

Retracing the footsteps of Tahu Pōtiki

**Mā wai taku kauae e tō ki uta ki tawhiti”
Nā Kawatapuārangi
Who will carry my jawbone into the future?**

A whakatauki that speaks to leadership and succession.

By Ranui Maxwell



Jade Kameta (Healthy Families East Cape, Rautaki Māori)

Celebrating Mātauranga Māori success with Jade Kameta.

Last year our Rautaki Māori, Jade Kameta handed in his last assessment for his Masters in Māori and Indigenous Leadership, through Aotahi, University of Canterbury. The three-year journey of study was celebrated in March, along with some of his cohort at Pounamunui (Houmaitawhiti) marae in Rotoiti with proud whānau and friends.

In September last year, Jade attended a haerenga (trip) as part of his Masters program – (Cross-Cultural Research Tour Paper). The haerenga was designed to introduce taura (students) to indigenous approaches to development, innovation, and self-determination in order to provide them with a rich and diverse set of precedents from which to design creative and principle-based solutions within our own communities and organisations. These approaches and concepts are aligned with Healthy Families East Cape’s areas of activation in the prevention of chronic illness and disease. Jade and other Masters’ taura investigated contrasting theoretical and philosophical approaches to indigenous development to provide them with a solid framework for critically engaging with and evaluating the comparative value, impact, and efficacy of various problem-solving approaches within Te Ao Māori.

Jade’s role as Rautaki Māori (Māori Strategist) generates the big picture systems view of health equity and wellbeing for Healthy Families East Cape through the application of Māori indigenous knowledge that can strengthen local systems, environments and settings.

The Rautaki Māori identifies and secures opportunities to activate or amplify kaupapa Māori across the health system, and the sectors and systems that impact Māori outcomes across Tairāwhiti and the East Cape.

They heard from some incredible Māori influencers who have had an impact on a variety of spaces, including Mātauranga Māori, marae, hapū, iwi, politics, governance, councils, academia, environmental, legal, digital, art, business, housing, entrepreneurship, financial, health and wellbeing, mental health and addictions, built environments, placemaking, co-design, social enterprises, rangatahi and ringawera.

"The MMIL gives people the ability to articulate themselves better, to push mana motuhake at a local level, which can affect any level, whether be at a grassroots, management, or policy level". "It also helps them build relationships with like-minded people throughout the motu" (Che Wilson, 2023).



"Not only has it improved my ability to articulate my mahi and passion for mātauranga Māori, but it has also allowed me to connect and learn from other amazing like-minded leaders, innovators disrupting the systems by pushing mana motuhake in their own unique way in their own spaces. It has validated all the mahi I've been involved with so far with Healthy Families to evidence mātauranga Māori as health prevention solutions. And it has unlocked new doors to opportunities to advance mātauranga Māori", says Jade.

What Jade valued the most was that they traced the footsteps of the illustrious tūpuna Tahu Pōtiki, starting in Te Tairāwhiri, Uawa, Turanga-nui-ā-Kiwa, Wairoa, Heretaunga, Wairarapa down to Whanganuia-ā-Tara then ending our haerenga in Ōtautahi.

TAHU-pōtiki's birth in Whāngārā has been conservatively dated to around 1450AD. He was the younger brother of Porourangi, the founding ancestor of Ngāti Porou. Tahu-pōtiki and Porourangi trace a senior line of descent from Paikea (circa 1350AD) to Pouheni, to Tarawhakatū, then their father Nanaia. ([Nga Maunga Kōrero](#)).

The haerenga was also underpinned by Māori values such as manaakitanga, whakawhanaungatanga, kaitiakitanga, wairuatanga, kotahitanga, whakapapa as well as the tikanga and kawa of the haukāinga.

"Our accommodation was mostly at marae until we arrived in Ōtautahi and stayed at Canterbury University," remembers Jade.

“What added another layer of meaning to this haerenga was whakapapa – I whakapapa to Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau A Apanui and Te Whakatōhea on my mothers’ side. My daughter, Mai Hawaiiiki, lives in Christchurch and her whakapapa is to Ngai Tahu.”

Jade’s daughter was able to join him for parts of the haerenga in Christchurch.

“Having had time to reflect on my trip, what is reminiscent is that the leaders we heard from were innovators and system disruptors working to improve equity for Māori. They all had a clear vision and followed their passion, drawing on the strength of their whakapapa, and serving a greater purpose than themselves” says Jade.

“Overall, the haerenga was an incredible opportunity to meet and connect with many inspiring individuals who are doing incredible things for the betterment of our people, while striving for Rangatiratanga and mana Motuhake. I'd like to thank the organisers of the haerenga, Jamie Hape and Sheena Maru, as well as our cohort's rangatira, Che Wilson, for this amazing opportunity.”

Jade vividly also remembers and quotes Rhonda Tibble from September 2022, “research done by each graduate today, will inform the business of your family. And if you’re not informing the business of your family, then who is”.

Rhonda Tibble of Ngāti Porou was also a speaker during the haerenga, delivering a kōrero about the new forms of leadership that have come from the past, what are the existing forms of leadership, and what forms of leadership we will require in the next 10 to 50 years.

Jade is certain her words will have an influence on his leadership style in the future.

The Healthy Families East Cape and Te Ao Trust congratulate Jade on his achievement. He kai kei aku ringa.