

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

He mihi

nā te Pou Whakahaere / Chief Executive

Kia ora e te whānau, and welcome to our first newsletter of 2026.

As we enter Ngahuru, the season of gathering, reflection and preparation, we take a moment to acknowledge the mahi that has led to this point. Traditionally, Ngahuru is a time of harvesting, and celebrating collective effort, a time to look ahead, to prepare for and strengthen what our communities need to flourish in the future. For many taiohi, this season marks an important milestone: the beginning of the tertiary year.



Tanya Anaha - Pou Whakahaere

We're thrilled to see 43 of our taura from Taranaki heading into new learning journeys, we wish them a year of discovery, strength and resilience as they step into new environments.

This year is shaping up to be one of innovation at Why Ora. In late March, we proudly co-hosted "Ngā Huarahi Mahi Rangatahi – Youth Employment Opportunities"; a new event designed to help South Taranaki taiohi understand local employment pathways and see that meaningful, rewarding careers are possible in their own rohe. Organised in collaboration with Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs, South Taranaki and South Taranaki District Council; we wish to acknowledge Alan Davis and Tina Parata, your relationships, networks and expertise made this all possible. Also the support of Mahutonga the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency for Region 2 and the Ka Kā Te Rama Initiative funding.

Ngahuru also marks the launch of our new Why Ora Taiohi Advisory Board – an exciting step forward in ensuring taiohi voices lead and shape the work we do. Not only will it strengthen our communication with young people, it will help to grow the next generation of Māori youth leaders in Taranaki. There's a lot happening, this season's newsletter is full of stories, updates, and opportunities that reflect our shared vision for thriving futures. We hope you enjoy the kōrero inside.

Ngā mihi, Tanya Anaha, Pou Whakahaere, Why Ora

NGĀ HUARAHI MAHI RANGATAHI

CAREERS EXPO

NGĀ MIHI NUI KI A KOUTOU!

THANK YOU EVERYONE INVOLVED!

EMPOWERING RANGATAHI CAREERS
IN SOUTH TARANAKI

A SUCCESSFUL EVENT WAS HELD AT TSB HUB,
HAWERA ON 31 MARCH 2026...

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR FUTURE EVENTS!

A special acknowledgement to our Ngā Huarahi Mahi Rangatahi Presenters, the Mayors' Taskforce for Jobs - South Taranaki and South Taranaki District Council, local South Taranaki Employers, Schools and all the Whānau who attended!

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!



Nina's Nursing Journey - From aspirations at school to a career in Nursing

Nina Goble first engaged with Why Ora in 2020 while a student at Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kōhanga Mōa/ Inglewood High School. "It was during Covid-19 that I was first supposed to attend Rapuara Hauora, but the workshops got cancelled" says Nina.

However, that didn't put Nina off, "I attended when Rapuara Hauora came up again!" Nina says she always knew she wanted to do something in health. "I just wasn't sure what I wanted to do. I hadn't got a clue!" says Nina.

"After Rapuara Hauora, working with Liahna (Kaiārahi Why Ora) we discussed options and set goals. Liahna was amazing. She helped me work it all out. We even met at the Café in Inglewood during the holidays! Liahna helped me with my confidence. If I needed a bit of extra support I knew I could go talk to Liahna about it."

In Year 12 I did some work experience through Gateway. In Year 13 I decided on studying for a Bachelor of Nursing at WITT.

I wanted to stay in Taranaki to be close to my whānau. Liahna helped me to apply, including scholarships and grants. I was successful and they were a huge help getting through my tertiary study!"

I completed my degree in 2025, and Liahna came to my graduation this year. After I sat my state finals I applied for my Practising Certificate. Then I got an opportunity to apply for a job at Tui Ora as a registered nurse - when I found out I got it – it was like a full-circle moment. Finally, I am now working in health!"

"I love my job at Tui Ora. There is something different to do every day. It's a small community here in Waitara and you get to know people and build relationships."

To any taiohi interested I would say Nursing study is manageable if you want to do it! WITT has so many helpful resources. Nursing is a good career option that leads to different pathways. After two years in the workforce as a registered nurse, I want to more post-graduate study and become a Nurse Prescriber."



