

## MEDIA RELEASE



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### **PACIFIC ENTREPRENEURSHIP RECOGNISED WITH YOUTH AWARD**

Pacific Island students in New Zealand high schools will have the opportunity to vie for a new award that recognises their entrepreneurial skills.

The *Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs Award for Excellence in Pacific Business* is presented to the best Pacific company in the Young Enterprise Scheme (YES) – an experiential business programme developed by Enterprise New Zealand Trust that involves setting up and running a real business for all Year 12 and 13 students.

Pacific Island Affairs Chief Executive Dr Colin Tukuitonga says 7.6% of all students participating in the nationwide project are of Pacific descent.

“Considering that under 7% of the population are Pacific Island, this is a good representation showing initiative and wanting to succeed in business”.

As this week is Youth Week 08, continues Dr Tukuitonga, we want to highlight some positive initiatives for our youth.

Youth Week is about creating a society that values young people and affirms their diversity and the week aims to highlight the amazing things young people do. In 2008 the focus is on relationships.

Dr Tukuitonga adds one of the key objectives of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs getting involved in the YES scheme is also about bringing together students and Pacific mentors.

“The scheme is about educating kids on what it takes to succeed in business,” says Dr Tukuitonga, “but it’s also about creating inspiring relationships that can influence lives for the better. Economic success is achievable, Pacific innovation is evident, we will be nurturing this,” he says.

The establishment of this award and associated support for young Pacific entrepreneurs fulfils Goal 5 Entrepreneurial Culture (Mindset Change) of the Pacific Economic Action Plan (PEAP). The PEAP is a Ministry of

Pacific Island Affairs plan that seeks to increase Pacific people's level of economic prosperity.

Dr Tukuitonga encourages the Pacific business community to contribute to the scheme by becoming mentors. Students in the scheme create a company, have student directors, approve a constitution and find a mentor. They invest real money, produce real products, and keep the real profits. There are also NCEA credits attached.

The award is granted to the Pacific company with the best Annual Report as judged by a panel which includes a successful Pacific business person. Awards are being held in November.

You can view the student companies at [www.yesinnovationhub.co.nz](http://www.yesinnovationhub.co.nz).

Ends

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