

Media release

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Tūwharetoa Awards Scholarships to three outstanding Academics

Three postgraduate students from Tūwharetoa have been awarded scholarships by the Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust to support their studies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The scholarship recipients for 2022 are Shaun McNeil, Keiha Nicol and Heni Unwin, and each will receive \$10,000 in recognition of their academic excellence.

“We are proud to support these future leaders who bring a unique kaupapa Māori view to their work, which will enrich their chosen field of study,” says Dame Georgina te Heuheu, Deputy Chair of the Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust.

Shaun McNeil is working towards a PhD (Chemistry) at the University of Waikato. Keiha Nicol is studying for a Master of Science (Geology) at Victoria University. Heni Unwin is striving for a Master of Science (Environmental Science) at the University of Canterbury.

McNeil’s research looks at the compounds created by nature and how they can benefit people. Nicol is working on understanding the science behind the geothermal systems within the greater Te Arawa, Rotorua/Taupō area. Nicol aims to use his insights to be a kaitiaki of the geothermal systems of Tūwharetoa hapū and marae. Unwin is examining the impact of microplastic fibres and natural fibres on the capacity of mussels to clean our waters.

Dame Georgina says the scholarships which are awarded annually, are part of the overall commitment of Ngāti Tūwharetoa to growing future leaders who will benefit the tribe and all of Aotearoa.

More information on the scholarships, the recipients and their research is in the attached appendices.

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Appendix 1

About the Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

The three \$10,000 scholarships are open to university students in their third year and above studying in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Applications for the 2023 Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Scholarships will open in February 2023.

In collaboration with Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board and the Ngāti Tūwharetoa Fisheries Charitable Trust, the Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust also contribute to a combined fund of \$750,000 that supports Tūwharetoa students in their education across a wide range of disciplines.

Why Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust finances STEM Scholarships

Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust knows science and technology play an important part in the future success of Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Aotearoa.

The STEM Scholarship programme is part of the Trust's commitment to promoting and advancing the educational aspirations of Tūwharetoa iwi at large.

In acknowledging the scholarship winners, Deputy Chair of Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust, Dame Georgina te Heuheu said the trust was proud to recognise the academic excellence of Tūwharetoa young people through a dedicated STEM Scholarship programme.

"In this regard, Shaun, Keiha and Heni have excelled in their studies and more than justified the focus our Trust has placed in this particular area of study," says Dame Georgina.

