



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

TE PŪRONGO A TE KURA TANGATA

Report on Philanthropy

2024





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ISSN 2744-6433 (Print)	
ISSN 2744-6441 (Online)	



Overview OF 2024



993

donors gave or
pledged a total of

\$12.6m

577

alumni gave

\$1.2m

126

members of the

**Victoria
Legacy Club**

481

members of the

**Victoria
Benefactors'
Circle**

22

new funds were
established, including

7

new
scholarships

9

students were awarded

**Ngā Hoe a Kupe
Pathfinder Scholarships**

17

students were awarded

**Alumni Appeal
Scholarships**

**You helped
1,206 students
in 2024
including 894
through the
Winter Energy
Grants.**

Who are our donors?

Trusts and foundations 4%

Government 2%

Corporate 12%

Staff 13%

Alumni 58%

Individuals 11%

% by number of donors

What did our donors support?

Academic positions,
programmes, and
institutes 24%

Students 27%

Research 40%

Other 9%

\$ amount for category (%)



Reflections on the year

FROM THE CHAIR

I'm very pleased to report that we've had another successful year of philanthropy, thanks to the support of generous donors who are committed to making a positive impact on our community.

The Victoria University of Wellington Foundation raised a total of \$12.6 million in philanthropic donations in 2024 from 993 donors. In the face of an ever-changing market, the Foundation's careful stewardship enabled it to meet its objective of future-proofing the endowed fund with an inflationary increase of 3.3 percent, while also providing a return of 4 percent.

The impact of your generosity could be seen across our campuses throughout 2024, with student support a particular priority for our donors. I was delighted that nearly twice as many students who were experiencing difficulty paying for heating benefited from a Winter Energy Grant in 2024 compared to 2023, thanks to an outpouring of support from our donors. We were also proud to award nine Ngā Hoe a Kupe Pathfinder Scholarships to deserving students. These students have all demonstrated determination and resilience, and we are privileged to have them studying with us.

These scholarships change lives, and we are proud to work alongside you in enabling students to achieve their dreams. It's not just the financial aspect of these scholarships that provides meaningful

support—students tell us that knowing there are people out there who see their potential and believe in their ability to succeed is hugely motivating.

In these pages, we look back on the fascinating life of philanthropist and environmentalist Dr George Mason, ONZM and learn what inspired the late Patricia Donnelly and Tony Haas to leave a remarkable bequest to support Pacific Studies and Pasifika students. We also focus on the students who will lead us into the future. You'll read about a wahine Māori business student who is being supported by an international CEO to achieve her dreams, the rural students who are serving as role models in their communities, and an artist combining her passion for music and poetry.

It has been an honour to serve as the chair of the Foundation for the past three years and as a trustee for the past decade. I have greatly appreciated the dedication, expertise, and commitment of my fellow trustees throughout my time on the board, and I know the Foundation is in very safe hands going forward.

On behalf of the trustees, thank you for your support. Your generosity creates positive pathways for students, enables critical research and innovation, and helps our community thrive. Your gifts mean so much to the people who benefit from them, and the work of the Foundation would not be possible without you.

Dame Kerry Prendergast, CNZM, DNZM
Chair, Victoria University of Wellington Foundation

FROM THE TUMU WHAKARAE—VICE-CHANCELLOR



Throughout 2024, I've had the privilege of meeting more members of our remarkable donor community and learning about the values and aspirations that drive your support.

Many of you are motivated by a desire to give back and support rangatahi in our region. Others are inspired by personal experiences with degenerative disease, or by a commitment to advancing cutting-edge technologies. I've also been struck by those who champion the social sciences, humanities, and creative arts—not only for the insights they offer into who we are, but also for how they help us reflect on what matters most in our lives and communities. These conversations have deepened my appreciation for the powerful motivations behind your generosity and the profound impact it continues to have across our university and society.

As our university continues to grow and evolve, I'm reminded that our achievements are never ours alone. One of the standout moments of 2024 was celebrating the opening of Ngā Mokopuna in December. For those who've had the chance to visit, you'll know it's much more than a building—it's a living expression of our values and a space that supports the next generation of thinkers, leaders, and kaitiaki. It's also a representation of the lasting impact your generosity has on generations to come.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank John Allen, who served as Chancellor from 2022 until February 2025. John's contributions to the University are too numerous to count, and those of you who know him will know the dedication and energy he brought to his years of service.

