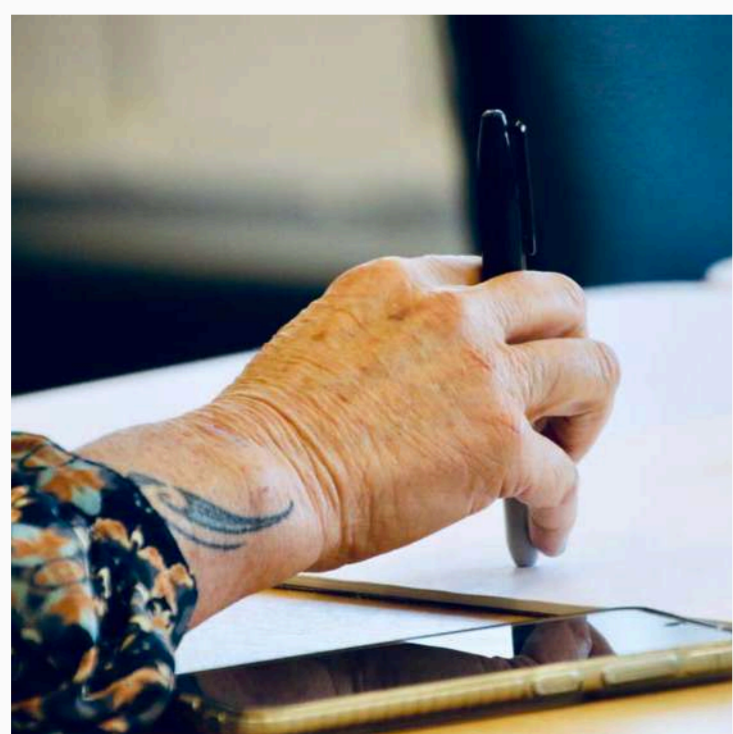


HE TUKUTUKU WHAKATUPU

Celebrating 20 years of taura from Whakauae, driving change
across Aotearoa and beyond



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FOREWORD FROM DR HEATHER GIFFORD

I was honoured as the founding Director of Whakauae and the current Manu Arataki for Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Hauiti to be asked to contribute some opening thoughts to this pukapuka: *He Tukutuku Whakatupu, celebrating twenty years of capacity building for Māori health research*. It is with much love and pride that I look back over the last twenty years at the achievements of the various staff and students that Whakauae has supported on their professional and personal journeys.

Māori research capacity building has always been a cornerstone of our kaupapa as an iwi research centre. Building rangahau capacity enables evidence to be produced more widely across Aotearoa ensuring better health outcomes for whānau, hapū and iwi. I want to thank the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) who have supported our aspirations over the last twenty years. More recently we have been successful in attaining HRC Independent Research Organisation Funding; enabling an even greater focus on capacity building for Māori health research.

I was thinking about the advice I often gave to those we were wanting to support. Most prominent for me was the kōrero “we will do everything possible to support your professional and personal development and don’t feel like you must stay with us forever. We are growing a bigger vision of Māori success here and you will take with you, wherever you go, the skills and knowledge we helped build.”

As I reflected on the advice provided by the tauira in this pukapuka I was heartened to see the vision for capacity building we dreamed about reflected in the kōrero and their advice to prospective tauira.

Several things stand out for me as underpinning values for capacity building; be bold and brave, believe in yourself, follow your passions, embrace your identity and use your skills and knowledge to change systems to ensure flourishing whānau.

I wanted to leave you with these final words from one of our tupuna Te Rangitākuku

Mete-Kingi:

Ko te pae tawhiti whāia kia tata

Ko te pae tata whakamaua kia tina

He ao āpōpō, he ao tea

Seek the distant horizons

Cherish those you attain

Tomorrow holds a bright future

Ngā mihi nui

Dr Heather Gifford

INTRODUCTION

Tauira have been supported at Whakauae since its inception, with various opportunities provided to support students enhance their knowledge of kaupapa Māori health research and how to undertake this work in a community setting. Since 2014, with the support of Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) Independent Research Organisation funding, Whakauae has also provided scholarships for tauira. Over the years, as Whakauae has grown, so too have the types of capacity building opportunities Whakauae is able to offer students and community members to support the next generation of hauora Māori researchers. Currently, Whakauae offers six scholarships to tauira, from summer studentships through to fully-funded PhD scholarships.

