

Hatch helps make a weld of difference for Witt student

Partnership in first gear

Amelia Ritchie

Witt student Michael Altorfer is the first recipient of a Hatch and Americarna combination scholarship.

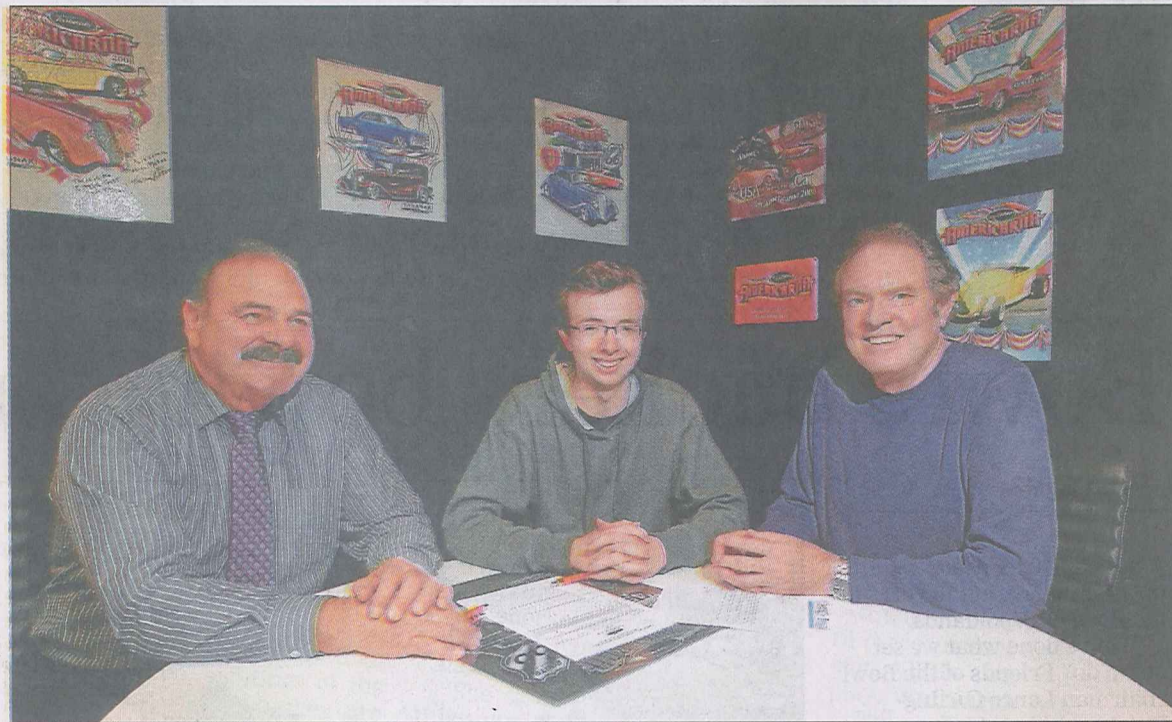
This is the first time the Hatch (help a Taranaki child) Trust has aligned with the biennial Americarna car event.

While the Hatch Trust offers funding to the general public, the scholarship offered with Americarna will be for Witt students with an engineering focus.

Hatch Trust chairman Richard Williams noted there was "good synergy," between Hatch and Americarna. Hatch was established in 2004 by a number of Taranaki businesspeople to help less advantaged children living in Taranaki.

Mr Altorfer said he wanted to do a welding course.

"The only major welding courses were in Auckland, but there wasn't actually a school where you could learn to weld, in depth, except for here," he said.



New start: Michael Altorfer, 19, centre, is the recipient of the first combination scholarship from Americarna and the Hatch Trust. He signs his papers with Americarna founder John Rae, left, and Hatch Trust chairman Richard Williams.

Photo: CAMERON BURNELL/FAIRFAX NZ

Originally from Switzerland, his family moved to Kerikeri when he was three and he travelled to New Plymouth to continue his education at Witt.

The 19-year-old has an interest in stainless steel fabrication, and hopes to one day own his own business.

Americarna founder John Rae

is delighted to be joining with the Hatch Trust.

"What I wanted to do was align the event with a trust, and have that trust become the sole ben-

eficiary of the proceeds from the event," he said.

"It's a win-win for the community, I think the outcome for that should be pretty spectacular."

In conjunction with Witt, the Hatch Trust would pay the scholarship recipient's fees a term at a time, so no money would be lost if the student couldn't continue their study.

Someone from the trust could be available to mentor the scholarship students if need be.

Hatch Trust member Marie Barrett said she was able to do this, as the recently retired principal of St John Bosco school.

Witt head of faculty of technology Glen West hopes to see the scholarship grow in popularity after it has been brought into the system of scholarships available to Witt students.

"I think it will grow in momentum and gain more support," he said.

In the future it is hoped that other businesses will be able to get on board to provide their own scholarships though the Hatch Trust.

"I'd love to see 20 plus scholarships each year," Mr Rae said.

■ Amelia Ritchie is a Witt Journalism student.