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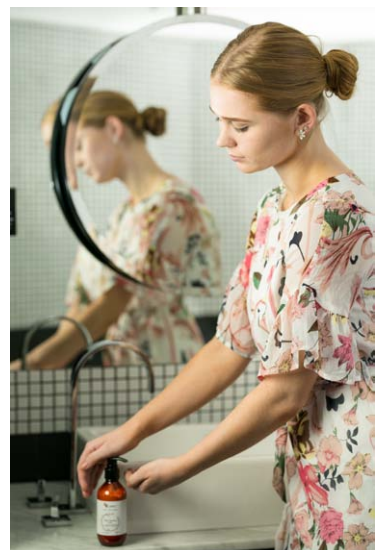


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*The Miss Universe New Zealand
Grand Final Charity Gala
SKYCITY Theatre
Saturday 4th August, 7.30 p.m.*

THE PRE-SHOW

Introduction from the Executive Producer Nigel Godfrey

THE SHOW

The National Anthem—LE ART

The Finalists for the first time

Meet your Hosts and the Judges

Harlem-Cruz Atarangi Ihaia—My Year

Pacific Streetwear by Sewtec

Performance from Razé

The Evening Gown Parade by Sidney Ecula

Thailand on screen

Swimwear by Raston Collection

Elimination from 20 to 10

Performance from Frankie Stevens

Let's meet the Top 10

Harlem-Cruz Atarangi Ihaia—a final word

Elimination from 10 to 5

Q&A with the Top 5

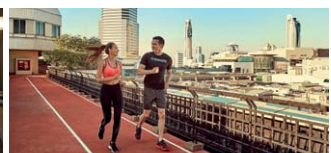
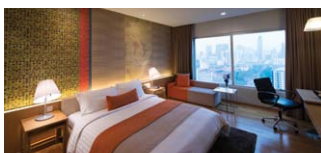
Performance from Russell Dixon

Announcement of the Winner of Miss Universe New Zealand 2018

At the end of the show, accredited Media and Platinum and Gold Sponsors are invited onto the stage for photos with the new Miss Universe New Zealand.

The Miss Universe New Zealand 2018 after-party will take place in Bar twentyone here at SKYCITY.
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**PATHUMWAN
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A welcome from the Executive Producer

Good evening and welcome to this year's Grand Final. If you are reading this whilst seated inside the SKYCITY Theatre, then you are in for a great night of live entertainment. If you've downloaded the programme and are watching us on a screen, then we hope you enjoy every moment.

We are delighted to be back on television with Bravo again this year and gratefully acknowledge the support of Caroline Cleland at NBC Universal in Sydney.

Tonight's show will, of course, be packed with the drama and tension, excitement and happiness that you can always expect from Miss Universe New Zealand.

We are delighted to be starting the show with LE ART, the girl group from Porirua that went viral last month with their version of our National Anthem after the "interesting" rendition in the USA. Razé, who made her live TV début with us last year, has had an incredible 12 months and we are delighted she is returning. The legendary Frankie Stevens, now very much a part of the Miss Universe NZ family, will again perform and judge. And ahead of performing in *The Original Phantom of the Opera* in Tokyo next month, is West End star, Russell Dixon.

Our 2017 collaboration with Sewtec proved so successful that this year, four designers were chosen to design a streetwear collection and those designs are now a part of their NZQA course. We have a new swimwear sponsor, Raston Collection, and we are delighted to be showcasing Rebecca's designs on location in Thailand. For the second year, our evening gowns have been designed by Sidney Ecula, and we are honoured that he has once again flown in from the Philippines to be with us.

We welcome some new judges for 2018. Evana Patterson is once again our key judge; Samala Robinson, the founder of SRA, our make-up providers, rejoins the panel, as does Frankie Stevens. We welcome Prerna Sinha Raniga, a finalist in 2014, and now a very successful young entrepreneur who, as well as being a sought-after software designer, owns her own designer label and a DJ and events' company. Our final judge is Tania Dawson, Miss Universe New Zealand 2016, who is now pursuing an acting and modelling career in the Philippines.

Tonight, we will travel to Thailand to experience some of the fabulous five-star retreat enjoyed by our finalists and we must thank the Pathumwan Princess Hotel in Bangkok and the Hard Rock Hotel in Pattaya for their extraordinary hospitality and incredible service. We would also like to thank our Thailand liaison, Ohm Ayutthya of Thailand Tourism Experts, who is, quite frankly, "the best in the business".

I also thank each and every one of our sponsors. They feature in the programme and their support is crucial to our success, and so I urge you in turn to support them.

Finally I would like to say, on behalf of Miss Universe New Zealand, a very heartfelt and sincere thank-you to each and everyone of our finalists, because without them we quite simply would not have a show. Now it's time for you to sit back and enjoy the show as they take to the stage for the culmination of their journey.



Nigel Godfrey

Executive Director & Producer

Miss Universe New Zealand

Message from Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, Miss Universe 2017



On November 26, 2017, I became the 66th Miss Universe and the second woman from South Africa to hold the title and bring the crown home after 39 years of waiting. I am so honoured and very proud to represent my rainbow nation. This was not just a personal victory, but also a victory for my entire country.

With this title of Miss Universe, I plan to learn and grow professionally and personally with the help of the Miss Universe Organization. I am grateful for the opportunities I have experienced thus far. There are so many goals that I would like to achieve this year, but I specifically look forward to developing further my Unbreakable campaign and to introducing it to new countries. I created Unbreakable to address the unyielding issues that women all over the world face daily. This is just the beginning of many great adventures yet to come for me. I want to thank you all for helping me see my dreams come true!