This resource collates the journeys of some of the many tauira who have been associated with Whakauae over the past 20 years. We have included 18 narratives of tauira, who have also generously provided kupu tohutohu or advice for students considering research as a career pathway.

This pukapuka is a celebration of the excellence of tauira who have created change in spaces across Aotearoa and beyond.

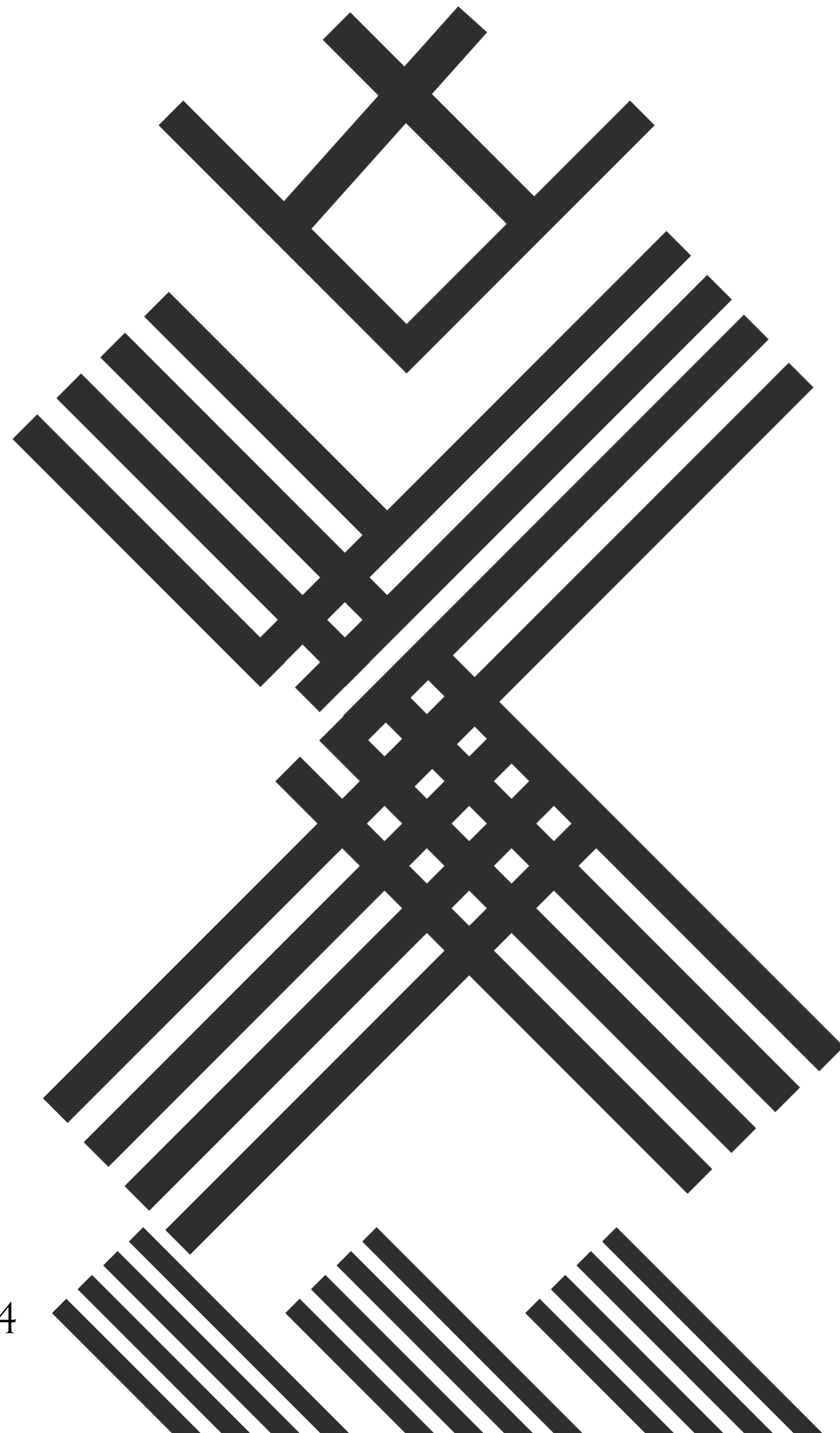
It is also testimony to the vision of the organisation in supporting the capability and capacity of the next generation of health researchers.

