

Empowering Māori career and employment aspirations so that our whānau can flourish

Kia ora from our Pou Whakahaere / Chief Executive

Hōtoke (Winter) is here. Many of us are spending more time inside and getting outside when the weather permits. During Puanga and Matariki, whānau everywhere are stargazing. Learning about the Stars is great way to connect with Mātauranga Māori. A star strongly connected to Hōtoke is Takurua, also known as Sirius, or the Dog Star, one of the brightest stars in the night sky at this time.

Why Ora encourages taiohi to engage with Science and Mātauranga. Growing an interest in these kaupapa can be so rewarding! Not only on a personal level, learning about the wonders of nature and how the universe works could lead to an amazing high value career!

We have some exciting news to share in the science and Mātauranga space. Why Ora has recently partnered with Pūhoro STEMM Academy to bring their secondary school STEMM programme (science, technology, engineering, maths and Mātauranga) to Taranaki kura and taiohi from Term 3 2025. You can read about our exciting partnership in this issue.

In May we held our first 2025 Rapuara Ako workshop (education careers exposure) at TET Stadium. It was an inspiring day, and as a result more taiohi are aware of rewarding careers in education. We also held our second series of Rapuara Hauora workshops (health careers exposure) in partnership with Tui Ora and Ngāruahine. We loved collaborating with these Māori Hauora service providers.

We would like to congratulate our Kaimahi Nina Lawrence who is moving on to work in Rongoa, her passion. Nina started with us 18 months ago as a cadet, moving into full time employment with us and has now secured a role in her chosen hauora field. We are so excited for Nina!

We continue to be motivated and inspired by our whānau on their career journeys, including Liam Ratana-Lloyd and Mattie O'Carroll. You can read their stories and more about our activities in this issue. We hope you enjoy it!

Ngā mihi,
Tanya Anaha, Pou Whakahaere, Why Ora



**MAHI OPPORTUNITIES
JOIN OUR WHĀNAU!**

Visit our website www.whyora.co.nz

TŪHONONGA

Tūhononga means strengthening and bringing together (Tū is to strengthen, hononga is to bring or join together). We all need connections that can help us to grow, to know who we are, where we've come from and help us get where we are going!

Working together to bring STEMM opportunities to Taranaki taiohi!

Why Ora and Pūhoro STEMM Academy are working together to improve taiohi engagement and success in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Mātauranga Māori) in Taranaki.

Why Ora has had great whānau outcomes across a huge range of careers in health, education and other industry sectors over the past 15 years. Pūhoro has a strong track record of delivering results in other regions and Māori students in the Pūhoro programme are achieving higher NCEA success rates and transitioning into tertiary study, internships, and high-value careers across Aotearoa.

We are now collaborating with Pūhoro to bring Te Urunga Tū, their proven secondary school programme to Taranaki. To begin with Pūhoro has invited eight Taranaki secondary schools to participate in their programme and aims to begin working with taiohi from July onwards.

Pūhoro will work within secondary kura to offer culturally grounded opportunities to learn more about science, technology, and Mātauranga Māori.

Activities will include hands-on weekly in-school sessions and wānanga each term, academic tutorials, mentoring and career pathway support, and future STEMM opportunities and experiences.

We are very excited, as it means Why Ora taiohi currently taking science or maths may gain access to targeted STEMM support and activities, which can lead to future rewarding and meaningful careers. Participating taiohi will be part of something empowering - a kaupapa Māori programme that's proven to support academic achievement, build confidence, and open doors to national and international STEMM experiences.

The new Pūhoro Kaihautū for Taranaki will be based in the Why Ora office in Ngāmotu and will work directly with tauira and kura, supported by Pūhoro nationally. Watch this space for more news from our partnership!

Rapuara Ako 2025

In May we held our first 2025 Rapuara Ako workshop, offering over 70 Year 11–13 taiohi across Taranaki taiohi a chance to discover and learn about rewarding career opportunities in the education sector. Taiohi connected with professionals from across the education spectrum – from Early Childhood and Primary to Secondary, Tertiary, and Kura Kaupapa Māori. Interactive sessions and inspiring kōrero encouraged taiohi to gain valuable insight into the diverse roles that make up the education workforce.

