Enhancing community engagement of international students using computer mediated communities

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Providing regular community information to international students is considered important in assisting their engagement in the community. This paper examines the effect on the community engagement of international students who receive regular information relating to community events and connections by means of a computer mediated community. The cost efficiency and effectiveness of this method for providing such information is noted, along with how information delivered in this way contributes to international students (and their families) engaging in the local community. A programme at Massey University for higher education international students and their families, using such a service is described in part, and evaluated in part as to its contribution to assisting in developing a sense of belonging and participation (two key elements in socially cohesive behaviour) within the wider community and within the university. The process and elements of the programme are described and some discussion of its enhancement in creating social cohesiveness amongst diverse communities is also examined. Of interest to international education providers with limited resources for assisting such engagement, will be the conclusions drawn as to the effectiveness and value of such a programme for the students themselves and the education provider. Comment is given as to conditions and factors necessary for education providers and their communities to enable such programmes to be effective

Key Words

Higher education students, International students, International families, temporary migration, New Zealand, Community engagement, computer mediated communities.

Introduction

New Zealand policymakers express interest in fostering community engagement among citizens and migrants. However, scant attention is focussed on the situation of temporary migrants, of whom international students are a significant and specific subset. Recent immigration policies related to international students have begun to focus on the potential of recruiting such students as long term migrants to meet labour force demands (Badekar & Tuya, 2010). New Zealand is not alone in developing such recruitment policies. With an open availability of PhD options, international student families have been favoured as a group of temporary migrants with the potential to become permanent migrants should their skills be required in New Zealand. Universities receiving such students are hard pressed to provide for them (and their families) in large numbers, as essentially they are set up as institutions of academic learning rather than pastoral care agencies. Education providers and others generally assume that when an international student brings their family along with them, then it is primarily the student's responsibility to ensure they are cared for. However, it is also recognised that what happens to the family affects the academic outcomes for the student, and thus a conundrum arises for support services which would normally focus primarily on the international student. For international student support services, the community within the geographical and cultural context of the university becomes important in providing for the student and their family. Community engagement is important for the successful settlement of any migrant family, including temporary migrant and international student families.

The term 'community engagement' is often used in academic literature to refer to one or the other of two broad types or levels of engagement: between people and institutions, such as governments or universities (Brown & Keast 2003; Winter, Wiseman & Muirhead 2006); and between people and subset groups of people within the wider community, for example, host communities and international students, or students and community members (Butcher et al. 2003; Butcher et al 2002; Spoonley et al. 2004). Using this wider view of 'community engagement' enables us to provide insight into the effectiveness of 'community engagement' programmes in terms of the enhancement of social cohesion in the experience of international student families in the community. It also provides insight into how policies and practices have been effective in promoting a growth in belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition and legitimacy for the time of sojourn, and in the context of the local geographic and socio-cultural context of the campus (McGrath et al. 2005; also see Jenson 1998; Spoonley et al. 2004).

In this paper we examine the development of a computer mediated adjunct to facilitating community engagement of our international students and their families, both within the subset community of international students and families, and within the wider community of Palmerston North, a university city in the North Island of New Zealand, about two hours north of Wellington. We are interested in the way in which community engagement and a measure of social cohesion is sought for international students and their families living in the community of Palmerston North. After briefly considering some literature on community engagement, higher education and computer mediated communities we then describe the practices engaged in to assist community engagement and temporary settlement outcomes for a set of international students and their families. We also share information provided from unsolicited feedback, interviews and observations from staff involved with international students.

