

# Tihei KAHUNGUNU

Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi  
INCORPORATED

## Strengthening our whānau

Wānanga explores culture and connection

**Ngahiwi Tomoana**  
Waipatu Marae Kaumātua,  
Historian & former iwi leader

Three years ago at Waipatu Marae, Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated launched Te Ara Mātua, a kaupapa built around one simple whakaaro: "Not one more child will be taken."

I coined that phrase in 2019 following the Hawke's Bay Hospital baby uplift controversy, when the iwi declared, "Not one more child will be uplifted and iwi will intervene at all costs."

Ngāti Kahungunu believes our whānau deserve better pathways of support before crisis ever reaches the doors of Oranga Tamariki. Te Ara Mātua was created to strengthen early intervention and place whānau back at the centre of decision-making.

Te Ara Mātua is influenced by our Māori values of whakapapa, whanaungatanga, manaakitanga, tikanga and iwi leadership. Rather than relying solely on state systems, it brings together iwi, health providers, social services, Oranga Tamariki, community organisations, and whānau champions, to collectively support tamariki, rangatahi and whānau within their own communities.

Today, three years on, Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated have two whānau hubs operating in Hastings and Napier, with Pou Tāhuhu and Pou Tuarongo teams working daily alongside whānau to help navigate support, assessments and pathways toward wellbeing.

But kaupapa like this cannot survive on systems



alone. The people doing the mahi must also know who they are, where they come from and why the work matters. Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated also has a support team in place to protect, guide and strengthen our providers in a united effort to deliver best practices based on Māori values.

Earlier this month, our first group of Te Ara Mātua practitioners took part in a two-day cultural wānanga called He Whakapākari Ngā Taurira. The purpose was to deepen confidence and capability through cultural practice-based learning.

I had the privilege of leading

parts of that wānanga alongside others who continue to carry our stories and mātauranga. We explored Kahungunu ki Heretaunga history, tikanga, whakapapa and the deeper meaning behind practices many of us participate in, but do not always fully understand.

What stood out most for me was seeing our kaimahi step into spaces unfamiliar to them. Through mock pōhiri and hands-on learning, many participants who had never stood to karanga or actively participate in pōhiri on their own marae found the courage to try. That takes humility and strength.

**Ngahiwi Tomoana (left), Michelle Ferris and Mere Tomoana in front of Waipatu Marae.**

One of the key discussions during the wānanga explored the true meaning of karanga. It is not simply a call of welcome. As taught by the late Dr Rangimarie Turuki Pere, karanga ignites and binds people together for a purpose. It calls people into relationship, responsibility and identity.

We also revisited the stories of Whātonga, Heretaunga and the whenua itself, the Pekapeka Ranges, the Haukunuui mists and the histories that continue to shape us as Ngāti Kahungunu today.

The wānanga concluded with the learning of Mātua

Through mock pōhiri and hands-on learning, many participants who had never stood to karanga or actively participate in pōhiri on their own marae found the courage to try.

*Whāngai*, a waiata written by my cousin, the late Tama Huata and taught by students of the Kahurangi Performing Arts school.

For me, the greatest lesson remains simple: if we want to serve whānau with integrity – to be truly tika and pono in both our actions and intentions, then we must first know who we are and stand firmly in that truth. That is where genuine healing begins, and where authentic leadership is born.

This whakatauki from Ngāti Kere of Pōrangahau speaks to the importance of nurturing strong, resilient Tamariki, especially those who are vulnerable – as they are the future carriers of the iwi, its values, and its aspirations. It reflects the enduring responsibility of the collective to raise and support the next generation so that the people may continue to thrive.

"Ngā uaua tamariki o Te Rangiwāhia – The strength of our iwi rests in the strength of our children."

