

He Toka Tū Moana

**Toi Moana Environmental
Scholarship**

2023



UNDERGRADUATE/BACHELOR



DANIEL ROEPER, originally from Germany, currently resides in Mount Maunganui and gained residency in 2018. He is studying at Toi Ohomai Te Pūkenga in his second year of pursuing a NZ Diploma in Environmental Management, specifically focusing on the Marine Strand.

Daniel plans to complete a third year, leading to his Bachelor of Science degree specialising in Ecology and Biodiversity. His current research revolves around understanding how different shellfish species in the Tauranga harbour contribute to improving local water quality.

In addition to his academic pursuits, Daniel actively contributes to the community in various ways. He volunteers for the Red Cross and is part of their Disaster Welfare and Support Team. He also plays a role in maintaining a trapline on Mauao for the Western Bay Wildlife Trust. Furthermore, he regularly participates in coastal planting and beach clean-up initiatives.

Daniel has also shown a commitment to learning Te Reo Māori, having completed levels 1-3 of the language course. He is a passionate advocate for conservation and sustainability, and his strong connections and involvement in the Bay of Plenty community are evident. Through his efforts, he has made a clear contribution to enhancing the regional environment.



HIKAWAI TE NAHU, a descendant of Te Arawa, is currently enrolled at The University of Auckland. He is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts and Science Conjoint degree, with majors in Environmental Science and Māori Studies. Hikawai is well-regarded for his exemplary leadership skills, which are highly sought after within the university community.

Beyond his academic endeavours, Hikawai actively contributes to various Marae in Te Arawa, displaying a strong commitment to community service. In addition, he has represented Rotorua in multiple sports, including Basketball, Hockey, Waka Awa, and Hapa Kaha, competing at regional, national, and international levels.

Hikawai's true passion lies in environmental sustainability and the preservation and revitalisation of traditional practices. He is currently engaged in research focused on sustainable technologies utilised in Te Arawa's lakes. By reviving traditional sustainable practices, Hikawai aspires to contribute to the development of environmental sustainability models.

Additionally, Hikawai holds an executive role in Ngā Tauira Māori, where he mentors younger students on a daily basis. His unwavering dedication to helping others and his relentless pursuit of personal growth are clearly reflected in his actions.



JESSICA MULES resides in Whakatane and is currently in her second year of pursuing a Bachelor of Environmental Studies at Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi. Her connection to Whakatane is rooted in her long-term residency in the area. Jessica has a strong passion for the environment, which has motivated her to pursue a degree in environmental studies. She also seeks to incorporate Mātauranga Māori theories and practices into her studies.

Despite being a single mother, a student, and working part-time as a share milker, Jessica effectively manages her various responsibilities. Her role as a single mother limits her free time, but she creatively finds ways to contribute to her community. Jessica actively assists with activities at Apanui School, including school trips, noho and coaching touch rugby, ripper rugby, and netball teams for her children.

MASTERS



AKIRA MCTAVISH-HURIWAI, who hails from Tauranga and has Waikato-Tainui and Te Arawa whakapapa, has completed her Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and Geography. She is currently pursuing a Master of Indigenous Studies with a specific focus on Māori Resource Management. Akira is deeply passionate about addressing inequities in Māori resource management and is particularly interested in co-governance and empowering Māori in natural resource management. She aims to strengthen collaborative frameworks and contribute to the development of future co-governance models. For her thesis, Akira is investigating the positive outcomes of co-governance, using the case study of the Te Maru o Kaituna River Authority and the Kaituna River Rediversion project. She believes that Māori involvement and decision making are essential for the well-being of the taiao and that aligning these efforts with the enhancement of the taiao is an opportunity to heal the environment for future generations.

Waikato-Tainui included.



TE MAIORA RURUE, has ancestral connections to Tūhoe and Te Arawa and is a graduate of Waikato University, having obtained a double degree in Law and Te Reo Māori. He has been actively involved in his community, participating in programs such as the Tuia program and performing in kapa haka events for Tūhourangi. Currently Te Maiora Ruruhe is working as a criminal defense practitioner, serving the underprivileged in court.

