South Auckland home to New Zealand’s best neighbourhood

Randwick Park in Manurewa is New Zealand’s Mitre10 Community of the Year!

The neighbourhood won the prestigious award at the glitzy Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year award ceremony on Wednesday night cheered on by 30 supporters, mostly Randwick Park locals, along with Councillor Daniel Newman, Manurewa Local Board chair Angela Dalton, TSI social intrapreneur Tania Pouwhare and Jim Nicol and Fred Craigie from Downer. Turn to page 2 for more details.
Winners of the annual awards are chosen for their strong sense of community spirit and vital role in enhancing the social, economic, cultural or environmental prospects of their area.

Randwick Park was once synonymous with crime and poverty but has undergone a remarkable transformation to be recognised as the country’s best neighbourhood. A local liquor store owner was killed eight years ago and out of that tragic and terrible event came change. The local people of Randwick Park worked tirelessly to transform their community and while there’s still more to do the community is proud of how far it has come. A community once in the headlines for all the wrong reasons is now abundant in youth leadership, community action and enterprise.

The unwavering support of the Manurewa Local Board resulted in significant council investment in Riverton Reserve. Once home to a graffiti riddled skate bowl and a large empty field, the reserve now boasts extensive facilities for sports and community activities, a modern and well-used skate park and a new multi-million dollar facility, Manu Tukutuku, run by and for local people.

For The Southern Initiative, communities like Randwick Park are exactly the kind of change agents who will unlock the huge potential of South Auckland. TSI brokered a relationship between Stepping Stones, a community-led enterprise, with council contractor Downer to maintain the Riverton Reserve.

Seeing the transformational potential, Downer got on board with the idea straight away and as a result, five Randwick Park residents who had experienced long-term unemployment got local jobs and a chance to give back to their community. Since then, Stepping Stones has secured a contract with the local school and has built an ongoing relationship with Downer.

TSI nominated Randwick Park for Mitre 10 Community of the Year and supported locals to be at the award ceremony so they could celebrate their success. The event was also attended by Auckland Mayor Phil Goff who said he was really proud to see a South Auckland neighbourhood take out the top prize.

“It just goes to show what people working together at a grassroots level can achieve and it’s exciting the council’s Southern Initiative was a part of this transformation. The Southern Initiative is making really good progress in upping Auckland Council’s game and is providing an excellent example for the rest of the organisation.”

As a category award winner Randwick Park will receive $5000 and a bespoke glass trophy.
It’s all going down
UPsouth

TSI is in the process of launching a crowd empowerment platform called UPsouth.

UPsouth is a place for people to respond to South Auckland’s challenges by getting creative and sharing new and original ideas – and earn some regular money for their input.

It is also an exciting new way of developing a network of young people who lead together, support one another’s development and is both entrepreneurial and altruistic.

Different groups including TSI use UPsouth to make a callUP. A callUP asks about a challenge in our community so people can share ideas on how to solve the challenge. Tapping into creativity, we can find new ways of tackling local challenges and at the same time those who contribute ideas earn money.

By responding to callUPs users are paid micro-payments from funding attached to each call. Each call is unique but in general UPsouth will distribute money to ideas that are honest, original, and creative and expressed differently. The ideas will generate insights and actions by the group or organisation running the callUp.

UPsouth users who respond to a callUp can also be paid by other users who like their idea. They can share $1 or more with them by clicking ‘give’ on the site. Every week the balance in a user’s UPsouth wallet will be paid into their bank account. Anyone can join, however to earn money people need a New Zealand bank account and an IRD number.

UPsouth was tested on a similar concept platform called it’sNOON and three young people answered several calls including ‘what do you love about South Auckland’. Janet, Neihana and Jackson used the money they earned from their contributions to buy camera and video equipment to start their own businesses and all three are building their client base.

Check out the calls, including one about a significant change in Auckland Council’s rubbish collection at UPsouth.nz.
Mayoral visit

Auckland Mayor Phil Goff and some of his mayoral office staff spent two hours at The Southern Initiative earlier this month.

The focus of our presentations and conversations was the progress TSI has made over the past two years. The mayor was particularly interested in our projects and initiatives that produce high-quality and high impact results such as Māori and Pasifika Trades Training, strategic procurement, the early years challenge, Healthy Families and Healthy Homes.

