

LEON GRICE, CHAIR OF THE NEW ZEALAND UNITED STATES COUNCIL



Leon's career has mainly been in the private sector building businesses, leading communications and technology teams. He has considerable corporate development experience advising: the Māori Fisheries Commission during the establishment of Aotearoa Fisheries; Tacoma-based forestry business, Weyerhaeuser as it invested in New Zealand forestlands; and TransAlta Corporation as it invested in the New Zealand energy sector.

In 2009 he entered public service and led the team that built the leverage program for New Zealand's hosting of Rugby World Cup 2011. In 2012 he was appointed to be New Zealand Consul General in Los Angeles and served for five years. A highlight includes building a partnership between the Seattle-based Gates Foundation and New Zealand dairy companies to establish a modern dairy development project in Ethiopia. His University of Canterbury Bachelor of Arts Honours (First Class) degree included land tenure systems of Pacific Islands and economic development impacts.

MAJOR ROLES

DIRECTOR, CLOSEASSOCIATE AND TWENTY4MEDIA, NEW ZEALAND – 2000 TO -

Built consulting businesses; twenty4media - a digital out-of-home TV business; CloseAssociate, developer of enterprise software and IP management products.

NEW ZEALAND CONSUL GENERAL, LOS ANGELES, MFAT – 2012-2017

Oversaw the leverage program for America's Cup 2013 and built new networks of US investors and innovators; established strong connections across US.

CHAIRMAN, NZ US COUNCIL – 2017 TO -

Invited President Obama to NZ and was formal host in March 2018; set up the future of: food; data; education and work; & defence policy projects.

DIRECTOR, NZ2011 OFFICE – 2009-2011

Led and delivered RWC2011 leverage program including building NZ's brand to focus on creativity & innovation; built an inclusive education & community program; and NZ's largest ever cultural festival.

ADVISER TO TE OHU KAI MOANA - MAORI FISHERIES COMMISSION

Supported Maori leadership during iwi fisheries allocation negotiations and implemented the restructuring of Maori-owned fishing businesses to create Aotearoa Fisheries.

FOUNDER DIRECTOR OF BRG – 1995-2000

Founder of highly successful public affairs consultancy, Busby Ramshaw Grice.