A huge mihi to all our presenters, whose enthusiasm and stories brought each pathway to life and left a lasting impression on our youth and future education leaders. We have two further workshops this year. If you are interested in this kaupapa contact us at Why Ora.



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Joining together with Māori health providers for Rapuara Hauora!



In May and June 2025, we partnered with Tui Ora and Ngāruahine to run our second Rapuara Hauora (health career workshop) for 2025. Held at their sites in Ngāmotu and Manaia, over 65 tauira attended getting to hear from professionals in a range of health careers including whānau and community health, youth work and kaumatua support (at Tui Ora) and diabetes, Whanau Ora, taiohi services, mental health, general practice, and health coaching (at Ngāruahine Health).



Feedback from the students following the sessions was that they were keen to further explore the hauora careers presented. Job done! Why Ora has collaborated with Tui Ora for many years, but this was the first time we've held Rapuara Hauora at Tui Ora and the first time working with Ngāruahine in a hauora Māori context. It was a very fulfilling experience for our kaimahi. We look forward to working with our partners again in 2026.



Studylink Introducing the new Regional StudyLink Outreach Officer, Jess!

Jess took up the position of Regional StudyLink Outreach Officer in February 2025. With no such role based in Taranaki for almost 15 years – Jess has stepped up to the challenge!

Jess is based full-time at Dawson House, located within Work and Income, at 160 Devon Street West in Ngāmotu. Jess spends her days visiting schools, talking with year 12 and 13 students about how to access StudyLink services. Jess also participates in community events to spread the knowledge of StudyLink, and networking with other organisations to promote education, including attending to present at our recent May Rapuara Ako workshop!

If you, or anyone you know, is considering study and would like assistance with navigating Studylink process, doing applications, and considering their options, contact Jess either by visiting the Work and Income office or emailing NPY_Outreach_Taranaki@msd.govt.nz to arrange an appointment.



UMANGA

A meaningful and rewarding career can change lives and change the future. There are so many possibilities and paths to take. Our career stories can help to show what is possible!



Liam's Journey: One Move, New Beginnings

Liam Ratana-Lloyd (nō Te Ati Haunui-ā-Pāpārangi) hails from up the Whanganui River, Parikino, an upbringing grounded in whakapapa, whenua and whānau. When Liam finished up Year 13 at Te Kura o Kokohuia in 2023, it was a big deal—not just for him, but for his whānau. In his whānau, finishing school hasn't always been something that happens. So even though it might seem like a small thing to some, for Liam, it was huge. It showed his determination to start carving out his own path.

While at kura, Liam worked at the local recycling centre on a casual contract, getting his first taste of earning pūtea for himself. That job gave him a sense of purpose and responsibility, and he continued working there even after graduating. But then when the job came to an end, life pushed him to make a big decision.

In July 2024, he packed up and moved from Whanganui to New Plymouth. He would leave his friends, have no employment connections, and no guaranteed plan. He moved in with his sister, seeking something different: more opportunities, a new environment, and a fresh start. It was a massive step outside his comfort zone, but it became the turning point.

Not long after settling in, Liam joined the Hoki Mai ki Why Ora programme a kaupapa run by Why Ora with support from the Ministry of Social Development. The programme is designed to support rangatahi who are disconnected from school, employment, or training to help them find sustainable employment.

Since then, Liam's done nothing but grow. He's added to his CV, attended wānanga, and stepped up as a volunteer helping out at our Why Ora Pūtaiao Expo (science exposure for Year 9 and 10 taiohi) and volunteering at Te Matatini o Te Kāhui Maunga. These experiences were not only practical but deeply meaningful, allowing him to connect more with Te Ao Māori and develop confidence in who he is and who he's becoming. In a short time, Liam's ticked off some huge milestones.

"I got my restricted license, bought my first car, landed full-time work at Taranaki Pine, and now I'm hoping to move into a trade and gain a qualification. I feel heaps more confident in my future and I'm grateful for the support." - Liam

Most recently, Liam has been successful in gaining a building cadetship through He Toronga Pakihi ki Taranaki with Lawrence Builders Ltd - a huge step in turning his aspirations into reality. Liam's haerenga is about stepping into who he really is. It has had a real impact not just on him, but on his whānau too. He's showing that change is possible. That small steps can lead to massive growth when you've got the right support, and the belief that you're capable of more.