He was also keen to hear about some of our social enterprise and innovation projects and was impressed with our activities to help South Aucklanders grow a maker culture (to tinker, fix, create). The vision is that South Auckland is known for intergenerational creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation.

As part of the trip south the mayor also visited the Manukau Bus Train Interchange site where he heard Auckland Transport and NZ Strong management talk about the value TSI adds to their businesses and projects. The mayor agreed TSI had made and built upon some very important relationships with central government and other organisations.

As a result of the visit Mr Goff was clear TSI needed to be maintained as a priority for Auckland Council.

“The Southern Initiative is involved in some very important social and economic development work and the team has an excellent overview about how to affect the deepest impact in that regard,” says Mr Goff.

“It also has all important insight into South Auckland’s needs and how to best help the community meet those needs, particularly around helping children reach their full potential. TSI is doing some impressive work and is achieving great results.”
New relationship manager

The Southern Initiative’s Māori and Pasifika Trades Training (MPTT) has a new relationship manager and he’s got some enthusiastic and exciting plans.

Norm McKenzie started with TSI at the beginning of the year replacing Rob Mitford-Burgess and has extensive experience with more than 25 years in leadership at all levels of commercial and public organisations and a strong commitment to clients’ needs and achieving results.

Norm says that when he started at TSI he immediately noticed the “wairua that permeates the team making for the most positive and constructive work environment” he had encountered. “We will continue to deliver transformational outcomes for our tauira that adds value to all our other stakeholders. In my view this is truly “whānau ora” in action”.

TSI’s Māori and Pasifika Trades Training (MPTT) is a nation-wide initiative funded by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). TSI is the contract holder for one of Auckland’s two MPTT programmes (the other is provided by MIT and Unitec) and the model is unique because TSI is the only non-tertiary provider. TSI’s courses, ranging from 12 to 50 weeks, are delivered by six private training establishments based in South Auckland and cover carpentry, motor mechanics, electrics, construction, infrastructure and welding.

Feedback from TEC is that TSI MPTT is one of the country’s highest performing. Its 2016 target of trainees was met and more funding for this year has been secured. TSI gets positive feedback from the Ministry of Social Development about enabling people to move from benefits to employment and the programme has ambitious goals – it moved from five per cent female trainees to 22 per cent in just 12 months.

Norm McKenzie has some big ideas and plans.

“I am passionate about the opportunity to educate those who have opted out of education and training. I want to build on the already solid platform by continuing to develop and evolve solutions for the challenges and opportunities that confront our communities.”

Norm would like to see TS MPTT scaled up so that by 2020 we have significantly more students participating and achieving through the initiative. He’s keen to pursue alternate revenue streams and drive brand awareness throughout Aotearoa with employers, whānau whanui and all political forums. He’s also keen to promote, develop and implement TSI MPTT through all of Auckland - perhaps the whole country!

Norm can be contacted at norm.mckenzie@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or on 021 530 286.
Pop up to benefit the community

Otāhuhu Station has a new pop up kiosk and the local community will be its main beneficiary.

The Southern Initiative worked with Auckland Transport to create an opportunity for an exciting food and beverage social enterprise, Fale Kofi, on a six month trial. This is potentially a prototype for what could be done in others places such as the Manukau Bus Train Interchange.

The kiosk is only a small space but big on innovation and community impact with its outstanding and unique food and beverage offering.

With a focus on providing nutritious and affordable products, Fale Kofi doesn’t offer sugar-added drinks, just kofi and water and plans to offer free misshapen fruit to children. The food and drink options are sourced from Pasifika, Māori and local producers wherever possible and are ethical trade. In the future, Fale Kofi will offer a text-and-collect service for busy commuters of authentic Cook Island meals from the oneCOOPERATIVE.

With an eye to treading lightly on the planet, all waste will be recycled and the stunning Māori and Pasifika inspired fit out, designed and built by Roots Creative Entrepreneurs, is made from recycled and upcycled materials.

The kiosk is run by Affirming Works, who already have extensive experience in successfully running community cafes, supported by a cooperative of The Southern Initiative, oneCOOPERATIVE and Roots Creative Entrepreneurs. The cooperative business model will add more social, local, Māori and Pasifika enterprises over time.

South Auckland’s unique Māori and Pasifika identity is being promoted by the kiosk through its cooperative business model, products, design and bilingual signage.

The kiosk demonstrates new models of economic development that puts people and the environment at its heart and fosters collaboration rather than competition. All profit goes back into supporting great community causes.

