

# Ministry of Education Language Immersion Awards (AFS)

16 teachers have recently been selected for a Ministry of Education Language Immersion Award to China, Japan, Samoa, France, Germany and Argentina in 2017. Teachers from around New Zealand will be heading off to immerse themselves in communities, schools, language programmes and families to improve their own language and cultural knowledge, and importantly bringing back that new updated knowledge to their classrooms and schools. Hear from 3 of these teachers below...

## Paula Kasper, Director of Languages and Culture at Hereworth School

*"My interest in an LIA has been annual however I believe this year the benefits of being involved will greatly assist the vision of growing a sustainable languages and culture pathway at my school, Hereworth Years 1-8. I have been fortunate to be awarded a 3 month immersion experience. My intention is to use the LIA experience to refresh and modernise my language and culture knowledge and skills. As a Languages and Culture teacher I endeavour to assist students to make connections with their own language, use familiar formulaic expressions and everyday vocabulary in real life situations, and to encourage enthusiastic and motivated Japanese language learners. A Learning Languages pathway from Primary through to High School /University is an excellent way to cultivate global citizenship and promote communicative language life-long learning for our global environment. My aim is to be to be a leader in primary language and culture learning in NZ to be shared with all."*



## Howard Young, DP at South Wellington Intermediate won a one month award



*"As Head of Languages and Head of International Engagement I lead language and cultural programmes throughout the school. All students at SWIS learn a language alongside the culture as the two go hand-in-hand. As a teacher of Japanese I am always looking at ways to build on or improve my teaching, and over the last two years I have developed my language teaching practice through a range of PLD including working with Karen Hollis at ILEP, attending NZALT conferences, leading our school in an ALLiS cluster and my own language classes. When talking to my students about what would improve their language learning, the message was clear - they want more authentic learning opportunities and direct links between culture and language. This got me thinking and it became obvious to me that a Language Immersion Award would be the best way to achieve mine and my students' goals. I have the opportunity to spend a month in Japan and I will be taking every opportunity to be immersed fully. I will return from this experience with an improved grasp of Japanese, and a series of authentic cultural contexts that I can engage my students with."*

## Michelle van Lit, Marshall Laing Primary School has been studying in Beijing

*"It has been a challenging and rewarding experience so far in Beijing. The course has been great so far. I have learnt more in a week here at Capital Normal University than all year in my weekly Mandarin class at home. The Chinese teachers love their homework but it all pays off though as I can now recognise some characters when I am out exploring the city (I knew none when I left) and my ear is much more attuned to the language. The highlight has definitely been a visit out to the Great Wall of China! I got to visit a local primary school which was a wonderful experience. Now I have been asked to give a lecture at the university about teaching in NZ, I am looking forward to sharing about some of the great stuff teachers are doing back home. I will try make the most of my remaining time here and soak up as much of the culture and language as I can."*



Round 2 for teachers now open for 2017 Ministry of Education Language Immersion Awards

Closing date - 10 March 2017 - contact [lia.info@afs.org](mailto:lia.info@afs.org)

"Learning another language isn't just about communicating; it's about discovering the history & rich stories, customs & beliefs and the people who make the country what it is".