Alan Judge, who took over from John as Chancellor, will be well known to many of you as a long-time trustee on the Victoria University Foundation Board of Trustees. Alan is a passionate supporter of our university community and the Wellington arts scene, and his knowledge and experience are an asset for our community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to Dame Kerry Prendergast, who stepped down as chair this year after three years leading the board and 10 years as a trustee. Kerry's invaluable leadership and depth of experience have been extremely beneficial to the Foundation, and I am deeply grateful for her service.

Thank you for your continued belief in the University and the work that we do here. It is greatly appreciated by the entire university community.

Professor Nic Smith
Tumu Whakarae—Vice-Chancellor



Victoria University of Wellington Foundation

Your generous gifts to the Victoria University of Wellington Foundation are changing lives and transforming communities through scholarships, prizes, academic positions, and research programmes.

Governed by an independent board of trustees, the Foundation is responsible for managing your donations, investing gifts into the endowment portfolio, and distributing funds in accordance with donor wishes. None of this would be possible without you. Your gift—no matter the size—is making a difference.

RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

The Victoria University of Wellington Foundation has a strong commitment to responsible investment. Our current measures include regular environmental, social, and governance (ESG) and weighted-average carbon intensity reporting by our fund managers and submissions to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI) to which the Foundation is a signatory. The Foundation's Statement of Investment Performance and Objectives outlines the Foundation's investment beliefs, including our commitment to integrating ESG considerations into the investment portfolio.

By investing in pooled investment funds, the Foundation recognises that there are limitations on its ability to select and influence the companies included within the funds. The board's focus is the appointment of fund managers; the extent to which the managers' ESG and climate-related policies align with the Foundation's policies; and ongoing monitoring, assessment, and engagement with managers

to ensure continuing improvement and alignment over time. These measures are tracking appropriately with our expectations.

UNITED NATIONS PRINCIPLES FOR RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT

In 2018, the Victoria University of Wellington Foundation was the first Australasian university foundation to become a signatory to UNPRI, joining more than 4,900 organisations around the world that have committed to these principles. As a signatory, the board of the Foundation pledges to integrate ESG considerations into its investment decisions.

The UNPRI provides an internationally accepted framework for investors such as the Foundation to manage ESG issues in a manner consistent with improving long-term investment returns, focusing on six principles for responsible investment. The Foundation is encouraged by the ongoing improvement in its UNPRI results showing the commitment to meeting and exceeding these principles while enhancing its stewardship of philanthropic donations.

To learn more about UNPRI, go to www.unpri.org

To learn about the Foundation's investment policies related to ESG and see its Statement of Investment Policy and Objectives, go to www.wgtn.ac.nz/foundation

CREATING A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE

Once you have made provision for your loved ones, a gift in your will can be the perfect way to have a lasting effect, without impacting on your current financial needs. We are immensely grateful for every gift we receive, whether it is a specific sum or a percentage of whatever is left once you have provided for those close to you.

The Foundation not only assists the University by supporting the current needs of students, researchers, and academics, but also strives to ensure a successful and sustainable future for the University and its students through the endowment portfolio. Endowed gifts are carefully invested and managed to ensure resources for the University's priorities for generations to come.

When a donor advises that a donation is to last in perpetuity, the Foundation invests the donation in the endowment portfolio to earn an annual income. That income is then used to provide ongoing support to the University's students and projects as per the donor's wishes.

Donors often choose to create an endowed fund, and we acknowledge this commitment by naming the fund in honour of the donor or a family member. One new endowed fund was established in 2024: the Patricia Donnelly and Anthony Haas Scholarship Fund.

By making an endowed gift, you are investing in the future of our students, teaching, and research. The Foundation's audited financial statements are available on the website at www.wgtn.ac.nz/foundation

When you create a legacy, you continue to be part of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington far into the future. Like legacy donors Patricia and Tony, you can help students to unlock their full potential.

If you would like to have a confidential talk about leaving a gift in your will, contact Karen Whitehead at karen.whitehead@vuw.ac.nz or 0800 VIC LEGACY (0800 842 534).



Highlights of 2024

HALF-A-MILLION-DOLLAR BEQUEST TO SUPPORT PASIFIKA STUDENTS AND PACIFIC STUDIES

The late Patricia Donnelly and the late Tony Haas generously left a large donation to increase the number of scholarships for Pasifika students and expand the Pacific Studies programme.

