

RYPEN 2021

Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment

Over the last weekend in March, the Inglewood Rotary Club again hosted the RYPEN course for students aged 15-17 years, from all over the lower half of the North Island. Fifty students from 27 colleges and one home schooled student were sponsored by 24 Rotary Clubs and all the students arrived at Vertical Horizon camp on Friday night not knowing each other. All were very quiet and somewhat timid. Between Friday night and lunchtime Sunday, things changed!

Best Friends Forever and “I’ll miss you” to “the weekend should be longer”, were all phrases in abundance as everyone departed after Sunday lunch. Cooking marshmallows over the campfire on Saturday night was a hit, as were the two guest speakers. The course theme for the weekend was “Be bold, be brave” and this was very much in evidence when Friday night guest speaker Paul Rangiwahia challenged the students to think about themselves when he spoke about mindfulness and looking after your mental health. Lake traverse, Flying Kiwi, the Raft Race and the Mud Run were all physical and mental challenges, then came Sunday’s guest speaker Jamie Turner, whose theme was “Expand the Edges” which was another way to conquer the challenges when fear, bullying, embarrassment and a lack of confidence come our way.

The evaluation forms all had two things in common, the macaroni cheese for lunch on Saturday wasn’t hugely popular and, the course should be a week, not a weekend! The warm letters and emails from students, parents and teachers have made RYPEN 2021 highly rewarding

for all the Inglewood Rotarians and we know that we have changed the lives of several young men and women, which is why we do what we do. Planning is already underway for the 2022 course.