Finally, it is an offering to tauira who may be considering research as a pathway, but are unsure of how to approach this, and a means of demonstrating the many opportunities that exist within the field of kaupapa Māori research.

We hope this pukapuka reveals pathways for future tauira to follow, to seek distant horizons and seize the ones nearby, as succinctly captured in the whakatauākī that gives our premier award, the Pae Tawhiti scholarship, its name:

**Ko te pae tawhiti whāia kia tata
Ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tīna**
nā Whakaari Te Rangitakuku (Rangi) Mete-Kingi LLD (Hon Caus.)

HE TUKUTUKU WHAKATUPU



He Tukutuku Whakatupu: a kōrero

The image of an incomplete tukutuku panel, He Tukutuku Whakatupu, represents the journey taura (students) are undertaking while at Whakauae. The raw, unfinished fibres of the tukutuku represent threads that are only just beginning to be woven together. At this point, like our students, the threads of the tukutuku are still in the process of coming into their own. Our students, at the start of their research careers, begin to make connections in the fields of Māori health and Māori research.

The untied strands represent the limitless potential of taura, and the open-ended design invites growth, adaption and partnership. The whakapapa of Māori research will be strengthened as their weavings grow in scope, criss-crossing with the other fibres of whānau, hapū and community, and in depth, as they acquire knowledge and experience.

Learning is a continuous journey, an emergent activity that involves integrating connections, information, and behaviours that benefit both the individual and the collective goals of Te Ao Māori. This is illustrated in the large and the small weaves and the different starting and non-end points of this tohu.

He Tukutuku Whakatupu, a latticed framework, represents the stories of each taura - interwoven into the greater fibres which make up the mission of Whakauae - advancing Māori health equity through high quality innovative kaupapa Māori research.



Gill has been a kaimahi with Whakauae since 2005. Coming in as a student and community-based evaluator, she now holds a Senior Research position with the centre.

Whakauae has supported Gill through undergraduate, postgraduate and Masters studies; paying her University fees and covering her days for study.

Gill reflects that her time with Whakauae has involved knowledge, support, experience, cultural nourishment, connection, networks and enduring relationships.

Gill's advice for taura going into health research draws on her experience studying and working for Whakauae. She notes: "study, working, whānau, a social life is like walking a tight rope. The Whakauae whānau are your safety net."

GILL POTAKA-OSBORNE (MMS)

(Te Awa Tupua o Whanganui, Raukawa ki te Tonga)

Dr Glenis Mark has an ongoing relationship with Whakauae, that began in 2011 with an HRC postdoctoral scholarship hosted by Whakauae. She now is working as both an independent researcher and author.

Glenis shares that during her time with Whakauae, she gained an operational working knowledge of research and the research grant funding process. Including learning about the research ethics process, how to write and submit articles, research reports and how to approach qualitative research and data analysis.

She also learned a lot about how a research organisation needs to be structured and supported, including business administration and support for employees. In short, she shares, “I gained most of my research skills and knowledge from being with Whakauae.”

Dr Glenis Mark’s advice for taura looking to go into Māori health research: “Know who you are and what you want to spend your career working on. Until you know that, you won't know which steps to take to create a career that you enjoy and feel proud of.”



**GLENIS
MARK (PHD)**

(Ngapuhi, Tainui, Ngai Tahu, Ngati Koata)



ARIA GRAHAM (PHD)

(Waipatu ki Heretaunga, Ngāti Kahungunu)

Dr Amohia Boulton, Director of Whakauae Research services, served as a supervisor to Aria on her HRC Erihapeti Rehu-Murchie Postdoctoral Fellowship (2020-2023). Dr Amohia was previously a supervisor on her PhD (2018) providing great support. Aria particularly highlighted the support that Amohia provided her in her use of kaupapa Māori methodology, but also with navigating the rangahau Māori funding pathways and processes.

“Dr Amohia was an invaluable mentor and greatly supported the pathway I was on although at times a seemingly unorthodox approach.”

Dr Aria Graham also joined the Whakauae team following the completion of her doctoral studies. She shares,

“I met wonderful researchers and support staff in the rangahau Māori space and enjoyed the manaakitanga of Whanganui and Whakauae when I travelled over.”

During her time at Whakauae, Aria developed wonderful relationships within the Whakauae team and enjoyed seeing rangahau Māori researchers, Māori and Pākehā, in action.