"Tātou te Iwi o Ngāti Kahungunu,  
kia awhina tia tātou katoa o te  
Iwi o Ngāti Kahungunu"

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# Celebrating inclusion and leadership

Manioro brings together Rainbow, LGBTQIA+ community and allies

**Ruth Wong**  
Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated Communications Adviser

A powerful celebration of identity, leadership and unity unfolded this month over three inspiring days as Manioro brought together members of the Rainbow, LGBTQIA+ community, allies, leaders and whānau from across Aotearoa. Held with a strong focus on empowerment and inclusion, the kaupapa explored the theme of looking toward 2050, reflecting on lessons from the past to help shape stronger and more connected futures for coming generations. Manioro opened on Thursday, May 14 with a moving pōhiri led by Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Wānanga Whare Tapere o Takitimu, setting the tone for a gathering grounded in manaakitanga, whakaaro and celebration.

Attendees were guided throughout the programme by MCs Tauru Johnston, Miss Trinity Ice and trailblazer icon Drag Diva Buckwheat, whose humour, authenticity and warmth brought energy and connection to every session. The Manioro Education session on Friday focused on shaping empowered futures, collaboration across Aotearoa and restorative conversations within communities. Speakers, performers and facilitators shared stories of resilience, lived experience and hope, encouraging open dialogue and collective understanding. Among the array of presenters was Fuimaono Dr Karl Pulotu-Endemann, a renowned Pasifika academic, public health leader and advocate whose lifelong work championed cultural identity, wellbeing and equity for Pacific and Rainbow communities across Aotearoa. During his wonderful

introduction he said, "Being Sāmoan and fa'afafine are the most powerful things about me. You can only be yourself." This reflected his lifelong belief that people should be accepted and celebrated as their authentic selves. Manioro included a Rainbow+ Excellence Awards and Gala evening recognising local individuals chosen to receive awards based on the Nevertheless values including Vā, Resilience, Aspirational Leadership, Tautua Service and Manaakitanga. Honoured during the evening were local community champions Apache Hanara-Ngaheu, Boibo Tevivi-Daniels, Annie Kaio, Tiana Kotuhi and Whitley Mareikura, all acknowledged as inspiring examples of perseverance, resilience, service, positive leadership and aroha among many other wonderful attributes noted in their introductory profiles.

Special acknowledgements were also made to culturally grounded and respected takatāpui trailblazer Whaea Hira Huata, internationally renowned icon Buckwheat Drag Diva, Pacific health advocate and proud fa'afafine, Fuimaono Dr Karl Pulotu-Endemann, influential Takatāpui, activist and researcher Professor Elizabeth Kerekere, and former Hastings District Council mayor Sandra Hazlehurst for her long-standing support of Manioro and Nevertheless Trust. Entertainment throughout Manioro reflected the creativity and vibrancy of the community, with performances from Mahinārangi Lawrence, Miquelle Blake, Hemi Wong, kapa haka supporters and the dazzling Raindrops Runway showcase receiving enthusiastic support from the audience. Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated chairman

**From left, Shaqaila Ueese, Bayden Barber, Sandra Hazlehurst, Drag Diva Buckwheat, Danielle Keil, Te Rangi Huata, Ruth Wong and Maia Wati-Cooper.**

Bayden Barber attended as a guest presenter and acknowledged the importance of creating spaces where people feel seen, valued and celebrated for who they are. Manioro was founded and organised by Shaqaila Ueese and Maia Wati-Cooper (Shaq & Maia), co-founders of Nevertheless Trust, a Hawke's Bay-based Māori, Pasifika and Rainbow+ mental health charity dedicated to Empowering people to be free to be heard, seen and be their authentic selves. The trust's mission, Manioro – meaning "to disrupt" – challenges harmful narratives, stereotypes, shame and stigma surrounding identity through education, storytelling, creativity and community connection. Shaq and Maia were widely praised by attendees for holding their fourth successful Manioro kaupapa and creating a safe and uplifting space that encouraged connection, inspired conversation and also one that celebrated the diversity that strengthens communities across Aotearoa. Shaq and Maia's messages to all included "Dream the impossible dream", "Be your authentic self" and "Always remember – You are worthy". Beyond Manioro, Nevertheless run free weekly workshops for Rainbow+ peoples in Hawkes Bay called Raindrops. Keep up to date via their instagram @nevertheless\_nz. If you want to learn more about Manioro or Nevertheless Trust see neverthelessnz.com.



