



Auckland
**Women's
Centre**

Te Roopu Wahine o Tamaki Makaurau

**Facilitating empowerment and
well-being for women**

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

**Statement of Accounts
1 July 2013 – 30 June 2014**

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Charities Commission Certificate of Registration No CC27188

COMMITMENTS

Vision

A society where women are well resourced and empowered within their communities to achieve equity, safety and wellbeing.

Mission Statement

The Auckland Women's Centre facilitates empowerment and well-being for women.

Philosophy

Auckland Women's Centre is committed to working for change for women from feminist perspectives.

Constitutional Objectives

1. We recognise Maori as Tangata Whenua o Aotearoa and wholeheartedly embrace and uphold the principles and spirit of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
2. We will create an environment for Auckland women to meet for support, discussion, information, referral, learning and sharing skills.
3. We will provide information on women's rights, healthcare and issues affecting women's lives from a feminist perspective.
4. We support and assist the development of women's self-help initiatives.
5. We advocate at local and national levels on women's issues.
6. We network with other women's and community groups to promote women's empowerment in society.
7. We will do all such acts or things as are incidental to, or which will directly or indirectly further, or be conducive to, the attainment of the foregoing objects of the organisation.
8. Any income, benefit, or advantage shall be applied towards the charitable purposes of the Auckland Women's Centre.

Strategic Directions: January 2014 - December 2015

1. Deliver sustainable projects to improve the well-being of marginalised mothers and their families.
2. Provide affordable, accessible, quality services, programmes and resources for women in response to their needs.
3. Be an effective voice for women's equality and well-being.

GOVERNANCE COLLECTIVE REPORT

By Sarah-Jane Olsen, Chairperson

The foundation of this report is one of thanks. As a Collective we give thanks to our paid staff and volunteers who provide an invaluable service to the women of Auckland. Despite this being an era in which many not-for-profits like the Women's Centre are battling funding constraints, the Centre's staff consistently excels at meeting this challenge with passion and professionalism. For this and more, we endeavour to express our gratitude.

Dr. Judy McGregor continues to honour us by acting as the Centre's patron. Judy is the Head of the School of Social Sciences and Public Policy at AUT. With interests in gender equality in governance, equal pay, and women's rights, we are very thankful Judy is willing to give her time and expertise to the Centre, including chairing the Women's Election Forum with charm, wit and impartiality.

Centre Manager, **Leonie Morris's** tireless enthusiasm for driving the operational aspects of the Collective's strategic planning ensures the Women's Centre's place as a respected voice. Our Information, Referral and Advice Service as well as community education is the responsibility of our Women's Services and Community Education Coordinator, **Ellie Lim**. Ellie's knack for



Wise Wāhine Speak presenters: Kelly Henare-Heke, Alicia Heremaia, Bianca Ranson and Jeanine Tamati-Paratene.

gauging interest and sending information before we realise it is needed is a skill unto itself and Ellie always manages to do it with a smile. **Rochelle Carr**, SKIP Coordinator, determinedly worked

to earn the Centre not only the effusive praise of this government, but two years of increased secured funding for our SKIP project. Answering any and all questions falls to **Tania Brady**, Administrator. Tania's patience and humour for responding to any accounting queries no matter how mundane is greatly appreciated. Finally, **Sophie Richmond**, Funding and Fundraising Coordinator, continues to find new and innovative ways to make the Centre more financially sustainable. This difficult task must often at times seem insurmountable, yet Sophie's enthusiasm is unwavering.

The Governance Collective's strategic planning prioritises engaging with a diverse range of women in their communities. This year the Centre launched **Women: Diverse and Connected**, consisting of a series of interactive forums designed to celebrate diversity and promote inclusivity, connect diverse groups of women with each other and enable different groups of women's voices to be heard. To date the Centre has partnered with **Te Wharepora Hou** and **Living Wage Aotearoa** to offer Wise Wāhine Speak, a forum showcasing the mahi of wāhine Māori and with **Generation Zero** (a youth led environmental organisation) to organise Women and Climate Justice, an interactive forum exploring and offering constructive ideas on gender and climate justice.

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

The Auckland Women's Centre's range of activities fall broadly into the categories of health and welfare services for women, opportunities for personal growth, developing resources for the women's communities, partnering with other agencies to provide a voice for gender equity, providing feminist community events, support for lesbians and queer women and delivering a SKIP Positive Parenting Single Mums Project.

HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES FOR WOMEN

Information, Referral and Advice Service

This year over 3,600 women from all over Tamaki Makaurau have sought assistance from our extensive service. Women have made contact by phone, email or in person requiring information about: women's health services, educational courses and workshops, counselling support, emergency accommodation, budgeting resources, maternity and mothering, domestic and sexual violence support, migrant resources, women's activities and adventures, support and events for lesbians and queer women, and much more.

Intensive support for women

Working from a strength-based approach, Centre staff and volunteers provide intensive face-to-face or telephone support to women experiencing major distress and seeking assistance with immediate needs. Empathetic listening, support and validation are provided, information is given, and referrals can be made to specialised crisis care services and community service providers for ongoing assistance. In 2014, 83 women received this type of intensive support from the Centre.

Therapeutic massage

Affordable massage for beneficiaries and other women on low incomes is available at the Centre. Our masseuse is highly skilled and supportive, consequently this service is very popular and bookings often have to be made a few months in advance.



Free mammograms

We were delighted to host the Mobile Breast Screening Unit at our Centre again this year. They provide free screening for women aged from 45 to 69.

New Zealand Flower Essences Clinic

After one and a half years of providing our clients with affordable Flower Essences, **Kiri Schumacher** held her last clinic in April. Her wonderful energy and skills are sorely missed and we wish her well with her creative pursuits.

Personal counselling

The Centre has benefited from retaining an experienced and talented counselling team. **Robyn Lawrence** and **Joan Prairie** provide high quality and low cost therapy sessions. Clients have a choice of counsellors and therapeutic modalities. Our counsellors are fully qualified, are members of a professional association and receive clinical supervision.

SKIP SINGLE MUMS POSITIVE PARENTING PROJECT

It was exciting to have the SKIP project renewed for two years, instead of one. SKIP has a new focus on parent-led community-action and our recent work reflects this emphasis. Our work continues to be targeted to meet participants' needs. The non-judgemental SKIP approach enables parents to connect, share parenting experiences and plan new approaches with strategies resulting in positive parenting outcomes.

- We delivered SKIP sessions in partnership with Te Whare Marama O Mangere Womens Refuge, Odyssey Family House, Roskill South Oasis Hub, Solo Parents NZ, Glenavon Early Childhood Centre, the Solomon Group (a Maori Private Training Establishment) and Royal Road Hub Massey.
- Seven fantastic single mums belonged to the SM Leadership Group (Jeannie Maher, Ollie Roberts, Jo Fletcher, Tina Tucker, Philippa Haith, Kylie Goddard, and Andrea Bartlett), with other single mums making informal contributions. Through this group the mums gained leadership skills and used their areas of expertise to contribute.
- Monthly SKIP Single Mum Sundays started in June and enabled mums who work outside the home on weekdays to come together in the weekend. This proved to be a valuable meet up for single mum families.
- Two events were so successful last year that we held them again; the 'SKIP Single Mums Family Fun Day' at Roskill South Oasis Hub (approximately 65 people participated) and the 'SKIP Single Mothers' Day' at AWC (13 families participated). A new event 'SKIP Single Mums Kids Disco', in term one, proved popular and another one was then held in term three with 12 families. The SKIP Single Mothers' Day attracted 13 single mum families. Five single mums and their children came together for a parent-led SKIP Easter Egg Hunt. These events celebrated parenting by normalising support through socialising and connecting with other single parents.
- We participated in three community events in term one - Toddler Day Out and Great Parenting Fair (approximately 12,000 people attended) and the Molley Green Neighbourhood festival (approximately 5,000 people attended). Two more community events are held in term four – Grey Lynn Festival and the Oranga Community Festival.
- Collaboration with Solo Parents NZ Facebook group has allowed access to over 1,400 parents online through posts about positive parenting.
- 14 community agencies attended the Single Mums Agency Network meetings contributing to the initiative by sharing ideas, resources, and developing strong working relationships.
- The Family-Friendly Shopping projects at Mt Roskill shopping area and the Mt Wellington Night Market attracted five single mums and two volunteers from the wider community. These innovative, parent-led community-actions are on-going.



Having SKIP fun at the Glenavon EC Centre

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT GROUPS

We were able to offer a wider variety of courses and workshops to meet the needs of our communities in 2014. New to this year's programme was **The Science of Happiness**, a six-week course on discovering what it is that makes one happy and how to maintain happiness. This course was offered by life coach, Annalise Roache from The Coaching Toolbox and we had such great feedback from the first course that we ran it again in term four.