2021 - Why Ora Massey Trip



2025 - WITT Graduation

2022 - First hui at WITT

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Photo: (L-R) Payton and Treal Niwa - Orthotics Technician (Why Ora participant)

Payton Tamatea -Wheeling towards his future in Healthcare

Payton Tamatea (17 years old) loves his job as a Wheelchair Assistant with Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora in Taranaki, fixing wheelchairs at Taranaki Base Hospital and in client's homes.

On a Why Ora cadetship since October 2025, Payton says he has always liked helping people. "It's been so good talking to people and getting introduced to new things and it's so hands-on, mechanical, working stuff out and working out what clients need," says Payton.

"I'm only 17, but feel like I have become a better person, getting my job and sticking to it. It was hard at first, but I've had to learn everything and now I just love it! Working in the hospital you see everything. Once, out in the hallway, I saw two newborn babies go past and thought "Wow!"

While at New Plymouth Boys High School, Payton started working with our Kaiārahi Rory to explore career pathways. Attending our Rapuara Hauora workshops, one presenter, a new AUT graduate physiotherapist, made a real impact. "I'm a keen sportsperson, I loved hearing what he was saying, it made me more interested in healthcare" says Payton.

Payton carried on with school but a bit further down the track after leaving, Rory got in touch to check how he was doing. Keen to keep working with us we enrolled Payton in our Hoki Mai Ki Why Ora programme.

Since then, working with our Kaiārahi Jen, Payton's confidence and motivation grew. Partnering with Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora in Taranaki, we supported him into his new cadetship which ends later in 2026. Payton says he is now keen to stick with health as a career and has an interest in exploring physiotherapy or becoming a doctor in future!

We are so impressed, proud and excited for Payton embarking on his new health career journey!

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!

New Why Ora Taiohi Advisory Board for 2026!

In 2026, we're launching a new Why Ora Taiohi Advisory Board - a space where young people can help shape the activities, events and programmes made for them, with them!

Starting in Term two, this new rōpū will bring taiohi from secondary schools and learning spaces across the region together to:

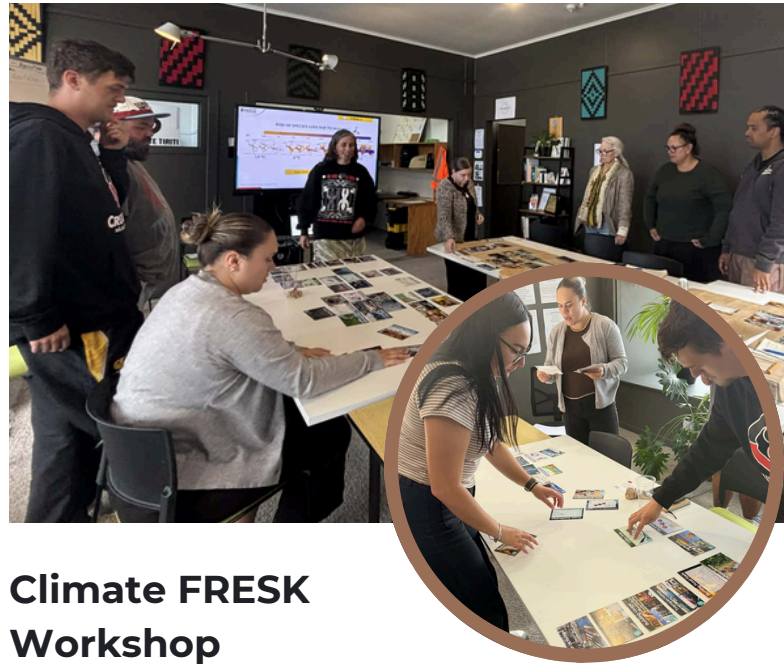
- *Lead and influence the design of Why Ora activities and programmes*
- *Help us strengthen our communication and presence, so taiohi know what's out there and how to access it*
- *Grow future Māori leaders in Taranaki, guided by manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and rangatiratanga*

Each of our partner schools will be invited to put forward taiohi reps to sit on the board throughout the school year and get to experience taking part in board hui, and planning sessions - building real-world leadership skills and giving taiohi meaningful influence over the direction of our mahi.