To the incredible women competing, congratulations on being here tonight! I wish you the best of luck now and forever more. Just walking on that stage makes each of you a winner, having already accomplished a huge achievement! Have fun, be yourself, support and believe in each other because at the end of this journey, this experience will lead you to memories that will last your lifetime.

Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters
Miss Universe 2017



Message from Paula Shugart, President, Miss Universe

Welcome to the 2018 Miss Universe New Zealand Grand Final!

As president of the Miss Universe Organization, I have the opportunity to meet and work with many of the incredible women who participate in our system every year. I have been able to watch our titleholders and contestants accomplish things that they only dreamed possible.

The 10,000 women who participate in Miss Universe programmes annually are provided a platform for possibility through the organization's resources. During their reigns, these women are able to continue personal and professional growth by championing organizations and causes that empower women and create change in their respective communities.

The Miss Universe Organization believes that confidence is the most important quality for a person to possess and we encourage women to challenge themselves with new experiences that further their confidence in themselves.

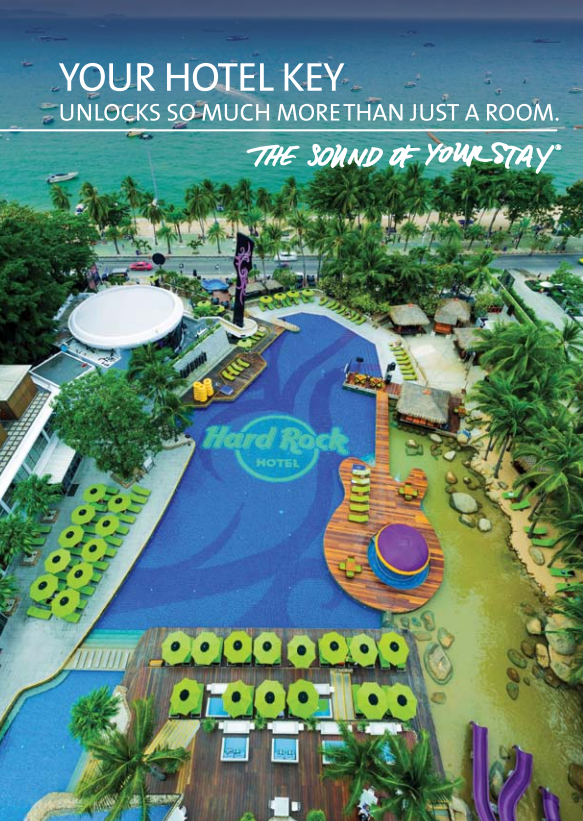
To all the contestants competing tonight, I hope you all leave here with lifelong memories, and a newfound confidence achieved through self-awareness. Believe in yourself and with hard work and determination, know that anything is possible.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our national director, Nigel Godfrey, the friends and families of our contestants and tonight's sponsors for their support. To the newly crowned winner, I look forward to meeting you at the next Miss Universe competition.

Paula M. Shugart, President
The Miss Universe Organization
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Message from Harlem-Cruz Atarangi Ihaia, Miss Universe New Zealand 2017



If I could say one thing to sum up my reign as Miss Universe New Zealand 2017, it would be 'life-changing'.

From gumboots to stilettos, from messy bun to hair tutorials, from kōhanga reo teacher to Miss Universe New Zealand, Stiletto Camp 2017 was when I stepped in to a new world.

My focus was to enjoy every moment, take every opportunity and to inspire along the way—winning was never a priority for me.

One thing that I've enjoyed the most about being on this journey is looking back at the "girl" I was when I first attended Stiletto Camp, then seeing me now as this confidently beautiful Māori "woman".

This journey was definitely challenging for myself as it was a huge step out of my comfort zone, but I now use this as a testimony to inspire.

The self-confidence I've gained, the self-worth I now have for myself, the dreams I have gained through Miss Universe New Zealand, money couldn't buy.

I have become the woman I am today by taking every opportunity no matter how hard, and believing in myself. Most of all, these experiences and challenges have helped me grow.

It was an honour and I feel very blessed to have been Aotearoa's Miss Universe New Zealand 2017.

I am excited for what the future has in store for me, as this is not the end for me, it is only the beginning.

Harlem-Cruz Atarangi Ihaia
Miss Universe New Zealand 2017



Associates

Graphic design

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Marketing specialist

Event management

Introduction from Miss Universe New Zealand

Tonight's show is the zenith of a year that, for some of our contestants, began during the last Grand Final, when they headed to our website at nextmissnz.com to sign up to see if they could be the next Miss Universe. At least it's the zenith for all but one, who will be crowned Miss Universe New Zealand 2018 tonight and head off overseas to represent Aotearoa at the international final.

Last year's winner, Harlem-Cruz Atarangi Ihaia, signed up not expecting to be even named among the finalists, but set her sights on enjoying her journey—and it is this journey that Miss Universe New Zealand focuses on for each of our contestants.

It is the sixth Miss Universe New Zealand held under the current management, and the sixth that does away with a live swimwear parade, a move that we notice has been followed by at least one other pageant abroad. Miss Universe itself is about diversity and tolerance, and any requirements about body shape, body art and size are happily absent from our entry requirements,

Harlem-Cruz, whom you will hear from tonight, has been a wonderful

titleholder whose close connections to her whānau, her iwi and her community in Napier have given this competition a more personal feel over the past year. She will crown a successor whom, we trust, will follow in the positive footsteps created by our most recent titleholders.

