being verified by JPs and completing my RealMe application.

Overall, I am honestly excited about the future especially when I picture myself wearing a graduation cap with a Degree in my hand. Even throughout all the daily challenges I face, I know it is nothing compared to the joy I will feel when I am walking on that graduation stage representing my culture, community, my family and TRF.

# A BIG THANK YOU TO TOSHIBA



We wanted to especially acknowledge the important contribution of Jim Nolan and his team from the Electronic Imaging Division of Toshiba New Zealand.

They played a big part in the recent success of our Transition 2 Initiative by providing a photo-copier and two iPads! This has really built our capability as a team. Thank you guys!

# ATTITUDE



Attitude is one of the 12 Pillar Themes we promote in The Rising Foundation and this term we had big plans to reinforce this vital theme at our camp, well Covid-19 had other plans! But there's more than one way to achieve a goal, and we got straight to work, from our individual bubbles, creating clear ways to challenge our students to get thinking about their attitude.

It can be easy to look at teenagers and label them as 'having a bad attitude', but we have found that often they have good reasons for talking and acting in the way they do. Instead of taking offense to the noise they are making, we look for the reasons behind their attitude and work on those. Lots of 'attitude' is self-defense or an expression of resentment over past hurts.

Respect, obedience, compassion, enthusiasm are all still there inside, but they must be consciously adopted and developed until they are more natural than the negative attitudes that can 'pop out' in times of distress.

[Here are a few of our Online Attitude conversation starters that have been popular so far.](#)





# COORDINATOR REFLECTIONS

We've been so impressed by our team of excellent young Social Workers and Youth Workers, they hardly missed a beat during the harsh transition to Level 4 Restrictions. We wanted to give them the opportunity to tell you a little about their experience as a snapshot of these unprecedented times.

One of the main reasons we work in schools is because we know how hard it is to catch our young people! Even in lockdown we have found that we need to adapt.

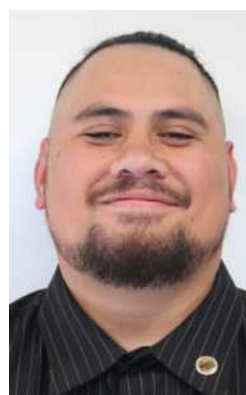


**Eddie from TRF Papakura High:**

This lockdown period has been interesting. Trying to find the right time for everything and everyone. With the students being at home 24/7, parents have got them occupied with chores and babysitting, so I've had to work the times they are allowed online which is usually around 8pm in the evenings onward. The best way to contact the students is via

social media. I have put up surveys, tasks and challenges via our Instagram and Facebook pages.

Most of my students are entering this next level of bonding with their families. Most of the time they love it but miss their friends, and getting out and about. Many just float and have no routine going. During this first week I have just tried to create a positive vibe amongst them and be available, especially when there are tensions and they need a break from their families.



**Jordan from TRF Manurewa High:**

I've been keeping in contact with my students via the TRF Rewa Instagram page, I post daily themed challenges: Monday Motivation where students send in videos about what motivates them, TikTok Tuesday (video challenge), Guess Who Wednesday with baby photos of the students, Thankful Thursday, and Feature Friday where whoever wants to be

featured on the page sends in a little testimony about themselves and the other students will encourage that person.

At the moment my students are in full holiday mode with their sleeping patterns. Every day I get calls via the Houseparty app around 11pm and I chat with a group of them until late. We call this the TRF nightshift!

Almost all of the students I've talked to say that quarantine is really lonely. They don't know what to do with themselves, some of the students' parents have lost their jobs and because of that they're stressed and angry. So I don't mind staying up late and chatting with the students, because for some of them it's the only real down time and positive conversation they get.



**Billie and Shani from TRF Pukekohe High:**

Lockdown in a nutshell has been very interesting for everyone. This time has opened up opportunities for us to interact with the students through social media, it's a new space

where we've felt a deeper connection in our student relationships despite the lack of physical presence. We've all had to adapt to this abrupt shift in community and society, it has realigned priorities within family households and given everyone time for self-reflection and appreciating the mundane aspects in their lives.

This has been reflected in our chats. Our students have definitely given us a glimpse into their lives and a better understanding of where they're at. There will be stressful moments for our students and families over the next weeks, as the reality of job losses and reduced wages continue to bite. That is why we will be touching base more regularly and creating more interactive content for our students to engage in.



**Gideon from TRF Rosehill College:**

This isolation period, has forced us to re-evaluate how we interact with and track our students.

For me personally, I have focused on individual catch ups with as many students as possible. The individual chats provide a little more privacy than group calls and I have found students have opened up more about their experiences, thoughts and feelings.

From there, I am better able to gauge which students will need more support during this time. Some are doing it really hard and I'm glad I can offer another perspective for them when things look bleak. I believe that by the time this lockdown is over, I will have a deeper and stronger connection with my students than before. Every cloud has a silver lining!





**Aviata from TRF Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate, Otara:**

In their own words, my students say that life hasn't changed too much because "they've always been in lockdown". Poverty has always meant a lack of options, no money to go out, nowhere safe to go out to.

If anything, the lockdown has presented them with a sense of newness through creative communication. At SEHC we have implemented a Buddy

System. 12 Buddy Leaders were assigned three buddies each that they keep encouraged, supported in school and reminded of all things TRF. The lockdown has forced them to be a lot more creative and the Houseparty app has really helped! A fun face-to-face interactive game app that has taken TRF students by storm. Instagram chats have also helped.