We were also able to offer our popular long standing courses and workshops, **Hatha Yoga, Get Knitting, Memoir Writing Toolkit, Introduction to Te Reo Māori, Sacred Tantra Belly Dancing, Girls' and Women's Self Defence Workshops** and our **Women's Book Club**.

There were three courses introduced last year that we carried on due to exceptionally positive feedback regarding the course content and the tutors. They were: **Expressive Art Journaling, Love it or Leave it** (emotional de-cluttering), and **Self Esteem and Empowerment for Women**.

Twice a year we have the privilege of having Lisa Dudson of Acumen Financial Solutions run two-hour workshops for us on **Budgeting** and moving **Towards Financial Freedom**. These workshops impart valuable information and tips for getting one's finances sorted. We are very grateful to Lisa for offering her time to us for the past three years.

Our **Restorative Yoga** class, taught by the wonderful Simone Bonny, emphasises the careful adaptation of yoga postures to suit individual needs.

Participants found our **Rediscovering You Workshop**, taught by the ever glowing Wende Jowsey, fun, interactive and successful at providing concrete ways to both examine and expand their potential for the second half of their lives. We continued to provide other invaluable personal development groups such as: **Amazing Assertiveness for Women, Solo Mum's: Resourcing the Source**, and **Building a New Life after Separation**. These support groups have a peer support and preventing violence aspect to them.



Girls love our Self Defence Workshops

Providing support and information to the Lesbian, Bi, Queer and Transgender communities is an important part of our work. Alongside the annual six-week **Questioning** course we also run a monthly social evening alternating **DVDs and Board Games**. We are very grateful for financial support from the RULE Foundation to help cover this year's costs. The social night has been running for six years and is a great way to connect with other women in the LGBT community outside the bar and club scene.

We are proud to provide women-only community education where women and girls can gain new skills, build their self-confidence and increase their feelings of belonging to their community.

FUNDRAISING

In August 2013 we employed our first Fundraising Coordinator, Sophie Richmond, to assist us to diversify our income streams. In 2014 Sophie held successful monthly fundraising events, including hosting the international feminist writer and cartoonist, Alison Bechdel. A big thank you to Holly Hatch-Stevens who provided top quality, much-needed assistance to Sophie on a volunteer basis. As well as raising funds, these monthly events are community building, profile raising and promote our activities and programmes to the public. All the fundraising events have been successful with the standout being hosting Alison Bechdel, which attracted 231 people, raised \$4,000 and even attracted a favourable Herald review.

Our fundraising aims to foster ongoing loyal supporters with a focus on relationship building, direct mail, monthly donors, bequests and donor retention. In addition to organising events Sophie has been increasing our fundraising infrastructure and capacity.



RESOURCES FOR THE WOMEN'S COMMUNITY

Women's Library

The Centre's library contains many hundreds of books written for and by women, both popular fiction and non-fiction. During the last year Aorewa McLeod and Elizabeth Morey have done sterling work in the library, carrying out a stocktake and ensuring the books are catalogued and shelved correctly.

GOSSIP – our quarterly newsletter, website and Facebook page

GOSSIP is provided free to over 1,800 individuals and to about 250 community organisations each quarter. Gossip informs women know about the Centre's current services and activities, provides a space for others to promote woman-focused events, and features articles on topical women's issues.

Our new website www.awc.org.nz allows women from all over the world to find out about the Centre and to email us from our site. Visitor numbers continued to increase over this year. We now receive about 4,000 visitors a month. The Centre also has a Facebook page which is updated frequently.

BEING A VOICE FOR WOMEN'S EQUITY

We began 2014 with a **Women's Talk: How do feminists harness the rage against 'roast busters'?** Our speakers brought a wealth of passion and experience: **Stella Gukibau**, Tumuaki/Director of Tu Wahine; **Dr Kim McGregor**, Executive Director of Rape Prevention Education; **Kathryn McPhillips**, Clinical Manager of HELP; **Kiran Foster** and **Lila Bullen-Smith**, former Avondale College students and founders of "Support Our Survivors"; and **Dr Nicola Gavey**, Associate Professor, School of Psychology at the University of Auckland.



Kiran Foster, Lila Bullen-Smith, Stella Gukibau, Kathryn McPhillips, Dr Kim McGregor and Dr Nicola Gavey

In November 2014 the police reported that after their extensive investigation they had decided not to charge any of the suspects. In response Nicola Gavey called for: law reform specifying that consent must be free and voluntary and that explicitly restricted the option of a defence based on an 'honest belief in consent', a high profile media campaign debunking rape myths and compulsory sexuality education in schools which includes endorsing sexual pleasure for young women.