Community engagement and higher education

Higher education institutions have a significant role in fostering students' preparedness for social and civil engagement and for social participation in their wider communities (Winter, Wiseman & Muirhead 2006; Butcher et al 2002) . There is a need to consider what 'community engagement' might look like in educational contexts with large proportions (numbers) of international student enrolments; attached families; culturally diverse domestic students; and globally interconnected social, economic and environmental concerns (Jiang 2005; Rizvi 2004, 2006;). For example, some writers (Hall 1996; Winter, Wiseman & Muirhead 2006) offer up ideas that 'community' concepts rely on homogenisation, and thus do away with or diminish insider/outsider boundaries ideas and other social and historical distinctions. There is a suggestion in this view that attempts to 'engage' with 'others' are part of assimilatory integration policies and practices. Jenson (1998, p. 5) highlights, that calls to increase "social cohesion" stem from a perception of disconnection within communities amongst the various groups that form those communities. This disconnection, according to Jenson (1998), is about a failure to facilitate five dimensions of social cohesion: belonging (not isolation); participation; inclusion (not exclusion); recognition (not rejection) and legitimacy. These five dimensions of social cohesion are relevant aims for any programme seeking to enable social engagement for international students and families as they seek to engage with the institutions of the geographical and cultural spaces in which they live.

Background

Engagement with resident New Zealanders is a desire of most international students coming to live and study in New Zealand (Berno & Ward 2003; Deloitte 2008; Ho et al. 2007). Research highlights that a barrier to this happening is the reticence of New Zealanders to initiate engagement, and their suspicion of non –European people, international students

and migrants alike (Collins 2006; McGrath et al. 2005; Ward et al. 2005). Concurrently, policy discussion, development and research provision, reveals interest in the strategic value (particularly trade with Asia) of engagement with international communities and people in New Zealand (see McGrath, Stock & Butcher 2007; Ministry of Education 2007).

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD, 2008) released a comprehensive report outlining the need for the pre-conditions of social cohesion, noted above, to be met. The conceptual framework used in that report depended very heavily on the work of Spoonley et al. (2004). Whilst Spoonley et al. (2004) did not use the term 'community engagement' specifically, their overview of international literature on "social cohesion and inclusion/exclusion" is helpful to understanding what social cohesion and social engagement should look like in regard to outcomes of any programme seeking to achieve it. The indicator framework chosen by Spoonley et al (2004), and used by Jensen (1998), undergirds the motivation and choices for those involved in the development of a programme to facilitate community engagement for higher education international students and their families.

Massey University in Palmerston North attracts a lot of international postgraduate students. Especially since the New Zealand government legislated that all PhD international students would only incur domestic fees for their courses, and their attached spouse, if they had one, would be able to come to NZ and be given an open work permit and, if they had children, then their children could attend New Zealand schools as if they were domestic students. The requirements of the code of pastoral care for international students would apply to the student, but the family would be like any other migrant family in respects of access to government and community support. This policy has resulted in a good flow of PhD students to New Zealand but, like many good policies, there is a lag to the consequential practical needs. The need which requires the most focus is the settlement need for the students and their families.

Development of the Postgraduate Mature International Students Club and support group

The local branch of International Student Ministries of New Zealand (ISMNZ) (the sponsor for Massey's international chaplaincy) had a support group for postgraduate international students as part of their ministry provision. Earlier, a number of the students who benefited from this support group conceived of the idea that this support could be extended to a wider range of students. Informal discussions ensued amongst people from the support group, the International Student Support Office and the Massey University Students Association and Chaplaincy. This resulted in the formation of a club known as the International Postgraduate & Mature Students Club [intlpostgradclub@gmail.com]. This group differed from many students' association clubs, as it recognised the involvement of the support group, the International Student Support Office and the Chaplaincy, and this became part of the ethos of the club. The club initially prospered due to good activities and support, but with a change in the support group it faltered for a period. Further discussions led to ISMNZ undertaking to provide ongoing assistance, as part of its chaplaincy provisions on campus, to ensure the club continued.

An ISMNZ staff member, and co-author of this report, Claire Hastings was assigned the project of developing a simple cost-efficient way to allow the club members to access wider community support and events, and to take pressure off the wider support group. This was initially done as part of her practical requirements for her Ministry degree studies. Her brief was to develop a means of ensuring the diverse group of students, that formed the potential membership of this club, would be helped to become a community around common needs and be assisted to access wider community supports and engage in the wider community. Massey has around 100 nationalities in its student ranks and this is most noticeable amongst postgraduate and mature international students. Hastings developed computer assisted options, which provided an information service on what is going on in the wider community, and led to the development of a computer mediated community. This computer mediated community grew from an emailed information bulletin, which was a collation of information derived from community sources already available in the community, into a limited online community allowing the passage of information between members, and also the development of sub groups. The information service became the glue for the development of a community that has resulted from this. Some community groups in the city are now proactive in passing on information of their events to the club through this information service.