**WAIROA**  
Ngāti Kahungunu Wairoa Taiwhenua Inc.  
3-5 Bridge Street, Wairoa  
P: 06 8384748  
E: [wairoa.tai.whenua@xtra.co.nz](mailto:wairoa.tai.whenua@xtra.co.nz)

**NAPIER**  
Te Taiwhenua o Te Whanganui A Orotū  
02 Wellesley Street, Napier Sth, Napier  
E: [admin@taiwhenua.com](mailto:admin@taiwhenua.com)  
FB: [@taiwhenuatwao](https://www.facebook.com/taiwhenuatwao)

**HASTINGS**  
Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga  
821 Orchard Road, Hastings 4122  
0800 TAIWHENUA or 06 8715350  
W: [www.ttoh.iwi.nz](http://www.ttoh.iwi.nz)

**TAMATEA**  
Te Taiwhenua o Tamatea  
Kitchener Street, Waipukurau  
P: 06 858 7206  
E: [tamatea.taiwhenua@xtra.co.nz](mailto:tamatea.taiwhenua@xtra.co.nz)

**TARARUA**  
Kahungunu ki Tāmaki nui a-Rua  
171 High Street, Dannevirke  
P: 06 3749224  
E: [administration@kahungunutnar.co.nz](mailto:administration@kahungunutnar.co.nz)

**WAIRARAPA**  
Kahungunu ki Wairarapa  
187-189 Queen Street, Masterton 5810  
P: 06 377 5436  
E: [mariana@kahungunuwairarapa.iwi.nz](mailto:mariana@kahungunuwairarapa.iwi.nz)

**Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi  
INCORPORATED**

**OUR OBJECTIVES**

- Ngāti Kahungunu - Culturally Strong
- Ngāti Kahungunu - Healthy and Vibrant Whānau
- Ngāti Kahungunu - Economically Strong
- Ngāti Kahungunu - Informed and Participating Citizens in the World
- Ngāti Kahungunu - Independent and Self Determined
- Ngāti Kahungunu - Healthy, Thriving and Sustainable Environment
- Ngāti Kahungunu - Making our Mark

**OUR VISION**

"Kahungunu - ki te whaiāo, ki te ao mārama"  
Achieving excellence in all areas of our lives

**OUR MISSION**

Kia maumahara ki te mana āhua ake o Ngāti Kahungunu  
Uphold the absolute uniqueness of the living breath of Kahungunu  
"To enhance the mana and well-being of Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi"

# Matariki a time to reflect and connect

Events will bring thousands together

**Te Rangi Huata**  
Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi  
Incorporated Event Manager

**A**s the first stars of Matariki rise above the horizon this winter, communities across Aotearoa are being invited to gather, reflect, celebrate, and create new traditions together beneath the night sky.

For Ngāti Kahungunu in Hawke's Bay, Matariki has long been more than a public celebration, it is a season of remembrance, storytelling, connection, and hope. For the past 25 years, iwi-led events have brought thousands of whānau together from Te Wairoa to Masterton, honouring the Māori New Year through fire, waiata, kai, waka lanterns, and ceremony.

This year's Matariki programme promises some of the most moving and community-focused celebrations yet, with free outdoor events encouraging people not only to attend, but to actively take part, by making a lantern, joining a ritual, lighting a beach fire, sharing stories, or creating their own family traditions.

Across Hawke's Bay, Tararua and Wairarapa, lakes, fountains, and shorelines will glow with floating lanterns

carrying messages of remembrance for loved ones who have passed. In Masterton's Tīrama Matariki Light Glow, hundreds of lanterns will drift across the lake in a breathtaking display of aroha and unity. In Hastings and Napier, waka maimai aroha/canoes of love – will transform waterways into shimmering rivers of light accompanied by soulful waiata and community gathering.

But organisers say the true heart of Matariki lies not in spectacle, but in connection.