Our Platinum Partners, Caithy Organics, Arture, Citroën, JD Associates, the Pathumwan Princess Hotel, and Hard Rock Hotel Pattaya, and all our sponsors, supporters, and volunteers, enable Miss Universe New Zealand to continue its work benefiting Variety—the Children's Charity. The finalists have, through their Entrepreneurial Challenge fund-raising, contributed in a very real way to helping these deserving Kiwi kids. To date, we have raised well over \$150,000 for this worthy cause.

This year, our new titleholder will drive away in a new 2018 Citroën C3, hers for the year of her reign. The C3 is a very stylish hatchback, and we thank Chris Brown at Auto Distributors New Zealand Ltd. It's certainly a great complement to the young woman who will represent our country on the world stage soon.

We thank you all for your support, and have a wonderful evening.

Nigel Godfrey,
Executive
Director



Jack Yan,
General
Counsel



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The fashion tonight

SIDNEY ECULLA

COUTURE

We are honoured this year to showcase designs from international couturier **Sidney Eculla**.

Sidney Eculla is a self-taught designer and first worked for Manila-based designer Edgar Allan. He has shown in New York as well as his native Philippines, where he has dressed some of the country's top celebrities. Sidney also develops his own handwoven fabrics, giving his work a unique look. His couture collection that you see tonight has been created specially for the finalists, whom he met in person during their International Retreat in Thailand. Sidney will also create the gown that Miss Universe New Zealand 2018 will wear at the international competition.

Sewtec Fashion Academy is an NZQA-registered and accredited training provider and has been helping students into careers in fashion for over 12 years. Our collaboration was so successful last year that this has been written into their course. Four design students have been busy creating a range of streetwear to be shown tonight in a collection, *Pacific Streetwear*. We know you will enjoy New Zealand's design future.



Our choreographer



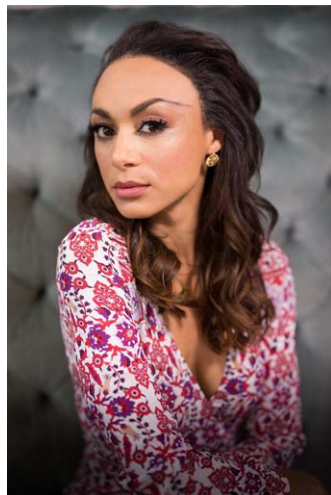
Born and raised in New Zealand, **Jane Strickland** spent many years nurturing her craft. Her passion for performing arts has taken her around the world, bringing her back to her motherland only five years ago. Prior to that, Jane spent her first few years in the industry performing throughout Australia in both the musical theatre and corporate worlds. Continuing her urge to travel, Jane then made the move to high seas, working for Norwegian Cruise Line as a principal singer-dancer. Jane is thrilled to be back home working alongside some of the country's most dedicated entertainers, as well as being a core dancer and choreographer for one of New Zealand's top commercial dance companies, Momentum Productions.

After having a fabulous time working with the Miss Universe New Zealand ladies at Stiletto Camp, Jane is very excited to be this year's choreographer for the Grand Final and wishes all the contestants the best of luck.

Your host

International commitments kept her away from hosting last year, but we're thrilled to have **Sonia Gray** back at our Grand Final. As presenter of the Lotto draw, Sonia Gray is accustomed to calling winners. But tonight the win she'll announce is of a different kind entirely.

Sonia's career has spanned modelling through to acting, including roles in *Shortland Street*, *Xena, Hercules* and *Wheel of Fortune*, and she is an active spokeswoman for the Mental Health Foundation. Sonia is currently filming the TV show *Kai Safari* with Pio Terei. She is married with twin daughters, Inez and Thandie.



Meet the judges

Evana Patterson is a former Director of Miss Universe New Zealand and the current Managing Director of the Talent Tree, a new Auckland-based talent and model agency.

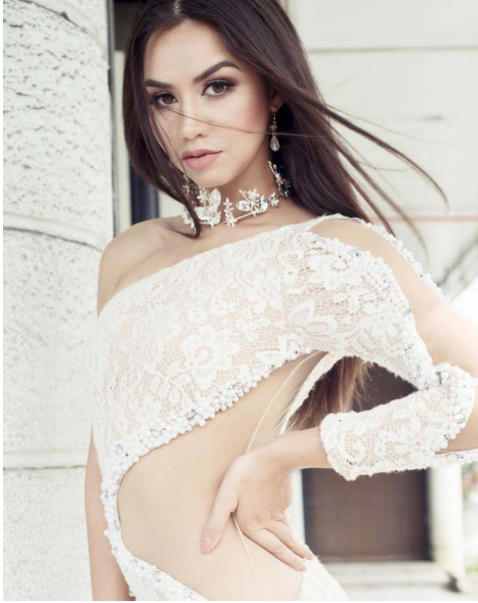
Evana is a pageant veteran, having judged over 50 competitions in New Zealand and has been involved in the modelling world for almost two decades, as a plus-size commercial model, a make-up artist and stylist, and photographer and choreographer for World TV's annual Miss Chinese Cosmos and Miss Chinese New Zealand pageants.

If this isn't enough to keep her busy, she is currently studying for a Diploma in Life Coaching and is Mum to six-year-old Mila.



Samala Robinson is the founder of New Zealand's leading make-up academy, SRA—Samala Robinson Academy. Samala trained as a professional make-up artist in Sydney and New York. She brought this expertise back to New Zealand in the '90s, where she became head of make-up and styling at TV3. Whilst there, Samala discovered a new talent—training young make-up artists, helping them develop their

skills and confidence. In 2000, the Samala Robinson Academy was born. Passionate about professional make-up and helping students reach their full potential, Samala set up SRA to pass on her knowledge and to create a space where people could train through hands-on learning, professional advice and quality products.



