

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE ONLINE PROGRAMME SPEAKER PROFILES

Steven Renata



Steven Renata is Chief Executive of Kiwa Digital which has been producing cultural intelligence apps for the private and public sector. The CQ App is based on Kiwa Digital's native digital app technology which creates a highly interactive user experience and powerful literacy tool. It's been adapted to support adult learning around Māori language and tikanga as it applies to the modern workplace.

Steven spent 20 years building a global wellness company – Les Mills International. During that time, the company grew from a small start-up to a 100 million-dollar business with a presence in over 100 countries. His experience helping to create a global movement offers KIWA numerous insights into how modern 'tribes' emerge, survive and thrive.

“It’s not about what you do in life....it’s how you make people feel. The joy that I see on peoples’ faces about understanding something, being able to practice it and deliver it, that’s gold. I have the best job in the world right now.” – Steven Renata

“A growing number of Aotearoa’s population want to know and use Māori culture and language in a relevant and meaningful manner. This is part of a bigger discussion around ‘individual and community identity’ as Aotearoa evolves as a modern nation, and trying to figure out who we are in the grand scheme of life.” – Steven Renata

Te Arahi Bryers



drives a lot of his work.

Te Arahi Bryers is a Māori business consultant, facilitator, educator and motivational speaker. His company Taiaha Connect helps facilitate engagement between organisations and Māori partners so they feel safe and connected. He’s also a marriage and funeral celebrant based in Tauranga whose clients are predominantly non-Māori expats. In 2015 he was a guest speaker for the TedX Talks in Tauranga where he spoke about New Zealand’s search for its cultural identity. It’s a theme that

“Why can’t we be this cool little country down the bottom of the world that isn’t afraid to do things our own way?” – Te Arahi Bryers

“You can have your identity and you can have your belief. But it doesn’t mean you have to give up that to accept someone else’s identity and someone else’s belief. It shouldn’t stop you from experiencing meeting other people with different views and ... still getting on with them and relating to them.” – Te Arahi Bryers

Dr Api Talemaitoga (MB ChB Otago; FRNZCGP)



Dr Api Talemaitoga has 30 years’ experience in medicine in both New Zealand and Fiji including 15 years as a GP. He holds Diplomas in Paediatrics and Obstetrics & Gynaecology and is a Board Member of the Royal New Zealand College of GPs (RNZCGP). Api has a distinguished record of service in many organisations as a director, senior public servant

and clinical leader. His diverse roles include serving as the personal physician to the President of Fiji.

Api has led the development of a Pacific GP network in NZ and contributes to strengthening primary care in the Pacific region. Despite his list of impressive achievements and skills, Api is also known for his humility and willingness to contribute.

“Our health system is fantastic, a first world health system and other countries travel here to look at how it’s run. However, the health system is targeted at white middle class New Zealanders.” – Dr Api Talemaitoga

“Improving Pacific health, improving Māori health to the same level as Palagi health, well that saves all of us a lot of money and a lot of grief. Because you won’t be dealing with these essentially third world diseases in a country that has a first world health system.” – Dr Api Talemaitoga

Filipo Katavake McGrath



Filipo Semisi Patita Katavake-McGrath has come a long way from a teenager living on his own at 16, to completing his Master of Philosophy at one of New Zealand’s leading universities.

“It is a liberating feeling - to come from a background of homelessness, being told you’re dumb, to writing something critical, getting a good grade for it and engaging with people internationally over it – it is a wonderful feeling.”

After a career in journalism, Filippo found himself in different communication roles in various countries and at one point found himself working within a policy analysis team at the Ministry of Pacific Peoples, where he discovered public policy.

“Public policy is the language that determines people's lives. We spent every day advocating for Pacific people in government policy and it was an uphill fight.”

“2% of the entire policy workforce in New Zealand are Pacific people and I think that 2% is quite generous; that might even include managers as well.” – Filippo McGrath

“As a mainstream ethnicity state sector leader, imagine a world where you do not benefit in any way. There is no advancement, there’s no salary, there’s no validation and there’s no you. That puts you in the position of a Māori or Pacific leader because it is always all about them (others).” – Filippo McGrath

Ward Kamo



Ward Kamo is National Director of Tū Whenua – Bayleys Māori business division. He joined Bayleys in 2016 to help enhance Bayleys relationships with iwi in the property sector.

Ward has worked in iwi development roles for more than ten years and management roles across a range of sectors including forestry, insurance, tertiary and electricity.