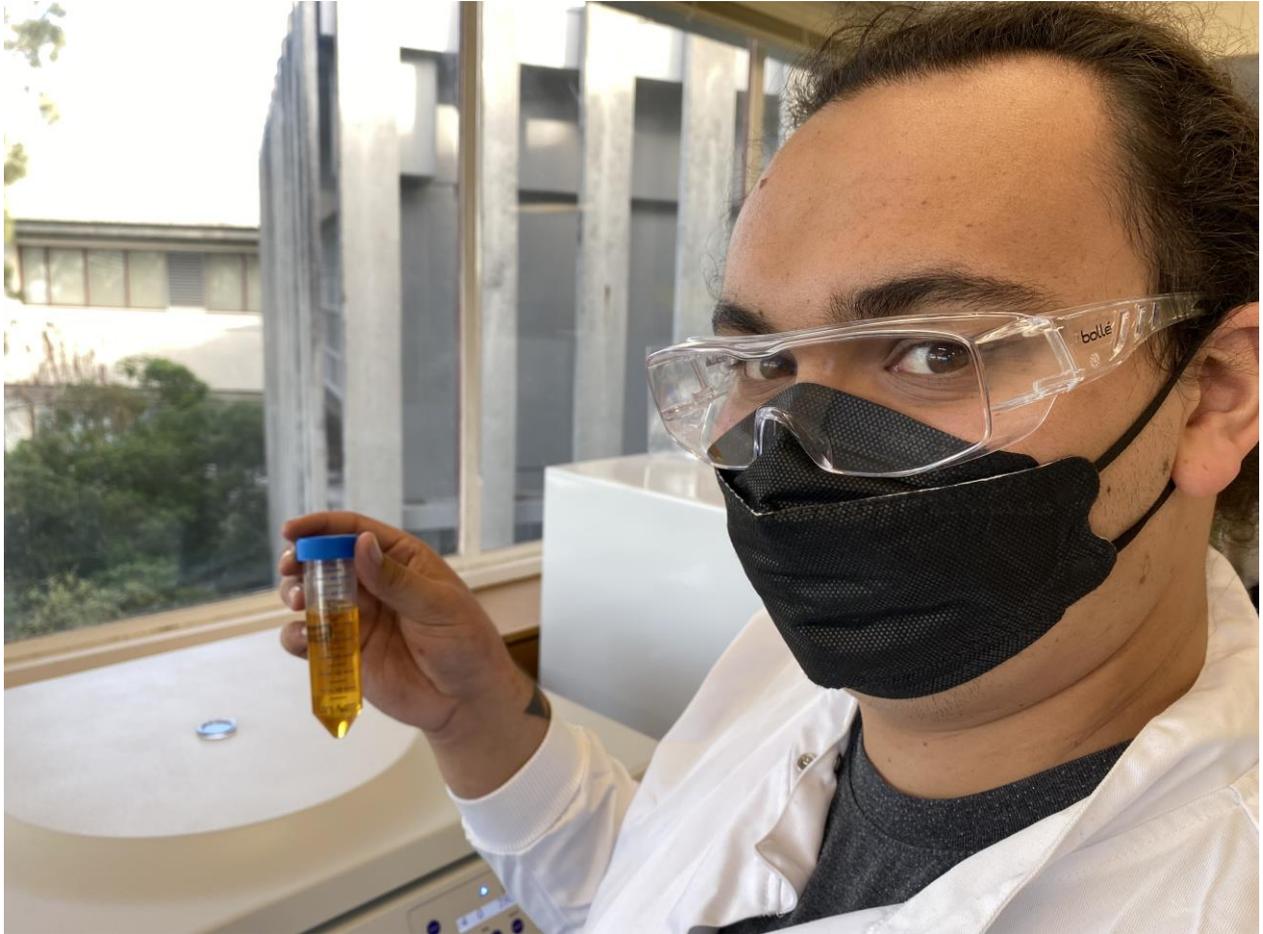
"We appreciate the importance of education in the ongoing advancement of our people and our communities and our STEM Scholarships are aimed at those of our whānau seeking to help unlock the potential for wellbeing and growth in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

"Through the programme, we also hope to encourage more of our young people to seek careers in these disciplines.

The wide-ranging impacts of current global events and issues like the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and global economic disruption reinforce the need for continued investment and research in these areas, now and into the future." Dame Georgina added.

The Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust has been impressed with the focus on Mātauranga Māori as an integral part of each of the recipients' study programmes.

Appendix 2 - Our recipients



Shaun McNeil — Ngāti Tūrangitukua

Studying for Doctorate of Philosophy in Chemistry, University of Waikato

“My rangahau borders the line between chemistry and molecular biology. I look at the compounds made by nature. Insight into this field gives researchers information on the composition of plants, plant products, and marine life. This lets us identify compounds that characterise these organisms and their products. This also helps to identify potential uses for compounds produced by nature. For example, the detection and identification of potential medicinal compounds in natural products produced by native trees can provide incentive for not only the protection of native ngahere but also replanting.

I believe that working towards living in harmony with all aspects of nature is key to moving into the future. If we can develop effective medicines which are sourced in ways that are synergistic to the protection of our natural taonga. The health of us as kaitiaki and the health of our natural taonga will flourish. We need to protect and work with nature to overcome the problems of the future. Research like my own aims to do this.”



Keiha Nicol — Ngāti Rauhoto, Ngāti Ruingarangi, Ngāti Te Maunga, Ngāti Te Rangiita, Ngāti Turumakina, Ngāti Tutetawhā

Studying for Master of Science (Geology), Victoria University

"I'm studying geology and looking to do my thesis on a geothermal system, either in the Taupō or Rotorua district. I'm passionate about our taiao and love the knowledge that geology can tell us about te taiao.