He has been accepted into Pace University in the United States and plans to pursue a Master's degree in Environmental Law with a focus on the legal personality of the Urewera Forest and the Whanganui River. His research project aims to explore the extent to which the rights of these natural entities are recognised and whether the legal framework adequately meets the needs of Māori. In light of the recent devastation caused by Cyclone Gabrielle, he believes it is crucial for Māori communities to have a say in the protection, management, and enhancement of natural landscapes. Te Maiora argues that granting legal personality to these entities offers an opportunity for Māori values to align with the preservation of the environment, potentially mitigating future damage from such events.

Te Maiora's commitment to his whānau, hapū, and iwi is commendable, and he serves as a role model for leadership in these communities. Overall, Te Maiora is described as personable, respectful, and a visionary among his peers, and his excellence and determination to achieve his goals.



LIAM TEMARA-BENFELL, a student pursuing a Master of Laws in Māori, Pacific, and indigenous peoples laws at the University of Waikato, has a strong connection to Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Mahuta, Waikato-Tainui, and Ngati Pikiao. He is an active member of his hapori and advocates for local political groups, kapa haka groups, marae, and charitable trusts like Toi Matarua Charitable Trust, Tū Rangatahi Youth Foundation, and Te Puna Ariki Charitable Trust. Liam's research project, titled "Whenua Māori - The key to the intergenerational healing and wellbeing of ngā iwi Māori," focuses on upholding the mana and tapu of whenua tupuna. He delves into legal perspectives to analyse the ways in which the tapu of whenua can be better cared in order to restore and uplift the mana and tapu of our people. This includes examining treaty settlements, local legislation, and RMA reforms.

Liam's research demonstrates a commitment to enhancing environmental knowledge by approaching kaupapa taiao from both a Māori and a legal standpoint. He envisions that his research will support and encourage whānau in pursuing their whenua aspirations while highlighting the importance of understanding the needs of the taiao. Ultimately, Liam's research focuses on the health of the whenua and the wellbeing of whānau, making this scholarship an ideal fit for his studies.

DOCTORAL



STEEVE WICKLIFFE, hailing from Maketu to Tongariro and with ancestral connections to Te Arawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa, and Ngati Porou.

Steeve is pursuing a Doctorate in Philosophy in Health and Environmental Sciences. Her research proposal focuses on studying the impact of bath soaps on the environment in Ngawha baths, with a potential comparative analysis involving Onsen baths in Japan and Greenland.

Steeve's ultimate goal is to make a difference in the treatment of ngawha (thermal baths) and the environment through her research, with the intention of shifting perspectives on product usage.

She has actively engaged in recent community initiatives. Notably, she played a critical role in the Puna Ora-Waitawa Restoration Project, which aims to restore a stream in Ngapuna, Rotorua. Additionally, Steeve has been working closely with Ngati Uenukukopako, Ngati Rangiteaorere, and Te Roro o te Rangi hapu to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues surrounding Rotokawa Baths.

Her exceptional attributes have played a vital role in the success of the Waitawa Restoration Project, enabling the Puna Ora Community Group (POCG) to secure funding for up to five years. This achievement marks a significant milestone for the Hurungaterangi hapū as they take their first step towards developing a Hapū Environmental Plan.



SIOBHAN NURI, a doctoral student in Ecology and Biodiversity, has established herself as a potential future Māori leader in environmental research. With ancestral ties to Ngāti Ranginui, Tūhourangi, Ngāti Pikiao, and Ngāti Tarāwhai, Siobhan's work encompasses a diverse range of activities.

Her PhD research revolves around the early life histories of tuna (eels) in Aotearoa, specifically focusing on the Rangitāiki River and involving close collaboration with iwi and local communities. Siobhan's previous research has included investigating kākahi (freshwater mussels) monitoring methods and contributing to the understanding of heavy metal accumulation in kōura (freshwater crayfish).

Beyond her academic pursuits, Siobhan actively engages with mana whenua and local communities, sharing knowledge about glass eels, monitoring techniques, and fish species identification. She integrates mātauranga (indigenous knowledge) shared by community members, visits schools and kura (Māori educational institutions), and participates in various iwi activities and cultural events.

She contributes to education, serves on committees, and advocates for environmental and cultural initiatives. Siobhan's dedication and alignment with taiao enhancement is evident in her aim to be a voice for iwi, whānau, and hapū in operational and governance roles. Her ultimate goal is to inspire younger individuals to care for the environment and promote unity within Te Arawa whānui.