

Innovative youth leadership programme a kiwi first

Auckland, Tuesday, November 6

Sixteen young employees have graduated from Fletcher Building's innovative 'Connect' learning and development programme, which aims to bridge the gap between school and employment, and grow future leaders.

The graduation ceremony was held at Mataatua Marae, Māngere on Tuesday November 6, 2018.

Indigenous Growth CEO Michael Moka, who facilitates Connect for Fletcher Building, says it is a first for New Zealand as it is the only corporate development programme founded in Māori and Pacific values.

"Connect embraces what is unique in Aotearoa. While Connect is for employees of all ethnicities, it recognises that Māori and Pacific are under-represented in leadership positions. We need to get back to the basics – before leading others you must first lead yourself.

"By harnessing culture and showing how to practically bring it to work, the programme builds confidence, motivation and skills in a relevant way so that what people learn can be implemented in their jobs," says Mr Moka.

Connect is based on evidence that feeling part of a community sets young people up for success in their careers. The programme uses self-reflection to focus on whole-self improvement, while at the same time building a community of young people.

Connect participant Nicole Duncan (age 21), who works at PlaceMakers Mount Wellington, says the programme helped her successfully build new skills. She has been in the workforce for just under four years.

"Working was totally different to how I imagined it. When you're at school you look forward to working and earning money, but the responsibility that comes with it is all new.

"Connect focussed on whole-self improvement – physical, emotional, mental and spiritual – so what I learnt applies to my whole life. It helped me achieve a huge goal of mine to be promoted into a human resources role."

The award-winning programme, which is celebrating its one year anniversary, is part of Fletcher Building's innovative youth strategy. Many of the employees in the Connect programme were also recruited through the non-traditional digital platform Switch Up, which recruits on attitude and behaviour rather than experience, and does not require a CV.

Participants of the six-month Connect programme are supported by a mentor from within the wider company, learn work and life skills such as budgeting, time management, and goal setting, and stay overnight at Te Puea Marae in Māngere. By the end of 2018, around 50 young employees will have graduated from the programme.

Ends

For further information please contact:

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About Connect

The Fletcher Building Connect programme uses a culturally inclusive approach to build leadership and work skills, confidence, and motivation. It is facilitated by Indigenous Growth, and based on evidence that feeling part of a community sets young people up for success in their careers.

Fletcher Building Connect won the Youth Employment Programme Award at the 2017 Young at Heart Awards.

About Fletcher Building

At Fletcher Building our vision is Building better together – and this unites our 20,000 people who work in 35 different businesses across more than 40 countries around the world. We manufacture and distribute high quality building products and we build and deliver homes, communities, commercial buildings and major infrastructure projects. At every step our business starts and ends with the customer, and we take great pride in the work we achieve together. For more information please visit www.fbu.com.