



Auckland
**Women's
Centre**
Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau

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

Annual Report 2018

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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 to improve women's lives from feminist perspectives.

Constitutional Objectives

1. We recognise Māori as Tangata Whenua o Aotearoa and wholeheartedly embrace and uphold 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 network with other women's and community groups to promote women's empowerment in society.

Our values-based culture

We are committed to good practice, high ethical standards, collaboration, community development, evaluation and sustainability.

Auckland Women's Centre is:

- A friendly place to get involved and to belong
- Open to women of every ethnicity, income, culture, sexual orientation, age and ability
- Responsive to today's challenges
- Trusted in your community for over 40 years

Strategic Directions: January 2018 - December 2019

1. Deliver sustainable projects to improve the well-being of marginalised women and their families.
2. Provide affordable, accessible, quality services, programmes and resources for women in response to their needs.
3. Work to prevent violence against women and children.
4. Engage and partner with women in their communities.
5. Be an effective voice for women's equality.

GOVERNANCE COLLECTIVE REPORT

By Mira Taitz, Chairperson

One of the things that most surprises people about AWC is its size. For a small organisation, the Auckland Women's Centre seems to do quite a lot! This is thanks to the deep dedication of our staff and large volunteer community. We are also very grateful for all of the donations, grants and support we receive from organisations and individuals, enabling us to continue to thrive with no government support. As 2018 draws to a close, our Auckland Women's Centre community has a lot to celebrate.

Our exciting **new youth project** supports young people in high schools running Wāhine Toa/Women's Equality Clubs, resourcing, inspiring and connecting them with each other. Run with a youth development approach, the project aims to support young women on their journey of self-empowerment, working towards change on issues that matter to them.

Women's Support, which lost all its government funding two years ago, is flourishing, supporting women who don't know where to turn for help and connecting them with those who can. Those who have used this service attest to how valuable it is in times of crisis and some of these women go on to change their lives with the support of our excellent counsellors and community education programme.



Mira Taitz

Our **Single Mums Project**, which also lost government funding last year, continues to thrive in the hands of our new single mums' coordinator. The mums meet up at the Centre for a meal with their tamariki, providing them with social connection, kai, childcare, food parcels and a chance to swap parenting tips in a non-judgmental environment.

In 2018 we have brought women together to share good times and to have some hard conversations. Our **community forums** continue to offer compelling discussion about women's experiences not given attention in the mainstream. This year the **Women and Disability forum** highlighted the staggering rates of poverty, unemployment and abuse for women living with disabilities, compared with others. Correcting this is all of our work as Dr Hickey reminded us "He waka eke noa", we are all in this together. Online our women's community continues to grow, with the livestreams of our events clocking up thousands of views.

While the end of the year is a good time to celebrate our successes, we know there is much, much more work to do. Violence against women and gender nonconforming people by men is still at epidemic levels. Yet one of the main themes for me this year across our events, was hearing from women about how, when they did speak about being victimised or oppressed, they were silenced, mocked, harassed, disbelieved and their experiences devalued. This is why our united voice matters and a strong women's centre is vital.

He waka eke noa

A waka we are all in together

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

This year's activities fell broadly into the categories of:

- health and well-being services for women
- personal counselling
- community education
- support groups
- partnering with other agencies to provide a voice for gender equity
- providing community forums
- support for lesbian and rainbow women

HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES FOR WOMEN

Women's Support: Support, Information, Referral and Advice

This year over 3,700 women from all over Tāmaki Makaurau have sought assistance from this free service available to all women. Women have made contact by phone, email or in person about: domestic and sexual violence support, women's health, housing, mental health, relationship break-up, single parenting, sexual harassment, educational courses and workshops, counselling support, budgeting resources, migrant support, support and events for lesbians and queer women, and much more.

In 2018 Women's Support provided **intensive support** to 96 women. Working from a strength-based approach, Centre staff and volunteers provided 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 are made to specialised crisis care services for ongoing assistance.

Personal counselling

The Centre has benefited from having an experienced and talented counselling team; **Jane Tyrer** and **Crystal McLean**. Jane enjoys supporting people to navigate their way through difficulties, clarify their values and strengths and find enthusiasm for new possibilities.