Their generous bequest of nearly \$600,000 has established a named endowment in the Victoria University of Wellington Foundation.

The Wairarapa-based couple were well-known members of the Wellington community and staunchly believed in bridging the gap between Aotearoa New Zealand and its neighbouring Pacific Island nations.

Half of the gift will go towards creating more scholarship opportunities for Pasifika students and half will go towards supporting the Pacific Studies programme.

Roger Taylor, the executor of the trust and a lifelong friend of Patricia and Tony, says the gift demonstrates the strong values they held during their lives.

"They were just incredibly open people," says Roger. "Truly just amazing people. When we knew this money was going to become available, it was important that it was allocated in a way that reflected their background. This gift is a way for Tony and Tricia to demonstrate their commitment to both the Pacific Island community and the wider Wellington community."

Tony was a prolific journalist who covered Pacific stories and in 2015 published a memoir, *Being Palangi: My Pacific Journey*. The book discusses his Jewish German roots and how his father fled to New Zealand before World War II, his decades of journalistic work in the Pacific, and the social benefits of multiculturalism.

The bequest, which doesn't have any specific parameters other than the condition of supporting Pasifika scholarships and studies, was intentionally left vague.

"You can't actually say today what should happen in 10 years' time," Roger explains. "It's about allowing the University to make the right decision on who the money should go to. It was important to them that their gift would be used for projects that would otherwise not be attempted by the University."

Patricia and Tony were keen patrons of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO) and would frequently drive over the Remutaka Hill to attend performances in Wellington. In addition to their named endowment in the Victoria University of Wellington Foundation, they left an endowment for the NZSO to ensure their love of music continues to support the next generation of classical music enthusiasts.

Get more information on leaving a legacy gift to Victoria University by contacting Karen Whitehead, development manager—planned giving, at karen.whitehead@vuw.ac.nz or 0800 VIC LEGACY (0800 842 534).





TE HERENGA WAKA PAYS TRIBUTE TO DR GEORGE MASON, ONZM

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Dr George Mason, ONZM in September 2024 at the age of 94. Dr Mason was a leader in the agricultural chemicals industry in Taranaki and donated millions of dollars to scholarships, education, and postgraduate research all over Aotearoa New Zealand through the George Mason Charitable Trust.

Dr Mason was a generous contributor to our Marine Biology programme, supporting the research group led by Professor James Bell to expand and make discoveries about temperate mesophotic ecosystems (TMEs). These rich marine communities exist in the transition zone from light to dark between 20 and 150 metres of depth. Thanks to the trust's purchase of two remotely operated vehicles (ROVs), the group's researchers could go beyond the range of divers for the first time.

This research 'shone a light' on how these biodiversity hotspots might be responding to climate change and led to Victoria's TME group becoming the global leader in TME research.

"Not only did George fund scientific endeavour through his charitable trust, but he also built a lifetime of connections with academics and researchers," says Professor Bell. "George was inspiring, sharp, and encouraging of all those he chose to work with. His legacy is in the progress he enabled, and the network of students and researchers whose careers he supported."

In 2019, Dr Mason was named an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to conservation, philanthropy, and the community.



Matariki Williams, Oroya and Melvin Day Fellow 2024



*Melvin Day, Seated Figure (ca. 1958) 840 mm x 765 mm.
Ngā Puhipuhi o Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington Art
Collection, gifted 2018.*



*Matariki Williams (centre) with Shona Willis (left) and Mark
Hutchins-Pond from the Oroya and Melvin Day Trust*

FELLOWSHIP DEEPENS UNDERSTANDING OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND ART HISTORY

Matariki Williams was the 2024 recipient of the Oroya and Melvin Day Fellowship in New Zealand Art History, which allowed her to research and teach an intensive undergraduate summer course on contemporary Māori art.

In 2023, the centenary year of Melvin Day's birth, the Oroya and Melvin Day Trust added the fellowship to its existing student scholarship. Melvin Day (known as Pat) was an acclaimed New Zealand artist, art historian, and director of the National Art Gallery. He produced distinctive and historically significant works over his 75-year working life, several of which the University owns.

