

Paige's Story



**GRAEME DINGLE
FOUNDATION**

Empowering kids to overcome life's obstacles
Whakamanawatia ngā tamariki kia eke panuku

“My journey started back in March when I was asked, along with selected students from Gateway. We had been told that we would be setting goals for our future, finding out more about ourselves as people, learning how to get a job, plus much more. What makes all of this important for me, is that I am a very shy person who would normally keep to myself. I had no confidence and didn't like to put myself out of my comfort zone at all. What I've found though, is as this programme has gone on, I have started to come out of my shell and show more of myself to the people around me. Meredith, Enoka, and I would go out of School every second week to a Café and we would sit and talk about what we wanted for our futures and how we would get there. We would set goals, go on worksite visits to look at jobs that we were interested in, and learnt about CV Writing and job interviews.



Attending the Waikato Excellence Awards was a privilege. My nerves were running at a high pace through my body, but it still felt really special to be around other young people who had tried as hard as me to make positive changes for their future. I was surprised and happy, both for myself and my School, to be announced as the winner of the competition. I remember thinking ‘how have I achieved this?’, ‘what did I do to make me stand out?’ and ‘what made me so special?’. A month after, I attended the National Excellence Awards in Auckland. Standing on stage was mind-blowing, especially considering the high profile people in the audience. But my newly developed confidence saw me get through it and I really enjoyed it. Looking back, I am so grateful for the opportunity that was given to me by the Graeme Dingle Foundation. With the help of my mentor and the Staff at Fraser High School, my eyes have been opened to bigger things in life, and I have gained so much. Things you never thought possible can happen if you take advantage of the help that people extend to you.”

We want every child to know: What they have inside is greater than any obstacle.