We're excited to uplift taiohi voices, strengthen connections across our communities, and support the next generation of Taranaki rangatahi leaders to step forward!

Pūhoro at Why Ora

We are excited to continue to host Pūhoro STEM Academy, based at the Why Ora tari. It's awesome to sit alongside another kaupapa empowering our taiohi to thrive in STEMM. Ngatupara Ritai, Kaihautū for Pūhoro supporting Taranaki kura, is located here with us as we collectively uplift our taiohi. Learn more: www.puhoro.org.nz



Climate FRESK Workshop

Our kaimahi recently attended a 'Climate Fresk' workshop - creating a space for honest kōrero and reflection on climate change, sustainability, and our responsibilities as kaitiaki. Facilitated by Tuhi-Ao Bailey – Climate Justice Taranaki, the interactive workshop helped bring complex issues to life and encouraged whakaaro about the impact of our everyday choices at home and at mahi. The session also challenged us to think about how this learning can be carried into our work with whānau and taiohi. Ngā mihi nui Climate Justice Taranaki and the Toi Foundation who made this learning possible.

“Since the workshop, I've noticed myself changing little things in my day-to-day life without even realising it,” shared Olivia.



MANAAKITANGA

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



Rapuara Hauora Workshops 2026

Throughout March, Why Ora delivered our first 2026 Rapuara Hauora workshops, held at Taranaki Base Hospital, in partnership with Health NZ – Te Whatu Ora in Taranaki.

Rapuara Hauora enables taiohi to explore hauora career pathways, gain hands-on experience, and connect directly with health professionals working across our local health system.

An incredible group of hauora professionals joined with us, generously shared their time, mātauranga and real-world insight, helping to inspire the next generation of hauora leaders.

Taiohi from kura across the rohe took part in immersive experiences, including behind-the-scenes visits (Emergency Department, MedLab, Blood Lab and Pharmacy), engaged in hands-on activities with nurses, doctors and allied health professionals, and a Q&A with Dr Kenny Hau.

Our taiohi left feeling inspired and informed. One student shared, *"It was good to have an insight on what they do day to day, I learnt how to put a filling in and what it's like to be a Dentist. Now I'm not as scared to get onto the chair for my dental appointments"*



PRESENTERS: COMMUNITY ORAL HEALTH THERAPISTS ANNABELLE BRADLEY AND JESSICA WORKMAN

"What we love about working in the community oral health service is helping people feel good about their smiles and their health. Being able to support whānau and tamariki to learn about oral health and build good habits is really special. It feels good to know we're giving back to our community."

Many participants reflected on discovering the wide range of hauora careers available to them. Ngā mihi nui to all those who uplifted and inspired our taiohi. **Mauri tū, mauri ora!**

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First Year Tertiary Taiohi: Here's What They Had to Say

Starting university has been a big shift for our first-year tertiary taiohi. There's been moments of excitement, challenge, and already growth and reflection. Below, our taiohi share their honest thoughts and experiences from their experience in tertiary so far...



Addison Whitikia

Bachelor of Human Nutrition – Massey University Palmerston North

"A big change from high school to university would be independence, I am very family oriented, and being away from family and friends is never easy and is something I have had to get used to. I have made many new friendships here at university which has made the transition much easier. Learning to be resilient and independent is hard but are great attributes to have, and the freedom that university brings, has allowed me to grow so much already."

"What surprised me most was the variety of people at the university. The differences between people who came here mainly to study, to socialise, or somewhere in between, was jarring at first. Some people were quite anti-social initially, especially in my first few weeks in halls, which challenged my expectations. However, over time people became more open and welcoming, which showed me that things often work out for the best - it sometimes just takes time."

Sahara Cameron

First Year Health Science - Otago University



"What I have enjoyed in my first month of tertiary study is having access to high quality labs and lab equipment and being able to carry out experiments to deepen my understanding of what has been taught in lectures."