Oroya Day lectured in Art History at the University and was the driving force behind the restoration and preservation of Katherine Mansfield's birthplace in Thorndon.

Matariki Williams (Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Hauiti, Taranaki, Ngāti Whakauae, Te Atihau-nui-a-Pāpārangi) is an alumna of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington and an accomplished curator, writer, and editor with expertise in mātauranga Māori. She is one of the hosts of TVNZ programme *National Treasures*, in which she presents history through personal objects.

In February 2025, Matariki taught a course focused on contemporary Māori art entitled *He Iho mō ngā Arotakenga Toi Māori: A Continuum of Māori Art*. Matariki says the term 'iho' describes something being passed down and is also the name for the umbilical cord.

"I'm looking at the passing on of intergenerational knowledge and what happens when it's been severed. How do you recapture it? How can we infiltrate archives, museums, and galleries with Māori ways of memorialisation, through generations, through artworks, through the canon?"

Having worked as a historian in government and as a curator at Te Papa Tongarewa, teaching the course was an intersection of Matariki's interests. She found the high level of interest in the course exciting, but was surprised at how little the 29 students knew about Aotearoa's history. She was able to relate that history to what is happening today, pointing out that at every moment there is a Māori artist canonising these points in history from Māori perspectives.

"A lot of Māori artists are historians in the way they research their works and create incredible things that go to the heart of our deep and complex histories. I loved sharing that with the students."

The course included looking at art in local exhibitions, getting a special view behind the scenes in museums and galleries, and close study of the University's outstanding collection, Ngā Puhipuhi o Te Herenga Waka, as Matariki believes in the experience of viewing art in person.

Matariki says the environment for contemporary Māori artists is more supportive now than it was for the ground-breaking artists of previous generations.

"At one time, there was a perception that Māori who wanted to become contemporary artists had to 'turn their back on the marae' to survive in the city. But that's no longer the case and spaces like Ngā Mokopuna and Te Herenga Waka marae maintain that connection for Māori students."

Matariki was thrilled to attend the Venice Biennale in 2024 with a large delegation of Indigenous artists from Australia. The group were beside themselves with excitement when it was announced that the four Māori women of Mataaho Collective and Australian Indigenous artist Archie Moore had won Golden Lion awards.

"It was just the most beautiful time to be there. Venice was like an alternative universe where art is just the norm."

Shona Willis, a trustee of the Oroya and Melvin Day Trust, was delighted to meet with Matariki at the end of her fellowship. "Matariki is so refreshing and energetic," she says. "We have the sense that she will just keep on making a deeply meaningful contribution here, there, and all over New Zealand."

Professor Susan Ballard, who teaches Art History and Environmental Humanities, says the Oroya and Melvin Day Fellowship in New Zealand Art History is a significant and generous philanthropic contribution that spreads beyond the University to the art community, including artists and galleries.

"There are so many incredible artists in Aotearoa, and this fellowship develops the future writers and curators who will work alongside them. Matariki has encouraged students to learn and remember our unique histories, as well as support the histories that are being made today."



FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND CHAIR IN ADVANCED AI

Generously supported by Bob Dykes, alumnus and finance and tech expert, the University is poised to further cement its leadership in the AI field with the establishment of the Bob Dykes Chair in Advanced Artificial Intelligence.

This pioneering role will provide exceptional leadership in advanced AI (artificial intelligence), helping to build Aotearoa New Zealand's capacity in the field. The Chair will mentor future leaders, promote interdisciplinary research, and foster collaboration among researchers, entrepreneurs, and international experts.

By involving students, staff, and startups, the Chair aims to create a dynamic ecosystem that transforms businesses across the globe, while exploring innovative advanced AI applications to ensure Aotearoa is positioned at the forefront of global advancements.

Generative AI, an initial iteration of advanced AI, is a branch of artificial intelligence focused on creating new content by learning patterns in existing data through self-analysis, and holds immense innovation potential. For instance, it is leading to exciting developments in medical research and in energy storage designs such as new battery composition. The rapid advancement of AI has raised critical questions about ethics, intellectual property, and societal impacts, challenges this Chair will be uniquely positioned to address.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Nic Smith says the new Chair marks a significant milestone for both the University and Aotearoa New Zealand.

"Generative AI is already reshaping industries and society at an unprecedented pace. Further iterations of advanced AI will accelerate the rate of change. The Chair will provide unique leadership in equipping the next generation of researchers and innovators to respond to the rapidly evolving challenges and opportunities AI presents.