“There’s a strong appetite in South Auckland for business that delivers sustainable and shared prosperity” says TSI specialist adviser Joel Umali. “Fale Kofi will show that we can deliver great service and products, be commercially viable and have a social, environmental and cultural mission. It’s a win-win for customers, Auckland Transport and the local community.”

The official opening event will be held early March.
Exploring cultural tourism opportunities

A visit to Woodhill Forest by local iwi helped glean real insights into cultural tourism opportunities in South Auckland.

More than 15 people took part in the visit organised by The Southern Initiative, ATEED and Ngāti Whātau ō Kaipara and got to experience a very important part of the latter’s cultural landscape that supports a variety of recreational activities including horse riding, mountain biking, tree climbing, off-road motorcycling and four wheel driving.

The whēna of 12,500 hectares in Woodhill Forest was bought by Ngāti Whatua as part of its Treaty of Waitangi settlement and its governance and management entity responsible for it is Ngā Maunga Whakahii ō Kaipara.

The visit showed those taking part what was possible using their natural resources and surroundings to create a unique experience tailored for a range of audiences including local and international visitors, schools, whānau, work teams on so on. It also provided valuable insights in terms of the process undertaken by Ngā Maunga Whakahii ō Kaipara in identifying and creating experiences that can provide employment while allowing them to fulfil kaitiaki duties.

Edith Tuhimata from Kaitiaki ō Ngati Te Ata took part in the visit because she specifically wanted to see how the organisation was getting on with incorporating taonga into its trails.

“These sorts of adventure activities could be applied elsewhere with the right platform, resources and funding,” she says. “They are excellent for building confidence in individuals and teams and promote cultural heritage in a culturally sensitive way.

“Rangatahi are involved so there is a future succession plan and the activities provide income for the tribe as well as jobs for tribal members.”

Errin Henare from Manurewa Marae particularly enjoyed the guided tour that perfectly delivered the history of the area, being able to ask questions about the organisation’s infrastructure and the wild kai gathered and prepared locally.

“And on top of all that the scenery was spectacular and the tree adventures a lot of fun.”

Kylie Tawha from Makaurau Marae Te Ahiwaru overcame her fear of heights during the visit and went home planning what activities her iwi and hapu could set up in South Auckland.

If you are interested in more information about cultural tourism contact ATEED Māori Product Development Manager Jes Sweetman on jes.sweetman@aucklandnz.com

Exploring cultural tourism opportunities at a high level – up trees!
Let’s bin the bag!

Auckland Council is introducing a rubbish bin service to replace the black rubbish bags in the former Manukau City area.

The new bins will be delivered to households in June and July this year and the bin collection service starts on September 4.

The move to bins will encourage waste reduction, make rubbish collection more efficient and consistent across the region and reduce mess on the streets created by animals getting into bagged rubbish.

Each household will be supplied a standard rubbish bin which holds about two black bags of rubbish free of charge. A larger bin will be available on request for a charge. If you are a tenant your landlord will need to request a larger bin.

No changes to current rubbish collection days will be made and once the new service starts only rubbish in the bin will be collected. No collection changes for users of orange council bags in Franklin and Papakura will be made.

Find out more at makethemostofwaste.co.nz or call (09) 928 0934.

Co-Design Lab secures funding and mandate

The Auckland Co-Design Lab which is co-located with TSI has secured has secured further central government funding.

The lab is now hosted by Auckland Council (as part of TSI organisation and team) rather than MBIE and has joined a cross-agency governance group chaired by Auckland Council’s Chief strategy officer Jim Quinn.

The lab focuses on leveraging the strengths of central and local government and the community to tackle Auckland’s large scale and complex challenges. It uses co-design methods and fosters collaboration to develop insights and ideas across complex social issues and catalyse change.

The TSI and the lab’s early years challenge explores how parents can be better supported to give their tamariki the best start in life. South Auckland is a place where communities and whānau have strengths and resilience but this potential is often untapped when it could be part of the solution.

By using co-design methodology TSI is bringing parents/whānau together with staff from Auckland Council, Plunket and other agencies to explore new ideas to ensure council facilities meet the needs of parents and communities. It is a whānau centric and strengths based approach and the insights and ideas developed will be valuable to families, community, policy makers, iwi, funders and service providers.

