

### **Cutting-edge technology showcased at West Coast Careers Expo**

West Coasters can experience the technology behind global phenomenon Pokémon GO, the new Star Wars marketing campaign and Peter Jackson's latest endeavour WingNutAR at next weekend's 2017 West Coast Careers Expo at Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP).

TPP is bringing augmented reality (AR) to the West Coast, through a new partnership with Fabriko Creative. Based at the Greymouth campus, the company is initially looking to get involved in the community through a series of free pilot programmes in schools that will be launched at the West Coast Careers Expo on Saturday 16 September. The partnership is part of a TPP initiative to support the wider community by opening its doors to businesses and community groups and allowing people to use the facilities and resources available.

Fabriko Creative Founder Carl Pavletich says his Koneki concept uses AR to enhance storytelling and education opportunities. AR technology is taking the world by storm, allowing people to experience digital creations in the real world through their smartphone or iPad.

"Through the relationships we've developed thanks to our partnership with the Polytechnic, we're looking to partner with local schools, introducing this technology to help kids tell their stories and understand the world around them. The technology is becoming more and more accessible and it is a great opportunity to introduce children to the storytelling tools of the future.

"This is one of the biggest leaps in technology since the internet itself; our programmes aim to make sure local children don't miss out on the global trend," Mr Pavletich says.

Different from virtual reality, which immerses people in an entirely different world, AR is used to enhance the world around us by over-laying digital content (such as video, 3D objects, graphics or text) on to the real world. It can be view through devices such as smartphones and iPads.

"Think Pokémon GO or the latest Star Wars marketing campaign that's putting Star Destroyers above famous landmarks all around the world. The technology is also being used by Peter Jackson's WETA Workshop through his new company WingNutAR – it's an emerging technology that's growing exponentially around the world," he says.

The launch of the Koneki programme on the West Coast is a partnership with TPP, with the aim of bringing a focus on digital technology and access to resources to the community.

"We're excited to be partnering with the Polytechnic to deliver the programme. We're based at the Greymouth campus and we've made some great connections through the institute's community partners. We're planning to start with pilot programmes in local schools and look to the creation of a Koneki Club so kids have ongoing access to the technology," Mr Pavletich says.

TPP Chief Executive Alex Cabrera says the Koneki programme is a great example of how strong community partnerships can benefit the region. “Introducing our school kids to the latest technology and helping them explore the possibilities that it creates is an important role of all educators. We saw huge potential in the Koneki programme and I’m keen to see it roll out on the West Coast.

“The Government has made it clear with recent funding announcements that digital technology initiatives in schools are crucial to ensuring our children are being taught the skills they’ll need to make it in a changing world. TPP wants to support programmes like Koneki on the West Coast in whatever ways we can to ensure our region is part of the technology wave,” Mr Cabrera says.

**If you’re interested in checking-out the technology and finding out more about what Koneki brings to the West Coast, come down to the 2017 West Coast Careers Expo, Saturday 16 September, 11am to 2pm at Tai Poutini Polytechnic’s Greymouth campus.**

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