Cothrel & Williams (1999), in addressing the ways on-line communities develop, pointed out the importance that the community be allowed to develop naturally and that it be designed for sociability. This happened as the computer mediated information service grew into a community in itself. Coupled with events the club organised, alongside wider community events and services which members began to access and join in on together, there resulted in an increased engagement in the local community of Palmerston North and across the membership of the club. Club membership has grown to 340, inclusive of support and interested people. In addition, the families of those who are members are included in activities. Activities are few but are generally well attended, and they occur during both term time and semester breaks as most of the students are year-round students. The support group and the leading student members still need to find the time and energy for putting on the events they sponsor, but they are generally assured of a good attendance and some events are capped on numbers.

Computer mediated information service.

Computer mediated communities have been a growing phenomena (see Castells, 2000). Higher education students are generally very media savvy and are frequently members of a range of computer mediated communities.

> "Social interaction between members is what makes a community "a community." The more possibilities for a social contact the community provides, the bigger the chances are that people will establish a relationship to each other. The word "community" itself is derived from the word "common" that underlines the basic principle of social organizations: groups of people can be called a community, *if they have at least something in common*." Nagele, 2005, p.26

In seeking to establish a club or community, there was a need to ensure that social engagement occurred. There were several needs that a computer mediated community could help us meet, such as, provision of information. But it was also important to ensure that face-to-face community was also part of the process. Figure 1 below, taken from (Nagele 2005, p.26), illustrates the importance of finding things in common if community is likely to succeed. .

Figure 1
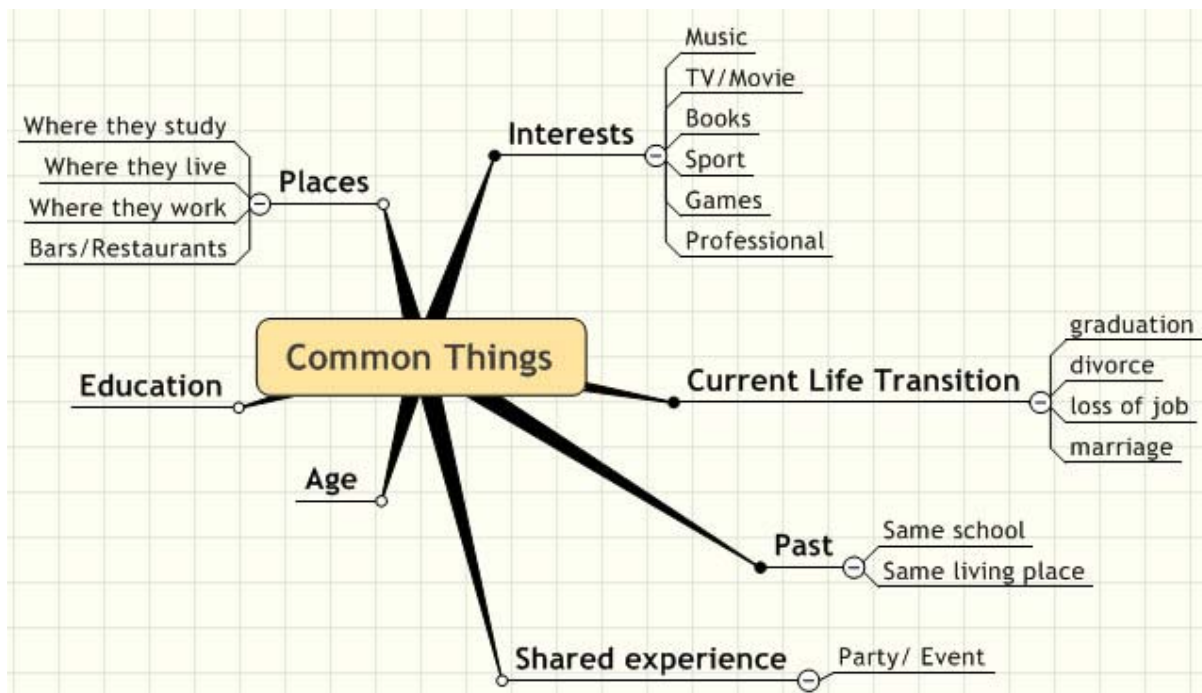
Our postgraduate mature international students were characterised by enormous diversity, which, of itself, can disrupt community formation. In many cases there were other clubs in the university catering for common characteristics, like culture or sport, but there were none that addressed common issues of raising a family in a foreign culture, handling the isolation of PhD research, the unique experience of thesis writing etc. We identified a range of needs that were common to our students:

