

News release, 20 February 2010

### **DRILLING FIRST FOR NEW ZEALAND AT TAI POUTINI POLYTECHNIC**

A new programme designed to meet the needs of the New Zealand drilling industry has been introduced for the first time this year.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic's Certificate in Drilling was developed after companies in the drilling industry experienced a shortage of drillers' assistants and approached the Polytechnic for help. Industry players including Westmere Drilling, Butt Drilling, Boart Longyear, training organisation EXITO (Extractive Industry Training Organisation) and the New Zealand Drillers Federation (NZDF) have been involved in the process.

Karen Le Gallais, Business Systems Manager for Boart Longyear commended Tai Poutini Polytechnic on the initiative. "Attending this drilling course will be an excellent way of entering the drilling industry with a very good expectation of what is required and it is great to see industry based training that will develop the knowledge and skills required to start a career in the drilling field. The current students look like a very keen and capable group of future drillers."

TPP Director of National and Industry Programmes, Marion Smith says the students have travelled from throughout New Zealand to take the 20-week programme with 12 weeks based in Greymouth and 8 weeks training on a non-hydrocarbon drilling rig in New Zealand.

During their time in Greymouth, the students will gain skills and knowledge in truck driving, heavy plant operation, lifting, loading, towing, drilling processes, rig mobilisation, maintenance and repairs, welding, gas cutting, 4 WD, operation of ATV's, Health and Safety, and emergency care (including working with helicopters).

On completion of this 20 week programme, each student will have gained their Tai Poutini Polytechnic Certificate in Drilling – Non-hydrocarbon (which has embedded the National Certificate in Drilling – Non-hydrocarbon (Driller's Assistant) (Level 2)) and sufficient skills and training to fast track their entry into the drilling industry.

The New Zealand Drillers Federation has offered \$5,000 to recognise the achievements of the students on the 2010 course. The criteria for receiving this award will be decided at the NZDF meeting on 11 March.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic will offer this programme three times in 2010 with a maximum of 12 students on each with the next intake beginning on 26 April 2010.

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**For more information please contact:**

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**About Tai Poutini Polytechnic:**

*Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP) offers a range of exciting programmes, has had one of the highest course completion rates in New Zealand for the last 3 years, has low student to tutor ratios and great relationships with business and industry. TPP has campuses in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Christchurch, Wanaka, Invercargill, Westport, Greymouth, Reefton and Hokitika. In 2010 Scholarships are available for most programmes\* (\* Conditions apply)*