Tania Dawson was crowned Miss Universe New Zealand 2016. We first met Tania when she was teaching drama and media studies in her native Auckland. Buoyed by the opportunities that came during her reign, as well as a self-confessed love of travel, Tania headed to the Philippines to pursue a career in acting and modelling. She has a very well followed blog (at tpd-gurl.com) where she writes about her adventures, and regularly shares to Instagram. She returns to New Zealand from a busy schedule in the Philippines to be on the other side of the judging panel.

Perna Sinha Raniga is the founder and owner of an entertainment company called Bombay Talkies and her clothing line, Perna. She works as a lead programmer for Designer Wardrobe during the day and is a DJ by night, known as DJ Charlie. She is also a former Miss Universe New Zealand Top 10 contestant and won MUNZ's Entrepreneurial Challenge in 2014.

Originally from India, Perna took the bold step of moving to New Zealand in 2006, leaving everything behind, to pursue her undergraduate studies. Twelve years later, she is a youth icon, a social influencer and a role model not just in New Zealand, but all around the world.



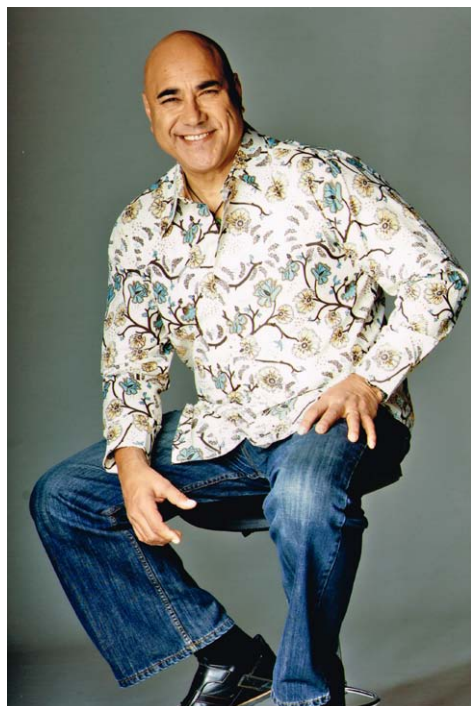
Your entertainers



Le ART is Anastasia Sirila, 16 (Samoan–Tokelauan–Tongan), Roseta Lopa, 17 (Tokelauan), and Tiresa Foma'i, 16 (Samoan), taking its name from the Polynesian word for *the* (*le*), and the first initials of the ladies' names. Formed in 2013, they soon won the junior prize at a regional talent quest. They have performed the national anthem at high-profile basketball games and the Prime Minister's Pacific Youth Awards, but it was a viral video earlier this year that brought Le ART into the national *Zeitgeist*. We are proud to have them perform live tonight.



Born and raised in South Auckland, **Razé**, the youngest of the talented Williams family (J. Williams, Lavina, and Emily are her siblings), has branched out with a unique voice and style in hip-hop, with a few magical tones and sounds of her own that she wishes to share. She scored second with her academy IDCO at the World Hip Hop Championships, opened last year for Aaradhna and Valkyrie, performed the half-time show for the Constellation Cup, as well as for our 2017 Grand Final, and released four singles and an EP, *4Seasons*, representing her family. With music around her since her birth, it has strongly influenced her passion for music, song-writing and creative wording.



