

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,
As Hōtoke settles across our rohe, it is traditionally a season to slow down and reflect. For the Why Ora team, however, it has been an incredibly busy and rewarding quarter. I want to acknowledge and thank our kaimahi for their ongoing commitment, energy and passion as they continue to create opportunities that support our whānau and contribute to growing the Māori workforce across Taranaki.



Tanya Anaha - Pou Whakahaere

Our Kaiārahi continue to play a vital role in walking alongside taiohi and whānau as they navigate their career journeys, connecting with whānau throughout Taranaki, providing guidance, encouragement and practical support to those exploring education, training and employment opportunities, including rangatahi who are currently not in employment, education or training. This work is only possible because of the strong relationships and partnerships we continue to build across our communities.

Through our valued partnerships with Health New Zealand and Tui Ora, June was another significant month. More than 150 Year 12 and 13 students, including 52 registered Why Ora taiohi, participated in Mātaki shadowing experiences at Taranaki Base Hospital, while a further 56 students explored Māori health careers through our hands-on exposure workshops at Tui Ora. These experiences help taiohi see what is possible, opening doors to meaningful career pathways. Today, Why Ora is proud to support more than 150 taiohi enrolled in tertiary study across health, education and other career pathways. During June, two of our Kaiārahi also travelled to Ōtākou to reconnect with and support our tertiary students while strengthening our relationships with education providers.

Alongside our programme delivery, we have continued investing in our own learning and growth. In June, the Why Ora team participated in a professional development day focused on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, strengthening our shared understanding and commitment to our kaupapa. We also welcomed Aaron Win, our new Cadet. Aaron is an aspiring game developer with a tertiary background in Design Innovation and Computer science, and we look forward to supporting him as he explores career and development opportunities within the technology sector.

This newsletter captures highlights from another productive quarter. I hope you enjoy reading about the incredible achievements of our taiohi, whānau, partners and dedicated kaimahi, whose commitment continues to make a lasting difference in our communities.

Ngā manaakitanga,
Tanya Anaha
Pou Whakahaere Chief Executive

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!



Workforce Collaboration makes a big impact – Why Ora Maataki Shadowing 2026

If you visited Taranaki Base Hospital during June, you may have noticed secondary school students wearing green Why Ora lanyards throughout the hospital. These students were taking part in the Why Ora Mātaiki Shadowing programme, made possible through a valued collaboration with Health New Zealand.

This year, Why Ora and Health New Zealand coordinated the largest number of Mātaiki Shadowing placements offered since the programme began. As soon as invitations were sent to schools, the response was overwhelming, with around 150 Year 12 and 13 taiohi registering to participate.

The programme began with two induction days before students spent time alongside health professionals, gaining first-hand insight into careers in medicine, nursing, dentistry, pharmacy, physiotherapy, orthotics, and Māori health services. These authentic workplace experiences help taiohi explore career pathways while building confidence and connections within the health sector.

The enthusiasm and generosity shown by Health New Zealand staff was exceptional. Many clinicians and health professionals volunteered their time to host students, providing a unique opportunity to experience a day in the life of a healthcare professional.

The success of this year's programme demonstrates what can be achieved through strong workforce partnerships. Why Ora extends its sincere thanks to Health New Zealand, the many staff who welcomed our taiohi, and the schools that supported student participation. We look forward to building on this success and delivering Mātaiki Shadowing again in 2027.

ORTHOTICS

TAIOHI WHAKAARO
My experience during the shadowing was very interesting. I enjoyed working with Treal. I learnt that orthotics is about a lot more than just moonboots and casts, and it assured me that a career in health is what I w
Moss Shewry-Smith | FDMC

Medicine

TAIOHI WHAKAARO
I really enjoyed my day shadowing a doctor in Ward 2A. It was really interesting seeing a patient being diagnosed with sleep apnea and having the chance to help the doctor set up their CPAP machine. It gave me a behind the scenes look at what being a doctor is actually like, and it made me even more interested in pursuing a career in healthcare.
Paerangi King-Cassidy | Waitara High School
Ngāti Maru



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!

Why Ora Otago Haerenga – Strengthening Tūhononga

In May, our Kaiārahi, Rory and Liahna, travelled to Ōtepoti (Dunedin) to reconnect with Taranaki tauira studying at the University of Otago. The haerenga began with a shared dinner, creating an opportunity for whakawhanaungatanga and allowing tauira to reconnect with other Taranaki taiohi, a welcome reminder of home while studying away. During the visit, Rory and Liahna met with 12 first-year Why Ora tauira from a range of study pathways, holding one-on-one kōrero on campus. These conversations provided valuable insights into the experiences, aspirations, and challenges tauira are navigating, helping to inform how Why Ora can continue to strengthen the support we provide throughout their tertiary journey.



The visit also included meeting with Māori student support services, including Te Huka Mātauraka, to strengthen relationships and gain a deeper understanding of the pastoral and academic support available to our tauira. A shared hāngī with tauira and staff was a memorable highlight of the haerenga. A special mihi to Michelle Taiaroa-McDonald (Tumuaki) and the team at Te Huka Mātauraka for their warm manaakitanga, and to our tauira who generously shared their time, experiences, and aspirations with us. Together, we continue to strengthen the connections that help our tauira succeed.

Strengthening Our Foundations: Why Ora Team attends Te Tiriti Workshop

Our team recently had the privilege of attending Tangata Tiriti – Te Tiriti o Waitangi 101, a full-day workshop delivered by The Wheelhouse in partnership with Waitara Foodbank – Pātaka Kai.