At Napier's foreshore reserve, Matariki Whāngai i te Hautapu – Hau Ahi will invite whānau to gather through the night around a small fire lit from the sparks generated from rubbing ngāio wood together. By dawn, that single flame will be shared across seven fires, symbolising the Matariki stars and the passing of time through the seasons. Stories will be shared, prayers spoken, names of loved ones called into the dawn air, and a hāngī offered as the first sunrise of the Māori New Year breaks across the Pacific Ocean.

Another highlight, Matariki Mahuika, encourages families to gather on the beach around small fires lit also using traditional methods. Bring a



As the first stars of Matariki rise above the horizon this winter, communities across Aotearoa are being invited to gather, reflect and celebrate.

guitar, roast marshmallows, cook kai, tell stories, or simply sit together beneath the stars. Organisers hope people will feel inspired to create rituals of their own – simple acts of togetherness that can be passed down through generations.

A new Hastings celebration

hosted by Ngā Toi Hawke's Bay and Hastings District Council will also feature lantern-making workshops, storytelling, live entertainment, and a lantern parade led by seven giant illuminated kahawai sculptures.

In a world moving ever

faster, Matariki offers something precious: permission to pause. To remember. To dream. To gather around warmth and light with the people who matter most. This winter, the invitation is simple – come as you are, bring your whānau, and let the stars guide you.

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# Winter harvest means great soup to share

## Aunty's Garden – Kūmara Soup

### Aunty Hanui Lawrence

**T**hese past few weeks have brought lovely warm days with a couple of frosts, typical Hawke's Bay weather. Who would want to live anywhere else?

"Great things grow here" is a motto of the Bay, and it's lovely to see that people are taking the hint to grow their own vegetables. There's nothing nicer than pūhā soup, pumpkin soup, and kūmara soup, along with many other hearty soups.

Very late, I know, but with

extra help we were able to harvest the last dozen kūmara grown at my home. This was followed by soups and Māori bread enjoyed with the help of the young and old missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who willingly give their time and service to anyone needing help and assistance, unconditionally.

It's always good to read about people doing good for others by giving their time or food to those in need.

A feeling of peace is welcome during these times of uncertainty, hardship, shortages of funds, and the



rising cost of living. With no jobs, new hardships, stress, and a bleak outlook ahead, life can feel overwhelming.

As strange as the world is at present, with wars all around us, the rising cost of food items and eventually all

essentials such as petrol and diesel, along with changing weather and growing patterns, I've noticed big changes in the way plants flourish, or don't, and changes in crop yields as well.

We're so used to seeing

tractors, big and small, on our roads as they move from one paddock to another for preparing, sowing, maintenance, and harvesting. The petrol costs for these farmers must be astronomical. They need to be looked after, because if there's no food, we starve, and with very little money to go around, there are many hardships.

At Aunty's Garden it's winter quiet, yet there are still plenty of greens to enjoy and add to your soups.

### KŪMARA SOUP

**1 red onion**  
**Boil 4 or 5 kūmara until soft, then mash**  
**Add salt, pepper, and cream to your taste**  
**I use about 5 vegetable Oxo cubes for flavouring. Melt the cubes in ½ cup of boiling water and add to the soup**  
**Add ½ cup of bacon pieces or ½ cup of cooked pork from 2 or 3 slices**  
**Stir often until heated through and ready to serve.**

# Mapu Maia supporting our Pacific communities

### Crystal Edwards Senior Māori Adviser – Health Hawke's Bay

In Hawke's Bay, our Pacific communities are strong, connected, and full of life – and Mapu Maia sits right in the heart of that, walking alongside people with care that feels familiar, safe, and grounded in culture.

We know the journey hasn't always been easy. Many Pacific families here are still navigating barriers – whether it's getting enrolled with a GP, finding services that feel right, or overcoming the stigma that can sit around mental health and addiction. But Mapu Maia offers something different. It's not just a service you go to – it's a place where people are seen, heard, and understood for who they are.