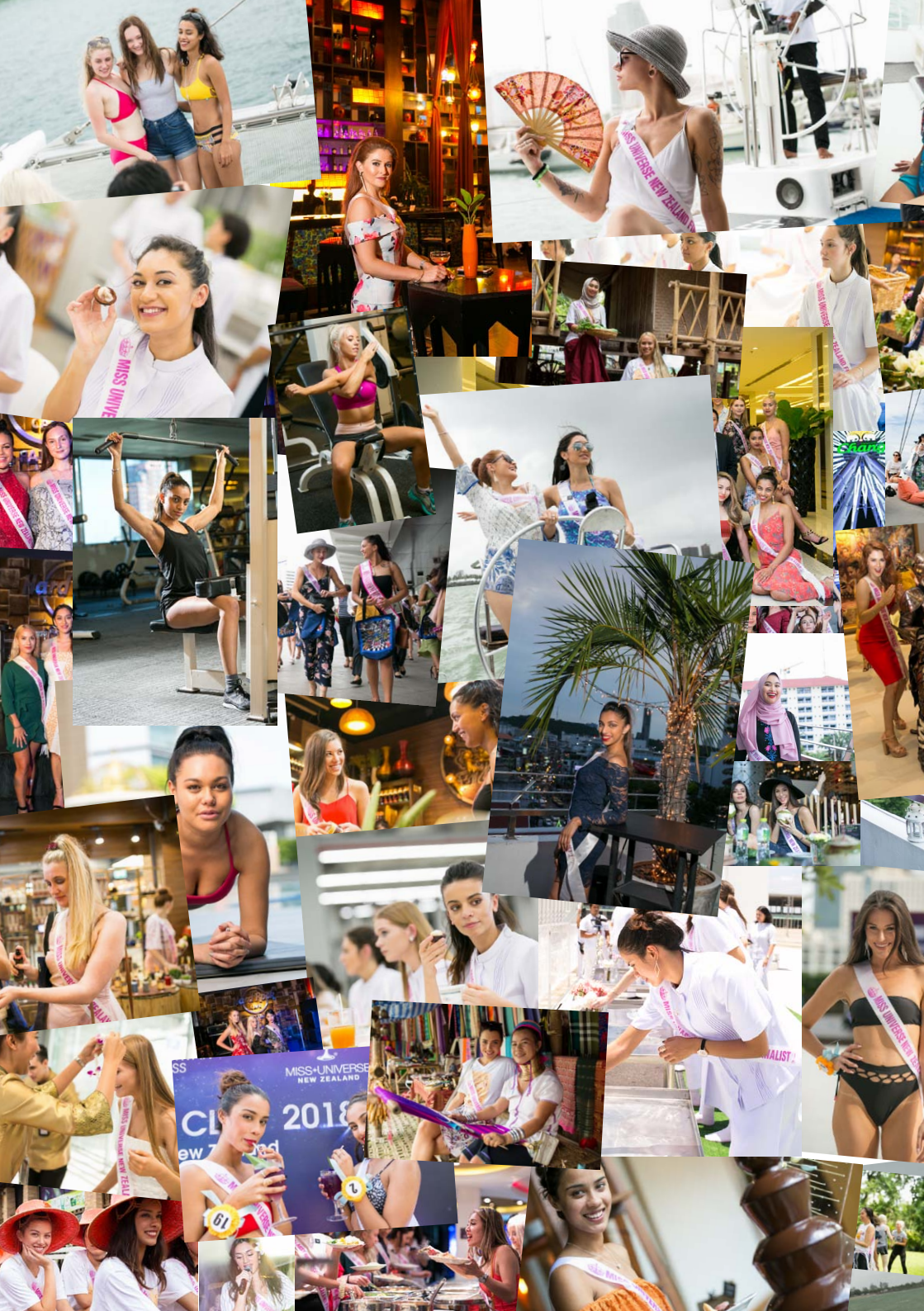
Judging as well as performing tonight, **Frankie Stevens**, MNZM, started his professional career in 1966 at 16, moving to Sydney to join the New Zealand band, the Castaways, before heading to London in 1970, where he won *Opportunity Knocks* six times in a row. He sang at both the Palladium and Albert Hall, and had a three-week season at the then-world-famous *Talk of the Town*.

Moving to the US, he performed in Las Vegas and sang with some of the biggest stars of the era. He moved to Nassau and joined the famous Māori Hi-Five show band, performing at the Nassau Beach Hotel and the Sheraton Hotel in Puerto Rico. On returning to the UK, Frankie was signed by CBS Records and appeared on numerous TV specials. A stint in Hawai'i followed, where he had a five-year residency at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, and acted on

Hawaii Five-O and *M Station Hawaii*, before Frankie returned to New Zealand in 1982, where he continued to tour and perform. He judged *NZ Idol* for three seasons, acted in *The Matrix 2*, and today continues to entertain nationally and internationally. He serves as a trustee for the charity, Hands Across the Water New Zealand, which was originally formed by Australian Peter Baines in order to aid Thai children who lost their loved ones in the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami.

Russell Dixon recently performed the leading role of Alberto Beddini in the West End production of *Top Hat* at London's Aldwych Theatre. He was cast in the UK tour of *The Witches of Eastwick*, playing the role of Joe Marino and was 1st cover to the lead role of Darryl van Horne. He played both Mr Lyons and the Narrator in the UK tour of *Blood Brothers*, Mr Lyons on the West End and in Dubai at the Madinat Jumeira Theatre. Russell's other credits include *Mamma Mia*, *Miss Saigon*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *Guys & Dolls*, and numerous others, while his TV credits include presenting the weather on TV3, and *Gangsta Granny*, *Shortland Street*, *Hercules: the Legendary Journeys*, *Riverworld*, *Underbelly* and many TV commercials. Russell brings his international magic to the stage again for us tonight.







2018 RETREAT: THAILAND

MISS UNIVERSE NEW ZEALAND 2018



Joyce Cassidy-Lee

Joyce Cassidy-Lee is 23 years old, and born and raised in Auckland. When she was a toddler, she fell in love with the piano and has now graduated from the University of Auckland with a Bachelor of Music (Honours) in Classical Piano Performance. She feels lucky that she is able to use her skills to teach music and help young children: 'It is so fulfilling seeing their growth and knowing you impacted their lives in a positive way,' she says.

Joyce would love to travel the world one day as she believes it would open her eyes and mind.

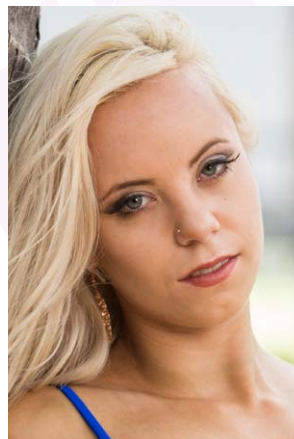
'Entering Miss Universe New Zealand was always on my bucket list, and I hope to share my moral beliefs and promote both beauty and wisdom.'

Busy 22-year-old **Jessica Taylor** from Patumahoe is a wine ambassador for Villa Maria during the day and one of the Murphy's Law team in Drury at night. She enjoys fundraising for events such as the SPCA and the Firefighter Sky Tower challenge.

Jess loves to put on the riding boots and go trekking, fishing, or spending time on local farms with friends. She studied for three years for a Bachelor in Film Compositing, and she has a passion for marketing and sales.

Jess entered Miss Universe New Zealand to break the stereotype that you don't have to be tall if you have a beautiful personality to make up for it. Her motto is to embrace your flaws because 'different is beautiful and unique.'

