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MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Inspirational leader a great loss to Waikato business community**

The Waikato Chamber of Commerce has paid tribute to much respected Waikato business leader Clifford Buchler who died last week.

Clifford was the CEO of Mitre 10 MEGA Te Rapa and Ruakura and was named CEO of the Year in the 2019 Waikato Chamber of Commerce Business Awards.

Mitre 10 MEGA Hamilton owner and former Waikato Chamber of Commerce board chair Terry Wilson said he and his wife Lynne were devastated.

“I can’t begin to tell you how Clifford’s team are feeling, let alone his family and friends. Clifford epitomised what it meant to be a leader. He understood and respected the strengths of everyone in his teams, he always led by example, and constantly pushed himself to be better. For that he earnt immense respect by everyone who worked with and knew him.”

Chamber CEO Don Good said Clifford was “truly one of life’s good people” who contributed vastly to Waikato business.

“He had a vast amount of leadership experience, and he was well known for his commitment to developing, motivating, inspiring and mentoring other up and coming leaders. He gave his time generously to the business community. Leaders like Clifford are few and far between; he will be sorely missed by many.”

Clifford was a speaker at a leadership forum last year and it was there he talked about the value of transparency in a business.

“I really believe if you want to motivate a team, how do you motivate them without any information? It’s quite a difficult thing to get across to most companies, because they want to keep everything closed and quiet,” Clifford said at the time.

He told the forum great business results come from having a motivated team. “And how I believe you help with motivation is clarity.”

He cited his absence from work for two months with a health issue in 2019: “I got back to work – there was nothing for me to do. I think that’s one of the best rewards for having a motivated team. And a lot of them did it for themselves, they saw opportunities, a lot of them did it for me, a lot of them did it for their colleagues.”

Originally from South Africa, Clifford had more than 30 years' experience in retail including with Foodstuffs and The Warehouse. He joined Mitre 10 MEGA in October 2017.

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