Koen Wensor

Bachelor of Biomedical Science - Otago University

"One thing that surprised me about starting my first year was how supportive lecturers and tutors are. They genuinely want you to succeed and will do everything they can to help you get there. I expected university to feel overwhelming, but there is so much support available if you know where to look. I've learned the importance of reaching out early and not feeling whakamā to speak up, because most of the time, others are needing help with the exact same things too."

"Kia kaha, kia māia, kia manawanui"



Charlise Graham

Bachelor of Physiotherapy Otago University

2026 WHY ORA EVENTS/ PROGRAMMES



Whanaungatanga sessions

Building relationships with our Kaiārahi and registered Why Ora taiohi. Whanaungatanga helps us to get to know each other so we can support our whānau to the best of our ability.



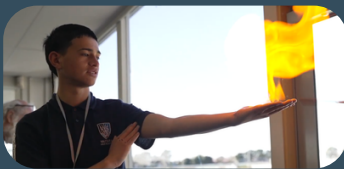
Hui Whānau North/ South

To meet with whānau at the beginning of the year connect and strengthen our relationships. To inform whānau about our kaupapa and events/ programmes we run.



CV sessions

Exploring requirements for a CV, what employers are looking for, identifying skills and talents and creating a CV from a Māori perspective.



Pūtaiao - Year 9 & 10

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



Year 10 Promo

Why Ora promo aims to inform taiohi and schools about who we are, what we do, why we do what we do and what activities/opportunities we offer.



Rapuara Hauora Year 11 - 13

Rapuara Hauora provides an opportunity for Year 11 to Year 13 taiohi to see and experience meaningful careers in the hauora/health sector.



Rapuara Ako - Year 11 - 13

Rapuara Ako provides an opportunity for Year 11 to Year 13 taiohi to see and experience meaningful careers in the education sector.



University Trip - Year 11 - 13

University Visits provide Year 11-13 taiohi with the opportunity to visit and become familiar with a university environment.



Mātaki shadowing - Year 12 & 13

Provides Year 12 and Year 13 taiohi with specific work experience opportunities for taiohi interested in a rewarding career in that industry.



Annual Hui Whānau

An opportunity for taiohi and whānau all ages to connect with tertiary providers, to ask pātai and listen to kōrero.

WHY ORA KAIĀRAHI IN KURA

Our Kaiārahi work within Taranaki secondary schools to empower taiohi career and employment aspirations so they can flourish! We do this through offering Māori taura relevant opportunities, events and activities, as well as manaaki (support) to taura who are registered with Why Ora.

“My babies are my why, I want a bright, opportunity filled future for them to be their true selves, and I believe that together, there’s no limit to what we can achieve”



Graham Jones

Te Paepae o Aotea,
Patea Area School,
Stratford High School

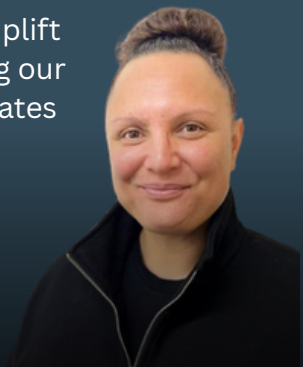
“Having had many opportunities, I’m passionate about giving back to taiohi by helping them see their potential and that with support, their dreams are achievable”



Tane Whitehead

Spotswood College, Inglewood High School,
Coastal Taranaki School

“I do this mahi with Why Ora to uplift Māori aspirations by empowering our taiohi, knowing their success creates a legacy for future uri.”



Jennifer Williams

New Plymouth Girls’ High School,
Sacred Heart Girls’ College

“After school I struggled with direction and barriers. Now I support taiohi to break down barriers and feel confident in their future beyond kura.”



Rory Maxwell

New Plymouth Boys’ High School,
Francis Douglas Memorial College

“My motivation is the untapped potential of our taiohi Māori. I aim to support and encourage them to follow their dreams, access meaningful opportunities, and take pride in who they are. My why is my irāmutu, I want them to see themselves in meaningful careers, flourishing in their choices, and be proud to be Māori.”

WELCOME BACK!



Liahna Smith

Ōpunakē High School,
Taranaki Diocesan School for
Girls, Waitara High School

2026 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