Engagement with the wider community

Engagement in community with each other around

The shared experience of being postgraduate students and what that entails

The natural affinities they share with each other, e.g. sport,

The experience of living and studying in a New Zealand environment

Raising children in a New Zealand environment

Reducing isolation for attached spouses and students alike.

These needs centre on the need that new international students to New Zealand have to be assisted in engaging with the wider community and making friends. Postgraduate and mature students tend to be very focussed on both their studies

and their families, if they have them. There is little room for these students to explore ways to constructively engage in the community.

Setting up the club was, in part, to seek to meet some of these needs and it is around these needs that the club revolves. These needs constitute common ground on which a sense of community could be built. Creating activity and connecting affinities around these needs was important, so that a community could come into being and so that this community, with its diverse cultures and nationalities, could engage with the wider community of the university and the city over and above the specific, cultural, national and academic components they shared in common with a few. Our view was that if a wider community could be established then that encouraged a wider range of engagements, and the needs expressed above could be met, at least in some measure.

How it works

A regular (at least weekly) information bulletin is compiled from: Palmerston North community information services; Destination Manawatu (local regional promotions organisation); local community newspapers; Arts on Wednesday; information received from community organisations; the International Student Support Office; Massey University Students' Association; and from club members themselves (for an example, see Appendix 1). This bulletin is generally short. If many attachments are required in promoting community events, then the bulletin is broken up into several brief paragraphs. Frequently, information bulletins contain links for readers to click on for further information. The information is moderated to ensure activities and events are family friendly. The bulletin frequently contains a buy, sell and exchange element, which is popular with members. There is some further information about cultural and religious festivals, which may only be normative information for some members, but is designed to raise awareness for all members and to encourage intercultural engagement within the community. Useful information like, "what to do when daylight saving occurs" are added in as appropriate. Preparing the information for this bulletin is a regular task that requires involvement of a person, who is well aware, informed and connected in the local community and who also has useful computer skills (see Appendix 1).

Secondly, club members are offered the option of having sub-group forums. These take the form of a Google group and generally relate to a group of students or their families being involved in an activity together. Such groups may or may not use computer assistance to keep in connection. Frequently, once there is a social connection, these sub-groups have a life of their own. Some of these sub-groups focus on study, such as research and thesis writing groups; some around areas of common academic disciplines, such as development studies; and some out of social interest, such as the international cooking class that meets socially to share, show and taste recipes from different cultures.

The third aspect occurs when the club decides to put on its own events. These club events are popular and often require planning. For example, trips to the snow for club members and families will have an online registration process. The most popular events are the welcome suppers for new club members, the snow trip, the summer barbeque, and the family enrichment workshop.

Feedback

Feedback has been very positive from members. The following short comments are just a few of many received:

"Thanks for the very useful information"- postgraduate student from The Philippines

"As always these emails are great. Thanks for sending these out, and including me in the email list!"
- MUSA postgraduate officer

"Thanks for your weekly email, I found it very useful and entertaining for my stay at Palmy."
-Undergraduate student from Canada

"Really appreciate your help and all you've done over the years for us students!" -Undergraduate student from USA

"Owesome Weekly Updates. Keep 'em comming, am enjoying them immensely." -MUSA President

"Thanks for this info and all others throughout the year. You have kept us informed of what has been happening around us."- Undergraduate student from PNG

"The emails that you send are very good. Lots of information and very friendly. Kudos for that and keep it up."
- Postgraduate student from India

"Thank you very much for your great job." -Postgraduate student from Vietnam

The above comments reflect the diversity of members, interests and their appreciation for information. The value of this information is that it raises awareness of activities within the wider community as well as through club activities. Club members indicate that most of their information on what's on in the community comes from this service. Correspondingly, those who attend community events have increased awareness, due to this. Some community groups have indicated to the club that they want to advertise through the club's network, as they find international student numbers have increased at their events when they have done so. Students have also reflected back the value of having theme-oriented information, e.g. Arts of Wednesday, which has been a great source of information for students wishing to attend plays, recitals and music events.