With varying levels of knowledge and understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi across our team, the workshop provided a valuable opportunity for us all to deepen our understanding together.

Facilitated by the highly respected local Te Tiriti educator, Whaea Margaret Smith, the session brought together community organisations committed to strengthening their understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Through engaging discussion and reflection, the workshop explored the historical context of Te Tiriti, its significance today, and its ongoing relevance to the work we do alongside whānau and our communities.

One of the most valuable aspects of the day was the safe, respectful environment it created for genuine learning, open conversation, and shared reflection. Opportunities like these help us continue to grow both individually and collectively as we strive to ensure our mahi reflects the principles and intent of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Our sincere thanks to The Wheelhouse, Waitara Foodbank – Pātaka Kai, and especially Whaea Margaret Smith for creating such a meaningful and inspiring learning experience.

"I loved having you guys here, I really enjoyed the tauira dinner, it was a chance to connect with other Why Ora tauira and share where we are on our haerenga. I now have familiar faces to look out for throughout my studies. I enjoyed my one on one where Liahna was able to help me identify goals to achieve this year" Māia Brunning

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

- Hauora Māori Workshops Tui Ora 2026

Throughout June, Why Ora partnered with Tui Ora to deliver our Rapuara Hauora Māori Workshops, providing Year 11–13 taiohi with the opportunity to explore careers in Māori health and gain a deeper understanding of the many pathways available within the hauora workforce.

Working alongside the Tui Ora team, taiohi engaged with a range of services, including GP Services, Human Resources, Public Health, Kaumātua Services, Whānau Ora, and Youth Services. Each team shared their mahi through kōrero and interactive activities, giving taiohi an authentic insight into the diverse roles that contribute to the wellbeing of our communities. Throughout the workshops, taiohi had the opportunity to ask questions, build meaningful connections with health professionals, and reflect on how their own aspirations could align with careers in hauora. They left feeling inspired, informed, and more confident about the opportunities available to them.



He mihi nui ki a Tui Ora me ō rātou tīma mō tō rātou manaaki, me te tuku i ō rātou mātauranga me ngā wheako hei tautoko i ā mātou taiohi. Through partnerships like these, we are helping to inspire and grow the next generation of Māori health professionals and leaders who will make a lasting difference for our whānau and communities.

Māori are over represented in the health statistics and under represented as health practitioners, I'd love to see more in these roles, especially tane
- Pairo McLeod - Tui Ora Public Health Team





JENNIFER WILLIAMS

**Ko Tawhitirahi te maunga
Ko Awapoka te awa
Ko Parengarenga te moana
Ko Māmari te waka
Ko Pōtahi te marae
Ko Te Aupōuri te iwi**

Tēnā rawa atu tatou. Ko Jenny Williams tōku ingoa, and I am the Why Ora Kaiārahi for Te Kura Taitamawāhine o Puke Ariki, Manawa Tapu and Whaimana Ako.

I grew up on the northern shores of Tāmaki Makaurau with seven of my siblings. Today, I am the proud māmā of six tamariki and the kui of two beautiful mokopuna.

I spent my teenage years immersed in my passion for kapa haka, which led me to represent major New Zealand organisations such as Tourism New Zealand and New Zealand Trade & Enterprise at international events well into my thirties.

I also have extensive experience in the health, not-for-profit, and education sectors, working across administration, accounts, and governance. Over the years, I've had the privilege of tutoring kapa haka in multiple kura and sharing ngā taonga tuku iho o Tānerore me Hinerēhia. I've also worked as a Production Coordinator and Production Assistant, predominantly within Māori media.

Besides my whānau, friends, and kapa haka, my greatest passion is Māori success both for individuals and for us as a collective. I love seeing our people thrive in spaces that once weren't built for us. Our taiohi are our future, and as future tūpuna, I believe it's our responsibility to set them up to win in life by normalising higher education, positive relationships, cultural grounding, and self-development. I aspire to be a tūpuna who not only supported our young people, but also genuinely modelled the values, behaviours, and pathways that lead to lifelong success.

I'm a strong believer that connection is the foundation of success, and the most important connection we can nurture is our connection to Te Ao Māori. When we know who we are and where we come from, we move through the world with clarity, pride, and purpose. Our whakapapa is our compass and when that compass is strong, our direction becomes limitless.

This is why Why Ora resonates so deeply with me. The kaupapa and the tautoko provided to our taiohi align perfectly with my passions, my values, and the impact I hope to contribute to our communities. Empowering our taiohi to step confidently into their futures is not just important — it's the work of building the next generation of leaders, creators, and tūpuna.

MEET OUR KAIMAHI

CADETSHIP SPOTLIGHT AARON WIN

In June, Why Ora welcomed Aaron Win as an IT Cadet, bringing with him a background in Computer Science, a qualification in Game Design, and a passion for digital innovation.

Aaron is supporting Why Ora across a range of IT and digital development projects, applying his skills while gaining valuable real-world experience in a supportive workplace environment.

Cadetships are a key part of how Why Ora supports taiohi and whānau into meaningful career pathways. They provide opportunities to build transferable skills, develop professional relationships, gain industry experience, and explore future career options.



We utilise cadetships where there is clear value for both the cadet and the host organisation, creating positive outcomes for everyone involved.

Whether working internally with Why Ora or externally with one of our employment partners, many of our cadets go on to secure temporary or permanent roles that lead to rewarding careers.

We're excited to have Aaron as part of the team and look forward to seeing his skills and experience continue to grow.

Ka mau te wehi, Aaron!



2026 Funding Partners and Supporters

The Toi Foundation, The Ministry of Social Development, Health New Zealand, Mahutonga. 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!



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