25 February 2021

**Northland Grassroots Fund and Taiohī Taiohā Wānanga Series**

Toi Ngāpuhi was delighted to receive $8,500 from the Grassroots Fund towards their Taiohī Taiohā wānanga toi series. These Māori arts wānanga are for youth aged 16-24 to enable them to be immersed in a series of workshops led by some leading Ngāpuhi creative practitioners from across Te Tai tokerau. They will be based at marae from the Hokianga through to Whangārei.

The selected Taiohī are those who show talent, passion and creative potential in a broad range of arts including visual arts, performing arts and the creative digital arts and they will be expected to have the knowledge and/or desire to learn more about their whakapapa and te reo.

These wānanga will be held over a five-month period and will be intensive. They are going to be led by an exciting and experienced group of Ngāpuhi creatives who between them have significant exhibition history and a huge array of skills in various artforms including sculpting, weaving, curating, painting, carving, jewellery-making and composing.

Tutors for the first wānanga include Alex Nathan, Charles Royal, Makareta Jahnke, Ngariki Ngatae, Kawiti Waetford, Horomona Horo, Nikau Hindin and Noa Campbell. Leading the wananga are Bethany Matai Edmunds and Dorothy Waetford, themselves award-winning and experienced exhibiting artists.

The Grassroots Fund will help enable these youth to realise their potential and develop work that is exhibition and/or performance ready. It will help give them the time and space to create their art and to be mentored by this exceptional group of artists.

The Grassroots Fund will also help fulfil the brief of Toi Ngāpuhi which was established in 2019 as an advocacy and support agency working across Te Tai tokerau to inspire excellence in Ngāpuhi cultural and creative expression. Toi Ngapuhi has a 25-year arts and cultural strategy, Piki Tū Rangitia, with the aim of:

* revitalising cultural identity,
* protecting Ngāpuhi culture,
* improving hapu well-being and cultural esteem through cultural expression,
* establishing benchmarks of cultural integrity and authenticity, and
* fostering talent and opportunity.

These aims link closely to what will be achieved through the Taiohī Taiohā programme. Dorothy Waetford who is also on the Toi Ngāpuhi Board, is delighted that this programme is up and running and has been supported through The Grassroots Fund. She is celebrating the opportunity to roll her sleeves up and directly explore the future of Toi Ngāpuhi. The chance to ‘pass it on’ immensely excites and inspires Dorothy.

Article by Gail Richards from Toi Ngāpuhi.

The Northland Grassroots Fund seeks donations from the Northland community. Last year the Foundation had four times the amount that they had to give out, and request the support of the Northland Community to increase the size of the fund. Donations can be accepted as direct pass through funds, or can be invested and the interest can be delivered out annually. To donate go to our website here: [Make a Donation Today - Northland Foundation (northlandcommunityfoundation.org.nz)](https://northlandcommunityfoundation.org.nz/donate/) To find out more about our investment funds email info@northlandcommunityfoundation.org.nz

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