For the members of the club, the regular email information service is the most important element for them and, because of its frequency and content, this service becomes the glue that holds the wider community together. Embedded in this information is also the opportunity for greater community involvement. For example, one specific need many of the families have is, "what to do with the children during school holidays" as one parent will be studying or carrying out their research while the other parent is working. In the lead up to school holidays, holiday programmes and how to access camps for kids, are a feature of the information provided via the email bulletins. Many of the students' families are unfamiliar with where to find information, having not lived in NZ for any length of time, so this provision of information helps immensely in getting them connected; often these connections have being generally helpful to their sojourn.

> *"Emails are the most versatile way of communication these days and Massey provides a free email service to every registered student. Apart from studies, two-way communication process can be helpful in connecting students to communities. The PGC uses this communication method to pass information, like community activities, to its members. Students can express their concern in a better written way with cost and time efficiently.*
>
> *For example, a student finishes his studies and goes home. In the meantime a new student arrives in the town. The person going home wants to get rid of his household goods and would love to get some money out of it. In the meantime the new student needs household items, on a cheaper price, for his settlement. Here comes the club role: it connects the two students and both get benefit out of it.*
>
> *All the surplus goods can be donated to furniture bank and whenever a new student comes he can have these goods for free and can return to the bank when finishes.*
>
> *Situations arise when there is a need for circulating quick message and email works perfect in that situation."*

<p align="center">Indian PhD student</p>

The furniture bank, mentioned by this student, is an adjunct service operated by the international chaplaincy and organised in part by some of the postgraduate international students. The university provides a warehouse and furniture is recruited from student halls' refurbishing programmes and the Palmerston North community. It is given to new international students who may need it in helping to set up the flat they will live in while studying. This service is very useful to families as they generally live off campus.

One of the international student leaders involved in the club wrote this:

> *"When a student arrives in a new place, it always worries him/her for his family settlement. Most time he will be busy establishing himself in the campus and not able to pay much attention to his family. The PGC helped me a lot setting in an environment where everything is unknown.*
>
> *Coping with cultural shock is not same for everyone. Some students first time separate away from their homes and in that situation meeting with people already settled in the country become a great help. The need is more demanding for students from Asian countries who live in a close family situation.*
>
> *Another important thing is the food habit. The food habit especially for Asian students is very conservative. It is really hard for them to cope with a completely new or different food habit.*
>
> *The orientation/welcome party by PGC plays important role in student's life. This also gives a chance for everyone to know each other and gets some friends. It is so hard for adults to settle then we can imagine through the children's perspective. They might be passing through greater stress as they can't speak other languages to express themselves.*
>
> *The club had great role in settling our children. The advice for school, rules in the school and sometime getting part-time jobs in this new country.*

Even day-day needs were also supported by PGC. We are very lucky to have this group working well. The furniture bank gave a great relief while settling."

The club has also received awards from the students association for its activities

--winner of Massey Clubs and Societies' Best Club/Society Event Award for 2009
-- winner of Massey Clubs & Societies' Best New Club/Society Award for 2008

Some of the specialist groups have also received encouragement from those who benefited from them:

"*Experience with Post-Grad support group:*

The group helped us widen our research perspective. This support group provided us with a platform to discuss our research with students with wider interests. This helped us explaining our research in more understanding way. The comments from the non-specialist students were very fruitful for our research. This group helped us networking with other PhD/postgraduate students. Sometime a student can explain the things better than an expert like statistics, we all need statistics for analysing data. A student of statistics can be more helpful in understanding the basics underlying while analysing data. This group provided great help in this regard.

How help in studies

Improves the communication skill

Improves understanding the local proverbs (slangs) in supermarket or any other places.