"It is a bold step forward, and a wonderful achievement for the University, New Zealand, and the wider global community."

The Chair will bring together a multidisciplinary group of expert advisers from government, university, industry, and user communities. It will foster close collaboration with New Zealand's AI Forum and other key stakeholders to provide strategic insights and recommendations on AI policy, ensuring that government initiatives align with the latest technological developments.

The University's Dean of Science, Professor Nicola Nelson, says this Chair positions the University to guide New Zealand into a future shaped by advanced AI.

"Our leadership in the field is already highlighted by a number of experts on staff, as well as our offering of New Zealand's first undergraduate major in AI.

"The Bob Dykes Chair will provide the critical leadership needed to deepen this expertise, serving as a visionary leader in advanced AI and ensuring Aotearoa New Zealand not only harnesses its transformative potential but also emerges as a global frontrunner."

Bob Dykes says he is pleased to help the University create this opportunity for students and researchers to have a leading position in advanced AI.

"I have benefited immensely from my education at Victoria University and would like to ensure future generations are well grounded in this new technology, which will change so many aspects of our economies and lives in the near future."

Mr Dykes's generous donation will fund the Chair's salary for three years, with the new Chair expected to start later in 2025.



Professor Sally Jane Norman in the Adam Concert Room



Denis Adam

UNIVERSITY WELCOMES THE DENIS ADAM CHAIR IN MUSIC

In 2024, the University was delighted to announce the establishment of the Denis Adam Chair in Music at the New Zealand School of Music—Te Kōkī (NZSM), generously funded by the Adam Foundation for the next decade.

Professor Sally Jane Norman, former director of the NZSM, was appointed as the inaugural holder of the Denis Adam Chair. An esteemed scholar and academic leader, Professor Norman has deep connections in the local, national, and international music communities.

In this position, she continues to play a key role in the NZSM's external and community links, in close collaboration with Professor Kim Cunio, the head of the School.

The University is committed to fostering musical talent and leadership within its community and strengthening its partnerships with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and other professional bodies through the national music centre.

Reinforced by international collaborations, Professor Norman's teaching, research, and engagement activities affirm the social benefits of music and sonic arts.

Professor Norman says, "The NZSM is hugely appreciative of the Adam Foundation's generosity. Our treasured Adam Concert Room has long been central to the School's activities, and the Denis Adam Chair further demonstrates the Foundation's belief in our work.

"This support inspires confidence for our pursuit of excellent musical education and practice, in and beyond our region and country."

Professor Norman took up the role at the end of March 2024.

Adam Foundation





From left: Student Finance team members Bianca Fonti, Monica Simpson, and Hayley Tinning, with Winter Energy Grant recipients Max Blake and Oliver Stirling.

WINTER ENERGY GRANTS SUPPORT NEARLY 900 STUDENTS

Alumni, corporate sponsors, and University staff came together to help students pay expensive power bills during the Wellington winter.

"When the weather turns cold, many students with tight budgets face a difficult financial choice," says Paige Jarman, Student Finance manager.

"Should they pay expensive power bills and risk going broke, or stay financially afloat by living in cold, uncomfortable housing?"

For the second year in a row, Te Herenga Waka's Student Finance team, in collaboration with Procurement and the Development and Alumni Relations Office, ensured students didn't have to choose.

The 2024 Winter Hardship Campaign raised \$40,960 and, with a boost from existing Student Hardship funds, the communal effort supported nearly 900 students to pay off their power bills during the expensive winter months.

Applications to the 'warm your where' grant were open to students between 29 July and 9 August. Students were encouraged to apply as a flat, and each household received between \$100–\$300 in grant money depending on how many Victoria University students lived together.

Paige says the campaign has made a tangible difference in the lives of students.

"This initiative was born out of a desire to reach a high number of students with a low-barrier way to support them through the cost-of-living crisis.

"We've heard from many students who reduce their grocery shop in order to afford power, or who only heat their home during the free power hour. Having more financial freedom makes a huge difference to their wellbeing and their ability to focus on their studies."

Heat for your health

Support for the Winter Hardship Campaign kicked off in June with a promise of \$18,700 in matching funds from corporate sponsors PB Tech, Kwikill Environmental Services, Setpoint Solutions, Fleetwise, Blue Star, ANZ, DXC Technology, and Aquaheat.