Crystal identifies as a lesbian and offers general counselling as well as counselling specific to women in the Rainbow Community. She joined our counselling service last year and has worked with a range of topics including; sexual identity, transgender women, relationships, addictions, trauma, stress anxiety and depression. She offers a variety of approaches for example; narrative, CBT, DBT and recovery model. Our counsellors are fully qualified, are members of a professional association and receive clinical supervision.



Jane Tyrer

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 has become very popular and bookings often have to be made well in advance.

Free mammograms

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

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

We have had an exciting year delivering new courses and workshops to our community. Funding for two youth workshops provided us with the opportunity to run **Drama and Storytelling** with award winning theatre maker Alice Canton and **Poetry and Spoken Word** with performance poet To'asavili Telea.

Our previous one day **Building a New Life After Separation** workshop was developed into a 4-week course, offering women a longer duration to connect, support each other and invest into their own journey forward. We welcome back our ex AWC counsellor, Claire Virtue as tutor for this course; her years of counselling experience in private practice are of huge benefit to the participants.



*Alice Canton with participants
Drama And Storytelling*

Our new 6-week course **Positive Change** was developed by counsellor Anna Keyter. Participants learnt how to build on their stories about themselves that supports them and change those stories that are not useful.

We also introduced a new one day workshop **Ora: An Introduction to Māori Approaches to Well-being** to extend and compliment the learning for those interested in Te Ao Māori. We also ran a one day workshop on **Basic EFT** with EFT coach and practitioner Robyn Shepherd.

Sadly we farewell two of our tutors, Carol Rewega who has taught **Amazing Assertiveness for Women** for the past 10 years and Barb Wallace our **Women's Self Defence** tutor who was with us for over 15 years. Both are onto new life adventures and we thank them for their commitment to AWC and the love, energy and education they have given to our community.

We were thrilled to offer these popular classes again this year:

- **Amazing Assertiveness for Women** with Carol Rewega
- **An Introduction to Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori** with Hinerangi Tarawa
- **Aroha Dance** with Rosanna Marks
- **CV and Job interview Skills** with Wendy Rowe
- **Get Knitting** with Barbara Woodman
- **Girls Self Defence** with Morgan Libeau
- **Memoir Writing** with Maria de Jong
- **Regenerative Yoga** with Simone Bonny
- **Understanding Money** with Lisa Dudson
- **Women's Self Defence** with Barb Wallace



*Maria de Jong
Memoir Writing*

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

SUPPORT GROUPS

Single Mums on Sundays

Our Single Mums project, which lost government funding last year, continues to thrive in the hands of our new **Single Mums' Coordinator, Suzette Jackson**. The mums meet up at the Centre with their tamariki, providing them with the opportunity to connect with others in a similar situation as themselves, childcare, food parcels and a chance to swap parenting tips in a non-judgmental environment. The mums report they:

- Gain a sense of being connected to, and accepted by other single mums.
- Develop friendships with other single mums—receiving and giving support to each other between meetings.
- Find the group a safe space to admit things that they are struggling with. They learn new coping strategies and realise they are not the only one dealing with these feelings; this is a huge relief and enhances their well-being.
- Feel a sense of belonging to the AWC community and learn of the opportunities provided by AWC and other agencies.



Suzette Jackson

Supporting the Rainbow Community

Providing support and connection to the **Rainbow communities** is an important part of our work. This year **Cissy Rock** delivered our **Questioning** course, a supportive space to talk about same sex attraction. Working alongside Cissy this year was a previous Questioning participant, who Cissy is training to facilitate the



Cissy Rock

course in 2020. This allowed the participants to engage with someone who had undertaken the same course and hear about how attending the group contributed to significant positive changes in their life.

Our monthly **Rainbow Social Nights** alternate between a **DVD** night and a **Board Games** night run by **Ellie Lim**. These nights are an opportunity for women to connect within the rainbow community outside the bar and club scene. It is a culturally diverse group with between 12-15 women attending each time. For some women coming here, being welcomed and feeling included, feels like a home coming.