What makes Mapu Maia special is simple: it's built by Pacific people, for Pacific people. That means the care comes with cultural understanding at its centre – respect for family, spirituality, community, and the stories we carry. It creates space for honest conversations, where



**Mapu Maia staff, from left, Ezra Morley (clinician), Stanley Mamea (Ta'iala/village Connector), Herman AhKiong (Mid-Central manager), Saele Tanielu (Health HB), Joyce Ah Kiong (Public Health project lead), Rachel Takie-Lewis (clinician), Tapereariki Tepaki (Hawke's Bay admin) and Annie Kaio (Rainbow peer support).**

people feel safe to open up without judgment, and where healing can happen in ways that make sense to them.

In our region, relationships matter. Our churches, our community leaders, our

families – they're the backbone of how we look after each other. The Health Hawke's Bay Pacific Strategy recognises this, and Mapu Maia brings it to life every day. Whether they're supporting

individuals, working alongside families, or uplifting our Pacific Rainbow community, they meet people where they are – often through the very networks our communities already trust.

Mapu Maia is also part of something bigger. Across Hawke's Bay, there's a shared effort to work better together – services joining up, listening more, and putting Pacific voices at the centre. Mapu Maia helps lead that shift, showing what it looks like when care is connected, culturally grounded, and truly community-focused.

As our Pacific population continues to grow – including our seasonal workers who become part of our wider whānau while they're here – the need for this kind of support only grows stronger. And Mapu Maia is right there, quietly doing the work, standing with people through some of life's hardest moments.

At its heart, Mapu Maia is about more than mental health services. It's about people. It's about connection. It's about creating spaces where our Pacific communities in Hawke's Bay can feel a true sense of belonging – and where, together, we can move towards better wellbeing for all.

# Cushla Tangaere-Manuel

MP for Ikaroa-Rāwhiti

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# Harm incidents a team responsibility

Organisations linked for better outcomes

**Ruth Wong**  
Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated  
Communications Adviser

**T**he Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated Smart Services staff recently had the opportunity to meet with their colleagues in the Family Harm Team; Krystal Ederveen and Annie Sutton, at their other place of work to gain a deeper understanding of the important mahi they undertake alongside New Zealand Police and community agencies throughout Hawke's Bay.

Krystal and Annie work with the Te Kura Family Harm team. Te Kura is a Ngāti Kahungunu approach to Whāngaiā Ngā Pā Harakeke, which is a New Zealand Police initiative that encourages collaboration with iwi and other agencies to reduce family harm within Māori communities. The NKII team consists of a team of five, supported by the wider Te Ara Toiora (Well-being) team. However Krystal and Annie work tirelessly with the Police on a daily basis.

The presentation highlighted the complex and emotionally demanding work involved in responding to family harm incidents across

the region. Working within a multi-agency model known as the Safety Assessment Meeting (SAM), the team works daily with Police, Oranga Tamariki, Corrections, health providers, iwi organisations and community agencies to assess and respond to incidents of family violence and harm.

Krystal and Annie explained that family harm is not limited to physical violence. It can also include emotional, psychological, financial, verbal and religious abuse, as well as patterns of coercion and control within relationships. The work requires careful assessment, empathy and culturally grounded decision-making.

Every morning, the team reviews reports from incidents that occurred over the previous 24 hours across Hastings and Napier. These incidents can range from verbal abuse and intimidation through to high-risk situations involving children, substance abuse and ongoing violence. The role of the SAM table is to determine the most appropriate response and identify which agencies are best placed to support the whānau involved.

One of the strongest messages shared during the presentation was the



importance of relationships and collaboration. Krystal and Annie spoke openly about how, in previous years, agencies often worked in silos, with limited communication and trust between organisations. Through commitment and relationship-building, they have helped strengthen partnerships across more than 20 agencies, creating a more coordinated and whānau-focused approach.

The presentation also highlighted the importance of culturally responsive practice. Māori providers and iwi partnerships play a critical role in helping whānau feel supported and understood, rather than judged or shamed.

Krystal and Annie expressed the importance of

remaining connected with Māori service providers to ensure whānau support continues to be monitored and strengthened.

