

## Raukura 2016 National Secondary Schools Kapa Haka Champions



On Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> of July Raukura departed from Rotorua Girls High School bound for Hastings. The purpose of the trip – to participate and place in the top 3 at the National Secondary Kapa Haka competition.

We arrived in Hastings to the official Powhiri which was amazing. Among the 41 different schools participating the Venue was also filled with the crème de la crème of Senior Kapa Haka performer's.

After the Powhiri we then travelled 45 minutes out to the lovely community of Waimarama. This would be our home for the duration of the competition.



Our performance day was not until Thursday so this allowed the students to further bond and practise at the Marae. Unfortunately, the space we needed was not available so we travelled in to Hastings where we were welcomed by Geraldine Travis. (Principal of Hastings Girls High School) She provided us with the use of her school Hall to practise in which was greatly

appreciated. Her staff and students showed great manaakitanga to our group which we will never forget.

On Thursday we woke and our students though nervous, were ready to perform. Hair tied back, feathers put in, mokos applied, tatuas fitted, piupius on and finally pois tucked in – our students warmed their vocal chords with a quick song backstage. At 1.30pm they hit the stage. Their performance captured the audience. In particular, the Waiata-a-ringā – a tribute to Mauriora Kingi. Many were left in tears.

The crowd was further captivated with the Poi. As consecutive winners of the Poi for the last 2 competitions we wanted to achieve the unachievable and be Poi champions for 3 competitions. The haka tautoko that came after our performance from the RGHS support group topped off a wonderful performance that hopefully would propel us into the Top 9 for finals day. The top 9 were broadcast live on TV and radio so at our Marae we all sat around and waited with baited breath for the announcement. Our group was the 2<sup>nd</sup> to be named and we celebrated with hugs and kisses. This celebration then turned to seriousness – **Whaea Laurelle** and **Matua Jamus** quickly called the group in for a quick run through. After this the group settled in for an early night and all were sound asleep by 9.30pm.



At 5am we all awoke and began the preparation for our what would be our groups most important performance. We arrived at the venue at 8.30 and then hit the stage not long after. The group were incredible – performing at a level that surpassed the day before. After the performance we then went back to Waimarama for the clean-up and to get ready for Prize-giving.

The prize giving was nerve racking for all. We placed in all disciplines and at the end were announced as National Champions for 2016. Final placings were:

Choral – 1<sup>st</sup> Equal

Entry – 1<sup>st</sup> Equal

Moteatea – 1<sup>st</sup> Equal

Exit – 1<sup>st</sup> Equal

Waiata-a-ringā – 1<sup>st</sup> Equal

Poi – 1<sup>st</sup> Equal

Haka – 3<sup>rd</sup> Equal

Overall – 1<sup>st</sup> Place.

Acknowledgements:

- **Whaea Whariki, Whaea Aroha, Whaea Taulima, Hemi and Pa Jo** – the meals you provided us with during our stay in Waimarama were better than some restaurants. We cannot thank you enough for this and also the medical care you also provided.
- To **Korka** – thank you for providing and welcoming us at your Marae. Your family is now a part of ours. Thank you also for being a cook and a shopper!
- To the following organisations for their generous contribution over this campaign. **First Sovereign Trust, NZCT, Ngati Whakaue, Te Arawa Kapa Haka Inc.** Without your help we would never have been able to have such a successful outcome.
- To our Principal **Mrs Gibbons** – thank you for coming with us and supporting us. Your presence was much appreciated by all.
- Finally to **Whaea Laurelle Tamati** – words cannot express how much respect and aroha we have for you. The hundreds of hours that you gave up during weekends and weekdays have resulted in this success. You along with **Matua Michael** are legends and experts in the world of Kapa Haka – this shown in the results Raukura have achieved at both a regional and national level for the past 7 years. We are truly indebted to you.

Nga mihi nui – TE ROOPU RAUKURA – Manageress **Wai Morrison**