

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **BEST Pacific Leadership Programme Begins**

An Ex-All Black, a former Silver Fern, an Operations Manager at Skycity and a Wesptac Branch Manager are just some of the selected candidates in the inaugural BEST Pasifika Leadership Programme which officially gets underway today.

In partnership with the University of Auckland, the BEST Pasifika Leadership Academy headed by CEO, and four-time Olympian, Beatrice Faumuinā ONZM, will deliver the unique leadership programme which blends post-graduate courses for business leadership and entrepreneurship interwoven within a Pasifika context.

Ms Faumuinā says this breakthrough programme will help build a pipeline to increase the number of Pasifika people in leadership positions within businesses.

The Leadership Programme was formally launched in December 2010 by the BEST Pacific Institute of Education.

There are 12 twelve candidates in the first cohort which includes Ex-All Black Eroni Clarke, former Silver Fern Vilimaina Davu, Operations Manager at Skycity Tavalea feagiaga and Westpac Te Atatu Branch Manager Afiafi Leala. The group will begin the programme with their first lecture tonight at the University of Auckland.

‘I am incredibly thankful to the corporate companies, philanthropic and community groups who share the BEST Leadership Programme’s vision and purpose. Together we will help increase the incomes for Pasifika communities; provide role models for our Pasifika people and community and help more businesses and organisations contribute to the economic development of New Zealand’ says Faumuinā.

She says this will enable the inaugural participants the opportunity to progress into senior leadership positions, or start their own entrepreneurial business to generate wealth for their families and for New Zealand.

‘I am extremely proud of our first cohort. These men and women are the Emerging Leaders of Aotearoa.’

The 18-month programme incorporates a myriad of components including lectures, a Distinguished Speakers series, Pasifika Mat and mentoring.

The candidates in the augural BEST Leadership Programme includes

Afiafi Leala – Bank Manager, Westpac  
Emma Sullivan – Operations Co-ordinator, University of Auckland Business School  
Eroni Clarke –Tupu Services, Waitemata District Health Board  
Francina Gataua– Tertiary Manager, Manukau, BEST Pacific Institute of Education  
Malia Apikotoa – Northern Sales Manager for State Insurance

Marina Masame – Youth Academy Manager, BEST Pacific Institute of Education  
Moe Alefai – Accounts Assistant, Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust  
Patrick Foster – Team Leader, Just Water International  
Talei Mattner – Sales Manager, Telstra Pacific Events Centre  
Tavalea Feagaiga – Operations Manager, Skycity  
Viliamaina Davu – Consultant, Coverstaff Recruitment  
Vita Sa Fia – Security Team Manager, Skycity

For more information on the BEST Leadership Programme, contact Beatrice Faumuina.

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