DRAFT

Walter Takaha Teouru Penetito (Wally)

Wally was born in Waharoa and is the second eldest of 12 Tamariki belonging to Tanumia Camellia Dehar (Ngati Tamateraa) and Te Uawhaki Sonny Penetito (Ngati Hauaa, Ngati Raukawa). Wally went to Waharoa Primary and Matamata College. In 1960 he graduated from Ardmore Teachers Training College. He and Sheena née Fredericks married in 1963 and had three children. In the 1970s he was captivated by the buzz of academia and immersed himself as a tauira for decades. He achieved a BA in Education and Sociology, and in 2006 at age 67, he graduated with a Doctorate in Philosophy.

Although the main impact of Wally’s work has been in education, he has also had considerable influence in broader areas of whanau, hapu and Iwi development.

Through his writing, teaching, and mentoring, Wally has demonstrated leadership in challenging racism, colonisation and promoting the value of matauranga Māori. He has influenced Maori teachers, students and parents, especially to understand the value of “being Māori” and challenging the system that is hell-bent on continuing to colonise us. He has worked extensively to change education policy and practice since the 1990s and continues to do so in his retirement.

Wally had a successful career as a teacher, an adviser to schools, a senior government public servant, a researcher, and a lecturer. He has also served on the Teacher Registration Board.

He has also worked extensively with Marae, Hapu and Iwi researchers teaching, coaching and supporting them to bring thoroughness, integrity and scholarship when researching and writing their histories.

He is a prolific writer and in 2010 published “What’s Māori About Māori Education? The Struggle for a Meaningful Context” which received high acclaim from people involved in education and research. Wally is highly regarded as a leader amongst his peers and is recognised as an authority on indigenous education, racism and colonisation.

He was the first Maori to be appointed Professor of Education at Victoria University and in 2022 was awarded Emeritus Professor when as his colleagues said; *“Under the wing of Wally Penetito we have all grown. For many years he has offered a vision not only for our Faculty but for New Zealand.”*

At 83 years old he is still providing mentoring to tauira, contributing to educational policy development, guest lecturing in institutions nationally and globally, and writing prolifically. In 2017 Wally was recognised by Ngati Hauaa with Te Tihi o te Matauranga award for Excellence in Education. Wally’s educational career has been driven by a mission to promote equity for Maori in education, in accordance with Te Tiriti o Waitangi. A lifetimes work!

From his mokopuna…..

*Ko taku Koro tērā, ko Koro Wally he iho pūmanawa ki te tini.*

*From my earliest memory my koro has had a moustache and white hair. He is cheeky and sharp as a tack. Koro’s super power is being able to simplifying the most complex academic korero for everyone to understand. He has spent a lifetime sharing the value of Māori pedagogies, Māori methodologies and pūrākau as the body of knowledge that taps into the wairua of Maori learners and brings out excitement to their learning.*

*Koro’s kōrero is often based around “place based education” which we never really understood as kids but as I’ve grown and attended his many speaking engagements, it has become easy to understand why his kōrero resonates with so many indigenous peoples. It is about turangawaewae, whakapapa, whanaungatanga and Rangatiratanga. Koro encourages people to familiarise themselves with the land marks that surround them. Understanding the journey that the whenua has endured to become what it is today, and who has played a role in that journey gives people a clearer understanding of their own connection to the local knowledge and history of that Whenua and the responsibility of one’s contribution to that community.*

*To us, his kōrero is a simple practice that tangata whenua all around the world have mastered by being in tune with their environment and being able to talk about ourselves and our place in the world. I believe this way of learning is what resonates far and wide.*

E te ihopumanawa poho kukupa ana mātou o mokopuna i ngā koha matauranga kua tukuna ki te ao!