This special fundraising opportunity meant that every dollar the public raised to the pledged amount would be matched—doubling the philanthropic reach of each donation.

"Alumni and staff quickly rose to the challenge and, within a few short weeks, the total donations exceeded the matching goal by several thousand dollars," says Paige.

"This outpouring of support meant that nearly twice as many students benefited from the Winter Energy Grants in 2024 compared to 2023."

While the chilly housing in Wellington is no secret, statistics from the 2018 General Social Survey highlight just how difficult it can be for students to find a healthy home in Aotearoa:

- 48.6% of renters reported their homes were always or sometimes damp, compared to 26.6% of homeowners
- 47.4% of renters reported their home had mould, compared to 29.7% of homeowners
- 32% of renters reported they could see their breath inside, compared to 13% of homeowners.

"Cold housing is also linked to myriad physical and mental health challenges, and many students reported getting sick more frequently when they couldn't afford to run their heaters," Paige explains.

In the application process, students were given space to describe their current living situation and financial stressors. One student offered detailed insight into the struggle of their household to make ends meet: "We are all full-time students who struggle from week to week to afford basic necessities such as food and to heat our home. We live behind a cliff, which means we get zero sunlight throughout the day and our home grows black mould in all our rooms. Three out of the five of us are unemployed and due to the lack of jobs around Wellington, even with constant applying, we have no luck finding work. Each of us gets \$300 a week for student loan living costs, but after our steep rent of \$260 each per week, that leaves \$40 for food and power.



"This grant would help us immensely as it would mean we can dry our clothes (it is taking 3–4 days to dry our clothes on racks throughout our living room), heat and dry out our home, and have more money for food."

The Winter Hardship Campaign is a great example of what can be accomplished when a range of stakeholders come together to support our student community. While \$100 may not seem like much, these grants have made a huge difference to students juggling the fiscal pressure that comes with flatting in an expensive city.

Thank you again to these corporate donors for pledging matching funds.





Melanie Smith, CEO, NEC Group

INTERNATIONAL CEO CHAMPIONS FUTURE WĀHINE MĀORI LEADERS

Melanie Smith (Ngāpuhi) is still in a minority as a wahine Māori business leader in London. She hopes to change that by funding the Mokaraka Māori Women in Business Scholarship to support young Māori women studying at Ōrauāriki—Wellington School of Business and Government.

Mel is CEO of Blackstone portfolio company the NEC Group, the United Kingdom's largest live entertainment and events company. She's a woman of influence on the international stage and would like to see young Māori women aspiring to lead global companies.

"My goal is to build a cohort of brilliant Māori businesswomen who can run the world—or at least some big global companies. Financial support, mentoring, and access to other fantastic people in networks (including other scholarship recipients) will help get these wāhine on their way."

The first recipient of the \$15,000 scholarship is Laura Scatchard (Tūhourangi, Te Arawa), a designer and ex-teacher who is now studying for both an Executive Master of Business Administration and a Postgraduate Certificate in Indigenous Studies. A familiar face at Rutherford House, Laura is also the entrepreneurship coordinator for The Atom—Te Kahu o Te Ao innovation space.

Laura was raised in the rural outskirts of Tauranga, Bay of Plenty, and attributes her resourcefulness and creativity to the self-sufficient lifestyle her mother nurtured. She grew up surrounded by nature, eating home-grown meat and produce and wearing home-made clothing. These humble beginnings were what led to her love for creativity, sustainability, and the circular economy, she says.

However, elements of this upbringing—along with her struggles with ADHD—may have somewhat contributed to her feelings of imposter syndrome in adulthood, she says.

"I almost didn't apply for the scholarship. In fact, I almost withdrew my application a couple of times. I didn't feel that I was deserving of it—that I wasn't smart enough, young enough, 'business' enough, or even Māori enough. As a neurodivergent person, I also had feelings that I just wasn't capable enough.

"I want to thank those who selected me for seeing through all that, because now—on the other side of it—I feel supported, validated, and more confident."

Laura chose to take on the MBA to develop her competency and confidence in business leadership.

"For me, it is important for women and Māori to be able to speak the same language as those in leadership positions and positions of power. Our systems tend to prevent minority groups from sitting at the 'adults' table', and what I would like to see is more Māori, more wāhine, and more creative people making impactful decisions in business."

