

# Music hits the right chord with mayor

SINGING has always been a passion for 18-year old Simone Holland who discovered her talent through kapa haka while at Te Kuiti High School.

In May, the talented young vocalist won the Waiata Workshop and Showcase talent quest held in Te Kuiti beating seven other finalists from throughout the Maniapoto tribal region. (*Waitomo News*, May 29)

The win propelled her into the spotlight locally with Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna selecting Miss Holland as the district's new representative on the Mayors' Rangatahi Leadership Development Programme.

The national programme is run throughout the country with 25 mayors onboard.

This is the second year the Waitomo district has offered the programme and Miss Holland replaces 2011 Rangatahi leader Te Ingo Ngaia.

Miss Holland says the opportunity to be part of the programme will "certainly open doors".

"I want to be able to influence the youth out there in the community and show them that there is another path and it doesn't have to involve drugs, crime, all those negative things."

Mr Hanna chose Miss Holland after seeing her perform at the talent quest.

"Simone was chosen out of six for this programme. I want to help her develop the potential

she has.

"Music plays such a big part in young people's lives nowadays and after hearing her sing not only was I blown away, I knew she would be a good role model for Maori youth."

## 2012 FOCUS

Miss Holland says her focus this year will be on getting in touch with young people locally, asking them what they want to see in their community and how she can help make it happen.

"I feel there isn't enough in the way of education for young people who have been kicked out of school. There are courses available but there needs to be more one-on-one tutoring for youth," she says.

"I want to do that this year, I want to help them with their courses and their units. I want to make a difference."

Miss Holland is presently studying music at Wintec in Hamilton, and plans to carry her studies on from her Certificate in Music to degree level.

"My dream is to teach music and perform as an artist overseas, my goal in five years time is to be travelling around the world with my career."

"No matter what happens though New Zealand will always be my home."

And it seems her singing career is just kicking off.



**NEW FACE:** Simone Holland has been selected by Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna as the district's new representative on the Mayors' Rangatahi Leadership Development programme and is looking forward to helping young people reach their goals locally.

Not only will Miss Holland compete in the National Maori Music Awards in Hastings on September 14, she is also the vocalist for a three-piece local band. Miss Holland has performed at several community events and will be on stage at this year's Christmas parade.

She travels to the Aspiring Lead-

ers Forum in Wellington on July 25, where she will join other young leaders from around the country and MPs to discuss ideas and the philosophy of leadership.

"That will be a great opportunity for me. I will meet so many other young people who want to make a difference as well."

## IN BRIEF

### Annual appeal

ONCE again Otorohanga residents dug deep for their local St John ambulance officers. For last month's annual appeal,

residents donated \$1500, which team leader Sue Wilson says was a fantastic effort. This year, funds were raised through blood pressure checks, a cake stall, a cadet walk and the Dental Surgery/Bailey Ingham Fun Run.

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