

**Media Release**  
**20 February 2009**  
**Rainbow Youth**

**Rainbow Youth: Charity of choice for Coffey and Hitchcock on Dancing with the Stars**

Rainbow Youth will be dancing with the stars this year, having been chosen by Tamati Coffey and Samantha Hitchcock as their charity for the upcoming season of *Dancing With The Stars* on TV ONE, beginning Tuesday 3 March at 8.30pm.

The Rainbow Youth Executive Board and Staff are pleased Coffey and Hitchcock have selected to support Rainbow Youth as their charity for *Dancing With The Stars*.

“Rainbow Youth will benefit greatly from both the exposure and funds raised through being chosen as a charity for *Dancing With The Stars*. The opportunity will be extremely helpful to Rainbow Youth, allowing us to provide an increased number of services to youth.” says Tom Hamilton, Executive Director of Rainbow Youth.

“Rainbow Youth members, facilitators, volunteers and staff are really excited about this opportunity. Rainbow Youth is a not for profit organisation and we are working hard to maintain our service in this current economic climate. We’d like to extend our sincere thanks to both Tamati and Samantha,” remarks Hamilton, “we wish them the best of luck on the show.”

Rainbow Youth has been providing support, services and advocacy for queer and questioning youth, their family and whānau for more than 20 years. Their services include peer-support social groups, a drop-in centre and education on sexual and gender diversity, identity, relationship, and health in high school. Through these and other services, they aim to support and educate not only queer youth but also the greater community.

In addition, Rainbow Youth has participated in and collaboratively run projects all over the country, including co-governing the OutThere project with the New Zealand AIDS Foundation, which aims to reduce discrimination and prejudice at a national level through the development of queer networks and youth participation.

Rainbow Youth is one of the larger organisations supporting queer youth in New Zealand and encompasses a unique approach to leadership and empowerment of young people. This is reflected by the fact that the charity is governed exclusively by youth through an executive board of eight young people aged 27 and under, with the advice and expertise of three Adult Advisors.

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