

Ko wai tēnei?

As a dedicated scholar currently undertaking a PhD in Strategic Management with a focus on Māori and indigenous trade and policy, I am passionately committed to enhancing Māori development. I also run a consultancy business with my partner committed to empowering Māori communities. My efforts are driven by a profound commitment to not only fostering economic and cultural growth but also to instilling in my tamariki the invaluable lesson that hard work truly pays off. My tamariki are my purpose.

- **Where did you grow up?**

I was born and raised in the hospitality industry within the Rangitīkei region. Growing up in a family dedicated to business, I learned the importance of managing a successful venture and contributing to a supportive business community. I have firsthand experience of the hard work and sacrifices required of business owners. My mother, the eldest of eight children, has always been deeply connected to her Ngāti Pāhauwera whakapapa. She ensured that my sister and I were involved with our Ngāti Pāhauwera whānau by taking us to hui.



**‘Hard work truly
pays off.’**

Suz



Suzanne Maria-Rewa Hepi

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

“Ma pango ma whero, ka oti te mahi” - This whakatauki has deeply resonated with me throughout my upbringing. Being born into a whānau business, it truly took a village to raise my sister and me while our parents were busy working. Our extended whānau, friends, and community members all played vital roles in our upbringing, providing support, guidance, and love. Their collective effort not only ensured our well-being but also instilled in us a strong sense of community, resilience, and the importance of mutual support.

- **Have you ever failed at something?**

I have encountered setbacks in various aspects of life, but I have consistently either learned from these experiences and grown or taken them as tohu, guiding my path forward.

- **What's your favourite food in the whole world?**

Growing up next to an Italian restaurant, I developed a deep appreciation for this culture and its kai. I became close to the Italian whānau who owned the restaurant, and their warmth and hospitality made a lasting impression on me.



**‘Mā pango mā
whero, ka oti te
mahī.’**

Suz