TSI lab team Jane Strange and Alastair Child are passionate about the co-design work they do and how it benefits the South Auckland community.
Community journalism workshop

People in the Māngere community interested in writing for local newspaper 275 times attended a free journalism workshop (pictured below) run by TSI social intrapreneur and former journalist Fiona Cunningham, Māngere East Community Centre manager Hone Fowler, 275 editor Belinda Fowler and former 275 now Manukau Courier editor Justin Latif.

The three hour workshop covered the basics of news, where to find good stories, writing skills, story forms and angles and citizen journalism.

275 is published monthly as part of the Māngere East Community Centre’s goal to provide an inclusive and accessible environment where people can come together to connect, learn, interact, contribute and celebrate community wellbeing.

TSI is keen to change the mainstream media’s perception of South Auckland and South Aucklanders.

“There are so many good news stories to tell so we are keen to develop a network of young South Aucklanders who are proud of where they live and sick of only reading, watching or hearing negatives stories,” says Fiona. “South Aucklanders who have a strong desire to tell their own stories and want to be citizen journalists focusing on the positive.”

Workshop participants got the chance to practise their interviewing skills by questioning Hone’s father Roger who set up the centre 20 years ago this year and is now kaumātua and mentor to its staff and community. An activist and protestor from way back, Roger was a fantastic source of stories and feedback on the workshop was all positive with 275 times getting some new contributors.

Keep a look out for similar workshops in the future!

The workshop in progress.
Manurewa High - makers and markets

The vision of Manurewa High School’s Business Academy is to foster the next generation of creative, enterprising business people and if the school’s first Future Fest is anything to go by there’s no doubt that vision will be realised.

Held over three days earlier this month Future Fest saw 450 Year 9 and 10 students take part in a variety of workshops including some run by The Southern Initiative and a variety of ideas were generated and products made.

Students put their heads together to:

- Become a Biz Ninja – find the idea, make a plan and pitch for start-up funding
- Learn exponential technologies like robotics, Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) and 3D printing
- Design a creative community space, and
- Make music.

TSI teamed up with Makerhood and Libraries to run a Design and Tech workshop which aimed to co-create solutions with students using design thinking and use technology as a tool to make learning fun and exciting. The workshop helped strengthen students’ experience in planning, designing, research, collaboration and entrepreneurship and to develop technology ideas the school can roll out.

Some of the most noteworthy ideas included:

- An online virtual app to dissect animals
- A messenger app for students to communicate with teachers
- Using robots to learn maths and physics
- An app for students to manage lunch deliveries, and
- An AR app to turn the school into a virtual classroom.
TSI also introduced the students to its new crowd empowerment digital platform UPsouth which will be used to harness collective strengths to solve issues identified by the school.

The fest culminated in the evening Manurewa Maker Market (see pictures) which brought together technology, food, music, dance, crafts and art focused on educational messages and enabled students to showcase their fascinating creations to their families and community.

With more community involvement the school plans to hold maker market regularly. For more information contact Ayla Hoeta at ayla.hoeta@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz.

A stall at the Manurewa Maker Market.

Otara couple has licence for success

An Ōtara couple who designed one of New Zealand’s most effective workshops for people to pass their driver’s licence test has created the country’s first app to do the same thing.

Swanie and Terry Nelson’s company Let’s Get Legal NZ was set up to help young people better understand the road code and almost all participants sit their test immediately following the one, three hour workshop which has a 98 percent pass rate.

“Our strong background in community and youth development means we know how important independence is to young people but with varied learning abilities and time restraints getting your licence can be a struggle,” says director Mrs Nelson.
As well as the workshop, Let’s Get Legal NZ offers highly successful E-books for Learners, Restricted and Full Licences which feature study guides, practical test guides, all possible questions and answers and their own bonus tips to pass.

“We products mean our customers can experience the benefits of being able to practise driving more strategically aligned to the real test and make the process easier, quicker, more enjoyable, more effective and cheaper given they can pass first time around.”

The company's new app is available for both iOS and Android devices and contains a study guide on what to and what not to do while driving, practical driving test scenarios and handy tips.

The couple approached TSI for some media advice to ensure coverage of their story.

http://www.letsgetlegalnz.com/restricted-app.html

Swanie and Terry Nelson show off their Let’s Get Legal NZ app

We love sharing stories about what our communities are up to and how we are working to unlock South Auckland’s potential. If you have any stories you’d like to share, please contact editor Fiona Cunningham at fiona.cunningham@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or on 021 773643.