The most important message I've relayed to my leaders is that, our creativity in communication is all about being there for each other! We've just clocked almost three weeks in isolation. The next few weeks, whatever happens, are going to present even more opportunities to discover new things together.



## Voices from LOCKDOWN

At a time like this one of our major roles is to be guides and mentors for our students. Someone who is steady and consistently positive in their lives. Someone who remains open and approachable and encourages each student to share their thoughts and feelings. These are a selection of some of the responses we have had during our weeks in isolation. When they are not distracted, our young people are very thoughtful and full of great insights.

**"It's very easy to take things for granted and I think given the circumstances, this is the best opportunity to show our love, appreciation and becoming the best version of ourselves and bringing out the best in each other!" - Year 11 Girl**

**"It's really lonely. It's only me and my dad home coz my mums always at work but dad just stays in his room and we only see each other when we have dinner." Year 12 Boy**

**"This lockdown has made me appreciate more things in life especially all the little things like being able to leave the house, being able to go outside and especially being in school.**

**Personally I usually hate being at school, but having to switch to online learning and having less help has made me appreciate my teachers more and all of the help and support they provide. After this lockdown is over, I am definitely looking forward to going back to school, getting to see my friends and family, and getting back into sports" - Year 12 Girl**

**"Not sure how lockdown is going to turn out for me and my fams. Both my parents lost their jobs 'cos of this virus and we have so many of us at home. We're okay now, but the next four weeks are going to be hard" - Year 13 Boy**

**"We've been good, just been spending heaps of time with my family. One thing I'm grateful for during this time is that I get to spend more time with my parents because they're always working. They're still working, but we get way more time as a family in the bubble." Year 11 Girl**

**"My dad said that there's a guy at his job getting tested for the Coronavirus. He said that we might not be able to see him for a while which sucks." Year 10 Girl**

**"Thanks so much for the food. My mum said much appreciated" Year 13 Boy** (This family received one of the food parcels we distribute in collaboration with KiwiHarvest)

**Isolation is going really weirdly for me. I'm in lockdown with a different family so I'm really missing my siblings. Its been a bit draining. But I'm benefiting a lot from this. I have to use this time to reflect on myself and heal myself.**



ITS TIME FOR  
**DEEPER**  
CONVERSATIONS

1. Trivia
2. News
3. Opinions
4. Feelings
5. Open & Honest

**DEEPER** ↓

KEEP IT BELOW 3



I would encourage everyone to definitely use this time to reflect on yourself and your actions. Are you happy with the person you are? Are you happy with the goals you have set? Are you happy with the things you have done in your life? I think these questions will really help us become better people and come out of this time ready for life.

**Year 12 Girl**

**"I really miss going to see my nana."**

**Year 10 Girl**

**"My parents are stressed out as aye. They try not to show it to me and my sister but we can tell. We know it's because my mum lost her job. But lucky my dad still gets to go to work aye".**

**Year 12 Boy**

It is a genuine privilege to be able to share these moments with our students. To see the courage, humour and resilience with which they face the same great uncertainty that many of us feel, is inspiring.

These are good, capable young people and in our online conversations we share the kind of values that perfectly equip us for times like these.

As we know, some of the pressures on our families will ease soon, but some will continue, and navigating the 'almost normal' in the aftermath of Covid-19 will be just as complex as coping with the overt restrictions of these days.

As a team we look ahead with hope and confidence in our students. Thank you so much for supporting our work now and through the unknown landscape we will be navigating in the months to come.



Here are just a few examples of student responses to our daily Instagram challenges. Lockdown has created a real sense of community for us.



# THE FOUR PILLARS OF TRF

## INSIGHT

(Thinking Systems)

The ability to extract, grasp and internalise principles, develop higher moral reasoning and mature in emotionally healthy ways.

KNOW IT

## SYNERGY

(Collaboration)

The ability to function well within an established group while maintaining the identity and purpose of each individual.

SHARE IT

## INTEGRITY

(Accurate Representation)

The ability to put values and principles into practice consistently and wholeheartedly in our daily life.

LIVE IT

## CREATIVITY

(Innovation)

The ability to continually develop new ways to express our values and principles for the benefit of ourselves and our community.

SPREAD IT



# THE PARTING SHOT

Just to give a bit of balance, our R&R Camp wasn't all gutting Eels and washing hair in the creek, we also had a pretty luxurious day in one of Northlands best little resorts, Rangiputa. A big thank you to Dave and Deb Reynolds from **White Sands Apartments** for the ice blocks they gave to the group. We are very grateful too for the auction prize support they have given for our rescheduled **TRF Race Day**. Every charity needs the help of good friends and that's what Dave and Deb have been to us. Good on you guys!



## A Community of Friends of TRF

The Rising Foundation would like to acknowledge all Sponsors, Philanthropic Trusts, Corporate Businesses, Individuals, Local Businesses, School Trustees, Principals, School Staff, Families and our Community Trusts who sponsor students or have helped us to expand our programme. During the ten years that the programme has been running, we have seen 1579 students and their families and friends benefit from our work across the wider Auckland area. Without your generous support and collaboration none of this would be possible.

Thank you for choosing to support The Rising Foundation; we all truly appreciate it.

## MAJOR SPONSORS

Unlocking Your Potential