Dr Aria Graham is now a Kaiarataki Mamia (Te Maioha o Mamia, Waipatu Marae, Te Matau-a-Māui). "Mamia" is a marae-based Māori child and maternal wellbeing model derived from my upbringing, nursing career and PhD findings. The model was piloted in 2020 through her HRC postdoc, and although 'young', is now an established hauora provider and service with many wonderful relationships and streams of funding to support the kaupapa they offer. There are 12 kaimahi and pou in Whānau Mamia (Mamia team), and they are very proud and excited about the kaupapa they offer.

Dr Aria Graham's advice for taura going into health research:
"Karawhiuā! Go for it and enjoy all of the relationships, skills and knowledge you will gain. Apply what you learn - utilise the mātauranga to support whānau Māori. Make a heartfelt contribution towards the wellbeing of tamariki and whānau. Work hard and allow your ngākau to lead and drive your intent. Seek out other Māori researchers and practitioners who will "get" what you wish to achieve and make it happen."





TOM JOHNSON

(Ngāti Hauiti, Te Awa Tupua)

Tom received support in 2019 as part of a Summer studentship with Dr Tanya Allport. This was then followed by an offer of employment to join the Whakauae team. Tom is now the Design Lead at Whakauae while also completing a doctorate degree.

Tom's advice for taura going into health research:

“Find your place in the ngahere of mahi that nourishes you—where you are watered, fed, shaded, and bathed in light. Seek opportunities within your rohe or connect with Whakauae; being a teina in a space of learning and inspiration is invaluable.

Once rooted in a healthy space, reflect on your unique positionality—your lens is a precious taonga. Draw strength from your kōrero tuku iho, whether your tūpuna descend from manu, awa, maunga, or arrived post-World War II—each story is a treasure. Let these stories guide and nourish your voice, and as you journey through research, plant seeds for future whānau and taura to grow in their own maara.”

Maihi received the Whakauae Pae Tawhiti Scholarship in 2019 to undertake his Masters in Visual Art degree at Massey. During this period, Maihi reflected that their relationship with Whakauae provided mentorship and connections with future clients.

Maihi is now a part-time artist and full-time Research Officer at Massey University, Te Papaioea campus.

Maihi Potaka's advice for taura going into health research: "Embrace your identity, your Māori identity is a taonga. It is a source of strength, resilience, and wisdom. Incorporate your cultural knowledge, values, and perspectives into your studies. Remember, your unique viewpoint is valuable and can offer a fresh lens in your academic field."



**MAIHI
POTAKA**

(Ngāti Hauiti, Ngāti Manawa, Te
Atihaunui-ā-Pāpārangī)



ANANIA KEREHOMA-COOK

(Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Huia, Te Atiawa Ki Whakarongotai, Ngati Toa Rangataira, Ngati Awa, Ngati Kahu)

Anania is currently working as a Senior Executive Assistant with the Parliamentary Service (Labour MPs Hon Phil Twyford & Hon Dr Deborah Russell).

In 2019, she was working with Whakauae Research Services as a Research Assistant alongside Heather Gifford and the Eru Pōmare Research Centre (University of Otago). During her time with Whakauae, Anania gained research assistance experience and an understanding of how to facilitate focus group discussions.

Anania Kerehoma-Cook's advice for taura going into health research:

“Understand the purpose / issue you are crafting [with] your research project and ensure the mātauranga shared is cared for and respectfully utilised. Check in with your whanau to provide updates and keep everyone informed on the progress you are making. You are a kaitiaki of this information and how you care for it is all that matters.”

Meretini is currently the Rautaki Māori with Te Oranganui: Waiora Whānau and a 1st year PhD student.

Meretini received a Summer Studentship in 2021 and is the first PhD student to be awarded Whakauae's top award, the Pae Tawhiti scholarship. During her time as a summer student at Whakauae Meretini gained a wealth of knowledge with amazing supervision. For her, this was also a great opportunity to explore the dissemination of her research. During this process, she felt "empowered by wisdom of mātauranga and kōrero tuku iho as a means of exploring new ways using old innovative thinking in tupuna wisdom."

Meretini Bennett-Huxtable's advice for taurira going into health research: "We need more evidence of our ways of knowing and being in this world so we give our future mokopuna narratives that they can connect too."



