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Ala Mai Pasifika

NEWSLETTER FOR PACIFIC ISLAND STUDENTS, UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

No. 1

April 1996

Greetings, Kia ora, Ni sa bula, Kam na mauri, Talofa lava, Fakalofa lahi atu, Halo olgeta, Malo e lelei, Kia orana

EDITORIAL NOTE

Welcome to the first edition of the Ala Mai Pasifika - Pasifika newsletter for students at the University of Canterbury.

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform the students and staff about Pacific Island issues. We encourage submissions and suggestions about the newsletter.

EDITORS

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Introduction

*Ueantabo Neemia-Mackenzie, Director
Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies*

I am pleased to contribute to this first issue of Ala Mai Pasifika. As a Centre responsible for the study of the peoples, cultures and countries of the Pacific, the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies welcomes most warmly the initiative which has now borne fruit in this first issue. I would like to congratulate the editors for a job well done. I do hope that this newsletter becomes the vehicle through which Pacific Island students are linked, informed and motivated to 'awake' and work hard.

Ala Mai is an expression which occurs in a number of Polynesian languages which means 'awake' or 'arise.' I have no doubt that the meaning of Ala Mai and how people relate to it will vary from one person to another. In the context of our student community, Ala Mai may be taken to be a gentle 'wake-up' call intended to shake us from our reverie, our complacency, to act decisively, to study and work hard. Ala Mai need not always be a voice external to us; it is also the voice of our inner selves calling us to fulfil our purpose for being here at Canterbury. Let me share this portion of my

people's creation myth to remind us of the importance of listening to constant ala mai calls from within our own selves:

"... Nareau [the first being, the creator] heard a voice calling him, once, and then a second time. Then came the voice a third time saying, 'Nareau, how can you remain floating in emptiness, alone and without thought. Are you not tired of just floating? Do you not want to do something for yourself?' A third time Nareau marvelled to hear the voice cry out to him, and he searched the emptiness to discover who had called him. He opened his eyes and shook himself to make sure he was not dreaming. He stretched himself and stood on his feet to cast off his drowsiness, until he was wide awake.

When he was wide awake, Nareau thought to himself 'How childish I have been. I have only just realised, this very moment, that I have been calling out my own name. Here I have been searching for the voice that call me but in fact it was really myself.' Nareau therefore kept his eyes wide open and gathering his wits about him he decided to think... and act."

I look forward to seeing you at our gathering on Wednesday, 17th April!

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Pacific Island Youth Leadership Trust

Applications for 1997 will be available from the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, 7th Floor, James Hight Building.

PACIFIC ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

Fatu Feu'u, well known Samoan Artist arrives mid April to take up a 1 month scholarship at the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies. This is the first time this scholarship has been offered. Fatu will be working jointly with the Centre and the School of Fine Arts.

PACIFIC ISLAND LIAISON OFFICER

An application is being sent to the Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, Don McKinnon to seek funding for a Pacific Island Liaison Officer position at the University of Canterbury. This application has been strongly supported by the community and students and members of the university.

Mr Lemuel Pearse, Maori Liaison Officer is available to help Pacific Island students with any problems that they might have. He can be located in the Liaison Office, 4th floor, Registry or on ext 8993.

PACIFIC ISLAND STUDENT STUDY GROUP - Study group for students currently studying full-time or part-time at Canterbury University

If you would like further information on how to join a study group contact Vailoa Tu'u'au on campus extension 7946.

PACIFIC ISLAND AND MAORI STUDENTS STUDY ROOM

This room was opened three weeks ago on March 7, 1996 by Reverend Roger Maaka. Students are welcome to drop in and use the room which is located in Rm 507, level 5, Department of Education (Modern Languages Building).

Pacific Island Students Gathering

You are invited to a get-together to get to know our new students and to honour the achievements of our 1996 graduates.

Date: Wednesday, 17 April 1996

Time: 4.30 p.m - 6.00 p.m.

Venue: Main Library Common Room
Level 5, James Hight Library Building

For any enquiries phone Kate Scott on 364 2957

PLEASE BRING A PLATE OF FOOD TO SHARE

Directions: Take tower lifts (access from under the library tower, across from the small cafeteria to level 5, look for the exit door to your left, look across the open area of the roof and you will see the common room).