Juggling the various demands of my life was the main part-time difficulty.
• I maintained my enthusiasm by selecting a highly interesting and emotive topic.
• The value of peer networks can never be underestimated."

PhD student member of research support group

The above feedback is representative and indicates the value this initiative is amongst the body of international postgraduates and mature students.

One feature of the club has been the community that has developed around the club. This has meant some specialist events have been possible in terms of delivering key support initiatives. One such event was the family enrichment day. Club members and their families were asked to register for this event and some 50 adults plus children did so. A day was conducted in a city council community centre with playgrounds close by. The children and teenagers were cared for in an activities programme for the day and the adults were involved in a series of workshops related to family life for international students in New Zealand. Topics included critical issues for marriage and family life: closeness, communication, conflict, and children and life skills. The day was largely workshopped in intercultural groups with facilitation provided by senior student leaders, International Student Support Office staff and Chaplaincy. The day was coordinated and lead by one of the international chaplains from another university who had experience and expertise to offer. The international support office provided the funding for the day, which included lunch. Feedback was unanimously positive. For all who participated, it was a wonderful and worthwhile experience. Students felt assisted in their roles as husbands, wives, parents and students, and better able to cope with the rigors and issues of raising children in NZ whilst studying. A positive spin-off from this event is that it was community building. It would have struggled to happen without the club.

Discussion

The above example of an activity contributes enormously to assisting international students in their community engagement and correspondingly helps them in their sense of belonging within a community. In this way, it contributes to social cohesion in the wider context of community engagement. Jenson (1998) suggests that 'social cohesion' is linked to 'social capital'. She notes that different scholars view this term differently. Jensen (1998), however, links it to the concept of "collective activities" and the community, "maintaining community infrastructure and services" and "social networks" (p. 26). Additionally, she links institutional practices to promoting inclusion and belonging. This aspect of inclusion and belonging is important for new international students to experience as they come into a new community. Postgraduate and mature international students frequently have a spouse and children, so any programme seeking to enhance their community engagement and experience of being part of a socially cohesive society will need to

be in reference to their children and spouse. At a low level, the postgraduate and mature international student club includes them all into a computer mediated community. From their starting point, this information service gives these students and their families a sense of belonging to something worthwhile, which is further built on through activities and encouraging engagement in the city. Over time, many of the international students in the club, and their families, have become connected to the institutions of the city and participants in their activities. The invitations, from many of the wider community groups, which come through the information service, recognise in a small way, the value of the students themselves. As the students and their families grow in their involvement in the community, there is a hope that they will be legitimised through their involvement.

The notion that a socially cohesive community (as Jensen conceives it) could be a computer mediated community may be a long stretch. However, the use of a computer mediated information service to assist in establishing and sustaining such a community is a very worthwhile notion. The elements of a growth in belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition and legitimacy (McGrath et al. 2005; Jenson 1998; Spoonley et al. 2004) for the time of sojourn, and in the context of the local geographic and socio-cultural context of the campus, have been enhanced by the use of a computer mediated information service and normative aspects of face-to-face interaction. We have noted that the use of computer mediated communities in this context has resulted in both the reduction of isolation and enhancement of a sense of belonging. Correspondingly, participation within both the communities of postgraduate and mature international students, and Palmerston North, has been raised. We have not used any quantitative measure to say to what extent we think this community engagement has occurred, but we do take from the qualitative feedback a distinct sense that the students and their families believe the information service the club conducts is invaluable in terms of them connecting more widely in the Palmerston North community. Whilst some aspects of information may not be relevant to them, it nevertheless is useful in aiding their engagement.

Fostering community engagement: Recommendations for use of computer mediated communities as a helpful adjunct

The use of a computer mediated information service is a valuable adjunct to any service that seeks to enhance community engagement. In our context there was a problem of lack of resources and limited likelihood that the government or university would financially contribute to ensure families of international students would be well looked after. The use of community resources in much the same way as the literature (MSD 2008) is indicative of the need for community engagement to occur in socially cohesive ways. In turn, that becomes an answer to the needs of mature international students and their families in terms of their care.