Police representatives Jason Evans and SAM Sergeant Davron Adsett, explained that frontline officers often attend incidents during moments of crisis, while Family Harm teams focus on prevention, follow-up support and safety planning once situations have de-escalated. This can include home visits, referrals to counselling or support services, safety planning, and helping whānau access protection orders or other support systems where needed.

The NKII Staff who attended acknowledged the

**Some of the Te Kura team; Senior Sergeant Jason Evans (left), Krystal Ederveen, Annie Sutton and Acting Sergeant Davron Adsett.**

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- Need to Talk? – 1737 Call or Text anytime
- Are You OK Helpline – 0800 456 450
- Lifeline – 0800 543 354
- Age Concern – 0800 652 105
- Women's Refuge / FVIP – 0800 733 843
- Oranga Tamariki – 0508 326 459

emotional weight carried by the teams involved in this mahi and praised the dedication shown by those working daily to support vulnerable whānau. The session provided valuable insight into the realities of family harm response work and reinforced the importance of strong partnerships to achieve safer outcomes for whānau across the region.

"At the start of our visit, we met the NZ Police Family Harm team of around 15 staff who seemed really nice," said Ruth Wong, NKII Smart Services Director, "Rather than negative feelings that we sometimes affiliate with the Police, there was a good vibe of ordinary people doing good mahi in the community to keep all of our whānau safe."

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# Wānanga growing our future leaders

**Ruth Wong**  
Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi  
Incorporated Communications  
Adviser

**M**aia Dreams Charitable Trust continues to make a significant impact across Hawke's Bay through its Rangatahi Leadership Wānanga, a kaupapa designed to strengthen leadership, identity and wellbeing amongst young people throughout the region. Since launching, the wānanga has already engaged more than 25 schools and reached over 480 rangatahi, with a further 33 schools expressing interest in being part of future programmes moving forward.

The kaupapa itself was developed directly from recommendations outlined in the Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated Leadership Report, which identified the need for stronger leadership pathways, culturally grounded development opportunities and greater investment into rangatahi and whānau leadership across Kahungunu.

Recommendations

included leadership programmes and resources for whānau and rangatahi, pathways into governance and leadership roles, Whānau Leadership Wānanga, large-scale leadership events and stronger incorporation of whakawhanaungatanga, rangatiratanga, te reo Māori and Tipuria te Aroha approaches throughout the iwi.

The Rangatahi Leadership Wānanga was intentionally built around those priorities, with a strong focus on:

- Te Whakawhanaungatanga
- Te Rangatiratanga
- Tipuria te Aroha
- Te Reo Māori me Ōna Tikanga

Alongside this vision, the kaupapa also became a direct response to many of the social, emotional and wellbeing challenges experienced by rangatahi following Cyclone Gabrielle.

Organisers say the wānanga creates safe and empowering spaces where young people can strengthen cultural identity, confidence, leadership skills and connections with one another while being inspired by positive role models and



facilitators from within their own communities.

The kaupapa has been supported by the Ministry of Education and Te Taiwhenua o Heretaunga, alongside sponsorship contributions including kai and volunteer support from Hastings District Council. However, organisers say contract funding has now come to an end, and support is needed to ensure the kaupapa can continue growing.

The next Rangatahi Leadership Wānanga will take place on Thursday, July 23 and is expected to bring together around 150 rangatahi from 14 kura across Heretaunga. Organisers have also confirmed an inspiring line-up of leaders, speakers and facilitators.

Because the kaupapa was born directly from the aspirations and

**An earlier Rangatahi leadership wānanga held in 2025. Twenty leaders attended with 110 Maori rangatahi, including iwi chairman Bayden Barber, to the far right front row.**

recommendations of the Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated Leadership Report, Maia Dreams Charitable Trust is now seeking opportunities for ongoing support through sponsorship, funding partnerships, in-kind contributions, promotional support and connections with organisations and individuals who are passionate about investing in the future of rangatahi leadership across Kahungunu.

