



Auckland
**Women's
Centre**

Te Rōpū Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau

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

**Annual Report 2015
Statement of Accounts
1 July 2014 - 30 June 2015**

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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 2016 - December 2016

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. Prevent violence against women and children.
4. Engage and partner with women in their communities.
5. Be an effective voice for women's equality and well-being.

GOVERNANCE COLLECTIVE REPORT

By Katie Palmer du Preez, Chairperson

This year the Auckland Women's Centre celebrated a remarkable achievement: 40 years since it was established by the Auckland Women's Liberation group in 1975. Against the odds, and thanks to countless women, AWC continues to survive and thrive. In July, 125 people attended our Anniversary Dinner where herstory was recounted, sung and performed. As a Collective we are immensely proud to be part of creating an Aotearoa where women and their families can make real choices that enable them to lead fulfilling lives and feel connected to their communities.

In 2015, the Governance Collective's strategic planning continued to prioritise outreach and engaging with a diverse range of women. Our project **Women: Diverse and Connected**, a series of interactive forums provided an arena to showcase and celebrate women's diversity and knowledge, promote inclusivity and enable different groups of women's voices to be heard. This year we partnered with five organisations to deliver forums on the following topics: *How do we build community strength? A women's perspective* - in partnership with **Te Wharepora Hou** and **Living Wage Aotearoa New Zealand**; *What is it like living in Auckland as an Asian Woman?* - in collaboration with the **Chinese New Settlers Services Trust**; *Black Feminist Practice in Aotearoa* - with **Te Wharepora Hou** and **The Project**; *Social enterprise: Contributing to migrant and refugee women's independence* - with **Shakti Asian Women's Centre**.



Teri Fong delivering a powerful speech at our 40th Anniversary Dinner

We are proud of AWC's new **Youth Development Project** for young women aged 16–20, in partnership with the **Roskill South Oasis Hub** and the **Mangere East Community Centre**. A significant group of young women are disconnected from the support of their communities, with about 10% of young women in Auckland not in employment, education or training. While excellent youth

work is carried out in high needs areas, there are a lack of projects which specifically resource young women to work together to improve their well-being. Our Young Women's Coordinator, Stephanie Vakauta, facilitates and resources the women. Expected outcomes are to: Provide young women with the opportunity to grow their leadership skills; strengthen their ability to connect with each other, their families and their local communities; develop their confidence and potential; and enable them to positively influence their local community. This is exciting work to which the Auckland Women's Centre brings a unique and much needed understanding of gender issues.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the AWC staff: Leonie Morris, Ellie Lim, Rochelle Carr, Sophie Richmond, Stephanie Vakauta and our newest member, Jeannie Maher. They are the passion and drive that hold the AWC together and who draw us collective volunteers in through their mahi. Thank you to our members, supporters and funders who enable our story to continue. Finally, thank you to my fellow AWC Collective members for your willingness to share your experience, wisdom and feminism in guiding AWC forward into 2016 and beyond.

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

The Auckland Women's Centre's range of activities fall broadly into the categories of health and well-being services for women, opportunities for personal growth, a community education programme, partnering with other agencies to provide a voice for gender equity, providing feminist community events, support for queer and lesbian women, providing young women's community development projects 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 Tāmaki Makaurau have sought assistance from our extensive service. Women have made contact by phone, email or in person requiring information and support 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 2015, 87 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 well in advance.



Personal counselling

The Centre has benefited from having an experienced and talented counselling team. This year we farewelled the wonderful **Robyn Lawrence** who retired in June. Robyn had been with us for over ten years and was well loved by AWC staff and clients. **Joan Prairie** continues to provide our clients with high quality and low cost therapy sessions. A new addition to our team is **Sarah Lowe**, a registered psychologist who offers ACC counselling support every Wednesday. Our counsellors are fully qualified, are members of a professional association and receive clinical supervision.

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.

SKIP SINGLE MUMS POSITIVE PARENTING PROJECT

Our Parent-Led Community-Action focus has produced some great outcomes this year.