She sometimes struggles with what seems like a choice between making money and creating social impact. However, speaking with Mel confirmed her decision to focus on her business acumen.

"Mel told me that creating impact can be difficult when you don't have money, which made me even more curious about the ethics of business and its place in making a positive impact."

Mel completed her MBA in the United States, and then worked for 12 years at global management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, where she became a partner. The organisation valued drive, determination, and intrinsic qualities above most other things. She says that the most important criteria for her scholarship are solid academic credentials and drive—"that's it".

"After my experience with McKinsey & Company, I don't think anything really intimidated me, as I had met people from all walks of life—from CEOs to frontline factory workers.

"I am still sometimes surprised to be the only woman or the only ethnic minority (or both) in a room. It does mean you can get treated differently, or noticed more, but I mostly figure out how to use that to my advantage."

Mel has some advice for young Māori women aspiring to pursue a career in business. "Raise your aspirations! Too many women don't think they can reach the highest heights—well, we won't if we don't try.

"Whāia te iti kahurangi, ki te tuohu koe, me he maunga teitei. (Seek the treasure that you value most dearly, if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain.)"

Laura urges other wāhine who are studying to apply for everything they can.

"It's not just about money, it's about accountability and mentorship and feeling supported—that someone's in your corner. Now Mel is in my corner, I am motivated more than ever to go for what I want and get myself in a position where I can pay it forward."



Laura Scatchard at The Atom—Te Kahu o Te Ao innovation space.

INTERTWINING POETRY, MUSIC, AND ART

Cadence Chung, the inaugural Ruth and Oswald L. Kraus Innovator-in-Residence at Wai-te-ata Press, spent her residency producing the book *Mythos*, an audio-visual anthology of art by young New Zealanders.

Ruth and Oswald Kraus, founders of Brick Row Publishing Company, wanted to foster young writers and artists. They left a generous bequest to establish the Ruth and Oswald L. Kraus Innovator-in-Residence Scholarship, which offers students a one-trimester residency at the University's Wai-te-ata Press. The residency gives them the opportunity to explore the interface between writing and publishing.

Chris Kraus, Ruth and Oswald's daughter, says she was delighted to select Cadence as the inaugural recipient, because her interests and strengths align with the Kraus family's.

"Cadence's interest in poetry publications reminds me of my parents' journal *Poetry New Zealand*, and my sister Carol trained as a classical musician, as Cadence is doing.

"She seems to be pursuing these vocations with intelligence, enjoyment, skill, and enthusiasm."

During the residency, Cadence learnt the publishing process, commissioned and edited artworks, wrote poetry, composed music, collaborated on book design, and recorded poets and musicians at places such as Lilburn Studios and St Peter's Church.

"This was such a special opportunity and I'm truly so thankful to the University, to the donors who made this residency possible, and to Wai-te-ata Press for their support of young artists. It can be difficult to find the

time and resources to make any art at all, so being able to spend a whole summer on a project was truly a dream come true."

Already a seasoned composer, classical mezzo-soprano, and published poet, Cadence also received the Margaret Kate Parker Scholarship, the 2023 FAME Emerging Practitioner Award, and the 2023 Kāpiti Chorale Award. Her successes reflect a persistent passion for words and music.

Cadence says she properly discovered poetry in her junior years of secondary school and began to be published from Year 10 onwards, with work appearing in literary magazines such as *Landfall*, *Starling*, *Turbine*, *MiNDFOOD*, and *The Spinoff*.

Alongside her literary pursuits, Cadence has thrived in the musical domain as she pursues a Bachelor of Music at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington. Majoring in Classical Performance (Voice) and minoring in English Literature, Cadence's interest in the convergence of these two disciplines has been a guiding force in her creative exploration.

"I've loved singing ever since I won my school talent show at primary school, but I only truly experienced the depth of the classical world when I began my university studies. Since then, I've performed across Wellington as well as in national competitions, even having the opportunity to work with my classmates on the biennial New Zealand School of Music—Te Kōkī opera.

"Being a keen lover of interdisciplinary ventures, I've found ways to combine music and poetry. I find that art forms are often put in neat boxes, without much interaction between different genres. As someone who works in several fields of art, it feels natural to put them together, to have poetry and music respond and intertwine."

