

I tipu ake ahau i te taha o Huriawa, i raro hoki i te marumaru o Puketeraki. He mokopuna ahau nā Atanui Wyeth – ko Hera Parata tōna māmā (nō Kāti Huirapa), ko Teone Matapura Erihana tōna pāpā (nō Kāi Te Ruahikihī). Tihei mauri ora!

I am running for Deputy Kaiwhakahaere of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and highlight three important attributes I bring to the role:



*1. Professional expertise and extensive governance experience*

I have a BSc(Hons) and PhD in Genetics from the University of Otago. I am a Professor of Māori Health, formerly at Otago, now at the University of Canterbury. A Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors, current governance responsibilities include Deputy Chair of Te Tauraki, Deputy Chair of Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki Incorporated, and Chair of WellSouth. Until recently I was on the Health Research Council of New Zealand and Chair of its Māori Health Committee. I was appointed Representative to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in July 2025 and served as Alternate Representative for three years from mid-2022.

*2. Whānau Heritage*

My tuakana and predecessor, Matapura Ellison, was Deputy Kaiwhakahaere of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu for two terms from 2017-2024. Our whanauka, Edward Ellison, earlier held the role. Both were earnest, honest, and loyal. I would uphold these values and our Taiaroa/Ellison record of servant leadership with total commitment.

*3. Wāhine Leadership Balance*

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu has, for more than a decade, had roughly equal numbers of wāhine and tāne Representatives. That is a positive development. Our daughters, as well as our sons, should see themselves in these roles. Reflecting this composition, Te Rūnanga has, over the same time, ensured balanced gender representation in the Kaiwhakahaere and Deputy Kaiwhakahaere combination. This equilibrium should be maintained, consistent with the “paired opposites” ethos at the heart of mātauranga Māori.

Beyond core duties, I have two key goals as Deputy Kaiwhakahaere:

1. Support the Kaiwhakahaere to cultivate and maintain important honoka across Te Ika-a-Māui by maintaining a personal focus on, and presence within, our takiwā. While I would represent our iwi outside the takiwā if needed, my attention will primarily be on Te Waipounamu me Rakiura.
2. Ensure the current Te Rūnanga Governance Review is brought to a timely, efficient, and professional conclusion with ambitious yet implementable actions. We need not simply inherit Te Kawenata but renew it – for the iwi we are becoming.