MANAAKITANGA

Our Manaakitanga means we genuinely nurture, encourage, respect and care for one another throughout our mahi, in whatever work we are doing.

Mattie O'Carroll - Igniting a passion for teaching



E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e rau rangatira ma Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa. My Name is Mattie O'Carroll. I was born and raised in Manurewa, Auckland until I was 10 years old and we moved to Taranaki, where my dad is from. I am the Pōtiki of four tamariki. I attended a variety of different schools both in Auckland and Taranaki. All in a mainstream setting. Throughout my life I didn't have the best experiences at school. I was diagnosed with attention deficit disorder in intermediate, and I never really felt like I belonged being a Māori kid in a mainstream school. I always knew I wanted to work with our tamariki, so future tamariki didn't have similar experiences when at kura.

During my second year at Inglewood High, I came across Why Ora, through a programme offered at our school where students could go and experience first-hand what it was like working in the health industry (Rapuara Hauora). Initially I just signed up for a free day out of school. But little did I know that the experience and the people I would meet would ignite my passion for teaching.

Although I didn't follow a pathway into the health industry, I found education outside of a mainstream setting.

*I te taha o tōku Pāpā
Ko Taranaki te Mouna
Ko Waitara, ko Mōhakatino ngā Awa
Ko Tokomaru te Waka
Ko Te Ati Awa, ko Ngati Tama ngā Iwi
Ko Otaraua te Hapū
Ko Pukearuhe, Ko Mangaiaemiemi ngā Marae
I te taha o tōku Mama
Ko Rangiora te Mouna
Ko Kaituna te Awa
Ko Te Arawa te Waka
Ko Tapuika te Iwi
Ko Tia te Marae
Ko Mattie O'Carroll tōku ingoa*

Before Why Ora all I saw was education being taught like that - you went to class, sat through a lecture and completed the work. No connection to the outside world or how I would benefit from those classes when I finished high school.

The following year I didn't manage to gain my NCEA Level 1, so I made the decision to drop out of high school and turned to alternative education, where I gained my NCEA level 1, 2 and 3 and I found my pathway into teaching. With frequent check-ups from my Why Ora kaimahi to see how I was getting on, I moved onto my certificate in teacher aiding and eventually on to my bachelor's degree in education, Te Tohu Paetahi Ako through Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi.

I had my trials and tribulations during my degree, with setbacks and times when I wanted to quit, but I persevered, keeping in mind that I am doing this for our tamariki, for our future generations. And for my whānau. In 2024 I graduated. Currently, I am now working full-time at Waitara East School as a year 1-3 Kaiako in the bilingual unit, Te Kāhui o Ngā Mata Raukura, to guide and nurture our tamariki and give them the skills they need to be our leaders of tomorrow.

“Ko nga pae tawhiti, Whaia kia tata. Ko nga pae Tata. Whakamaua Kia tina”

17
JUL

Rapuara Ako

Offers a unique opportunity for taiohi in Years 11 to 13 to explore meaningful and inspiring career pathways in the education sector.

Why Ora

UPCOMING EVENTS

18
AUG

Hui Whānau

Bringing our whānau together to connect and strengthen our relationships, connect with education providers, iwi and employers to learn about possible careers.

19-21
AUG

Pūtaio Expo

A hands-on expo event for Year 9 to 10 taiohi which aims to inspire a passion for science subjects and increase Māori uptake of science.

MAHI OPPORTUNITIES JOIN OUR WHĀNAU! 2 KAIĀRAHI POSITIONS

Applications close: 5pm Sunday 29th June 2025

For more information check out our website www.whyora.co.nz



2025 Funding partners and Supporters

The Toi Foundation, The Ministry of Social Development, Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora
Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou! Thank you to all of our community and supporters - without your help we would not be here to support our whānau!

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora



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Don't forget your Kaiārahi is here if you require tautoko