



In Napier your dreams can come true

It was once a few buildings linked by driveways off the main road through Taradale. In 1975 it was simply called the Hawke's Bay Community College - a modest educational facility but a place where great vision, and dreams for the future were cemented.

editorial roger moroney / **pictures** anneliese hough

Now the present day EIT (Eastern Institute of Technology) is a world-class learning facility that serves not only Hawke's Bay, but also students from many other countries. It is a place that has fulfilled the visions of those who drove it from the very beginning, and it has become a facility that has attracted not only international students, but also international tutors. EIT's reputation as an advanced educational centre is only equalled by the number of skilled people it has guiding, lecturing, advising and inspiring its students. Among these are EIT's professors.

Mark Neal

Mark Neal, who has settled in Hawke's Bay from England with his family, had the change in his lifestyle triggered by EIT's growing research capability, and took on the role of Research Professor in the Faculty of Business and Computing late last year. He arrived with a teaching background in locations like Oman, Thailand and Mauritius, and now enjoys a lifestyle where the family have sheep 'in the back garden'. And eight year old Georgie can run and play, climb trees and ride his bike, where he loves being a 'kiwi kid'.

Mark has no doubts about the move to Napier and EIT. "Doing research is what I love. I love writing and developing ideas. I'm interested in different cultures and politics and am able to explore my interests as a full-time job."

In his EIT role he is strengthening research structures and strategies for his faculty, and also looking to secure funding for future research projects. This well-travelled educator's summation of his job? "Absolutely brilliant."

... **LEFT: Mark Neal at the Eastern Institute of Technology campus.**

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Bob Marshall

That's a view shared by another member of the high quality EIT team, and another arrival from offshore. It was back in 1972 when Canadian Dr Bob Marshall (Research Professor with EIT's Faculty of Health and Sport Science) decided to travel downunder in search of work. He was a young graduate with a Bachelor of Physical Education and Master of Science but there was no work in Canada available to him.

One of Bob's university professors, an Australian, suggested he try for a job at the University of Queensland. So he hopped on a plane and off he went...but it was the stopover in Fiji that sealed his future. A Kiwi he met up with there said he should stop in and have a look at New Zealand on the way. "Basically I fell in love with New Zealand," he said. "Living 800 miles from the coast in Canada I had no idea what the ocean beaches looked like."

Bob moved throughout the country and took up a lecturing position at Otago University where he worked from 1974 to 1988. During that time he also completed a PhD through the University of Western Australia, returning to New Zealand with partner Shona Thompson, who had qualified for a doctorate at Murdoch University, also in Perth. "It felt really good to come back," said Bob.

He came to Napier, took a look at the EIT campus, and was hugely impressed by the set-up in the Faculty of Health and Sport Science. "They had really thought it through – good resources and committed." He added that EIT had approval to appoint a professor to help develop and support research across the faculty's undergraduate degrees and Master of Nursing.

Bob was successful in securing the job where Shona too has joined EIT in a part-time position supervising Master of Nursing

students in their research work. "EIT is a fantastic place to work," Bob enthused. The immense spread of programmes (more than 100) offered at EIT for postgraduate, degree, diploma and certificate level, are reflected in the resources and the people, who are at its strong heart.

Roger Maaka

Importantly, that includes Te Manga Māori, and that has seen Takapau-born Roger Maaka return to his 'turangawaewae' – the place that offers a sense of connection to the land. He is in the Director-Māori for the institute and in charge of the Faculty of Māori Studies. Roger has an impressive background having held posts at New Zealand, and Canadian universities in the field of native studies after gaining a PhD in Political Science at the University of Canterbury.

"An academic career conventionally includes sabbaticals which include stints overseas," Roger said, explaining that he travelled to Canada as it shared similarities to New Zealand – in that it had a British heritage and was a post-colonial country looking at how to deal with its indigenous population.

Dr Maaka was offered several positions after he left Canada – three of them in New Zealand. He chose EIT because, as he said, he wanted to, "come home" and was seeking a change from the university system. "EIT is unique in that it is the region's tertiary institution. And the Māori leadership in Hawke's Bay is beginning to understand its significance to our people. Now is the time to capitalise on what EIT is able to offer them."

Effectively this speaks for all, as EIT has built, and maintains, a reputation for providing the very best in quality education – as its simple, but so very accurate motto declares: 'Live Your Dreams'.

www.eit.ac.nz

ABOVE: Dr Bob Marshall – Research Professor EIT Faculty of Health and Sports Science.

RIGHT: Dr Roger Maaka – Director-Māori EIT Faculty of Māori Studies.