Jess has a passion for fitness, and trains with Flyer Fitness three times a week aiming to one day compete in fitness modelling and body sculpting. Her MUNZ journey has made a huge impact on Jess and is, so far, the best experience of her life.



Jessica Taylor

'Confidence is a universal key to new adventure, new opportunities and living your dream. Miss Universe New Zealand has given me the confidence to gain my key.'

Jess Taylor

Milena Taryan is an Armenian-born 26-year-old certified dental assistant and a ballroom dance teacher based in Wellington.

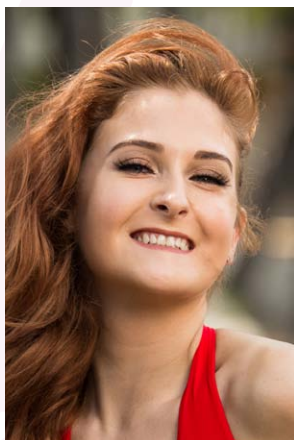
When Milena was 16, her parents made the decision to emigrate, to create a better future for their family. Milena speaks three languages, having learned English when her family arrived in New Zealand.

'I am proud to be the first Armenian Kiwi to be in the final. New Zealand has inspired me and I'm proud to call this country my home.'

Milena reached the Top 10 in 2016, and says she couldn't compete without the unwavering support of her family. 'I believe that by hard work, dedication and passion, anything can be achieved. Miss Universe New Zealand represents someone who is able to embrace Kiwi values. For me, that means embracing diversity. We are unique because there are so many cultures in New Zealand, yet we live as one. If I'm blessed enough it will be the greatest honour for me to represent the many faces of New Zealand on a universal stage.'



Milena Taryan



Ruby Hunt

Born and raised in Canterbury, **Ruby Hunt**, 24, is a conscientious, caring, and self-proclaimed "chocoholic". She has been a classically trained dancer from the age of 3, which taught her a great deal about presence and self-discipline—aside from chocolate! She is now a professional performer, full-time administrator and qualified beauty therapist, a subject in which she graduated with excellence. After struggling for a while with her own self-confidence, she decided she was tired of the constant feeling of inadequacy, so she decided to focus her energy on the things she enjoyed. The gym became enjoyable and she noticed a shift in her happiness. Wanting to share her journey to self-love, Ruby entered Miss Universe New Zealand 2018. By doing this, she hopes to encourage people to do the things they enjoy and not let societal standards or social media dictate what you want to do or look like.

'It's been the greatest of feelings being part of an organization that supports and encourages you to showcase your individuality while testing what you "thought" were your limitations.'

Ruby Hunt



**Neera
Vasanthan**

Neera Vasanthan is 21 years old, born in Auckland, and of Sri Lankan descent. She is currently in her second year studying a Bachelor of Architectural Engineering at Auckland University of Technology. Her studies are important to her as she aspires to work on large-scale skyscraper and bridge projects.

She enjoys dancing more than anything. Since the age of five, she has had training in classical Indian dance, hip-hop, jazz and many others. After 10 years of training she graduated as a professional classical Indian dancer. She considers this dance style to be the most important to her as it keeps her grounded to her roots.

Neera loves travelling overseas and tackling new experiences, which is what led her to Miss Universe New Zealand. She says self-confidence is key to success, and believes that with her efforts in Miss Universe New Zealand she can speak out to young girls in Aotearoa to be proud of who they are and what they stand for.

Lucy Brock, 23, prides herself on being motivated and always curious to learn. Some of her greatest accomplishments include completing a five-year degree in three years and having worked for some of New Zealand's most successful companies, including Air New Zealand, Les Mills International and Icebreaker in digital marketing. She entered Miss Universe New Zealand 2018 because the challenge seemed equally frightening and exciting.

For Lucy, mindset is everything. She believes that with the right attitude, with compassion and with a healthy dose of determination, anything is possible—and that it's in our own hands to make it happen.

If she were to win Miss Universe New Zealand she would continue to use all of her efforts to encourage others to cultivate self-confidence and chase down their dreams.



Lucy Brock

'It seems like every day throughout this journey, I've been conquering a personal fear or have learnt something new about myself.'

Lucy Brock

Promise Royal is an 18-year-old Māori wahine from Rotorua, who entered Miss Universe to use the platform to express herself on stage by doing what she loves doing, namely modelling and singing.

Her aspiration is to be the best role model to not only those around her, but to the world. To show that beauty isn't always about how you look, but more, what you give. She is a believer in reaping what you sow.

Promise's ambitions regarding life after Miss Universe is to continue pursuing her modelling and singing career. These are her passions and she feels that combining the two for an everyday job would be ideal! She also hopes to get into acting and get work in commercials or TV.



Promise Royal



Abigail Curd

Abigail Curd, a 19-year-old bartender from Rolleston, Christchurch, is passionate about modelling and has been in the industry for the last six years. This has given her confidence and allowed her to become the open, bubbly person she is today. She is driven to discover new skills on all levels, whether it be physically at a gym, being on the catwalk in front of cameras, public speaking, or challenging herself to see what she is really capable of within this competition.

Abigail is very proud that she is helping out New Zealand's disadvantaged kids through Variety—the Children's Charity as part of the Miss Universe journey, and has enjoyed fund-raising.

'Life is about taking chances, and this is one I am glad I took,' she says.

'What I love about MUNZ is that it makes you realize that anything in life is possible. Having fun while working hard is the greatest job one can have.'

