**National Iwi Chairs’ Forum Celebrates Remarkable Leaders in Te Ao Māori with Te Whare Pūkenga Inductions**

1 November 2024

The National Iwi Chairs’ Forum celebrated the outstanding contributions of four remarkable individuals during a special ceremony in Heretaunga yesterday. Mavis Mullins (Rangitāne Tamaki nui Ā Rua), Mana Elizabeth Hunkin (Ngāti Kahungunu), Tā Timoti Kāretu (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngai Tuhoe), and Tā Pita Sharples (Ngāti Kahungunu) were inducted into Te Whare Pūkenga at the Forum’s concluding session for the year. This event brought together nearly 300 attendees from across the country to honour their achievements.

Te Whare Pūkenga, established by the Iwi Chairs Forum in 2021, recognises rangatira who have significantly enhanced the lives of whānau throughout Aotearoa. The award is presented to individuals whose actions reflect and contribute to the revitalisation of the Forum’s core values: Rangatiratanga, Whanaungatanga, Manaakitanga, Kaitiakitanga, Tikanga, and Pono. This esteemed honour is entirely conceived, managed, and funded by the 80+ iwi that comprise the National Iwi Chairs Forum.

**Sir Tīmoti Kāretu,** a preeminent Māori scholar and cultural leader, has made an indelible impact on the revitalization of the Māori language. As the inaugural Toihau of Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori, he was instrumental in implementing the Māori Language Act 1987. A gifted composer of waiata and haka, he is celebrated for his mastery of Māori performing arts and the language itself. Sir Tīmoti founded the Māori Department at the University of Waikato and co-established Te Panekiretanga o te Reo, the Institute of Excellence in the Māori Language. His influential textbook, *Te Reo Rangatira*, continues to guide generations of language learners.

**Mana Elizabeth Hunkin** is a distinguished Māori educator and advocate celebrated for her transformative work in revitalising the Māori language through the innovative Te Ataarangi methodology. With unwavering dedication to language preservation, Whaea Liz has empowered countless Māori communities by providing accessible and culturally relevant language education. Her leadership has revolutionized Māori language teaching, inspiring a new generation to embrace their heritage and ensuring the language's vitality for years to come.

**Sir Peter Sharples** is a distinguished Māori leader and academic based in West Auckland, celebrated for his profound contributions to Te Ao Māori and national policy in New Zealand. As a champion of Māori education, Sir Pita led the creation of Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hoani Waititi, the first Kura Kaupapa Māori in New Zealand, which set a precedent for Māori-language immersion education. His involvement extends to numerous Māori community and educational organisations.

A founding member of the Māori Party and former Minister of Māori Affairs, Sir Peter has tirelessly advocated for Māori rights and cultural revitalisation throughout his career. His commitment to advancing education and social justice for Māori communities has garnered him numerous accolades, including a knighthood, reflecting his dedication to fostering understanding and collaboration between Māori and non-Māori New Zealanders. Through his leadership and vision, Sir Pita Sharples has inspired generations to embrace and celebrate Māori heritage.

**Mavis Mullins,** nominated by the Rangitāne Tū Mai Trust, is a distinguished Māori leader and businesswoman whose impact extends throughout both Māori and New Zealand society. A key figure in securing significant benefits for her iwi through Treaty of Waitangi settlement negotiations, she has championed Māori economic development and encouraged Rangitāne businesses to flourish. As a successful entrepreneur, she led her family’s shearing business to become the first in the world to achieve ISO 9002 accreditation, demonstrating her commitment to quality and innovation. In 2000, Mullins headed establishment of 2 Degrees Mobile, NZ’s third mobile network, as the Chair of Te Huarahi Tika Trust which held the collective interests of all Māori in the network for twenty years. Her roles on boards such as Landcorp, and Massey University Council have further established her as a leading figure in the business world.

Professor Margaret Mutu, Chair of Ngāti Kahu and Pou Tikanga rōpū, expressed that it is an honour for the Forum to recognise and celebrate the achievements of these inspirational Māori leaders, stating, “Mahia te mahi, hei painga mo te iwi. Work for the betterment of the people.”

These esteemed rangatira now join the ranks of current members of Te Whare Pūkenga, which includes Tākuta Moana Jackson, Tākuta Whatarangi Winiata, Kahurangi Iritanga Tāwhiwhirangi, Tākuta Wally Penetito, Norm Dewes, Linda Dewes, Kahurangi Tariana Turia, Tākuta Cathy Dewes, and Patricia Grace.

**End.**

**For more information**

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Photos attached.

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