

Wairarapa Times-Age

Family holiday job takes the biscuit

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By Matt Stewart

Enterprising Riversdale Beach student Millie Bell reckons she's hitting her sales stride collecting cash for cookies to bankroll a semester's study at Dublin University next year.

The 20-year-old ex-St Matthew's pupil is in her second year studying sociology and marketing at Otago University and continues a family legacy of involvement in the Cookie Time Christmas Cookie campaign with cousins Lucy, Pip and Sarah Dalziel having sold the cookies for a total of nine years between them.

The campaign, in its 23rd year, gives tertiary students the chance to run their own business, fund the next year of their studies and raise money for charity.

This year, 69 students are expected to sell more than 200,000 of the distinctive Cookie Time buckets to businesses and schools.

Ms Bell began selling on Sunday and met with some initial opposition from prospective buyers. "It was pretty tough the first two people told me in no uncertain terms to rack off," she said. Come Monday it was a different story. "Today's been really good I think I'm starting to get the hang of it."

Ms Bell aims to make between \$3100 and \$3700 as she carts cookies from Pahiatua to Featherston all the way out to her home turf until the end of the month and, like the other students, she will run her campaign as an independent business, giving her skill and experience in areas like sales, marketing, distribution, inventory management and account maintenance.

Last year the average seller made \$6000 while the number one salesperson scooped in \$11,000.

One dollar from every bucket sold is going to the Cookie Time Charitable Trust principal sponsor of the Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand.

The foundation works to support the one in 10 New Zealanders with the learning disability, including 70,000 schoolchildren.

This year's campaign theme is "Crunch-time for Dyslexia" aiming to highlight the fact that, if properly addressed, dyslexia can be a creative gift.

If not it can breed low self-esteem and disruptive behaviours starting in the classroom.

Money raised this year will go towards projects like the Dyslexia Foundation's 4D/For Dyslexia programme, which provides concrete guidance on steps schools can take to help their dyslexic students to succeed.

The aim of the programme is for New Zealand to become a world leader in dyslexia and action in schools.

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