

## NEWS

# Enlighten scoops innovation award

THE TUXES WERE OUT WHEN ENLIGHTEN DESIGNS SCOOPED THE HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL INNOVATION AWARD AT THIS YEAR'S WAIKATO BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS. WITH THE OBLIGATORY BUBBLES FLOWING YOU COULD BE EXCUSED FOR TAKING TIME TO WONDER JUST HOW, IN NINE SHORT YEARS, A BUNCH OF HIGH SCHOOL FRIENDS AND WAIKATO UNIVERSITY GRADUATES HAVE GONE FROM WORKING OUT OF A BACKYARD CARAVAN TO PARTNERING WITH IT GIANTS MICROSOFT AND HEWLETT PACKARD AND SECURING HIGH END NATION-WIDE CLIENTS LIKE THE NATIONAL PARTY AND FONTERRA. ALL THE WHILE KEEPING THE LITTLE GUY FIRMLY IN THEIR SIGHTS. THAT IT SEEMS IS THE SECRET TO THEIR SUCCESS.



ABOVE. ENLIGHTEN DESIGNS Chief executive Damon Kelly and sales manager Travis Houghton

The bright idea came to CEO Damon Kelly in 1999. As a new graduate and without the money to set up a website, he made a deal with a local internet service provider to provide web design skills in return for free site hosting. The deal really paid off. The company liked Kelly's designs - a lot. They quickly set him to work on a revamp of their own site and continued to keep him well stocked with work. What Kelly saw then was a viable opportunity. An opportunity that has become award-winning IT design and development company Enlighten Designs.

The impressively quirky nature of Enlighten's successes has continued on from there. Early on an employee tuned into The Edge and heard DJs asking for internet chat services on-air. That "in" secured The Edge and The Rock radio

stations as clients. Kelly describes it as a "good break" - somewhat of an understatement you could say when you consider that Enlighten later became the service provider to the majority of the Radioworks' portfolio of stations before they were bought by CanWest. Also when you see that the site of Edge DJ Jay-Jay Feeney is this year's Winner of the People's Choice NetGuide Web Awards' Best Youth Site, and also a finalist for Best Entertainment Site.

They are busy boys these days. But it seems Enlighten Designs hasn't lost sight of what counts. Right up there with commercial success Kelly proudly rates two projects that didn't make them a cent. Under their sponsorship of Waikato University's Students in Free Enterprise program the company provided students with the technology, skills leadership and encouragement to win a place in the Paris world championships. Lead designer Steve Dennis has also made the company proud, representing New Zealand and winning the trans-Tasman web development competition Full Code Press. It is an international site in a day competition where teams vie to build a fully operational website for a not-for-profit organisation in 24 hours, no excuses, no extensions, no budget overruns.

Clearly Enlighten's recent award win is not their first accolade. Kelly points out they have enjoyed a long and successful association with the Waikato Business Excellence Awards. They have entered on eight occasions, each time being finalists or receiving highly commended. There is certainly a raft of praise. Judges at the awards

described Enlighten Designs as a company that "oozes innovation." Rewarding their expertise in providing customer satisfaction using Microsoft products and technology, Microsoft vice-president Allison Watson bestowed on Enlighten Designs Gold Certified Partner status this year.

Hamilton Mayor Bob Simcock says that the city's increasingly sharp and wealthy economy owes much to our advantages of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. "Previously the region's strong agricultural base has seen the majority of innovation emerge from our internationally competitive agritech and biotech industries. Now, as Hamilton steps up to become a metropolitan centre, multi-sector innovation is coming to the fore. This year's winners, information technology innovators and entrepreneurs, are clear proof of that transformation."

Indeed, Kelly believes it is innovation in services and processes that have been key factors to Enlighten's continual success. "We have a vision to be New Zealand's leading web solutions provider by 2015," he says. "To achieve that we must continue to build on our successes, innovate and grow our partnerships. We have some fantastic new products and services in development and, working with our partners, we hope to bring these to the market next year. The future is bright for Enlighten and we are constantly trying to find talented individuals that want to become part of the Enlighten team."

Watch this space ■  
www.beawards.co.nz  
www.enlighten.co.nz

## SHORT CUTS

# Taking science off the shelf

Warwick Silvester is the namesake and first time winner of the Silvester Award, the Kudos awards' recognition of lifetime achievement in science. He is a modest man who describes "bright young students" as the highlight of his career, but he is also a magnificent scientific mind whose colleagues glow with praise for what they describe as the truly noticeable difference Silvester has made to the environment in which we live.

Silvester's work on plant function, nitrogen cycles and native forest ecosystems is a credit to him as a respected science leader and proponent of international scientific excellence. The body of work also goes a significant way towards addressing what Silvester describes as the greatest issues facing the country - energy and deforestation.