- We delivered **66 SKIP sessions** in partnership with Odyssey Family House, Roskill South Oasis Hub, Te Whare Marama O Mangere Women's Refuge, the Solomon Group (a Maori Private Training Establishment), Diabetes Projects Trust, Nutrimerics, and Waikowhai Primary School.
- SKIP sessions were specifically targeted to meet participants' needs. Our **non-judgemental** approach empowered parents to connect, share parenting experiences and plan new approaches drawing on SKIP strategies which enabled positive parenting outcomes.
- Single mums at **Odyssey Family House** had fantastic discussions, reflections and changes supported by our Early Childhood Education expert volunteer, Dr Helen Bernstone.
- Collaboration with **Solo Parents NZ Facebook Group** has allowed access to over 2,820 solo parents online through posts about positive parenting, up from 1,400 parents last year.
- The **SKIP Single Mum Leadership Group** grew to 19 members. The mums gained leadership skills and used their own expertise to contribute to the project. Six participated in the Conscious Parenting: Five Stages of Change workshop.
- The monthly **SKIP Single Mum Sundays** brought single mums together on a supportive social basis. Mums discussed parenting challenges and offered support and positive parenting strategies to each other. Six workshoping groups were also held at AWC and focused on topics specifically for solo parents.
- The seven parent-led '**Caught Being Good**' evenings at the Mt Wellington and Papatoetoe Night Market were a great success. We engaged with approximately 60 parents and caregivers and approximately 105 individual children.
- Collaboration with the Westpac Recruitment Team saw 36 women from the SKIP Single Mums Project have one-on-one time learning about **CV writing and job seeking skills**.
- The **SKIP Single Mothers' Day** attracted 21 single mum families. Other small events celebrated parenting by normalising support through socialising and connecting with other single parents. We participated in two large community events, the Toddler Day Out and Great Parenting Fair and the Grey Lynn Festival attended by over 120,000 people.
- The **SKIP Community Garden** was designed and built by SKIP Single Mums. Construction skills were taught by Genevieve, an apprentice builder, and vegetables were grown and harvested by those families who have participated.



A SKIP workshop in Roskill South

Thank you to all the single mums, their children and the volunteers this year!

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND SUPPORT GROUPS

This year we worked with new and existing tutors to offer a range of courses and workshops to meet the needs of our communities.

Anita Simpson joined us to teach a six-week **Introduction to Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori** course which was met with such enthusiastic feedback that we will run it again next year and also introduce an intermediate class.

We also have a new **Get Knitting** tutor, Barbara Woodman, an inspirational source of creativity and crafting skills. Barbara started knitting at age seven and has shared her passion for the craft with many adults and children.

We are very grateful to Wende Jowsey who runs three of our courses: **Solo Mum's Empowerment, Rediscovering You: for Women 40's and beyond** and **Assertiveness with Love**. Wende is highly skilled at facilitating groups of women through the difficult times in their journeys.

This year we saw the return of many of our popular, long standing courses and workshops: **Restorative Yoga** with Simone Bonny, **Self Esteem and**

Empowerment for Women with Chris Johannis and **Belly Dancing** with Rosanna Marks. We offered two **Girls' Self Defence** workshops, a



Participants at the Digital Diaries workshop

Women's Self Defence workshop and two, two-hour seminars with Lisa Dudson on **Budgeting** and **Towards Financial Freedom**.

Lisa Williams had a wonderful group of women for her final **The Memoir Writing Toolkit** and most of them went on to participate in her pilot **Digital Diaries** course, which we are offering again in 2016.

We provided two **Building a New Life after Separation** workshops this year facilitated by Joan Prairie. This one-day workshop delivers invaluable support in the processing of grief and anger post relationship break up.

Providing support and information to the Rainbow Communities is an important part of our work. Alongside our annual six-week **Questioning** course we also run a monthly social evening alternating **DVDs and Board Games**. The social night has been running for seven years and is a great way to connect with other women in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans community outside the bar and club scene.

Also providing regular connection to a community of like-minded women is our monthly free **Women's Book Club**, facilitated by Susy Carryer.

Thank you very much to all our tutors for their excellent work. We are proud to provide women-only community education in a supportive environment where women and girls can gain new skills, build their self-confidence and increase their feelings of belonging to their community.

YOUNG WOMEN'S COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

This project is delivered in partnership with the **Mangere East Community Centre** and the **Roskill South Oasis Hub**. Our first achievement was employing **Steph Vakauta** as our Young Women's Coordinator. Steph is Roskill South born and bred and an excellent leader: inspirational, empathetic and ethical. Steph began by recruiting two volunteers to help her, Eden Choice and Machaeen Teautama.

Together they established the **Roskill South Young Women's Group**. The group of nine young women meet weekly. After some whakawhanaungatanga to build up trust, each participant took a turn at leading the group. Initially the young women were nervous about facilitating, but they found talking about the issues they face (alcohol, sex, drugs, careers, love, suicide, etc) has built their confidence. The young women are highly engaged, it is a safe space for everyone to be in, and each week they leave the group feeling uplifted.