Milena Taryan



Latafale Auva'a

Latafale Auva'a represents the idea that beauty and education can go hand in hand. She won a prestigious five-year law scholarship and graduated from the University of Otago with an LL B and B.Mus. She has represented New Zealand and Samoa in sport, choral music, performing arts and modelling. This year, she was admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand and bestowed a Matai (chiefly) title. She has worked for the Government of Samoa in marketing and gained experience as a youth worker for Child, Youth and Family in New Zealand. She currently works for the University of Otago as the senior tutor at Selwyn College, and is a casual research assistant for their Faculty of Law.

Her stance for entering is summarized in the proverb, 'He tina ki runga, he tamore ki raro.' This is an opportunity for her to encourage women to be confident and comfortable in their own culture and success. 'New

Zealand is unique in that so many different nationalities make up what it is to be a Kiwi. I love my biculturalism, with a Pākehā mother and a Samoan father—I see the partnership of both worlds and I proudly represent that.'

'Never would I thought I would have the opportunity to travel to Thailand, experience a different culture, taste exotic foods, be treated like a VIP and expand my modelling portfolio. Fantastic lifetime experience! Thank you Miss Universe New Zealand!' Latafale Auva'a

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Estelle Curd, 27, holds a master's degree in business and currently works as a CRM, HR and H&S manager of a large national automotive group. She leads a team of five and sits on the senior management team. Estelle was appointed to her first senior management position at age 23, in a company of 18,000, making her the youngest to ever hold a position of seniority in this multinational steel-manufacturing organization. Estelle has been a finalist for three national HR awards and continues to develop programmes to improve employment culture. Further to this, Estelle has spoken at an international academic conferences and written articles which have been published in national media, based on her master's thesis findings. Estelle has a passion for health and fitness and is an avid runner. She entered Miss Universe as she believes in taking all opportunities that present themselves and wishes to elevate others by showing that even with challenging circumstances, you can achieve anything with dedication, motivation and passion.



Estelle Curd



Jaimee Wiggins

Jaimee Wiggins, 21, is a trained actress with many years' experience in this field. Despite having dyslexia, she completed a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in English and Theatre. While working on her acting dreams, she works part-time as a support worker, assisting people who live with disabilities. Jaimee wishes to be an advocate for those who are suffering. She aims to take the world on at full speed and help anyone she can along the way: 'No matter what your background, ethnicity or gender, you deserve to be respected. You deserve to be loved. Although times might be tough, there is a reason you're here and that reason is to make yourself the best person you could possibly be. Be kind. Be caring. Be fearless. Be determined. Respect will come, but it's earned. It's hard. There will be struggles, arguments, hate—but you were born for this. You can achieve your goals and dreams. You are strong enough for what the world throws your way. There is *always* the opportunity for change.'

'If it doesn't challenge you it doesn't change you. This I feel it is the best way to describe my journey. I have had the opportunity to grow myself on a personal and professional level, while also creating real and lasting friendships.'

Estelle Curd

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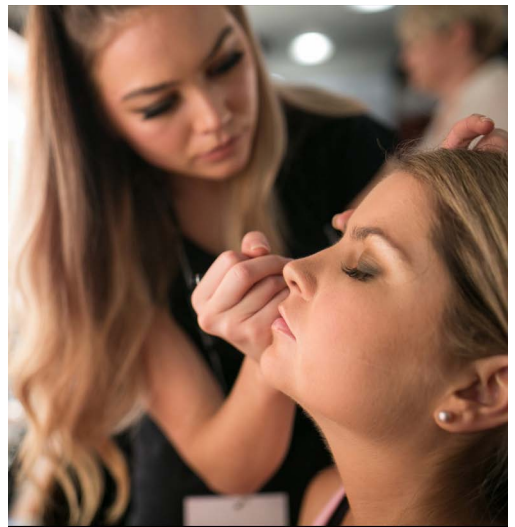
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Mataora meet weekly at Te Kurahuna Whare Wānanga. Dr Diana Kopua (Consultant Psychiatrist) and husband Mark Kopua (Tohunga) have been helping build the capacity to embed indigenous knowledge systems to address institutional racism, and create positive change in Te Tairāwhiti.

Te Kurahuna is developing the current workforce in Te Tairāwhiti by growing indigenous capabilities and confidence within the health, social, education and other sectors for improved well-being, outcomes, and equity, particularly for Māori.



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Mahi a Atua



Amber-lee Friis, 21, was born in Piha on the beautiful west coast of Auckland. She has worked at a successful online marketing agency for the past five years. She is motivated and graduated from university in both mechanical engineering and early childhood. She strives to lead by example and wants to encourage other women and girls that no matter what challenges you face, with motivation and positive reinforcement, you can achieve the goals you never thought were possible.

Amber-lee has been heavily involved with children her whole life, growing up around day care centres. Kids have always been naturally drawn to her. She says, 'The day we took the kids from Variety—the Children's Charity to Rainbow's End was one of the biggest highlights of my journey with Miss Universe New Zealand.'



Amber-lee Friis



Jewel Harris

Jewel Harris, 21, from Auckland, has successfully completed her degree in art and design, majoring in spatial design at Auckland University of Technology. Following her success, she has earned a full-time interior design internship. She is extremely proud to represent her Māori culture as this quality is part of the identity that has given her strength during her journey with Miss Universe. She is currently working on a campaign that uplifts and promotes artistic talent in Aotearoa that mainly focuses on Māori, providing a platform and gateway to further opportunities and successes. She has overcome many struggles and fears in her life and, through that, feels she is able to help other women to overcome their struggles and fears. As a wahine toa, Jewel wishes to encourage women to be strong and confident in who they are, because she believes that 'true beauty comes from within'.