During her residency, Cadence had the opportunity to explore her interest in the relationship between music and literature, resulting in the creation of her book *Mythos*, which showcases the work of young artists. It is an anthology of poetry, writing, musical scores, and visual art, complemented by recordings to enrich the reader's experience. Cadence also contributed her own poetry and musical scores.

"It's been special to work with these young artists. The literary community in New Zealand, especially in Wellington, is absolutely thriving, and it was such a wonderful environment for me as a young writer to surround myself with art. I've learnt so much as a poet, musician, and editor."

Mythos was celebrated at a book launch in March 2024.

Cadence Chung, the Ruth and Oswald L. Kraus Innovator-in-Residence





Scholarship recipients Jade Cowley and Quincy Gillies-Walters

RURAL MĀORI STUDENTS FULFIL THEIR DREAMS

Information management services provider TEAM IM NZ has sponsored two new undergraduate scholarships for Māori school leavers who wish to study STEM-related subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) at Te Herenga Waka.

The company is New Zealand-owned and operated and has been delivering long-term sustainable IT business solutions for more than 20 years. The TEAM IM NZ Scholarship for Māori students (School Leavers) is worth \$8,000 per year and includes a paid internship.

The first recipients, Jade Cowley and Quincy Gillies-Walters, are both from rural areas and made the exciting and challenging move to Wellington for their first year of study in 2024. They spent the summer break at TEAM IM NZ's Wellington offices, where they gained valuable first-hand experience across various aspects of the tech industry, including audit processes and developing apps and websites.

Jade says, "Beyond technical skills, the internship provided a broad perspective on different career paths. Engaging with professionals in various roles, attending events, and directly interacting with customers enriched my understanding of the industry. The flexibility of the programme allowed me to explore areas of interest, making the experience both educational and insightful."

Jade, who is studying Computer Science, says that living in Wellington presents her with opportunities for networking that are essential for her career aspirations.

"I am proud to be one of the few wāhine Māori in my field. This scholarship represents more than financial aid; it is a testament to the potential for Māori students in STEM fields. Connecting with my Māori heritage has been a vital part of my journey, and I am committed to bringing the values and perspectives of my culture into my academic and professional life."

Quincy is studying for a Bachelor of Engineering with Honours, majoring in Software Engineering, following a childhood fascination with computers and how systems worked.

“As I got older, my mum encouraged me to explore the IT industry, highlighting how well it aligned with my interests and skills. By the time I was 13 years old, I had already decided to pursue software engineering—and I haven’t looked back since.”

The financial stress involved in moving to Wellington meant Quincy was initially unsure whether he would be able to pursue this dream. Receiving the scholarship was a massive relief for Quincy and his whānau and smoothed his transition to university study.

“Being the first in my whānau to attend university is something I’m really proud of. It’s given me the opportunity to be a role model for my younger siblings and cousins.”

Quincy feels strongly that there aren’t enough Māori people pursuing higher education, especially in the IT industry.

“Many people in my extended family left high school early, and it’s always weighed on me because I knew they were more than capable of succeeding in education. I want to show them that university is within their reach and that they’re capable of achieving it too.”

While Quincy missed his family, he had a fantastic experience living in Joan Stevens Hall, where he made lifelong friends and got familiar with the city.

“I love how compact and easy to navigate Wellington is. The city isn’t too big, which makes it much easier to adapt to, especially coming from a small town.”

Ian Rogers, managing director of TEAM IM, says:

“If New Zealand is to remain productive, it must harness talent from across the entire population.

“We see this scholarship programme as a way to encourage young Māori to pursue careers they might not have otherwise considered by providing financial assistance. Many of our scholarship recipients may be the first in their family to attend tertiary education, becoming role models within their whānau.

“For TEAM IM NZ and the technology sector, this means employing more New Zealanders, increasing our diversity of talent, and helping to boost New Zealand’s IT sector—ultimately enhancing the country’s productivity.”

New scholarships in 2024

- **L.G. Peacocke Scholarship**
- **Mokaraka Māori Women in Business Scholarship**
- **Pacific Biosecurity Scholarship for Pasifika Students**
- **Pasifika Fale Malae Development Scholarship**
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- **Te Hau Kori Scholarships**
- **Te Hikuwai Rangahau Hauora Doctoral Scholarships**



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