With the parliamentary elections dominating 2014 the Centre was involved in two election forums. The first was the **Women's Choice Election Forum** organised by a partnership of: the National Council of Women (Auckland Branch), Auckland Women's Centre, AUSA Women's Rights Officers, the Hand Mirror Blog and the Auckland Women's Studies Association. This well-attended event was lively and informative.

Chaired by the Auckland Women's Centre's patron Dr Judy McGregor, the MPs on the panel included National's Maggie Barry, Labour's Carol Beaumont, Green's Jan Logie, the Internet Party's Pani Farvid and HinurewaTe Hau from the Maori party. Highlights of the night included Jan Logie's reference to increasing the tax rate to 40% for earners over \$140k to provide funds to tackle child poverty which was met with wide applause and Carol Beaumont's commitment to provide \$60m over four years to support services for victims of domestic and sexual violence.

Silent Injustice, a partnership of the Women's Health Action Trust and the Centre, organised the second election forum. This forum focussed on women's experiences and recent law reforms which force women into mediation with their abusive ex-partner. The forum's speakers were; Senior Lecturer of Sociology Dr Vivienne Elizabeth, National MP, Scott Simpson, Labour MP, Andrew Little, Green Party MP, David Clendon, Maori Party candidate, Hinurewa Te Hau and Internet Party candidate, Miriam Pierard. During the Q and A many women in the audience told their own heartbreaking stories and asked questions about the lack of

accessibility of protection orders, the extreme financial costs, the lack of accountability, the poor understanding of domestic violence by practitioners working in Family Court and the loss of the child's voice since the new reforms. The horrifying personal stories of the abuse inside and outside the courts echoed throughout the room.

The Auckland Women's Centre continued to coordinate the **Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children** consisting of thirteen violence prevention groups. joined the existing members: Auckland Women's Centre, Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP, Homeworks Trust, Eastern Women's Refuge and the Inner City Women's Group, the Mental Help Foundation, Mt Albert Psychological Services, North Shore Women's Centre, Rape Prevention Education– Whakatu Mauri, Rodney Women's centre, SHINE Safer Homes in New Zealand Everyday, Supportline Women's Refuge, and Women's Health Action Trust. The coalition shared relevant research, supported best practice in family violence intervention, and advocated for the sector by producing submissions to local and national government.

Today pornography is available 24/7 on smartphones and computer screens. Its accessibility and use in music videos, computer games and popular culture means porn has become normalised, is shared and imitated, and its content is increasingly violent towards women. This year the Women's Centre has been working with **two high school feminist groups** that are telling us they are worried



Members of the Western Springs College Young Feminists at the Centre making a 'W' for women with their hands.

about the messages porn gives both women and men. This push back against porn's harm is one of the drivers behind the rise in feminism's popularity, and it has increasingly been led by young women.

Feminist Action gained two new co-coordinators at the beginning of the year, Meg Rayner-Thomas and Anita Lacey. In August Meg and Anita led a powerful, energetic march to **Take Back the Night** for women, the queer community, and the homeless, all of whom are subject to male violence or the threat of male violence.

The marchers, a wonderfully diverse group of gender, ethnicity, ability and age, carried banners that read: "Reclaim our autonomy", "I don't owe you a smile" and "Teach Boys Not to Rape" as AKSamba's amazing drumming echoed through Queen Street.

Several inspiring speakers addressed the Rally, including *Marama Davidson*, Te Wharepora Hou: *Meg Rayner-Thomas*, Feminist Action: *Kathryn McPhillips*, HELP, support for sexual abuse survivors; *Kim McGregor*, Rape Prevention Education; *Suman Ramavat*, Shakti Asian Women's Support Group; *Kiran Foster*, a founder of Support our Survivors; *Levi Joule*, AUSA Queer Rights Officer; *Jennifer Shields*, Campus Feminist Collective and trans advocate; and *Lorrie Mackness*, a spokesperson for Women's Disability Forum.

WE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITH GRATITUDE THE FOLLOWING WOMEN:

Members of the **Governance Collective** provide AWC with big picture, strategic guidance and support within a collective framework. We wish to thank **Sarah-Jane Olsen** (Chairperson), **Ruth Busch** (Secretary), **Katie Palmer du Preez** (Treasurer), **Dale Little, Sabrina Muck, Nicola Brebner, Mira Taitz, Meg Rayner-Thomas, Sylvia Barnes** and **Ella Cartwright** for providing invaluable knowledge, skills, perspective and ideas. We were sad to say goodbye to Ella who shifted to Wellington in August.