MERETINI BENNETT-HUXTABLE

(Ngā Iwi nui tonu o Mōkai Pātea, Atihaunui, Ngāti Rangi, Tainui, Tuwharetoa, Maniapoto, Ngāti Raukawa te au ki te tonga)



ANETA CRAM

(Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Pahauwera)

Aneta is a current Phd student and received the Whakauae Research Services Ltd Scholarship & Pae Tawhiti Scholarship to support her studies.

Over the course of her involvement with Whakauae, Aneta has found that the people that she has met and the experiences that she has had with Whakauae have been invaluable. Particularly noting that the Whakauae whānau is so kind, welcoming and generous with their support, awhi and knowledge. She has also been fortunate to engage with a rōpū Phd students associated with Whakauae's research programme *Kia Puāwai Ake Ngā Uri Whakatupu*.

Dr Amohia Boulton is one of Aneta's doctoral supervisors. She states that having Dr Amohia Boulton as her supervisor has been incredible. The degree of guidance, challenge and awhi that Amohia has provided over the course of her doctoral studies has allowed her to grow and get a deeper understanding of Indigenous Evaluation, the kaupapa that she is studying.

Aneta states: "I cannot thank Whakauae enough! Ngā mihi aroha ki a koutou katoa."

Aneta Cram's advice for tairira going into health research: "Just do it! You may feel a little āwangawanga at first but even if you realise that it's not for you, you won't regret jumping in."

Kiri has a long-standing relationship with Whakauae. She has been a subcontractor with the organisation since 2007, and since 2021 has been the Programme Manager for the *Kia Puāwai Ake Ngā Uri Whakatupu* as well as a doctoral student.

During her time with Whakauae, Kiri has valued tuakana-teina mentoring, opportunities for growing her skills and mātauranga, conference presentations, leadership roles, and building networks and trusted relationships with communities.

Kiri Parata's advice for taura going into health research: "Ask lots of pātai, look for opportunities to advance your skills, align yourself with an organisation that shares your values, and always know your 'why'."



KIRI PARATA

(Te Ātiawa ki Kāpiti, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāi Tahu)



DANIELLE SWORD

(Muaūpoko, Ngāi Tara, Te Ātiawa, Ngāti
Toarangatira, Kāi Tahu)

Danielle is a PhD candidate and 2022 recipient of the Whakauae Kia Rite scholarship.

During her time with Whakauae, Dani has been able to ground herself in her rangahau. She stated that she was becoming proud and strong in her Māoritanga and Iwitanga in research, with a rangahau whānau learning how to tautoko others in this space.

Danielle Sword's advice for taura going into health research: "Learn your whakanoa processes, what you need to do to ground yourself, to calm yourself when things get overwhelming, to reset from the day, week, month or year to be recharged and ready to give the next day, week, month or year your best. Mauri ora!"



STACEY MARIU RURU

(Ngāti Haua, Ngāti Raukawa)

I roto i tōna tau tūatahi i awhina a Whakauae ki a ia ki te whai i ngā karahipi e rua, ki te tautoko i a ia i roto i tāna mahi rangahau mō te tohu kairangi. I whakarite ia i tētahi tononga mō te 2022 Ngā Pae O Te Māramatanga PhD Doctoral scholarship i raro ia Ngā Pae O Te Māramatanga, me tētahi atu tononga, mō te 2023 Māori Health PhD Scholarship i raro i a te Health Research Council of New Zealand.

In her first year, Stacey received help from Whakauae to apply for two scholarships to support the research she was undertaking as part of her doctorate. She developed an application for the 2022 Ngā Pae O Te Māramatanga PhD scholarship under Ngā Pae O Te Māramatanga and, another application for the 2023 Māori Health PhD Scholarship under the Health Research Council of New Zealand.

Kia kaha koutou ki te whakapā mai ki a Whakauae Research Services, nā te mea, he maha ngā āheinga ki te hono ki ngā kairangahau, ngā kaimāhi, ngā tauira hoki. Ū ki tētahi kaupapa e tino ngakanui ana ki a koe. Whakahonohono ki ētahi atu tauira, hei roopu tautoko mōu. He pai te hui, patapātai, kōrerorero, wānanga rānei. Me aki i a koe anō, tō hauora, waiora, wairua hoki.

She strongly recommends contacting or applying to Whakauae Research Services for student support. There are many opportunities to connect with researchers, kaimāhi, and other students.