His previous roles included General Manager of the Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust, presenter for Native Affairs at Māori Television and a diplomat for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Ward now advises on how iwi and Māori businesses might best approach acquisitions and divestments of property and businesses for the best commercial and social returns.

“What I’ve noted is that the leadership first and foremost in these tribes are very cautious and wary and they watch you. They watch to see that the right signals are coming off you. They watch to see that there is truth behind the words that you speak, and one of that is your willingness to hang around.” – Ward Kamo

“Learn the culture of Māori. It is not enough to just want to do business with Māori. You’ve actually got to understand the mindset. You’ve got to understand the drivers of activity inside the iwi.” – Ward Kamo

Josiah Tualamali’i – Chair PYLAT (Pacific Youth Leadership and Transformation) Council



Josiah Tualamali'i is the Chair of the Pacific Youth Leadership and Transformation Council or PYLAT in Christchurch. In 2016 he won the Prime Minister's Pacific Youth Award and travelled to Geneva to attend the World Health Organisation Conference. In November 2017 he also won the SunPix Pacific Emerging Leadership Award.

He is studying political science and history at the University of Canterbury and is on the board of Pacific mental health NGO, Le Va. Like a lot of New Zealand born Pacific youth, Josiah spent many years learning about his Pacific and Samoan identity. But it wasn't easy when the family name Tualamali'i was changed to 'Brown' to help his dad fit in.

“There’s been a number of things which have happened in our history which have made it really hard for our matua and elders to trust decision makers, and trust key leaders or just people who represent our country. Those attitudes get passed onto our young people and it’s of not fault of their own, but just be aware that things like the dawn raids and things like New Zealand’s colonial administration in Samoa and other parts of the Pacific continues to have an impact.” – Josiah Tualamali’i

“Build trust, show them that you do care and that you’re there for the long-haul, not just for a short time.” – Josiah Tualamali’i

Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie (Diversity Works) – Diversity and Inclusion



Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie was the former Chief Executive of [Diversity Works New Zealand](#) and previously held roles in marketing and relationship management across both private and public sector. She also spent time running her own business. In the past five years she witnessed a sea change in attitudes towards, engagement with and ideas around, workplace diversity and inclusion, and is committed to helping businesses across New Zealand to be better-by-diversity.

Bev believes that to bring out the best in diverse individuals and teams we need to cultivate a workplace culture that values difference and makes the most of everyone's talents; an

approach that values the transmission of valuable knowledge and experience from one generation to another, from one culture to another, and from one team to another.

“Successful organisations are recognising that it’s inclusion that brings business benefits, not diversity alone.” – Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie

“Many organisations are doing great work in diversity and inclusion. But unless they address bias, particularly unconscious bias, it will undermine their progress.” – Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie

Liz Mellish – Chair of the Palmerston North Māori Reserve Trust
Tribal affiliations: Te Ātiawa, Taranaki, Ngāti Ruanui



Liz is the current Chair of the Palmerston North Māori Reserve Trust. She was elected a Trustee in 1994. Liz is currently a self-employed contractor and a Director FoMa (Federation of Māori Authorities). Personal interests include her mokopuna, reading, walking, whitebaiting and gardening. Liz is involved in many sectors as notes her Trustee roles in the Ngahuru Charitable Trust, Wharewaka o Pōneke Charitable Trust, Matiu Island Charitable Trust. She is an adviser to the Lion Foundation and Director of Wharewaka o Pōneke Enterprises Limited. She’s also a Trustee for Metlifecare Palmerston North (Retirement Village), the Lux Light Festival and Featherston Booktown.

“If they want to engage with Māori it’s because they know we’re worth something. That’s the change and I mean worth in its whole sense. We bring diversity, we bring opportunity, we bring money and assets to the table.” – Liz Mellish

“I don’t know that our long term New Zealander who thought that this was really their paradise and it was quite nice; and Māori lived here and we weren’t too much trouble, has shifted irrevocably. They’ll struggle with that. I don’t think millennials will.” – Liz Mellish

Manu Sione, General Manager of Cultural Leadership and Development, Emerge Aotearoa



Manu Sione is the General Manager of Cultural Leadership and Development at Emerge Aotearoa which was established in July 2015 after a merge between Recovery Solutions Group and Richmond Services Trust New Zealand.

The not for profit organisation provides a wide range of community based mental health, addiction, disability support, social housing and Corrections services nationwide. Manu previously worked in leadership roles with Relationships Aotearoa, Counties Manukau District Health Board, Pacific Trust Canterbury and Workbridge. His role at Emerge Aotearoa is to support the organisation’s 900 staff to be more culturally aware, competent and responsive when working with Māori and Pasifika tagata/whai ora, whānau/aiga/families and communities/hapū/lwi.

