

Media release

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### **Four students receive pharmacy scholarships**

An outstanding calibre of applications has seen the Hiwinui Heke pharmacy scholarships shared among four Māori pharmacy students this year.

The awards are jointly presented by PHARMAC and Nga Kaitiaki o te Puna Rongoa o Aotearoa (Māori Pharmacists Association or MPA). They are aimed at students enrolled at pharmacy schools and committed to studying pharmacy.

Three University of Auckland and one Otago University pharmacy student have each been awarded \$2500 scholarships. They are:

- Brendan McIntosh (Dunedin – Kai Tahu) final year BPharm Otago University
- Robert Haua (Rotorua – Ngai Te Rangi) 2<sup>nd</sup> year BPharm University of Auckland
- Jilly Alexander (Kerikeri – Ngapuhi) 3<sup>rd</sup> year BPharm University of Auckland
- Susan Wilson (Pukekohe – Ngapuhi) final year BPharm University of Auckland

PHARMAC's General Manager Māori Health Marama Parore says the standard of applications this year was one of the highest PHARMAC has seen.

"There is certainly no shortage of high-quality Māori pharmacy students, which is extremely encouraging for the profession," says Marama Parore. "It is important that the health service is responsive to the needs of patients and these awards are aimed at supporting people who will be aware of and able to respond to Māori seeking pharmacy care."

PHARMAC developed the scholarships with the MPA as a way to encourage more Māori students to complete their pharmacy studies.

"PHARMAC has recently published its updated Māori health strategy Te Whaioranga, and one of its five pillars is advancing tino rangatiratanga with whānau in health interventions," says Marama Parore. "Having a highly-skilled Māori health workforce is part of achieving that goal and I am delighted to be able to assist these students as they embark on their pharmacy careers."

"I congratulate the recipients and I hope they go on to play a leading role in the pharmacy sector."

The scholarships are named after Hiwinui Heke (Te Arawa), who was one of the first Māori to graduate from a New Zealand pharmacy school in 1955.

### **Photo caption:**

Hiwinui Heke scholarship winners (left to right): Robert Haua, Jilly Alexander, Susah Wilson, Brendan McIntosh.

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