
NEWSLETTER



Young Leaders Reflection by Eleanor Blatchford

On May the 29th, eight Year 8 students went to the Palmerston North Regent Theatre for the 2012 National Young Leaders Day. Our two hosts for the day were Matt Gibb and Whitney Tuitasi. There were five speakers and they all spoke about 'Ignite the spark in your potential'.

The First Speaker of the day was Nick Tuitasi.

Nick Tuitasi is an ex police man and he talked to us about the meaning of SPARK, our undiscovered ability and about digging deep.

- **S= Shaken.** When Nick was young he was badly shaken when his mother died. He found out with a phone call from his Auntie and then he had to tell his father the sad news. He remembered that the last words his mother had said to him, "Don't forget to feed the Cat."
- **P=Pushed.** He described push by talking about when he was out for training with his police cadet squad. They got trapped by a flood and it was dark, they had to stay the night out in the wet and cold with no food. That night Nick prayed for his fellow cadet members because it was so cold that night he had the thought that not everyone would make it through the night. He dug deep so that he could find his undiscovered ability.
- **A=Anger.** Next he talked about anger. When you are feeling angry you need to think of different ways to express your anger away and turn your situation around so it can be something positive.
- **R=Risk.** He talked about when he was in the Riot Squad. In this role he had to do a lot of training but he kept going and he dug deep and found he had another undiscovered ability.
- **K=Kick Start.** When he was younger his mother forced him and his younger sister to play an instrument. He played the guitar and his sister played the piano. His mother saw that there was a talent quest on at their school and she 'forced' them to enter and they ended up winning. They were surprised and happy that their mum had encouraged them to enter she had given them both big kickstart.

The second speaker of the day was Dr Farah Palmer.

Dr Farah Palmer was the captain of the Women's Rugby World Cup champion team. She spoke about how her family taught her how to dream. Her friends supported her with her hobbies because they shared the same dream... to play rugby. She talked about her foe, all the people who didn't believe it was right for girls to play rugby, and that her dreams couldn't come true. She said, "You have to learn to pick yourself up and don't listen to your foes" and, "Believe in what you stand for and be focused." She also reminded us to have to have loads of fun in our lives.

Next up was my favourite speaker Cam Calkoen.

When Cam Calkoen was born he was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. When Cam was younger it was really difficult for him to fit in at school because of people that weren't very nice. His favorite word in the whole world is **AWESOME!!!** Every day he thinks of the word **AWESOME!!!** and tells himself that he is 'Awesome, Strong, Positive and Encouraging'.

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He encouraged us to focus on our strengths. At school one day Cam had an egg and spoon race. He said, "A boy with cerebral palsy plus an egg and spoon race just don't go together!." We laughed when he told us how his dad helped him out a little with a bit of chewing gum! Cam's goal and vision was to become an athlete. Three of his motto's were, "Build a dream and the dream will build you", "Support is the foundation of our success" and finally, "People who know what it takes to believe and hope will succeed."

He was my favorite speaker because he made me think how lucky I am to have normal health. It also made me think about possibly being a physiotherapist or work in a job where I can help people. He helped me have more of an understanding about the challenges people face when they are born with a disability.

The next speaker was Jamie Fitzgerald.

Jamie Fitzgerald is a New Zealand ocean rower. When they were winning the Trans Atlantic rowing race they hit a storm. They kept getting pulled back in the waves. They had the choice to keep rowing or to put out the sea anchor but they chose to keep rowing and rowed for 42 hours. In the end all of the other boats ended up having to put down the sea anchor and so they won. He was also the first Kiwi to walk from one side of the South Pole to the center. This took him a great amount of training to get ready for this challenge. To train they tied together eight tyres and tied them to their waists and walked through the streets. He related this to how sometimes when you think you are making the least progress you are actually making the most.

Then we had a surprise guest Kiwi singer Annah Mac.

Annah Mac talked about when she was young she used to wonder why there were no Kiwi songs on the radio. Her dream was to become a singer and her inspiration to become a singer and a song writer came from Brooke Fraser. She performed two songs for us 'Celia' and 'Girl in Stilettos'. She never gave up on her dreams.

Then last but not least was Dave Atkinson.

Dave Atkinson is now a graphic designer but he also does a lot of public speaking. He was really funny. Dave talked about, "Stick up for what's right", "Choose good friends" and "Live for others". He talked about how simple things like baking someone a cake can change people's lives. He said, "If something's worth doing, it's worth doing badly" which means if you really want to try something new and you don't think you are any good at it, you should try it anyway. When you do things again and again you always get better at them. He also said, "The people you spend most time with are the people you can become." We should hang out with the type of people we want to be.

My dream is to become a really good Hockey player and become a Blackstick. I would like to explore the world and also go on my own adventure to France maybe even on a student exchange. I really enjoyed the National Young Leader's Day, thank you Mr Rate for giving me the opportunity to go - I got heaps out of it!

Remember to DREAM BIG!