“So the English law, the English health system, the English social service system gets planted on all of our communities. But we recognise that if we’re to truly make

gains in health, education, justice, then sometimes we need to look at how we can do that from a traditional cultural perspective.” – Manu Sione

“NGOs have got huge amounts of experience in a particular area. So you use that experience to support a Pasifika or a Māori iwi or hapū to be able to deliver to their own people.” – Manu Sione

Dr Chellie Spiller, Associate Professor, University of Auckland Business School



Dr Chellie Spiller, (Ngāti Kahungunu / Pākehā) is an associate professor at the University of Auckland Business School. She has more than 30 years of corporate experience in tourism, finance and marketing, holding senior executive positions in New Zealand and abroad, and brings this experience to her academic work and leadership and management development programmes. Her research explores how Māori and indigenous businesses create authentic and sustainable wealth and wellbeing.

Chellie was a Fulbright Senior Scholar at the Harvard Kennedy School and the University of Arizona between November 2011 and March 2012. She is a recipient of a 2011 Dame Mira Szászy Māori Alumni Award, 2011 National Māori Academic Excellence Award, and 2010 AuSM Best Lecturer Award, AUT University. In 2013 she released a co-edited book with Professor Donna Ladkin titled Reflections on Authentic Leadership: Concepts, Coalescences and Clashes published by Edward Elgar Press, which was nominated in the top ten leadership books of 2013 (University of San Diego Outstanding Leadership Book Awards).

“In some ways it’s a nascent area of study, that we have reached a maturity in terms of looking at the Māori economy, Māori business but we’ve still got all these other areas that people are looking at and saying, “Why hasn’t this been articulated? Why have we been copying what sometimes can be a very flawed paradigm and why are we not looking at our own culture for answers and ways of moving in the workplace?”
– Dr Chellie Spiller

“I think sometimes what happens for people is they feel a bit ashamed maybe that they don’t know more than what they do, so it’s just holding people really carefully and gently. For some people this is a beginning of a journey and for others, they’ve had a lot of exposure to Māori culture. We’re all in different places, and it’s just to accept where we’re at and to start that journey.” – Dr Chellie Spiller

Anaru Vercoe – Bay of Plenty Regional Council Māori Policy Unit

Anaru Vercoe is the team leader for Māori Policy at the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, part of a unit called Kotahitanga. Anaru previously worked at Auckland Council and the Auckland Regional Council and he moved back to Whakatane in 2015.

“You’ve got to set the conversation in their context not a council context because you’re just going to lose them.” – Anaru Vercoe

“Somebody that hasn’t had any experience with Māori walking into a job that the iwi another previous person has built up a good relationship with. Not only do you then get someone who has no idea is a shock to the iwi but I can tell you what, it’s really scary for the person trying to take up the role.” – Anaru Vercoe

Stella Muller – Bright Sunday



Amatailevi Stella Muller is the Director and Chief of Enlightenment for Bright Sunday (4pi Ltd). Based in South Auckland, Bright Sunday is a digital marketing and communications agency fanatical about backing people, organisations and communities to unleash their greatness.

Stella is an experienced marketing communications strategist, creative, and communications practitioner who is recognised as an expert in Pacific marketing communications. Her clients include a range of government departments including the Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Education and the Health Promotion Agency.

During her 15-year career, Stella has been behind some significant campaigns including the national HPV immunization rollout (MOH), Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE), PowerUP (MOE), YTribe (HPA); and at the NGO level: Culture Club (PEC), Mama's House (AH+), Taha Bubba's World (TAHA), and SPARK (Village Collective).

More recently Stella has been working in the food marketing space with a mission to support more Pacific products to launch and build a global following. She is also the co-founder and creative mind behind the Hot Samoan Boys Chilli sauce brand and XOX Pacific Ltd.

Stella has a Bachelor of Communications (BAC) from Manukau Institute of Technology and is a member of the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand (PRINZ), NZ Marketing Association and the Pacific Island Media Association (PIMA). This year, Stella was recognized for her business acumen and achievements, and was selected to participate in the Ernst Young Winning Women Entrepreneurs Programme.

“We as Māori and Pacific people we are highly relational people. Sometimes before you can even start the comms conversation, we need to do the legwork to earn the respect of the people that we need to engage with beforehand. This is why it's useful to work with Māori and Pacific practitioners because sometimes those relationships are already in place and you can then jump to getting on with the task of developing the campaign.” – Stella Muller