

# Schools going wireless



PHOTO: ANDRE HUEBER

By Andre Hueber

North Shore schools are starting to hook up to the super high speed 1GB broadband network known as NEAL, or North Shore Education and Access Loop.

At a demonstration at Albany Primary, students connected to Albany Junior High and had a video conference over the network, which runs around 10 times quicker than the fastest broadband currently available in New Zealand.

North Shore City deputy mayor Dianne Hale said the connection signalled a radical new approach to learning on the Shore.

"Our classrooms have now assumed virtual dimensions. Ultimately over 40 North Shore schools, representing more than 30,000 students, will be linked into a single high performance network.

"Providing speeds of up to one gigabit a second, NEAL will create a stimulating and innovative learning experience for students and enable sharing of information and resources among North Shore schools," she said, in a press release.

While Albany and Albany Junior High were the first schools to be hooked up, others

will follow suit over the next year.

NEAL is a secure virtual network built by Vector Communications, after it applied jointly with North Shore City Council for funding under the Government's broadband strategy.

It is a high-speed fibre network linking North Shore schools, to create an environment where schools can collaborate and share information, ideas and systems.

The Government has identified that New Zealand is poorly served and uncompetitive when it comes to broadband provision.

Takapuna Normal Intermediate principal Owen Alexander says his school already uses computers, and he is passionate about the enhanced abilities the additional speed will provide.

"Teachers will be able to suck a DVD down in 55 seconds. If a student wants to learn Spanish and we don't have a Spanish teacher at school, that's okay. They can learn over the internet using DVDs and webcam conversations."

Mr Alexander says the linear post-industrial model of education is changing and teachers need to play catch up with "digital native" students of today.

INTERCONNECTED: Albany Primary school students networked with Albany Junior High School students.

## Winning AUT journo heading to China

By Elfreda Gers

A self-confessed adventurer and opportunist, Marc Checkley went with his "gut instinct" when deciding to return to study.

The 30-year-old took the laurels for excellence in broadcast journalism for 2006 at the recent AUT School of Communication Studies awards.

His final year also saw him winning an internship on Beijing-based Chinadaily.com.cn

Checkley has been firmly entrenched in the media industry since leaving school, and had an enviable resumé. But, he says, "you have to take risks".

"I got to a point where I was bored with the professional life. I wanted to do certain things I knew I couldn't do without a degree," he says.

"It's about passion. You have to go by gut instinct."

After leaving Papatoetoe High School in 1995, Checkley obtained a certificate in film, video and television production from Southseas Film and TV School.

At the end of 1999, he went on holiday to Singapore where he worked as an assistant television director and producer.

He started his own media consultancy and starred in a television series, *Gotcha*, broadcast in Singapore and Malaysia.

Checkley returned to New Zealand in 2004 to start a Bachelor of Communication Studies at AUT, majoring in journalism.

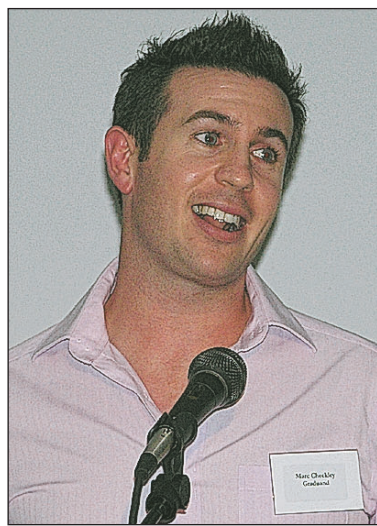


PHOTO: ELFREDA GERS

MARC CHECKLEY

"I'm a big show-off. Broadcast is my element," he says.

But he admits the course gave him an appreciation for writing, so much that he became an honorary member of *Te Waha Nui*.

Checkley says the course excelled above his expectations, and he appreciated how the tutors are still involved in their profession.

He says he is surprised to have won an internship and hopes the opportunity will give his career a boost.

Checkley will be joined by Laura Bond, an AUT diploma in journalism graduate from 2006.

Cameron Broadhurst was awarded an internship to Indonesia's Jakarta Times. He says he is excited about reporting in what is, compared to China, a "free press" country, and aims to report on international news.

## Maori reporter wins AUT diversity issues award

By Lauradanna Radesic

AUT's first ever award for the reporting of diversity issues has gone to journalist Qiane Corfield.

Corfield, 21, was presented with the prize at the university's annual communication studies awards ceremony recently.

Corfield says her work is made up of "inspirational people telling their stories".

"Diversity is about getting a different perspective. Often the mainstream media can't be bothered with these people and the stories they have to tell."

Te Anga Nathan, head of news and current affairs at Maori Television, presented Corfield with the MTS prize worth \$250 and the Storyboard Award.

Nathan says he was impressed with the quality of Corfield's portfolio, especially her moving tribute on the passing of the Maori Queen, Dame Te Arikinui Te Atairangikaahu.

"I can definitely see potential in this young journalist."

Corfield, also an accomplished artist, says she is extremely privileged to be given the award because it doubles as a piece of art.

The Storyboard Award, donated by associate professor David Robie, is a traditional Papua New Guinean wood carving mounted on rimu.

Corfield is currently employed as a staff writer and production assistant at *Mana* magazine.

She says the small team environment gives her opportunities

a large news organisation may not.

"I get to dip my fingers in all pots. This month a photo I took is on the cover of *Mana*."

Corfield says her communication studies degree has given her the necessary skills to approach different situations as a journalist.

"It has given me the confi-

dence to put myself into my work, to really write and tell people's stories," she says.

Corfield says the secret to her success is to not take life too seriously, to laugh and have fun with what she's doing.

"You need to have confidence in yourself...and don't be afraid to pick up the phone for that elusive interview."



PHOTO: MANA MAGAZINE

A DIFFERENT VIEW: Diversity issues award winner Qiane Corfield.