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Media release

TIA announces recipients of 'Women in Tourism Career Accelerator' scholarships

Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) is delighted to announce the recipients of three TIA-funded scholarships to take part in the 'Women in Tourism Career Accelerator' programme with Grow Tourism and Powrsuit.

They are: Dahna O'Docherty, Park Manager – Tasman Holiday Parks Picton, Morgan Monahan, Customer Sales Manager, Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa, and Kiriana Koni, Māori Development Manager, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited.

"It was a pleasure to read the nominations and get closer to the aspirations, achievements and mahi of some of the amazing women in the TIA community," says TIA Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram.

"The three successful recipients, Dahna, Kiriana and Morgan, had powerful nominations with examples of their significant achievements, passion for our industry, and the positive impact they have on others.

"I hope they find the programme insightful and inspiring for their personal development and tourism career aspirations, and that the connections they make will expand and strengthen their professional network to support them into the future."

TIA was blown away by the volume of nominations made on behalf of powerful wāhine across the tourism industry, with more than 60 nominations received over the two-week period.

"I want to thank everyone who took the time to nominate a woman they knew and felt would benefit from the scholarship.

"We know from speaking with our members that they are passionate about growing their teams and investing in their development. Opportunities can be hard to access though - particularly in smaller regional centres of New Zealand - and what is available often doesn't have a tourism lens applied.

"The strong engagement reinforces that the initiative by Powrsuit and Grow Tourism is on point – filling a real need in our industry - and we're delighted to be a champion for it," said Ms Ingram.

Responses from the TIA-funded scholarship recipients

Morgan Monahan, Customer Sales Manager, Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa

I'm incredibly grateful for this opportunity and to be awarded a scholarship– it means a lot to be supported in a space that empowers women in the tourism industry. I'm excited to embark on this course and grow my confidence to help continue contributing to the future of tourism.

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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Dahna O'Docherty, Park Manager - Tasman Holiday Parks - Picton

I'm relatively new to the tourism industry, having started in September 2024. My transition has been fast-paced and incredibly rewarding, and I'm continuing to grow and adapt within the industry with enthusiasm and commitment. Being awarded a scholarship means a great deal to me — not only as recognition of my potential, but as a chance to further my development and make a meaningful contribution to the tourism industry. It gives me the support and confidence to keep striving, learning, and leading, and I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally.

Kiriana Koni, Māori Development Manager, Tātaki Auckland Unlimited

Receiving this scholarship means so much to me, both personally and professionally. It represents an incredible opportunity to learn and develop skills that will empower me to take my career to new heights. This scholarship not only fuels my ambition but also reinforces my commitment to supporting and uplifting other wāhine in our industry. I am deeply grateful for this opportunity and look forward to embracing all that this programme has to offer.

About the Women in Tourism Career Accelerator programme

The Women in Tourism Career Accelerator offers participants practical, on-demand learning via three courses led by accomplished female tourism professionals. Each course is designed to develop skills essential for career progression.

- **The Art of Self-Leadership** is taught by Kylie Ruwhiu-Karawana, CEO of TRC Tourism – helping participants define their strengths and career path and actively shape their own opportunities.
- **The Power of Networking and Connection** is led by Lou Baddiley, Business Development Manager at Rotorua NZ, and focuses on building genuine relationships to bridge the gap between where participants are and where they want to be in their careers.
- **Crafting Your Personal Brand** is taught by Michelle Caldwell, Director of Destinate NZ – empowering participants to take control of how they are perceived professionally by creating a compelling, authentic personal narrative.

Upon completing the courses, learners maintain momentum with a three-month membership to Powrsuit, a global professional network for women looking to build career-enhancing skills and connections. You can register and find out more information about the course here: www.powersuit.com/women-in-tourism

For more information, please contact TIA Communications Advisor Leah McNeil – leah.mcneil@tia.org.nz or (021) 045 1143.

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- Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) is Aotearoa New Zealand tourism's peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of the country's large and diverse tourism industry.
- TIA has about 1,200 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
- TIA leads implementation of the industry's **Tourism Sustainability Commitment**, which aims to see every tourism business in Aotearoa New Zealand contributing positively to our people and cultures, our environment and our economy.
- TIA delivers a comprehensive and diverse range of industry events including TRENZ, New Zealand Tourism Awards, Discussing Tourism regional events and Tourism Summit Aotearoa.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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