Our experience is limited, and so much more could be done with greater financial provision and other resources. Using computer mediated communities, especially when related to an information service, has enhanced our capacity to assist the development of a sense of community and wider community engagement, for our higher education students and their families.

Our recommendation is that it is worthwhile using computer mediated communities to enhance community engagement for international students, especially for those with families where there are significant common experiences related to living and community engagement needs. A computer mediated information service is a low resource, low-cost means of enhancing community amongst the mature international students and their families and assisting greater community engagement for them with the local community. A good source of community information is needed along with a dedicated person, or team of persons, to ensure that regular information is sent out and to ensure additional programmes are organised to build the sense of community.

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Appendix I – recent representative example email information attachments deleted reduced font size

Hi club members

Some of the events happening over the next week or so are:
- Indian Independence Day celebration
- Interactive Careers Expo
- English & Media Studies research seminar
- Kerala Assoc of Palm Nth's Onaghosham celebration
- Cycle clinic

Also, Massey's annual **Unity and Diversity** concert is coming soon on **Sun 22nd August** – a celebration of the diversity of cultures on-campus and in our city! See below & attached poster for details.

See below for more details & more events/notices.

Indian Independence Day celebration – Sun 15th August
The Manawatu Indian Cultural Association (MICA) celebrates Indian Independence Day.
Dance / Songs / Bollywood Attractions & Indian Food Stalls.
Free entry. Please Join Us With Your Friends & Family.
Time: 4pm – 6pm
Venue: Queen Elizabeth College Hall (opposite BP petrol station), Rangitikei St
For more details, see attached poster, & the following links:
http://manawatuindian.blogspot.com/
http://www.manawatunz.co.nz/events_calendar/2010/08/15/5833.html
To see a map, go to
http://maps.google.co.nz/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=queen+elizabeth+college,+palmerston+north&sll=-41.244772,172.617188&sspn=31.091776,78.837891&ie=UTF8&hq=queen+elizabeth+college,&hnear=Palmerston+North,+Manawatu-wanganui&ll=-40.344631,175.603795&spn=0.007719,0.019248&z=16&iwloc=A

Interactive Careers Expo – Sun 15th August
This is a free, hands-on, fun, and interactive careers expo with a focus on trades and technology. Come along, have a look, talk to the experts and try out the activities. There are a wide range of career options where you can get great skills and qualifications while you work - earn while you learn. There will be friendly people from a wide range of training and employment organisations on hand to give you information on how to get started in your dream job! With over 140 different qualifications available through work based training covering a diverse range of employment, you never know what you might find!
Free entry.
Time: 10am – 4pm
Venue: Arena 2, Arena Manawatu, Pascal St
Go to http://www.manawatunz.co.nz/events_calendar/2010/08/15/5806.html for more details.

Arts on Wednesday – Wed 18th August
Arts on Wednesday provides weekly lunchtime entertainment to the staff and students of Massey University and the Palmerston North public on Wednesdays, and is presented by Massey's School of English and Media Studies.
"Worse Things Happen At Sea" – Theatre – Massey University Drama Society 2010 presents excerpts from *Worse Things Happen At Sea*- "A veritable Shakespeariment" after just finishing a successful season.
Time: 12:30pm – approx 1:30pm
Venue: Auditorium (SGP2.17), Sir Geoffrey Peren Building (previously called Old Main Building), Turitea campus
Entry by gold coin donation (ie. $1 or $2)
Go to http://ems.massey.ac.nz/massey/learning/departments/school-english-media-studies/arts-on-wednesday.cfm for more information, and to download a calendar of the Arts on Wednesdays performances for Semester Two.

Research seminar – English & Media Studies – Thurs 19th August
Massey's School of English & Media Studies presents a Research Seminar :
Allen Meek will speak on the topic of "Trauma and Media: The Transmission Problem" as follows:
> The paper considers how different media scholars have understood the transmission of traumatic experience and memory through photography, film and video. In particular, the discussion focuses on an often cited passage from Susan Sontag's On Photography, in which she describes the impact of first seeing images of the Nazi death camps. The paper looks at Sontag's account in the broader context of her writings on media and of Cold War and post-Cold War politics.
Time: 3:30pm
Venue: SGP4.20, Sir Geoffrey Peren Building (previously called Old Main Building), Turitea campus
Everyone welcome.

