the RISING FOUNDATION

NEWS TERM THREE

HI EVERYONE

Despite the challenging economic climate, I only need to reflect on the work of TRF and our community of supporters to find heartening news each term.

It is a genuine pleasure for me to announce the appointment of former programme graduate Gideon Rihari to the role of General Manager at The Rising Foundation. To see this young man take his place at the head of our team, after an impressive career as a volunteer, Social Worker and Operations Manager, is the fulfilment of a major dream for our organisation. We are looking forward to supporting you, Gideon.

I was also delighted to hear of the truly outstanding efforts of our friends at Celestielle Travel and their new partners in South America, Explora, in particular Ana-Maria Varela (Explora's Director of Global Sales) and Matias Alamo (Manager of Explora Rapa Nui). They were instrumental in co-ordinating another amazing trip for four of our young people to the beautiful nation of Chile.

As you will see, the contrasts in terrain, social status, culture and personal experience that our team were exposed to on this unforgettable journey couldn't have been more extreme. I know that Mo'ui, Sky, Floyd, Gordon and Alex will be reflecting on all they saw and achieved for a very long time to come. A special mention goes to two charities that our young men raised funds to support: The Jurique Foundation, which provides rehabilitation services for children with physical and intellectual disabilities in the Atacama Region of Chile, and Hōŋa'a Re'o Rapa Nui School, whose team is pouring its heart into keeping the indigenous Rapa Nui language alive on Easter Island.

This term saw our schools combine to focus on the powerful theme of ATTITUDE. We all know that without a good attitude, very little can be achieved. Like so many other things that our young people face, the answer lies within. It is vital that we take this opportunity, in our workshops and through our excellent adventure camps, to help our students take a long look in the mirror regarding this challenging theme.

Finally, I want to encourage you to get behind our newest social enterprise initiative, TRFCreative. Our extremely talented Communications Manager, Leo Molina, is offering his graphic design services to our supporters and network partners at a discounted rate. If you have any upcoming design projects, please consider working with Leo. You will receive world-class design at a reasonable cost while directly supporting our brilliant young New Zealanders at The Rising Foundation.

Warm regards,

John





ATTITUDE

INSIGHT

Our attitude is 'the way we usually think, feel and respond to life'.

Thinking positively and focusing on the good helps us feel better and respond to life with a healthy attitude. Negative thinking can have the opposite effect.

We must lift our heads, like a seed rising from the soil. A Rising person is confident, humble, compassionate and wholehearted. We do what we can with what we have, ready to help, care, give and try. We don't 'puff ourselves up' or 'put ourselves down'. Let's be honest, kind and fair with ourselves. Our mind should be our friend.

We are realistic about what we expect from ourselves, others and situations. We won't always get what we want. Accepting this helps us stop pushing too hard and to feel less disappointed.

We don't waste time judging others or comparing ourselves to them. Everyone has their own load to carry and race to run. Let's run our race with all our strength and seek our 'personal best'.

We don't choose our family, but we choose how we treat them. Let's act in ways we can be proud of, see the good in our loved ones, apologise and make peace.

There will always be someone in charge. Let's accept correction from people we respect and recognise that others may have a better understanding. Treat leaders with respect, but never lower our standards when they fall short. Learn from their mistakes and choose to lead better when it's our turn.

If we want to succeed, we should expect failures along the way. Failure is part of learning and proof that we are trying. It does not change our value as people. Let's use it to reflect on our thinking and learn what to do differently.

When we succeed, we recognise that our effort is working. We stay humble, without gloating or getting a big head.

Finally, let's be hopeful! Where there is life, there is hope. The future isn't set; we can shape it, starting today. Feeling hopeless doesn't mean a situation is hopeless.

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We help businesses, organisations and individuals bring their ideas and brands to life through high-quality creative design.

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- **Reasonable price and inside understanding!**
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A NEW CHAPTER IN LEADERSHIP



TRF has been part of my life since I joined as a student in 2010. Back then, I couldn't have imagined where that connection would take me. Looking back, I'm grateful for the people who have walked alongside me, challenged me and given me opportunities to grow.

After graduating from PHS in 2012, I stayed involved as a JB, volunteering for a couple of years before being offered a role in early 2015. I was asked to establish TRF at Rosehill College, beginning a chapter that has meant a lot to me. Moving from student and volunteer to supporting a cohort of my own came with plenty of learning, and Rosehill has held a special place in my journey ever since.

While working with TRF, I completed a Diploma in Youth Work, followed by a social work degree through Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, graduating in 2020. Study deepened my understanding, while the rangatahi, whānau and colleagues around me continued to teach me how to put that learning into practice.