High School Peer Support Project

Our exciting new youth project supports students in high schools running Wāhine Toa/Women's Equality Clubs, resourcing, inspiring and connecting them with each other. Utilising a youth development approach, the project aims to support young people on their journey of self-empowerment, working towards change on issues that matter to them.

While the project is new, our **Youth Coordinator, Gabriella Brayne**, is already supporting young people in thirteen high schools and has brought these students together at an engaging leadership development and networking workshop.

Gabriella has reported on the needs and views of young women at several conferences this year including the National Council of Women's, the Women's Studies Association's and PACIFICA Inc.'s Conference, 'Young and Empowered'.



Gabriella Brayne

FUNDRAISING

Our talented and hardworking fundraiser, Sophie Richmond, brought our community together for several wonderful evenings again this year. Alongside the **feminist film nights** we held our big annual comedy show '**Feminists are Funny**'.

Auckland's Q Theatre was packed out for a riotous evening of fun, feminism and fundraising for the Auckland Women's Centre on 1 July. So many women told us they laughed until their bellies hurt and we have the fabulous **Michele A'Court** to thank for that. Michele was incredibly generous, not only in lining up all of the comedy acts, but also in MCing the event and contributing her own inimitable brand of humour throughout the evening.

The Acts were:

Michele A'Court, The Fan Brigade, Justine Smith, Ray Shipley, Alice Snedden, Donna Brookbanks, Lana Walters, Melanie Bracewell, Louise Beuvink and Ruby Esther.

A huge thank you to the comedians and everyone who made it such a wonderful event. We are also grateful to those who came to support us - we are only as strong as our supporters.



Justine Smith



Melanie Bracewell

A special thank you to our dedicated regular donors who give each month, it makes a big difference knowing we can count on your support and can budget for our life changing services.



Over 1,141 tickets were sold to fundraising events in 2018, raising much-needed funds for the empowerment and wellbeing of Auckland women.

Our fundraising focuses on growing support for women's equality and our Centre, building quality relationships with our supporters, and improving our financial sustainability.

In 2019 we will create our next 5 year fundraising strategy in collaboration with Maitland and Associates. We look forward to increasing opportunities for supporters to engage with their local Women's Centre and improving donor experience.

A VOICE FOR WOMEN'S EQUITY

Women: Diverse and Connected Forums

We held four public forums this year, shining a light on aspects of women's lives often overlooked by the media. We were thrilled by the large number of women with a disability who attended our **Women and Disability** Forum held in March. Our powerful speakers were; **Tanya Black**, General Manager of Attitude Media, **Dr Huhana Hickey**, Disability, Legal and Human Rights Expert, **Pia Jane**, Deaf and Disability Advocate and **Paula Tesoriero**, Disability Rights Commissioner. Speaker after speaker outlined the challenges disabled women face:



Tanya and Huhana

- Only 24% of disabled people are employed, compared to 74% of non-disabled people.
- Disabled women earn, on average, \$30,000 less than disabled men.
- A higher number of Māori (than non-Māori) with disabilities live on less than \$15,000 per year.
- Women with disabilities are much more likely than other women to face abuse, including by 'carers' and family.

New Zealand's own **#MeToo movement** was brought under the spotlight at our forum in May drawing a large crowd of all ages. **Under-Secretary to the Minister of Justice, Jan Logie**, spoke about the Government's how the #MeToo movement offers a real opportunity for the government, "already we're looking at how sexual harassment can be treated as a health and safety issue and how our justice system needs to change, so sexual violence victims aren't re-traumatized."



Jan, Mengzhu, Alison, Nicola and Mira

Dr Hickey explained how the most marginalised groups, in particular Māori and disabled people, continue to be invisible and left out of the conversation, despite figures showing that they experience the highest levels and severity of abuse.

Co-founder of Shakti Youth, **Mengzhu Fu**, drew attention to the 'double silencing of migrant women of colour in New Zealand....while the voices of the white and wealthy are amplified the most.'

Alison Mau, broadcaster and founder of the #MeTooNZ project, spoke of hearing hundreds of heart-breaking stories and explained how survivors had to overcome incredible fear before sharing their own stories.