Our ngāwhā are one of these taonga that tell us plenty about Earth systems, while also providing the means to help te taotiao through sustainable energy and mineral production. They hold the potential to uplift our hāpori financially and enhance our mana and welfare through the direct involvement of hapū and iwi in these projects (employment, marae heating and more!).

Once I've graduated I see myself in a role where I can act as a scientist and advisor in the practice of the geothermal industry, as well as a māngai for the science and practice on the marae.

I think that our geothermal taonga are a gateway to prosperity for both the iwi and Aotearoa, but I want to make sure that it is done right and that our voices are heard in the process. I still have a lot to learn, both in geology and te ao Māori, and even more to learn about our hapū/iwi trusts and our business partners, but I am keen and willing to learn.

E kī ana te korero, "Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua."

With the skills I obtain from my study, I hope to make both persist."



Heni Unwin — Ngāti Kurauia

Studying for Master of Science (Environmental Science), University of Canterbury

“My thesis in environmental science is investigating if there is a physiological response when mussels are exposed to microplastic fibres and natural fibres. It will further relate findings to oxidative stress measured in the gills, adductor muscle and the digestive tract.

The fibres are derived from mussel rope and I am trying to determine the best option to not induce stress on mussels. Mussels clean our water through their filtering processes and if this is affected due to increasing microplastic in our environment it could be detrimental to the overall health of the ocean. There is increasing public and regulatory concern about the impact of microplastics on our environment, food and health.

Microplastics are pervasive in the environment and this problem has been likened to climate change. This specifically links to the field of science and the environment as it is looking at ocean species health and the current anthropogenic effect of an unknown capacity and therefore it is unclear the linkages and full effects of this issue.”

About Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust

Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust is the Post-Settlement Governance Entity (PSGE) that manages the financial and whenua resources returned to Ngāti Tūwharetoa in the Central North Island Forests Iwi Collective settlement. Approved by Ngāti Tūwharetoa, the Trust was established on 1 July 2009 and has been operating for the benefit of Ngāti Tūwharetoa ever since.

For more information on Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust, click [here](#).

Ngā Marae me ngā Hapū o Ngāti Tūwharetoa

MARAE MAP

Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board



MARAE	AFFILIATED HAPU
HIKAIRO KI TE RENA	Ngāti Hikaio
HIRANGI	Ngāti Turangitukua
KAKAHI	Ngāti Manunui
KAURIKI	Ngāti Hinemihi
KOROHE	Ngāti Hine
MAROANUI	Ngāti Rauhoto
	Ngāti Haa
	Ngāti Moekino
	Ngāti Parekaawa
	Ngāti Te Kohera
	Ngāti Tarakaiahi
	Ngāti Wairangi
MOKAI	
NUKUHAU	Ngāti Rauhoto
	Ngāti Te Urunga
OTUKOU	Ngāti Hikaio
PAKIRA	Ngāti Tutemohuta
PAPAKAI	Ngāti Hikaio
POUKURA	Ngāti Parekaawa
PUKAWA	Ngāti Manunui
RONGOMAI	Ngāti Rongomai
TE HAROTO	Ngāti Hineuru
TE KAPA O TE RANGIITA KI ORUANUI	Ngāti Te Rangita
TE MAHAU	Ngāti Te Mahau
TE RANGIITA	Ngāti Ruingarangi
TE TIKANGA / TOKORANGI	Ngāti Waewae
TOKAANU	Ngāti Kurauia
TUTETAUWA	Ngāti Tutetawha
WAIHAHA	Ngāti Tarakaiahi
	Ngāti Wheoro
WAIHI	Ngāti Turumakina
WAIPAHIHI	Ngāti Hineure
	Ngāti Hinerau
WAITETOKO	Ngāti Te Rangita
WHANGANUI BAY	Ngāti Te Maunga

This map shows the names and locations of the 34 hapū and 26 marae of Ngāti Tūwharetoa iwi. Source: Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board. Used with permission.

Please note: all images in this release can be used. Please credit Tūwharetoa Settlement Trust for the photos of Shaun Te Rire McNeil and Keiha Nicol. Please credit Te Apārangi – Royal Society for the photo of Heni Unwin.