After a discussion about their role models, the young women decided to cook a **Heroes Dinner** for their mums. There was singing, original poems about why their mums are their heroes, some tears, and the mums felt appreciated!

At Mangere East, Steph and her volunteers have been connecting young women to the Mangere East Community Centre and the **Otahuhu/Mangere Youth Group** (OMYG). They ran a stall at the Mangere East Cultural Festival, where 21 young women signed up to the group and filled in a questionnaire identifying career paths as their biggest struggle.

As a member of OMYG, Steph helped organise the group's **annual youth camp** and arranged for three members of her project to attend the camp with her. At the camp the young women were shy at first, but ended up getting to know everyone and enjoying it so much they didn't want it to end.

Steph organised young women to attend the **Women of Worth** concert at Nga Tapuwae and the **E.C.H.O. concert** presented by **Living Wage** and the **Tongan Youth Trust** at the Mangere Arts Centre. Currently they are rallying young women to attend the **Mangere East Festival** where they will be running a stall for young women entitled '**Strictly for the Ladies**'.

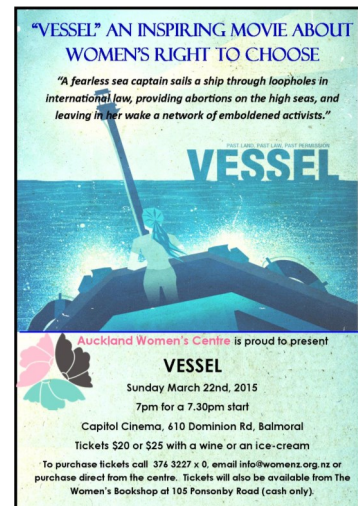


A meeting of the Roskill South Young Women's Group:
Zhanet, Emily, Steph, Machaeen, Eden, Daneka, Kalesita, Shannon, and Caroline

FUNDRAISING

This has been another great year for community building and fundraising events. Alongside the **monthly feminist film nights** we have held special events including a high profile **Art Auction** with support from the artist community, local business sponsors, and community volunteers. A special thank you to our fabulous MC, Michele A 'Court and a huge thanks to **Soala Wilson, The Works Hair Salon**, for dedicating time and talent to supporting the vital work of the Auckland Women's Centre. The Art Auction raised over \$5,000 for the empowerment and wellbeing of women living in Auckland.

A big thank you to **Sara Jacks**, our events and communications volunteer specialist this year. Our **supporters and volunteers** are the life blood of the organisation. Thank you to every single one of you who has contributed to the Auckland Women's Centre in 2015 - it makes a huge difference!



BEING A VOICE FOR WOMEN'S EQUITY

Women: Diverse and Connected, was a series of five forums, each with a different agency, about a topic important to that agency. We partnered with community agencies that are successfully engaging their community and are carrying out innovative, solution-based work. These agencies drew on their rich networks and strong partnerships to bring women to the forums who might not otherwise attend a public forum.

At all of the forums, the speakers and the korero that followed combined incisive analysis with humour and a sense of commitment and purpose. By providing a space which showcased the creativity and mahi of diverse women, we were all empowered.

The Auckland Women's Centre continued to coordinate the **Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children** consisting of twelve violence prevention groups: Auckland Women's Centre, Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP, Homeworks Trust, Eastern Women's Refuge, Inner City Women's Group, the Mental Health 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, and Women's Health Action Trust.

Thanks very much to Catriona MacLennan who coordinated a submission on behalf of the Coalition on the Government's discussion paper '*Strengthening New Zealand's legislative response to family violence*'. Much of the Coalition's work over the next two years will be related to this paper.

Auckland Feminist Action, led by Anita Lacey and Meg Rayner-Thomas, organised a powerful and energetic march in August to take back the night for women and the queer community, and to fight male violence.

The marchers, a wonderfully diverse group in terms of gender, ethnicity, ability and age, carried banners that read, "My Body Always Deserves Respect", "Blame Rapists, Not Women" and "Teach Boys Not to Rape" as AKSamba's amazing drumming echoed up and down Queen Street.



Several inspiring speakers addressed the rally, including Marama Davidson, representing *Te Wharepora Hou*; Teri Fong, *Auckland Feminist Action*; Kathryn McPhillips, *HELP, support for sexual abuse survivors*; Debbi Tohill, *Rape Prevention Education*; Mengzhu Fu, *Shakti Asian Women's Support Group*; Kiran Foster, *No Pride in Prisons*; Tessa Naden, *AUSA Queer Rights Officer*; and Lorrie Mackness, a spokesperson for the *Women's Disability Forum*.