'Miss Universe New Zealand gave me an opportunity to reconstruct a better version of myself, not to change anything but enhance what I already had with confidence.' Te Ara Hunt

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Priyena Prasad, 21, was born and raised in Auckland, and says she is grateful for every opportunity life has given her. She is a proud Kiwi-born Fijian Indian and confidently represents both cultures in her everyday life.

She currently works for the the Ministry of Social Development, studies business part-time at Massey University, and plays premier netball. Priyena has played netball for Auckland, North Harbour, and the Fiji U21 squad. She loves living a balanced life and always trying new things.

Priyena entered Miss Universe New Zealand because she has always had a passion to be on stage, and wanted to motivate girls to step out of their comfort zone and to grow in confidence in themselves. 'Every girl should know their worth and always aim high,' she says.



Priyena Prasad



Loryn Reynolds

Loryn Reynolds, 23, from Auckland is a freelance make-up artist who believes in the beauty within. Loryn enjoys creating make-up styles that instil confidence and encourage women to feel great and accept and love who they are. One of Loryn's favourite quotes is 'People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'

As a competitive ballroom dancer she has had many wonderful opportunities to perform in large arenas and international competitions. Loryn believes in seizing every opportunity that comes her way and doing all she can to live the best life possible and enjoy every moment. Loryn hopes to inspire young women through her Miss Universe New Zealand journey to follow their heart, see their potential and achieve their goals.

'My Miss Universe journey has encouraged me to discover qualities within myself and allowed me to use them in a way that is beneficial for myself and others around me.' Priyena Prasad

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Ella Morgan is 18 years old and from Hamilton. She is the founder and studio director of Tamahere Dance Academy, and teaches dance to over 50 students on a weekly basis. As well as running a successful business, Ella is currently studying towards a Bachelor of Arts, double majoring in Political Science and Public Policy. In the future, she hopes to represent her community as a Member of Parliament.

Ella was motivated to enter Miss Universe New Zealand in order to learn new skills and gain knowledge. She sees every challenge as an opportunity to develop her skills and learn new lessons, and is very grateful for the experience she has gained on her journey as a finalist.



Ella Morgan



Te Ara Hunt

Te Ara Hunt, 21, is a Māori wahine from a small town called Te Araroa on the east coast of Tairāwhiti, but currently lives in Gisborne for work and studies.

She is a community support worker in mental health in a service called Te Kuwatawata. In support of this, she is over halfway to completing her Bachelor in Social Work and is studying for a Certificate in Small Business.

Te Ara is also an amateur Muay Thai fighter and has been training and fighting for over four years. She fights out of a Māori martial arts' club called Rangataua o Aotearoa, and enjoys the sport because it always provides new challenges and pushes her to constantly train harder. Outside of these spaces, Te Ara describes herself as a country kid who spends her free weekends with her whānau fishing, hunting and swimming in the ocean and rivers.

Te Ara entered the Miss Universe New Zealand competition after a lot of encouragement from her aunt. She entered the competition to fight stereotypes and unconscious bias around the beauty industry. She describes herself as the 'epitome of a stereotype breaker'.

'The highlight of my journey as a Miss Universe New Zealand finalist has been all of the relationships that I have gained. Through this competition I have been lucky enough to be a part of a group of the most diverse, amazing and talented women who I know will be lifelong friends of mine.'

Ella Morgan



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Marina Kere, the down-to-earth 20-year-old from Nelson, entered Miss Universe New Zealand because she wants to make positive changes to the world. She is of Māori descent and belongs to the tribes Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Kuia and Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō. Currently, she is studying a degree in commerce, majoring in marketing, and working as a membership consultant at a local gym, and as a model signed with Voda Model Management.

Marina overcame obstacles to get to where she is in life now and captured attention as she has the rare disease, vitiligo, which only occurs in 1 per cent of the population.

This young woman has always strived for success and graduated high school with awards in business and geography, which are close passions of hers. She also came ninth in New Zealand in the Young Enterprise Studies' Exam and got selected to attend a future financiers' delegation in the US in 2017 along with 10 other young adults from New Zealand and Australia.

Marina hopes that, in the future, she can start her own humanitarian business that gives back to people.



Marina Kere



Nurul Shamsul

Nurul Shamsul, 20, is of Malay-Indonesian descent. She has lived in the Morrinsville area since she was five.

At college she had the honour of being Te Amokura (Māori cultural leader), acting as a mentor for younger students. Māori culture and values continue to influence her. At age 17, she became a published poet, and continues to write for her blog, *The Girl in the Wine Red Scarf*.

Nurul is currently a student at the University of Waikato. She aspires to become a community psychologist, as her goal is to empower individuals and communities. A strong advocate of Amnesty International, Nurul founded supporter groups at her high school and university. She is currently the president of the latter.

Nurul believes that competing in Miss Universe New Zealand will help her personal growth. She hopes to empower other young women through sharing her journey with MUNZ.

Nurul is the first Muslim hijabi finalist in Miss Universe New Zealand, and hopes to redefine what true beauty is.

'My life-long goal has always been to liberate and empower people, especially young girls, and I believe that Miss Universe New Zealand has made my dream come true.' Nurul Shamsul

Credits

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 General Counsel **Jack Yan**
 Production Associate **Aloha Quitat**

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Executive Producer **Nigel Godfrey**
 Television Director **Nigel Carpenter**
 Choreographer **Jane Strickland**
 Evening Gowns **Sidney Eculla**
 Pacific Streetwear Parade **Sewtec**
 Outside Broadcast Facilities **Image New Zealand Ltd.**
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