Organisers say the continued success of the wānanga reflects a growing need for culturally grounded leadership spaces where rangatahi can thrive, connect and step confidently into their futures.

Maia Dreams Charitable Trust is a Hawke's Bay-based organisation dedicated to uplifting rangatahi, whānau and communities through

wellbeing, leadership, creativity and cultural connection.

Through wānanga, arts-based initiatives, youth development and community engagement, the trust creates safe and empowering spaces where people can strengthen identity, confidence and resilience while building meaningful relationships within their communities.

Founded by Kristyl Neho, the trust reflects her passion for community wellbeing, storytelling and creating opportunities for others to thrive.

Kristyl is an award-winning creative practitioner, youth advocate and community leader.

For more information contact [admin@maiadreams.com](mailto:admin@maiadreams.com) or see [facebook.com/share/1NtwVn7ucQ](https://facebook.com/share/1NtwVn7ucQ) and [maiadreams.com](https://maiadreams.com).

**Let's go to Church!**

**Flaxmere Christian Fellowship**  
220 Flaxmere Avenue, Hastings  
Main Sunday Meeting - 10:00AM

*The Flaxmere Christian Fellowship is a local Church which has been operating since 1980. Situated on Flaxmere Avenue it draws people from around the Hastings and Napier area. This Pentecostal Church was birthed out of the Charismatic renewal of the late 1970's.*

The main meeting is every Sunday morning starting 10:00. A Bible College also operates on Sunday evenings for those serious about advancing their knowledge of the Bible. Different groups run during the weekend which cater to youth and adults. Children's Sunday school

classes run on a fortnightly basis during the Main Sunday service.

The Fellowship aims at reaching people with the Good News of Jesus Christ and the transformational power that message brings. It is

involved with different programs in the community to help bring this to pass. The Flaxmere Christian Fellowship is also a strong advocate for the Jewish People's right to exist as an independent and sovereign state on their historical ancient land in Israel.

**Feel free to come and try us out!**

Flaxmere Christian Fellowship - 220 Flaxmere Avenue, Hastings

Main Sunday Meeting 10.00am - Phone 06 879 5588

Email: [flaxmerechristianfellowship@hotmail.com](mailto:flaxmerechristianfellowship@hotmail.com)

Web: [www.flaxmerechristianfellowship.com](http://www.flaxmerechristianfellowship.com)

# Work placement more than just a job

Advocate able to raise her clients' spirits

**Ruth Wong**  
Ngati Kahungunu Iwi  
Incorporated Communications  
Adviser

I recently met with a young Māori wahine about her role at the Disability Resource Centre. I found her mahi fascinating and asked her if I could write an article about what she does and how it can help our whānau.

**Supporting people into employment with care, compassion and community**

For many people living with long-term health conditions or disabilities, finding employment is about far more than simply getting a job. It is about confidence, connection, well-being and having the right support systems in place to help people succeed.

That is the focus of the mahi carried out by Taneshia Gill at the Disability Resource Centre, where she works as an Employment Consultant supporting people into meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities throughout the region.

Born and raised in Flaxmere, Taneshia brings both professional experience and deep community understanding to her role.

Known for her warmth, authenticity and ability to connect with people, she works closely with individuals living with long-term health conditions, including physical disabilities, mental health challenges and learning disabilities.

Rather than simply matching people with jobs, Taneshia says her work is about understanding the whole person, their strengths, barriers, goals and aspirations, and helping build pathways that work for them.

"It's more than just finding a job," she explained. "It's getting to know the person, understanding their challenges and then finding creative ways to support them into work that is sustainable and meaningful."

Her role includes CV preparation, interview coaching, job searching and connecting with employers across a range of industries. She also supports people through the early stages of employment, helping both employers and employees navigate expectations, boundaries and communication.

A strong part of the role involves advocacy, encouragement and relationship-building. Taneshia says many people



**Taneshia Gill works as an employment consultant supporting people into meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities throughout the region.**

simply need someone to believe in them and help create opportunities where they may previously have felt overlooked.

"There are a lot of people who are capable and confident, they just need the opportunity and support to step into the workplace," she said.

