



Ko Tāwhirirangi te maunga
Ko Mōhaka te awa
Ko Ngāti Pāhauwera te iwi
Ko Ngāti Kurahikakawa te hapū
Ko Takitimu te waka
Ko Waipapa a Iwi te marae
Ko Te Kahu o Te Rangi te tupuna

Tēnā rā tātou,

My name is Sonny Vercoe and I was born and raised in Rotorua, and now I live in Tāmaki Makaurau. I went to Te Kōhanga Reo ki Ōhau and Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Koutu.

Now I'm at the University of Auckland doing a PhD in Civil Engineering about how engineers do earthquake assessments on our wharehau. It involves doing building inspections to see the structure of our wharehau across the country, and also having kōrero with engineers to see how they do them in the industry. Outside of university, hauora is a big part of what I do.

Sonny Vercoe



Sonny



- **What was your favourite subject at school?**

Ā-hinengaro, it was Physics and Calculus. Ā-tinana, it was hākinakina as we would be paddling for waka ama in the warmer seasons.

- **How do you connect to Ngāti Pāhauwera?**

Albert Hector Cross > Lucy Kora (nee Cross) > Tess Kora > Renee Kora > Sonny Vercoe

- **What's your favourite whakataukī?**

Ruia taitea, ruia taitea, kia tū ko taikākā, ko ahau anake. Strip away the sapwood, so that only the heartwood remains. This whakataukī is my favourite as it symbolises going against all odds and resilience.

- **Where can we check out your mahi?**

- <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/news/2022/05/06/brothers-to-help-whanau-safeguard-whenua.html>
- https://www.nzherald.co.nz/kahu/coach-expects-maui-wildfires-will-add-edge-to-students-trip-to-waka-ama-champs/GHFTCRTDW5HJJNP2VLBXH774LA/#google_vignette



What are your hobbies?

I love waka ama, and I'm going to be competing in the Queen Lili'uokalani Waka Ama Race in Hawai'i this coming September.

Sonny