MEDIA RELEASE

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Pasifika Connections Fills Ōtāhuhu with Stories, Song and a Call to Vote

Every attendee is now enrolled to vote, as families and youth came together to talk about energy hardship, wellbeing and the power of their voices

Failoa Famili, in partnership with Pasifika Powered Peoples and 350 Aotearoa, hosted Pasifika Connections at the Ōtāhuhu Town Hall Community Centre on Thursday 22 October. The free community evening brought around 80 Pasifika families, young people and community members together to share lived experiences of energy hardship and talk about what can be done about it.

The night started with the energy of the MC, who sang the audience through the evening. The speeches that followed were motivational, relatable and grounded in real life. Speakers Feagaimaalii Naomi Tavau, CEO of Failoa Famili, Nele Kalolo of 350 Aotearoa, and Helena Fuluifaga Chan Foung of Pacific Climate Warriors and Fossil Fuel Treaty Aotearoa shared stories and evidence on how energy hardship affects health, dignity and wellbeing, and on the systemic challenges behind it.

A highlight was that every attendee is now enrolled to vote. The aim was to help young people in particular understand why their voices matter and how their participation shapes the issues their families face.

The evening moved into Table Talks, where laughter and storytelling filled the room. Conversations at the tables encouraged people to stand up for change in their own homes, neighbourhoods and communities.

Five lucky attendees took home prizes of RaD laptops and fuel vouchers. Guests also enjoyed Newstart Nourish Bowls and Island Chia Seed pudding, which disappeared quickly. This showed that healthy food can be delicious too.

> *"It was an amazing turnout. So many families came together, and it was great to see everyone realise that energy hardship is a challenge many of us share, and that it can be helped. We can use our voices, and our votes in this election, to stand for the change we want to see."*
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> **Sammi Wu, Project Manager, Failoa Famili**

> *"Pasifika families are paying the price of cold, damp, mouldy homes, and our children's health is suffering. This is a systemic failure, not a family failure. Warm, dry, healthy homes are a right, not a privilege. As we head to the polls, political leaders must commit to ending energy hardship and put people before profit."*
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> **Feagaimaalii Naomi Tavau, CEO, Failoa Famili**

Organisers thanked the families and communities who attended, the speakers, the MC, their partners, community supporters, RaD and the volunteers who made the evening possible.

WHAT'S NEXT

Let's keep the momentum going. Take the time to research the parties and policies for the election, because every vote counts. If you are experiencing energy hardship, please reach out. Failoa Energy offers a free home assessment.

ABOUT THE ORGANISERS

Failoa Famili
is a charitable trust, delivering values-based services and programmes, leadership, and support that strengthen youth, families, and communities.

350 Aotearoa
is the New Zealand arm of the international climate movement 350.org. It supports grassroots, community-led action for a fair transition to renewable energy across Aotearoa.

Pasifika Powered Peoples
is a Pasifika-led initiative working with communities on energy hardship, access to affordable, sustainable power and climate action.

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Photos from the evening are available on request.

SHORT VERSION TO READ ON AIR (OPTIONAL)

Last Thursday, Failoa Famili, with Pasifika Powered Peoples and 350 Aotearoa, hosted Pasifika Connections at the Ōtāhuhu Town Hall Community Centre. Families and young people came together for an evening of storytelling about energy hardship, with powerful speeches, lots of laughter at the Table Talks, and a crowd-favourite MC who sang the night away. Every person who attended is now enrolled to vote, and five lucky guests took home RaD laptops and fuel vouchers. Organisers are encouraging everyone to keep the momentum going, research the parties and policies before the election, and remember that every vote counts. If you're experiencing energy hardship, reach out to Failoa Energy for a free home assessment. For more information, contact Sammi on 022 188 1366.