Following the speeches, the marchers were treated to Ellie Lim's beautiful singing and Sabrina Muck's eloquent and moving slam poetry.

This year AWC helped to establish the **Pay Equity Coalition Auckland**, a partnership of over twenty groups of unions, women's organisations, and academic groups. We now have a critical opportunity to reduce the gender pay gap! Kristine Bartlett, with the support of her union, proved that aged care workers are subject to gender discrimination when she won the case against her employer, Terranova, under the Equal Pay Act in the Employment Court (later upheld by the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court). In response, the Government has recently announced plans to set-up a joint working group to develop principles for dealing with claims of pay equity under the Equal Pay Act. The group will recommend agreed principles on pay equity that could be applied in all sectors of the economy. To date the Coalition has visited many Auckland MPs, produced a Q and A, and held a rally calling on the Mayor and Auckland Council to become Equal Pay Leaders.

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 especially thank **Katie Palmer du Preez** (Chairperson) who has readily given thoughtful advice when called upon between meetings. Thanks are also due to **Ruth Busch** (Secretary), **Mira Taitz** (Treasurer), **Anita Lacey, Meg Rayner-Thomas, Sabrina Muck, Nicole Duncan, Nicola Brebner, Sarah Ebyarimpa, Sylvia Barnes** and **Teri Fong** for providing invaluable knowledge, skills, and ideas.

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our amazing Patron, **Judy McGregor**, for her on-going support, and her tireless work for women's human rights.

This year our Information, Advice and Referral 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, Sarah Cossey, Caitlin Melhuish, Shannyn Hunter, Jo Abplanap, Riki-Lee Unsworth and Holly Dunham.**

We supervised three students this year who assisted us with our work: **Anastasia Bargiacchi, Rebecca Fountain** and **Sherree Dayal**. We were lucky that both Anastasia and Sherree were with us full-time for three months giving us their careful reflection, compassion and social work skills. Thanks very much to Rebecca who wrote an excellent submission on behalf of Silent Injustice to the Government's discussion paper '*Strengthening New Zealand's legislative response to family violence*'.

Other women who have generously contributed their time, skills and effort to our crèche, SKIP project, mail-outs, advocacy work, cleaning and library include: **Alex Sutherland, Annie Aroa, Aorewa McLeod, Debra Becker, Elizabeth Morey, Jenny Naea, Jo Abplanalp, Liesa Walter, Loretta Verry, Raine Shirley, Rosiena White, Philippa, Tiara Betham, and Wendy Rowe.** We also wish to express our special thanks to **Donogh Rees**, our talented and compassionate crèche supervisor.



**Collective members: Sylvia, Meg, Sabrina, Ruth, Katie, Tessa, Nicola and Teri.
Members not available for the photo: Anita, Mira, Nicole and Sarah**

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
Auckland Council
COGS
Dragon Community Trust
First Sovereign Trust
For Everyone Foundation
Foundation North
Four Winds Foundation
GABA Charitable Trust
Infinity Foundation
John Ilott Charitable Trust
Lion Foundation
Maitland and Associates
Maurice Paykel Charitable
Trust
Ministry of Social
Development
Nautilus Foundation
NZ Lottery Grants
Board
North and South Trust
Pub Charity Inc
Rule Foundation
Sir John Logan Campbell
Residuary Estate
SKIP, MSD
SKYCITY Auckland Community
Trust
Todd Foundation
Trillian Trust
Waitemata Local Board

TUTORS

Annalise Roache
Anita Simpson
Barbara Woodman
Barb Wallis

Carol Rewega
Chris Johannis
Cissy Rock
Estelle Mendelsohn
Helen Bernstone
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 Lesbian Business
Association
Auckland PlayCentre Assn.
Auckland Regional Migrants
Services
Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP
Auckland Women's Refuge
Barnardos
Catholic Social Services
Charlotte Museum
Child Poverty Action
CADS
Citizen's Advice Bureau
CYF, Grey Lynn, Westgate
Diabetes Projects Trust
Eastern Women's Refuge
Family Planning Association
Food With Love Mission NZ

Grey Lynn Community Centre
Human Rights Commission
Inner City Women's Group
Mangere East Community
Centre
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
Odyssey House
Parent Aid
Plunket
Raeburn House
Rape Prevention Education
Rainbow Youth
Roskill South Oasis Hub
Salvation Army
Shakti Asian Women's Centre
SHINE
Solo Parents NZ
Stop Demand
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
Violence Free Waitakere
Waitemata Local Board
Women's Health Action
Youth Horizons Trust
Youthline