



**Mahi a Atua**

**Director Bio's**



## Tohunga Mark Kopua

Ko Maruaterangi te maunga

Ko Hikuwai te awa

Ko Horouta te waka

Ko Ngati Kahukuranui te hapū

Te Aitanga a Hauiti te iwi

Kainga noho: Te Tairāwhiti

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Mark was raised in Mangatuna, by his old people and is considered a historian by his East Coast tribes. He is renowned for his expertise as a master carver and spent 44 years in carving which includes completing 7 ancestral meeting houses. Mark has dedicated 31 years of working at the forefront of modern Moko (traditional Māori tattoo) and has trained several moko artists while still continuing to work as a moko artist and design consultant. Mark has been employed in many national and international roles. One unique role has been his involvement in Moko Ihorei (tattooed head) repatriation work and domestic and international provenance of traditional Māori carvings. For many years he was a board member of the national Māori art advocacy, Toi Māori. Mark for 40 years has accepted the invitation to judge the regional kapahaka (Tamararo) and 13 years as a national judge for Matatini. He first began his journey in mental health services in 2012 as a cultural advisor/worker for a community Māori Mental Health Service, in Porirua. He is a confident facilitator and his approach to healing is celebrated by communities as he embraces his unique skills as a storyteller and keeper of ancient Māori knowledge and whakapapa. He held the position as Tohunga (expert) for 'Te Kūwatawata' - a groundbreaking Māori designed mainstream mental health service. Together with his wife Dr Diana Kopua, Mark has created 'Te Kurahuna' - a whare wānanga (training institute) where practitioners learn indigenous knowledge in a unique and authentic way.



## Dr Diana Kopua

Ko Hikurangi te maunga

Ko Waiapu te awa

Ko Horouta te waka

Ko Ngati Porou te iwi

Ko Rahui te marae

In 1990 Diana began her journey in the health industry, training first as a nurse and in 2014 she completed her specialist training in psychiatry and is a Fellow of the Royal Australia New Zealand College of Psychiatry. In 2010 Diana was awarded the prestigious Ngarimu VC Manakura Award. It is awarded to those who display characteristics of the 28<sup>th</sup> Māori Battalion; strength of character, ambition, courage and original thought. Diana carried these characteristics to the Tairāwhiti in 2014 where she became the first Ngāti Porou psychiatrist.

Dr Diana Kopua is changing the system by preferencing Indigenous approaches to oranga-tanga. As the developer of [Mahi a Atua](#), she and husband Tohunga Mark Kopua use Māori creation stories and pūrākau to transform mental health frameworks, providing an affirmation of our amazing genealogy and validation for our resilience. Dr Di and Mark are teaching communities of practice an alternative to the Western model, using a culturally sensitive new therapy to address mental distress and suffering amongst Māori. The Mahi a Atua approach has been utilised by multiple practitioners across various sectors within New Zealand society including art, health, education, justice and the social services sector. Both Diana and Mark Kopua are committed to indigenising their respective communities of practice and are pioneers within their fields.

Kainga noho: Te Tairawhiti

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