

# Western Leader

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YOUR PLACE, YOUR PAPER



## Volunteers saluted

By CIARA PRATT

BY DAY he is teaching nine-year-olds – by night he is fighting fires.

Meet Titirangi resident Nik Edwards.

The deputy principal at Chaucer School received a Local Hero award this week at the 2014 Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year Awards, honouring his work in the community.

Mr Edwards is a newly qualified firefighter at Titirangi fire station where he has volunteered for more than two years.

He is also a Sea Scout leader in New Lynn mentoring young Keas, Cubs and Scouts.

But that's not all. Mr Edwards is also an executive trustee for charitable trust One People, One Planet which encourages children across the world to promote peace.

After a long day at school he rarely has an evening free which doesn't bother him, he says.

"I've got two Duracells – I've got a lot of energy compared to most people."

Mr Edwards says the award is "a wonderful tribute".

"I'm very grateful. I'm in awe of some of the people who were up there receiving awards."

A normal Monday can see Mr Edwards drop his three children to school in the morning, teach year 5 and 6 pupils at Chaucer School, lead a group of Cubs at Sea Scouts until 6.30pm in New Lynn and then begin fire duty at Titirangi Fire Station until 10pm.

"I might slow down when I die,"

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Nik Edwards

he says. "I would really encourage anyone to put their name down and get involved in their community.

"New Zealand survives on the basis of volunteering and you can really change people's lives," he says.

Kiwibank chief executive Paul Brock says the organisation is proud to help communities celebrate outstanding citizens.

"New Zealand has a long standing tradition of community service. It's therefore equally important that we have a tradition like the Local Heroes awards where we can give our thanks to those who have improved the lives of others in their communities."

**Local hero:** Chaucer School deputy principal Nik Edwards was awarded a local hero award for his dedication to the West Auckland community.

Photo: CIARA PRATT



### WEST AUCKLAND'S LOCAL HEROES

Three other West Aucklanders were honoured at this year's awards:

**Delane Mackie:** Delane Mackie is a personal trainer for the Te Whanau o Waipareira Trust organisation. He also works with young mums and people with mental or physical disabilities to help them achieve their health goals.

**Jeff Percival:** Jeff Percival is the group leader of the Motu Moana Green Bay Scout Group, one of the largest Scout groups in New Zealand. He works with

youth to provide them with new skills, life experiences and adventure in a safe and fun environment and has also organised four camps for Cubs and Scouts.

**Ursula Thynne:** Ursula Thynne manages Magnet, a nationwide youth organisation for the deaf and hard of hearing that reconnects deaf communities across the country.

She has created, developed and strengthened Magnet by producing presentations, workshops and camps.