



MEDIA RELEASE

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Yvonne Hinemoa Hawkins – Is she South Auckland's Local Hero of 2009?

A top Manukau politician reckons he's found the spirit of the South Auckland community.

The MP for Manukau East Ross Robertson has nominated Yvonne Hinemoa Hawkins as a Local Hero in the inaugural New Zealander of the Year Awards.

Hinemoa, as she is known to her friends, volunteers for several organisations and agencies in her community including the Otara Citizens Advice Bureau and the Stroke Foundation.

She has worked closely with many of the community's senior citizens, offering care and support.

Hinemoa has also thrown herself heart and soul into fundraising for several causes such as the Kidney Kids Foundation and a local sports club for special needs students.

And if that's not enough she has also worked with and been nominated as a Justice of the Peace.

Mr Robertson says Hinemoa would be a most deserving recipient of a Local Hero Award.

"What drives Hinemoa is a determined aim to improve the level of support available to the vulnerable in the community and in this, she has been more than successful and has achieved very pleasing outcomes," he says.

Mr Robertson says she has worked within the CAB to increase the level of awareness of Te Reo and Tikaanga.

"Hinemoa is of Nga Puhi and Ngai Tahu descent. She is very proud of her heritage."

Mr Robertson says that he is amazed by so many individuals and organisations that he comes into contact with who are making such positive contributions to South Auckland and he wants to encourage the entire community to get behind the awards programme and nominate someone they feel is deserving of recognition.

Grant McCabe, the National Coordinator of the New Zealander of the Year Awards, says this is the exact sort of nomination the award committee is looking for.

“There can never be enough thanks and appreciation for those individuals and community groups who are making a valuable contribution to our communities.”

Nominations can now be made for the following category awards:

The Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year Award
The Ryman Healthcare Senior New Zealander of the Year Award
The Coca-Cola Amatil Young New Zealander of the Year Award
The Mitre 10 Community of the Year Award
The Kiwibank Local Heroes Awards

Winners of each of the five categories will receive \$5,000 courtesy of Kiwibank and all nominees will receive a certificate of appreciation of their achievements.

Nomination close on 20th November and application forms are available from Kiwibank and Mitre 10 branches or free phone 0508 692 927. You can also nominate online at

www.nzawards.org.nz

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