“Find a topic you are very passionate about. Connect with other students for support, to meet, ask questions, discuss, or wānanga. To also take care of yourself, your health, well-being and spirit.”

Ema has been involved with Whakauae since 2022, starting with a Winter Studentship and then receiving a Masters scholarship as part of the *Kia Puāwai Ake Ngā Uri Whakatupu* programme which will support her through her studies until 2025. During her time with Whakauae, Ema has gained insight into the kaupapa Māori research sphere. She stated that she valued guidance from prominent Māori researchers: “Tuākana such as Tom and Stacey who provided me with awahi. New friends on similar academic journeys.” She also mentioned developing skills, “[receiving] guidance with literature reviews, evaluations, and article writing. Gain[ing] confidence in delivering presentations and conducting interviews.”

Currently, Ema is studying a Master of Indigenous Studies at Waipapa Taumata Rau. She is also a Rūmaki Reo student at Te Wānanga Takiura o ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori o Aotearoa and a Research Assistant at Victoria University of Wellington.

Ema Tu'akoi's advice for taura going into health research:
“Whāia te iti kahurangi, ki te tuohu koe, me he maunga teitei.”



EMA TU'AKOI

(Ngāti Whakauae, Ngāti Uenukukōpako, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Maru ki Hauraki, Tongatapu)



JORJA HETA

(Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa, Te Aupōuri)

Jorja Heta is currently the Policy and Advocacy Coordinator for Amnesty International Aotearoa. She was involved with Whakauae during the Summer of 2023 as part of the Winter Studentship programme. During her time with Whakauae, she shares that:

“I formed lifelong connections through collaboration on kaupapa and was privileged to work for an unapologetic kaupapa Māori organisation for the first time! The studentship also encouraged me to be critical and nurture creativity, thinking outside the box to respond to enduring issues impacting hapori Māori.” Jorja Heta’s advice for taurira going into health research: “Your differences are your greatest strengths, lean in on what comes naturally to you and never feel like you don't belong in these spaces. You absolutely do. Apply for everything! Especially the things you feel under-qualified for! And remember to go home.”

Tomairangi is currently a student intern within the *Kia Puāwai Ake Ngā Uri Whakatupu* research programme, undertaking a piece of work entitled “Kia Manawanui” - a collection of rangatahi stories of wellbeing. Prior to this, she received a Summer Studentship with Whakauae in 2023.

During her studentship Tomairangi gained knowledge of Māori research, valuable feedback for creative writing, lots of awhi and support from the team, and a chance to share stories on behalf of whānau in a nourishing and fulfilling environment.

Tomairangi’s advice for taura going into health research: “Do it! even if you’ve never tried before, do it. there’s so much to learn, and you’ll have just as much to offer just by being you.”



**TOMAIRANGI
MORGAN**

(Rotorua, Kāwhia, Te Kopuru)



LUKE TUMIHAU ENOKA

(Ngāti Hauti, Ngāti Apa, Tūwharetoa, Te
Ātihaunui-ā-Pāpārangi, Ngāti Tama ki te
Upoko o te Ika, Rarotonga)

Luke joined Whakauae in 2023 as a Kairangahau Āwhina (Research Assistant) and Pou Tikanga Āwhina (Cultural Advisor Assistant). In 2024, he began studying for a Master of Indigenous Studies at Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington. He expects to complete his degree in late 2025.

Luke Tumihau Enoka's advice for taura going into health research:

E noho taura mai, ka tū taura atu (remain a student until you become the example).

As a taura in the academic world, you're part of an institution – a journey across waters of knowledge. Think of it as getting on a waka mōkihi where everyone both paddles and learns the waters together.

Connecting with a mentor is like having a skilled kaihautū – this could be your supervisor, a teacher, or as in my case, Matua Utiku and Amohia. They'll help you navigate the currents of research, give you a gentle push to present at symposiums, and share kōrero from their own rangahau journeys.

Your peers are like the raupō that binds your waka together. Together, you discuss and critique ideas, challenge each other's thinking, and learn together through wānanga – making the waka more resilient.

Being a taura rangahau Māori means voyaging with your community, contributing to the journey, and creating pathways that future waka can follow.