I later had the opportunity to serve as Team Leader and then Operations Manager. Mid this year, when Alex Tarrant stepped aside as General Manager, I was asked to take on the role. I'm thankful for that trust and very aware that I still have a lot to learn.

Throughout my journey, I've had the privilege of walking behind and alongside leaders from all walks of life. Each has carried their own strengths and weaknesses, but the common thread has been a heart for service and a love for people. Their example has taught me lessons I'm still growing into, and I'm grateful for the footsteps ahead of me.

In particular, I've learnt from both Eli Tulafono, our first GM, and his successor, Alex Tarrant. Their mahi, alongside the commitment of our founder John Bongard, our team, Board and wider supporters, has helped shape the TRF we have today.

I've seen TRF reach new schools, strengthen as a team and expand through T1 and T2. We can now walk alongside rangatahi from Year 8 through high school and into study, training and working life. Seeing former students return to encourage the next group, is a special reminder of how those relationships continue beyond graduation.

As I settle into this role, I hope to listen well, support our team and care for the kaupapa entrusted to us. Having once been a student myself, I know what it means to have people believe in you. My hope is that, together, we can honour what others have built and keep offering that same belief, support and opportunity to those who come next.



FROM *the* GENERAL MANAGER
GIDEON RIHARI

A HUGE ***THANK YOU*** TO ***CELESTIELLE CHARITABLE TRUST*** AND ***EXPLORA*** FOR MAKING THIS EXPERIENCE POSSIBLE.

CHILE trip

Celebrating the fourth year of our partnership with Celestielle, we embarked on an exciting new adventure to South America. With family connections to Chile and some knowledge of Spanish, I was thrilled to lead our first-ever all-boys trip.

Building relationships with our four Year 12 students, Sky, Mo'ui, Floyd and Gordon, and their families was a highlight. Over 14 days, we grew into a genuine team, sharing unforgettable experiences and discovering the beauty of Chile.

Our journey began in Santiago, where we explored the lively streets of Chile's capital before flying north to the Atacama Desert. Surrounded by the breathtaking Andes, we arrived in San Pedro de Atacama, where the incredible team at Explora Atacama welcomed us.

Our desert adventures included exploring Valle de Marte, relaxing in the Puritama hot springs, spotting native wildlife, stargazing at an observatory and visiting flamingos on the vast Gran Salar salt flats. These extraordinary landscapes left a lasting impression on us all.

A particularly meaningful experience was visiting the Jurique Centre, where we met Elizabeth Tapia Santibáñez, her dedicated team and the children they support. Accompanied by Explora representatives and the local mayor, we enjoyed a wonderful cultural exchange. The connection was so special that we returned the following day to spend more time with them.

Returning to Santiago, we explored the city's rich history, architecture, modern attractions and delicious cuisine, guided by the wonderful Valerie Reynolds and Benjamin Rodriguez.

Our final destination was the remote island of Rapa Nui, also known as Easter Island. From the moment we arrived, we were welcomed with warmth, kindness and genuine hospitality by the Explora Rapa Nui team.





Guided by knowledgeable locals, we discovered the island's remarkable history and traditions. Highlights included visiting the iconic moai statues at Ahu Tongariki, exploring the Rano Raraku quarry, discovering Anakena Beach and walking along the spectacular Rano Kau crater overlooking the Orongo Birdman village.

Another unforgettable experience was visiting Hōŋa'a Re'o Rapa Nui, a local organisation supported through our fundraising. Meeting Maria Virginia Haoa and her students gave us valuable insight into their efforts to preserve the native Rapa Nui language and cultural identity. Our final evening featured a spectacular performance by KariKari, the island's longest-running dance troupe, providing a colourful and energetic conclusion to our adventure. Chile offered incredible contrasts, from the dry Atacama Desert and snow-capped Andes to Rapa Nui's lush landscapes and beautiful beaches. More importantly, this journey provided our students with opportunities to embrace different cultures, develop confidence, build friendships and experience life beyond New Zealand.

An enormous thank you to Celestielle Travel for carefully organising our itinerary, Celestielle Charitable Trust and the Explora network for generously sponsoring our entire journey, and The Rising Foundation for trusting me to lead this exceptional group of young men.

Finally, to Floyd, Gordon, Sky and Mo'ui, thank you for your enthusiasm, friendship, laughter and willingness to embrace every opportunity. Watching you try new foods, learn about different cultures, overcome challenges and grow together was the most rewarding part of this experience. This was more than a trip. It was a journey of discovery, friendship and personal growth that we will remember for a lifetime.