Onaghosham 2010 – Sat 21st August
The Kerala Association of Palm Nth (KAPN) are celebrating Onaghosham 2010.
Fun, laughter, and traditional Kerala food.
Time: 5:30pm
Venue: Terrace End School, 201 Ruahine St
See attached poster for more details and how to get tickets for this event.
For a map, go to
http://maps.google.co.nz/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=201+Ruahine+Street,+Palmerston+North,+Manawatu-wanganui&sll=-40.358383,175.606842&sspn=0.007194,0.019205&ie=UTF8&hq=&hnear=201+Ruahine+St,+Roslyn,+Palmerston+North+4414&z=16

Organic Farming presentation – Sat 21st August
Organic farming can be a difficult job, often labour intensive, often more costly than conventional agriculture. Despite these factors, many organic farms are thriving all over the world thanks to a growing network of support from schemes such as WWOOF and farmers' markets. What is a WWOOFer? What is the difference between a farmers' market and a general market? Greg and Joanne Turner (Certified to the Demeter organic standards for biodynamic production since 2001. Hosts of WWOOFers, and marketers of their produce at farmers markets) answer these questions and explain how these schemes work, and their experiences with them.
Time: 7:30pm
Venue: The Theosophical Centre, 304 Church St
Entry fee: $5 non-members
Go to http://www.manawatunz.co.nz/events_calendar/2010/08/21/5860.html for details.

Unity and Diversity – Sun 22nd August
Unity and Diversity is an annual concert which celebrates the cultural diversity at Massey and in Palmerston North. Come and see cultural performances from many different parts of the world.
Two shows: 4:00pm and 7:30pm
Venue: Globe Theatre, corner of Pitt St and Main St (opposite Davis Trading)
Tickets: $5 each student or child, $10 everyone else
You can buy your tickets at the show, or pre-purchase them from the MUSA office
See attached poster.
For a map, go to http://maps.google.co.nz/maps?q=-40.358351,175.606778&num=1&sll=-40.358841,175.606606&sspn=0.007194,0.019205&ie=UTF8&ll=-40.358383,175.606842&spn=0.007194,0.019205&z=16

Cycle Clinics for cyclists –Thurs 26th August
The Massey Recreation Centre in association with Stephen Stannard is hosting a series of cycling clinics (**see information attached**). The 2nd clinic in this series is on Thu 26 Aug.

The clinics are free to everyone. **Please e-mail pnrecreation@massey.ac.nz to register.** If you are looking at getting into cycling as an activity for fitness or plan on taking part in a cycling event/race, then these clinics should help you prepare your bike and yourself.

We look forward to you taking advantage of these great clinics.
Cycle Clinic Series
- Thursday July 29, Preparation the Key to Success: Bike setup and training schedule
- Thursday August 26, Bike Maintenance
- Thursday September 23, Fuelling up for the ride: Nutrition tips
- Thursday October 21, Final preparations leading up to your event

"Dead Tragic" – live musical comedy – Sat 10th July to Sat 21st August
A live comedy play performed by professional actors...
Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the theatre... Dead Tragic, the cult musical of the 90s returns with the original cast. Who shot who at the Copacabana? What did they do to Maria? (When they did what they did to Maria!) Why did Billy Joe MacAllister jump off the Tallahatchie Bridge? These, and many other mysteries of pop music may be answered by Dead Tragic. Featuring more than 20 hits (and misses) from the 50s, 60s and 70s. Dead Tragic - a musical night from HELL!!!
Ticket price: Student (with ID) $12, Adult $35, Adult aged under-35 $25
Venue: Centrepoint Theatre, corner of Pitt St & Church St
Go to http://www.centrepoint.co.nz/dead-tragic.html for booking details etc

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(If you want to be removed from this mailing list, please reply and tell me)

Cheers

Claire Hastings

Massey International Postgraduates & Mature Students Club

-- winner of Massey Clubs & Societies' Best Club/Society Event Award for 2009 --
-- winner of Massey Clubs & Societies' Best New Club/Society Award for 2008 --