Ko te hua tino whakahirahira o tāna mahi i Whakauae, i mahi ia i roto i te āhua o te kaupapa Māori. I ngā wā o mua, i whakaaro ia he tino Pākehā te āhua o te mahi rangahau, engari i muri i tōna noho ki Whakauae i puta mai ngā hua māramatanga - ka taea e ia te whakatinana ngā tūmanako Māori mā te rangahau! Nōna te whakawhetai ki te ako ki te taha o ngā kairangahau Māori ki kōrā - nā, kua whakatuwhera ōna pae ki te ao o te rangahau i te hauora Māori, me ōna āheinga maha.

The biggest thing Saffron gained was the experience of working within a fully kaupapa Māori research organisation, alongside Māori kairangahau and tauira. From that, her perspective shifted in terms of realising how research has the power to be innovative, exciting and transformative in ways that hold true to te ao Māori me ōna tikanga.

Saffron's advice for future tauira:

“Don't underestimate the perspectives, experiences and insights that you bring to the table as Māori, and don't let imposter syndrome hold you back from pursuing any and all opportunities that may arise. Whether it be within a kaupapa Māori organisation or elsewhere, you hold a wealth of unique knowledge and insight within you which health research stands to greatly benefit from. Kia maumahara ki tērā!”



SAFFRON
PUTI STANLEY

(Ngāi Te Rangi, Ngāti Maniapoto, Kāi Tahu)



RACHEL KAHURANGI MCCLINTOCK

(Waikato/Maniapoto, Ngāti Porou, Ngāti
Mutunga, Ngāti Apakura)

Rachel was an Intern with Whakauae in 2024, as part of the *Kia Puāwai Ake Ngā Uri Whakaptupu* research programme. She found that the internship deepened her appreciation of Māori values and culture and the importance of these in Māori health leadership. She also noted the practical research skills that she developed, increasing her knowledge of literature review methods and methodology, particularly around using great literature and analysis. She brings these skills into her current role as a researcher and university student.

Rachel's advice for taura going into health research:

“Māori health research has many different avenues you can explore. I highly recommend looking for opportunities to increase your knowledge of Māori health and the theoretical and practical aspects of carrying out research. The easiest way I found to do that was to take Māori health and research-related papers at university and be part of kaupapa Māori research projects as a research assistant and as an intern. I also think it is equally important to value and learn about having good work-life balance and spending time with supportive whānau, as this will help you remain resilient when you go through difficult times.”

Bridget was a summer internship in 2024-2025 on *Rapua te ara Rangatira* Project, one of three research projects in the *Kia Puāwai Ake Ngā Uri Whakatupu* programme.

E ai ki a ia “Ko ngā hua matua pea [o te karahipi], i āta kite i ngā tūāhua, i ngā tikanga hoki, i roto i te rangahau kaupapa Māori, ā, he āheinga kia whakawhanaunga atu ki ngā rangatira o āpōpō o Ngāti Hauiti. Ko tetahi atu wheako mīharo hoki, ko te whakapono nā ngā kaimahi/kaiārahi o Whakauae, nā rātou te ara tika i ārahi. Waihoki, kua tuhia ētahi painga i tētahi rīpoata”

He kaimahi ia i TBI Health, e rua ngā pōtai ōna. Ko te mahi tuatahi, he physio ia. Ko te mahi tuarua, he kaiārahi ia i te tīma Māori

He kupu tohutohu nā Bridget:
“Whaia ngā āheinga katoa, follow all opportunities Whakauae provides, he kaupapa haumaruru, its a safe place to learn through experience and diving in the deep”.



**BRIDGET
WATSON**
(Ngāti Hauiti)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We, the *He Tukutuku Whakatupu* team, want to acknowledge the various people who were instrumental to this kaupapa: Tuatahi, to the amazing tauira who have shared their wisdom with us, tēnei te mihi atu ki a koutou e ngā pūkenga. Tuarua, to Heather, Amohia, the team at Whakauae who were able to actualise a vision for nurturing Māori health research, kua rangatira te kaupapa i a koutou mā. Tuatoru, we acknowledge the Health Research Council of New Zealand who have supported Whakauae Research Services Ltd throughout the years and invested in developing Māori research capacity and capability. Finally, we want to acknowledge Ngāti Hauiti for their continual support of Whakauae and their leadership in investing in the health of Māori.





**HE TUKUTUKU
WHAKATUPU**

WHAKAUAE

20

**TWENTY YEARS
OF RESEARCH**