



MENTOR: Dame Tariana Turia with rangatahi at the Iwi Chairs Forum at Whangaehu. PHOTO/M_RANGATAHI

Rangatahi chance to voice views

By Matariki Cribb

At the Iwi Chairs Forum at Whangaehu Marae at the start of May, iwi were encouraged to increase rangatahi engagement with the forum.

I, along with Rongomaitawhiri Takiari Ah-Ching and Tamahaia Skinner, are your Whanganui iwi representatives on the newly-established rangatahi group, Ngā Rangatahi a Iwi.

This was an exciting opportunity for us to engage with rangatahi from other iwi, to build networks based on whanaungatanga and to gauge the nationwide needs, hopes and aspirations of rangatahi, and to contribute to the governing body that is the Iwi Chairs Forum.

Feeling slightly out of depth in the first few hours of hui, we realised that we had plenty to contribute to it in terms of our iwi successes with projects such as Raukotahi Whanganui, Tira Hoe Waka and the work

our kura do to grow engaging, bright, contributing iwi members.

The decisions being made by the Iwi Chairs Forum today are on an array of topics, including education, conservation, housing, Whānau Ora and, most importantly, for Whanganui iwi, fresh water.

As is the case in many forums like the Iwi Chairs, our pāheke speak on our behalf and rangatahi are rarely heard giving our views on issues that affect us.

The reality for us is that the choices made by the Iwi Chairs today will take effect in the next one to two decades, and that is our time.

We have another opportunity to contribute to the forum at Hopuhopu in August, and would welcome any suggestions for discussion. The engagement of energetic, innovative rangatahi in these discussions is key to iwi advancement, and growth of future iwi leaders.

Future iwi leaders form own group

By Laurel Stowell
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Young people at the Iwi Chairs Forum at Whangaehu Marae earlier this month are forming their own ginger group, Ngaa Rauuira Puumanawawhiti says.

He links to Ngaa Rauru through his grandmother and Kaipō Marae, and was one of about 25 young people at the forum from May 5-7 — all of them there as future leaders, and being mentored by iwi chairs.

At just 21, Mr Puumanawawhiti is lecturing at Te Wananga o Raukawa, and being called “matua” by students three times his age. The documentary *Māori Boy Genius* was made about him, but he said it was his education and not himself that was special.

He started in kohanga reo and moved on to Māori immersion kura and the wananga, with a spell at Yale University at the age of 13.

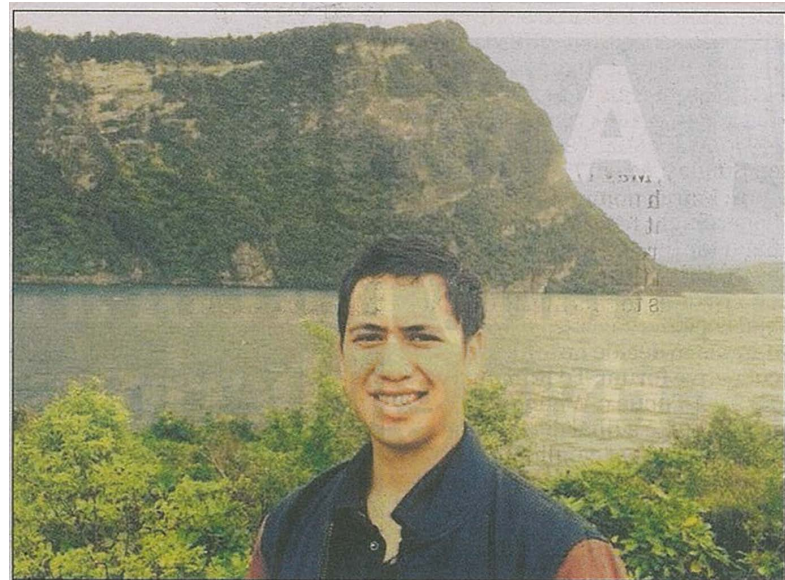
“I came through a total immersion system. There are many of us out there — it’s just that not everyone is acknowledged,” he said.

The Iwi Chairs Forum meets every four months and is chaired by the host iwi. At Whangaehu Marae, the chairman was Ngati Apa’s Pahia Turia.

Mr Puumanawawhiti wasn’t at all the forum sessions, but said discussions covered the country’s flag referendum and whether Māori, as a minority, would have much say.

The case of James Takamore — whose body was taken by whanau to the Eastern Bay of Plenty against the wishes of his Christchurch wife and children — was discussed and the question of who was responsible for the body of a dead person: immediate family or extended family at marae?

Housing, and the degree to



YOUTHFUL ENERGY: Ngaa Rauuira Puumanawawhiti is one of those organising a youth committee of the Iwi Chairs Forum.

PHOTO/SUPPLIED NGAARAUUIRA_PUUMANAWAWHITI

“I came through a total immersion system. There are many of us out there.”

Ngaa Rauuira Puumanawawhiti

which iwi could help provide it in their rohe, was another big topic.

The forum makes recommendations for wider policy, although Mr Puumanawawhiti said that was a long process, given the many different iwi and views represented, and the high level strategic thinking that “couldn’t see the tree for the forest”.

Young people at the meeting had a joke about this.

The forum only came up with one recommendation, “word-smithed to death”, while the

young people managed two.

Youth at the forum have thought of forming their own group before, but at Whangaehu they began to formalise it.

Their ages ranged from 16 to 31, and they named themselves Ngā Rangatahi a Iwi with plans to make their own recommendations and have a seat or seats on the Iwi Chairs Forum.

Between now and the next forum — which will be at Hopuhopu in the Waikato in August — they will organise themselves using a Facebook page and emails.

Being at the forum and among those talented young people was inspiring, Mr Puumanawawhiti said.

“You can quite clearly see that a lot of our peers are going to be the future Tukoroirangi Morgans, Sonny Taus and Mark Solomons. It’s an exciting thing to meet them before they’re in those roles.”