This year our frontline service has benefited from the hard work of many volunteers and student placements. We would like to thank the following women for their work, skills, energy and enthusiasm: **Marilynn Johnson, Laura Crossen, Umayya Ekanayake, Caitlin Melhuish, Veronika Rybova, Mary Kienholz, and Nicole Duncan.**

Three students assisted us with our work; **Sarah Ebyarimpa, Apurva Mahire,** and **Natasha Hunt.** We were lucky that both Natasha and Sarah were with us full-time for three months giving us their careful reflection, compassion and social work skills. Apurva skilfully aided our participation in the General Election.

Other women who have generously contributed their time, skills and effort to our crèche, SKIP project, mail-outs, advocacy work, cleaning and library include: **Amanda Robinson, Angela Thorogood, Aorewa McLeod, Carol Eruera, Debra Becker, Donogh Rees, Elizabeth Morey, Emily McMillian, Jenny Naea, Jo Abplanalp, Jo Carter, Liesa Walter, Loretta Verry, Lucinda Staniland, Lucy Xu, Maia Carr Heke, Maddy McCarthy-Morrogh, Natalia Lukaszewicz, Raine Shirley, Rosiena White, Philippa Haith, Tiara Betham, Vesta Clarke and Wendy Rowe.** We also wish to express our special thanks to **Bronwyn Banks and Barbara McArdle** our talented and compassionate crèche supervisors.



Collective members: from left to right: Dale, Meg, Sabrina, Ruth, Sarah-Jane Mira and Katie.

We sincerely thank the **tutors** of our courses, activities and workshops, listed on the following page. Their ability to share their diverse skills and experiences allows us to offer a wide variety of support and learning opportunities to our community. Also listed on the next page are our **funders** whose generosity enables us to provide a wide range of services and programmes to women.

THE AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES AND WOMEN THAT SUPPORTED OUR WORK:

FUNDERS

ANZ New Zealand Staff
Foundation
ASB Community Trust
Auckland Council
Creative Communities
COGS
Dragon Community Trust
First Sovereign Trust
Fuji Xerox NZ Ltd
Four Winds Charitable Trust
GABA Charitable Trust
Guardian Trust
Infinity Foundation
John Illott Charitable Trust
Lion Foundation
Maurice Paykel Charitable
Trust
Ministry of Education
Ministry of Social
Development, MSD
Nautilus Foundation
NZ Lottery Grants
Board
North and South Trust
Pub Charity Inc
Rule Foundation
SKIP, MSD
SKYCITY Auckland Community
Trust
Trillian Trust
Waitemata Local Board

TUTORS

Annalise Roache
Barb Wallis
Bianca Williams
Carol Rewega

Chris Johannis
Cissy Rock
Estelle Mendelsohn
Joan Prairie
Kirsten Shaw
Lisa Dudson
Lisa Williams
Margaret Lewis
Marian Hammond
Morgan Libeau
Nancy Cooper
Rosanna Marks
Simone Bonny
Susy Carryer
Wende Jowsey

AGENCIES

Auckland Council
Auckland PlayCentre Assn.
Auckland Regional Migrants
Trust
Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP
Auckland Women's Refuge
Barnardos
Charlotte Museum
Child Poverty Action
Community Alcohol and Drug
Services
CYF, Grey Lynn, Westgate
Eastern Women's Refuge
Family Planning Association
Glenavon ECE Centre
Glendene Hub
Grey Lynn Community Centre
HIPPY
Human Rights Commission
Inner City Women's Group
Massey Community House

Mental Health Foundation
Mt Albert Physiological
Services
National Council of Women
New Zealand Family Violence
Clearing House
North Shore Women's Centre
Northern Family Works
Onehunga Community Centre
Odyssey House
Parent Aid
Plunket
Raeburn House
Rape Prevention Education
Rainbow Youth
Ranui Baptist Community Care
Ranui PlayCentre
Refresh
Roskill South Oasis Early
Intervention Hub
Salvation Army
Shakti Women's Centre
SHINE
Stop Demand
Supportline Women's Refuge
Tamaki Makaurau Lesbian
Newsletter
Te Rito Rodney
Te Whare Marama O Mangere
Women's refuge
The Women's Bookshop
The Solomon Group
Tu Wahine Trust
The Hand Mirror Blog
Violence Free Waitakere
Waitakere Women's Centre
Women's Health Action
Women's Refuge