The chair of the forum, **Dr Nicola Gavey** closed by emphasising her optimism for the future based on: the large turnout for the forum, the solidarity, sharing of stories, the speakers' expertise and commitment, and that this conversation has finally begun.

A large audience enjoyed and discussed the kōrero of four dynamic women at our **Mana Wahine** Forum, a #Suffrage 125 event on the 9th of October. When asked by moderator and broadcaster Mihingarangi Forbes about whether feminism and mana wahine were the same, **Leonie Pihama** who directs Te Kotahi Research

Institute at the University of Waikato said they are different because their cultural groundings were different. A central difference was the individualism of Western feminism and the collective understandings of mana wahine. **Khylee Quince**, a law lecturer at AUT later added: "We can be feminists and practice mana wahine – they're not mutually exclusive."

A major focus of discussion was the justice system. Khylee reminded the audience that "tonight 5,000 Māori will be living in a cage" and 3,500 Māori children will be in state care. **Laura O'Connell Rapira** Director at ActionStation pointed out that "Māori incarceration is a result of 178 years of stripping Māori assets and an imported justice system. The government spends more on prisons in two years than on all Treaty settlements."



Laura, Khylee, Mihingarangi and Leonie

Leonie said that "the country continues to accept the violence on which it was founded. Colonisation is not a singular event, it's systemic and ongoing and we deal with it every day." **Mihingarangi Forbes**, as the moderator, set a warm tone and ensured the evening was lively, engaging and meaningful

We were delighted to host prominent Australian feminist and writer **Clementine Ford** who hit the shores of Aotearoa in November to promote her latest book "Boys will be Boys". A sell-out crowd of more than 300 turned up to hear and be inspired by Clementine Ford whose first book "Fight like a Girl" was a bestseller last year.

Growing good boys is about acknowledging the reality of the world we live in, says Clementine. That world where the behaviour of men and boys, whether it be



Clementine and Mira

engaging in violence against women, telling harmful rape jokes, interrupting women, etcetera is the result of a widespread culture which enables and excuses bad behaviour in men and boys on a daily basis, summed up aptly in the decades old phrase "Boys will be Boys".

Throughout her book, Clementine dismantles harmful attitudes; defining what a boy is, how little is expected of fathers in the domestic sphere, toxic societal attitudes towards sex and rape and how men are enabled to commit violence through these prevailing beliefs. Nevertheless Clementine is optimistic that attitudes can change, "The more people who get together and seek to change their immediate communities, the more it will filter out and create change."

AWC coordinates the **Pay Equity Coalition Auckland (PECA)**, a partnership of over twenty groups. The Government recently released the Equal Pay Amendment Bill, designed to clarify what a pay equity claim is and make it easier for employees to make a claim. PECA is pleased the Bill followed all the recommendations of the reconvened and original Joint Working Group on Pay Equity Principles. Our submission welcomes the Bill, but is concerned about the very many number of opportunities for employers to delay the process of settling a claim.

We also run the **Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children**, consisting of eleven violence prevention groups. Our main goal is to progress a gendered and intersectional analysis of the underlying determinants of violence against women and children and policy and practice responses to the issue.

THANK YOU!

AWC gratefully receives support from many different people, agencies and funders.

Members of the **Governance Collective** provide AWC with big picture thinking, strategic guidance and support within a collective framework. We wish to especially thank our Chairperson, **Mira Taitz** who readily gives thoughtful advice when frequently called upon between meetings. Thanks are also due to **Ruth Busch** (Secretary), **Katie Palmer du Preez** (Treasurer), **Charon Leasing**, **Felicity Moore**, **Katherine McAlpine**, **Margo Athy**, **Nicola Brebner**, **Ratika Rai**, **Sabrina Muck**, **Sylvia Baynes** and **Tenisha Kumar** for their invaluable knowledge, skills, ideas and volunteering at our events.

We would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our amazing Patron, **Dr Judy McGregor**. Judy works tirelessly for women's human rights and makes a huge contribution to our Centre.