Silvester says there is a big question as to how we will sustain our current lifestyles in the absence of a cheap energy source. This is where science could have a part to play. "At the nub is getting people to appreciate that the resources of the planet are limited. If we understand that, everything else follows."

The Silvester Award is one of eight Kudos awards, which are the creation of the Hamilton Science Excellence Awards Trust. Other awards

celebrate medical, agricultural, educator, environmental, information and computer technology achievement.

Hamilton mayor and trust chairman, Bob Simcock, says Kudos aims to "take science off the shelf and give local scientists the recognition they rightly deserve."

"We have over 1000 PhD scientists performing 25 percent of the country's research right here on our doorstep. We believe it's time for the local community to celebrate their amazing achievements."

Silvester says over the years working with bright young students has kept him going and kept his mind active. He cherishes "watching their scientific thinking mature and having them as colleagues". Looking to the future, Silvester's passion for science education is something that is shared by Kudos.

Explains Simcock, "Our eight award winners will also work with the trust to encourage high school students to enter the sciences and raise the profile of local science achievements within the regional community." Silvester says science grabs him by the throat - it's a hobby as well as a vocation. That passion is what the Kudos is all about ■



## Tucking in to safer food

Forty-six food premises secured excellence awards and 24 merit awards at this year's Hamilton City Council Food Safety Awards, well up from last year, meaning even more safer food for Hamilton to enjoy. The Garden Café in Garden Place and Hamilton Girls High School's Sonninghill Hostel received their awards for the 10th and 11th time respectively. The purpose of the awards is twofold - publicly recognising existing food safety excellence and providing incentive for businesses with room for improvement. Food safety award winners display an award certificate and a full list of award-winning premises can be found at [www.hamilton.co.nz](http://www.hamilton.co.nz) ■

## New life targets skill shortage

Looking world-wide to target regional skill shortages and keep the Waikato on the chart as one of the country's fastest growing productive regions, Hamilton's Business Development Centre has formed a partnership with UK immigration organisation, New Life. Based in Hamilton, New Life New Zealand has contacts in the UK and acts as a one-stop shop for people wanting to move to New Zealand. The initiative gives local employers a free and targeted approach to finding suitable employees from the UK, with the legwork of selection and suitability already dealt with. Interested workers in the UK pay a small fee to have their CVs registered with the company, while here in Hamilton the New Life New Zealand office liaises with local businesses, identifying their exact requirements in staff. BDC general manager Sandra Perry says interest from local enterprises has been huge ■

# Hitting hard on speed and alcohol



says the Give a Damn campaign is deliberately provocative - they want behaviours to change and have drunk drivers and speedsters firmly in their sights.

The campaign is backed by road safety agencies across the board - Hamilton City Council, the Police, Transit New Zealand, Land Transport New Zealand, Environment Waikato, ACC, and the Population Health Service of the Waikato District Health Board. Together they are adopting a strategy with proven international success, targeting engineering, enforcement and education improvements.

An initial six-week campaign will focus on intersection safety. Moving into the holiday season this will be backed up by a second phase of targeted police enforcement and improvements to traffic signals, cycle facilities, road layouts, signs and markings.

Bullick says the progression from a safety phase based primarily on driver education to a police enforcement campaign deliberately challenges drivers to change their habits for the better and save lives.

Give a Damn is one of a number of initiatives launched in the Waikato to assist the Government to reach its 2010 road safety targets of reducing road deaths and hospitalisations ■

Hamilton crash numbers have been rising steadily since 2003. In 2006, 1502 crashes were reported. Seven resulted in fatalities, 35 in serious injuries, and 253 in minor injuries. A hard-hitting campaign is looking to change that this holiday season.

Hamilton project co-ordinator Rob Bullick

## Thrill seeking slide debut

Thrill-seekers got their first chance to take a wild ride on 24 November. Just in time for summer, it was the grand opening of Waterworld's all-new speed and blackout slides. Street performers wandered crowds enjoying an action-packed day of family fun and spot prizes. The Screamer and Python promise speeds of up to 40km per hour, the fastest slide to hit the Waikato yet. An interactive splash pad for younger children was also opened on the day ■



## NORTON RD CLOSURE



The Lincoln Street end of Norton Road will be closing to traffic on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2008 for approximately six to eight months

This will enable Transit New Zealand to construct the new Norton Road Roundabout and rail bridge for the Avalon Drive Bypass.

During the closure there will be no connection between Lincoln Street and Norton Road, and pedestrians and cyclists will no longer be able to cross the railway lines into Norton Road.

Visit the Avalon Drive Bypass website at [www.transit.govt.nz/projects/avalondrive/](http://www.transit.govt.nz/projects/avalondrive/)

Avalon DRIVE  
bypass

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