The Disability Resource

confidence and independence. The organisation also works closely with employers to help create inclusive and supportive workplaces where people can thrive.

Outside of work, Taneshia is heavily involved in the community through sport, youth development and coaching. She referees Touch for New Zealand, supports Rugby League in Hawke's Bay and coaches youth sports teams, while also balancing life as a mother and community advocate.

Throughout the kōrero, one thing became very clear – Taneshia's work is driven by genuine care for people and a belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to feel valued, capable and connected within their community.

An important message shared during the interview was that there are currently a low level of Māori whānau accessing their services. Taneshia hopes more whānau will feel encouraged to reach out, ask questions and learn more about the support available at the centre.

Even if whānau are simply curious about what support may be available for themselves or someone they care about, they are encouraged to connect with the team and have a conversation.

For more information, visit: <https://www.drchb.org.nz/>



## Whānau Ora

Whānau Ora is a culturally based and whānau-centred approach to wellbeing focused on whānau as a whole. Our Kaiārahi (navigators) are here to support your whānau every step of the way. We're dedicated to helping you as the decision-makers who set and achieve their goals by using your unique strengths and abilities. Together, we'll build a brighter future, empowering each member to reach their full potential. We are to support whānau to realise their confidence, mana and belief in self, family and community.

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# Ngāti Kahungunu

# MATARIKI

## EVENTS 2026



**TĪRAMA MATARIKI LIGHT GLOW**  
Wairarapa Celebrates Matariki

QEII Park  
Dixon St, Masterton  
6pm - 8pm FREE ENTRY



**KAHUNGUNU FISH HOOK SUMMIT**  
Resilience

Napier War Memorial Centre,  
Napier  
8.30am - 5pm Iwi Members FREE  
Others Paid Entry



**MATARIKI WAIROA MOVIE NIGHT**  
Wairoa Movie in the Park

Wairoa Community Centre  
Alexandra Park, Marine Parade  
Wairoa  
4pm - 6pm FREE ENTRY



**MATARIKI WHAKANUIA KI TE WAIROA**  
Wairoa Celebrates Matariki. Kai, Entertainment & Fireworks

Wairoa Community Centre  
Alexandra Park, Marine Parade  
Wairoa  
6pm - 8pm FREE ENTRY



**TŪRAMA MATARIKI LIGHT TRAIL**  
Tararua Celebrates Matariki

The Lake,  
Lower Domain Rd, Dannevirke  
6pm - 9pm FREE ENTRY



**MATARIKI WHAKANUIA  
KI TĀMAKI NUI A RUA**  
Kai, Entertainment, & Fireworks

Dannevirke A&P Showgrounds  
Queen Street, Dannevirke  
6pm - 8pm FREE ENTRY



**MATARIKI TĀPUAPUA**  
The Pools of Matariki, Remembrance, Lanterns in the Pool

The Pond, Flaxmere Park,  
Henderson Road, Flaxmere  
6pm - 9pm FREE ENTRY



**MATARIKI WHAKANUIA KI TAMATEA**  
Celebrate Matariki in Central Hawke's Bay. Kai, Entertainment, Fireworks

Russell Park  
10 River Terrace, Waipukurau  
6pm - 8pm FREE ENTRY



**MATARIKI WHANGAI I  
TE HAUTAPU - HAU AHI**  
Matariki Ceremony

546 Marine Parade, Napier  
[next to the Spirit of Napier Statue]  
6am - 7am FREE ENTRY



**KAI HAU KAI MATARIKI**  
Feast on Kai, Entertainment, & Fireworks

HB Race Course,  
Prospect Rd, Hastings  
3pm - 8pm FREE ENTRY



**MATARIKI MAHUIKA**  
Storytelling around the fire. Kai, Remembrance, & Lanterns in the Fountain

546 Marine Parade, Napier  
[next to the Spirit of Napier Statue.  
Kai, Remembrance, Lantern in Fountain]  
4.30pm - 9pm FREE ENTRY

# MATARIKI.EVENTS