*Our Patron:
Dr Judy McGregor*

Others who generously contributed time, skills and effort to our crèche, mail-outs, forums, garden, posters and newsletter design, fundraising, Women's Support, researching, writing and library include: **Aorewa McLeod**, **Carol Davey**, **Caryn Tasker**, **Catriona MacLennan**, **Christine Henderson**, **Cissy Rock**, **Elizabeth Morey**, **Ella Worger**, **Ellen**



Governance members :

*Back row; Nicola, Mira, Margo and Tenisha.
Front row; Sabrina, Ruth, Sylvia, Charon and
Katherine. Absent: Felicity, Katie and Ratika.*

Michie, **Genevieve Black**, **Helen Deuchar**, **Isabella Holdsworth**, **Jade Weatherall**, **Jack Grimwood**, **Jenny Naea**, **Jenny Rankine**, **Kathleen Ryan**, **Katrina Wolff**, **Lana McCarthy**, **Lisa Williams**, **Manisha Das**, **Marewa Grimsdale**, **Maria Boow**, **Marilynn Johnson**, **Miriam Ludbrook**, **Nikki Wendel-Symonds**, **Olivia Holdsworth**, **Orlando Kwok-Cameron**, **Peter Heerdegen**, **Priscilla Frame**, **Raine Shirley**,

Rochelle Carr, **Rosiena White**, **Samah Shazia**, **Sarah Dunn**, **Sandra Furness**, **Sara Howell**, **Stefania Saranaki** (Red Design), **Suzi Upton**, **Tiara Betham**, and **Toni Chase**.

We supervised two social work students this year **Courtney Tai** and **Ann-Katrin Lang** who contributed their careful reflection, compassion and social work skills.

We wish to express our special thanks to **The Women's Bookshop** for kindly donating books to our Women's Library and for inviting us to be part of the Clementine Ford forum. Thanks also to **Bunnings** who donated both labour and equipment to vastly improve our storage facilities and our community garden.

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

FUNDERS

ANZ New Zealand Staff
Foundation
Akarana Community Trust
Auckland Council
BlueSky Community Trust
COGS
Dragon Community Trust
First Sovereign Trust
Foundation North
Four Winds Foundation
GABA Charitable Trust
Infinity Foundation
John Ilott Charitable Trust
Lion Foundation
Maurice Paykel Charitable
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New Zealand Community
Trust
North and South Trust
Pub Charity Inc.
Rule Foundation
Sir John Logan Campbell
Residuary Estate
The Trusts Community
Foundation Ltd
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Waitamatā Local Board

Cathy Livermore
Cissy Rock
Claire Virtue
Danielle Turnbull
Hinerangi Tarawa
Katherine McAlpine
Lisa Dudson
Maria de Jong
Morgan Libeau
Robyn Shepherd
Rosanna Marks
Simone Bonny
Susanna Ramos
To'asavili Telea
Wendy Rowe

AGENCIES

Auckland Lesbian Business
Association (alba)
Auckland Regional Migrants
Services
Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP
Auckland Women's Refuge
AWA Associates
Barnardos
Breast Screen NZ
Business and Professional
Women, Auckland
Catholic Social Services
Charlotte Museum
Child Poverty Action Group
CADS
Citizen's Advice Bureau
Dayspring Trust
Eastern Women's Refuge
E tū
Family Works Northern
Framework Trust
Grey Lynn Community Centre

Grey Lynn Library
Hearts and Minds
Human Rights Commission
Inner City Women's Group
KiwiHarvest
Lesbian News Aotearoa
Leys Institute Library
Lifewise
Living Wage Movement
Aotearoa NZ
National Council of Women
New Zealand Family Violence
Clearing House
NZ Pacific Women's Watch
North Shore Women's Centre
Oranga Tamariki
OUTline NZ
Public Service Association
Rainbow Auckland
Rainbow Youth
Rape Prevention Education
Salvation Army
Shakti Asian Women's Centre
Shine
Stop Demand
Te Rito Rodney
Te Wharepora Hou
The Women's Bookshop
Tu Wahine Trust
Violence Free Waitakere
Waitematā Local Board
Women's Health Action
Women's Centre Rodney
Women's Centre Waitakere
Women's Studies Association
Working Women's Resource
Centre
Youthline
Zonta Club of Auckland

TUTORS

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Anna Keyter
Barbara Woodman
Barb Wallis
Carol Davey
Carol Rewega
Caryn Tasker