

From Rotorua to Vancouver: Making a difference for Indigenous Health in Vancouver, Canada

As Kāhui Tautoko Consulting celebrates 25 years of Indigenous leadership and community empowerment, the newest team member is making waves across the Pacific.



Rotorua-born Ben — with whakapapa to Ngāti Whakaue, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, and Ngāti Pūkenga ki Maketu — joined Kāhui Tautoko in 2024 and now works from the organisation’s Vancouver office supporting First Nations health initiatives.

Ben’s connection to Kāhui Tautoko began through his work with Te Aka Whai Ora. “I was lucky to work with Mara on a wide range of projects, and I really enjoyed the innovative approach to working and the humour that her leadership brought to our work,” he reflects. That experience with CEO Mara Andrews inspired him to take the leap to Canada and continue championing Indigenous-led solutions on a global scale.

Already, Ben has supported the development of a five-year strategy for the *sālilwētaʻ Healing Together Journey* with the Tsleil-Waututh IRSS *ʻlewētaʻ* Project Steering Committee. The initiative is designed to provide compassionate support for Indian Residential School Survivors while fostering resilience and cultural restoration.

For Ben, the work is both deeply meaningful and a natural extension of Kāhui Tautoko’s kaupapa. “It’s all in the name – Tautoko. The appreciation and gratefulness for the support that Kāhui Tautoko has provided since arriving in Canada in 2008 is immense,” he says.

As the organisation marks its 25th anniversary, Ben’s story reflects Kāhui Tautoko’s enduring mission: to walk alongside Indigenous communities, provide unwavering support, and ensure the voices of whānau are at the heart of health transformation — whether in Aotearoa, Canada, or beyond.