Our Raglan camp was a good chance to get away together, reconnect and close out what's been a challenging year for our Rosehill College whānau. Having a smaller group meant we could go a bit deeper, spend more time together and strengthen the relationships within our roopū.

For me, a highlight was seeing the students come together throughout the week and grow in confidence. Many of those who came have been, or are becoming, our core group at Rosehill. It gives me a lot of hope for the years ahead, knowing that when we find our next Programme Coordinator, they'll have a solid group alongside them to support them and help carry the kaupapa forward.

It was also awesome having our JBs, graduates from previous years, come back and volunteer their time. This reciprocation is a big part of our programme and seeing them share their experiences, encourage the kids and give back to the kaupapa meant a lot. They've sat where these students are sitting, so there's something special about the kōrero and encouragement they can offer.

Rosehill College has had a tough year with the departure of their previous PC. The kids have also had to share me as I juggle a few different hats and the demands on my time and energy. I know that hasn't always been easy and I really appreciate their patience and the way they've continued to show up.

Even with those challenges, I feel we've grown stronger together. This camp gave us time to recognise that and build on it.

A big mihi to our students and JBs for the time, energy and aroha you brought to the week. I left Raglan proud of our whānau and excited for what's ahead.

ROSEHILL COLLEGE
ATTITUDE CAMP
2026



TRILLIAN TRUST
SERIOUS ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY

A HUGE ***THANK YOU*** TO ***TRILLIAN TRUST*** FOR MAKING THIS CAMP POSSIBLE.

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PIKI ATU KI TE RANGI

KIA RANGATIRA
PAPAKURA HIGH SCHOOL



MHS-PAHS-PUHS ATTITUDE CAMP 2026

This camp saw 75 students from Papakura High School, Pukekohe High School and Manurewa High School attend, alongside eight adult volunteers and four staff members. CYC Ngaruawahia Camp is always a perfect fit for our Term 3 camps, as it has multiple facilities large enough to accommodate our activities and workshops. Even though it is a very large campsite, everything is still close enough together to create an intimate atmosphere.

One of our main goals for this camp was to give our students a new experience. We've followed the same camp structure for the past few years because it works well, and we had no reason to change things. However, we always tell our students that there's no growth in the comfort zone, so we reflected as a team and decided to change the entire structure of our camp.

Most of these changes were made to give our tamariki more creative freedom and opportunities to showcase their talents, develop leadership skills and try new things. Activities included school promotional videos, choir workshops, dance workshops, a talent show and skit night. Another change that received plenty of positive feedback was moving our TRF content workshops to the mornings after breakfast, when students were fresh and ready for the day, rather than exhausted from a full day of activities.

All our activities were run by staff and past graduates who volunteered their time for the entire week. Asotasi Tanielu, Aviata Tanielu and Tele Nofoaiga led our choir workshops, while Nese Godinet led our dance workshops. Without our amazing JB graduates volunteering their time and energy, we wouldn't have been able to run this camp, let alone provide opportunities for our tamariki to try new things, such as joining a choir or learning to dance from an experienced dancer.

A huge thank you to all our JB graduates who took annual leave from work or sacrificed university classes and study time to attend camp and help give our students the same, if not better, experiences that you had when you were in their position. We appreciate you all more than you can imagine.



Our tamariki enjoyed a jam-packed week of fun and exciting activities, from the Amazing Race and our very own Commonwealth Games tournament to the hydroslide and mudslide.

Alongside the fun, there was also plenty of meaningful workshop time. Students were divided into their respective year-level groups and rotated through four staff-led workshops exploring our theme for the term: ATTITUDE.

As our last camp of the year, this also marked the final camp and the end of our Year 13 students' TRF journey. There was plenty of reminiscing, heartfelt gratitude and, of course, a few tears towards the end.

To all our Year 13 students who attended their final camp, I hope you truly enjoyed your last TRF camp as a student. I hope you remember everything that made you keep choosing TRF and hold close to your hearts all the lessons, friendships and memories you've made throughout your journey with us.

We love you all, and we'll see you at graduation!

Jordz





the PARTING SHOT

Thank You, Z Energy – Good in the Hood!

A huge thank you to Z Energy, particularly Z Kingsway in Papakura and Z Browns Road, for selecting The Rising Foundation as one of the recipients of their Good in the Hood programme. This fantastic initiative supports local charities and community organisations, giving customers the opportunity to vote for causes close to their hearts. We are incredibly grateful to Z Energy and everyone who voted for us, helping us raise a combined $1,980 to continue supporting and empowering young people in our communities.

A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS

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 17 years that the programme has been running, we have seen 2,598 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 SUPPORTING THE RISING FOUNDATION; WE ALL TRULY APPRECIATE IT.

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Thank You!

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