# Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau

AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE



Promoting equity, safety and well-being for women

# **Annual Report 2023**

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#### **Staff Contacts**

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**Charities Commission Certificate of Registration No CC27188** 





#### Vision

#### A society which has achieved equity for women.

#### **Mission Statement**

Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Women's Centre enables the wellbeing of women, especially women's empowerment and safety.

#### Philosophy

We recognise Māori as tangata whenua, and are committed to working from a feminist perspective that understands different systems of oppression intersect.

#### Our values-based culture

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

Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Women's Centre is:

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

#### 2020 - 2025 Strategic Directions:

#### 1. Whakatoa (Empowerment)

All women become more able to speak up for themselves and participate in community, enhancing their wellbeing and improving social equity. The Centre models organisational empowerment and inclusivity of all women in its internal decision-making and activities.

#### 2. Kia whakanuia ngā tāngata whenua (Recognising tangata whenua)

Māori hold unique status as first peoples of Aotearoa. Our work with wāhine Māori will address persistent inequities affecting Māori communities.

#### 3. Kia haumaru te noho, wāhine mai, tamariki mai (Safety)

New Zealand has unacceptable rates of violence against women. We facilitate women's safety at the individual, cultural and legislative levels.

#### 4. Kia whakanuia ngā take wāhine (Raising awareness)

Our work sparks community conversations about experiences of inequality and about diverse visions of social and gender equality, including the experiences and aspirations of Māori, Pasifika, migrant, disabled and Rainbow women.

## **Governance Board Report**

Working alongside the AWC staff is consistently an enriching and enlightening experience for me. We said farewell to lovely Mary and gained the fabulous Maia, and

the rest of our staff remain experienced and steady, with the comanager model providing breadth of knowledge, inspiration, and a solid foundation.

Our small but mighty staff consistently deliver quality programmes and support whilst intelligently looking for ways to stay current, sustainable and forward-moving.

Our forums programme in 2023 was stimulating and varied. Unfortunately, much of what was identified in our "What women want in the election" panel event will remain a pipedream for



want in the election" panel event will remain a pipedream for **Katherine McAlpine** the next three years. Some of our feminist events are culturally-focused and there is nothing I love more than being in the audience alongside our regular community, feeling uplifted by stories by and for women and allies. In times as tough as the ones we currently wade through, solidarity through storytelling is powerful and can also provide

I'd like to acknowledge the gracious, wise, and diligent work of my fellow Board members, who are all standing again this year. The stability and astuteness with which they steer this ship is an absolute privilege to be a part of. They continue to turn up as advocates for all women and are humble enough to learn and grow as contemporary issues evolve.

In 2023 the Auckland Women's Centre remains a place many turn to for solace, advice, activism, leadership, advocacy, guidance, learning, low-cost counselling, and community. 2024 will be no different.

This beloved organisation has weathered many changes in politics, culture, and funding landscape over the last 48 years. Its resilience, flexibility, and consistent commitment to improving gender equity (sometimes against all odds) galvanises me to keep going. Our work is cut out for us and there is nothing to do except roll up our sleeves and work harder than ever over the next three years.

Warmly,

Katherine

Katherine McAlpine, Chair

valid (temporary) relief.

## **Managers' Report**

This is our second year as co-managers and having two managers continues to work well. With Kaitlin working full time she continues to undertake the bulk of the work, while Leonie looks after collective advocacy, the Community Kōrero, and finances and funding.

Both of us appreciate being able to seek advice from each other when we wish. Kaitlin has made time this year to learn every aspect of our finances and she is also organising our first Community Kōrero for 2024 so that Leonie can focus on anti-violence advocacy, such as the campaign to outlaw stalking (watch this space).



Kaitlin & Leonie

Kaitlin's role covers our counselling programme which has expanded to four days a week in 2023, our successful community education programmes, and our Women's Support clinic which is busier than ever. Our counselling has also seen a tech upgrade, with sleek booking software and ability to run secure telehealth appointments.

Mid-year we said goodbye to our wonderful Women's Services Coordinator, Mary Mulatu, who strengthened our community education programme and brought a calm and supportive demeanour to our Women's Support service. We were lucky enough to welcome the fantastic Maia Hall, who has brought a positive attitude, excellent communication skills, and a fresh perspective to the Centre (and is helping to organise the first 2024 Community Korero with Kaitlin).

Our work this year was enriched by two wonderful social work students: Harriet Nickels, who contributed a can-do attitude, went above and beyond for our community, and was a fundraising superstar for Feminists are Funny; and Lara Mansfield, who made a huge contribution to Women's Support bringing her calm manner and social work training to this work.

It's been a good, and full, year – the Centre has contributed greatly to the wellbeing of women, and of the community as a whole in Tāmaki Makaurau. Thank you for being part of our community – we both love being part of something so special!

Arohanui,

Kaitlin & Leonie

Kaitlin Henderson and Leonie Morris, Co-Managers

# **Services and Activities**

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

- health and welfare services for women
- community education
- support groups, including community & support for lesbian and rainbow women
- partnering with other organisations to provide a voice for gender equity
- community for young women
- community kōrero.

## Health and Welfare Services for Women

#### Women's Support: information, referral and advice

We supported approximately **3,000 people** through our women's services



Women's Services Coordinator Maia Hall

We provided **brief crisis intervention** for 186 women

This year over 180 women from all over Tāmaki Makaurau accessed our free brief crisis intervention services by phone, Zoom, email and in person. They asked about support for: preventing/surviving domestic and sexual violence, women's health, mental health, relationships, parenting alone, counselling, budgeting, migrant inclusion, and more. With a strength-based approach, we provide empathetic listening, validation, information, and referrals to specialised crisis care services.

In 2023 we added new digital tools to make support more accessible. Through our

website, women can now book their choice of a phone, in-person or video session. Our new backend portal Cliniko allows us to securely store notes for each person.

#### **Personal counselling**

We enabled 450+ counselling sessions



Fantastic student counsellors Billie Webster and Kayla Tonge

In response to strong community need for mental wellbeing support, we increased our counselling programme from 3 to 4 days a week, with supervised student counsellors Kayla Tonge and Billie Webster and our fully qualified counsellor Jane Tyrer, who provides more intensive support for women.

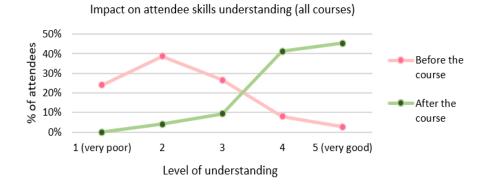
#### Health clinic and therapeutic massage

Our **affordable massages** from highly-skilled therapist Lorelei Messersmith, were in high demand. And this year, the Centre partnered with **Well Women & Family** to provide a monthly pop-up **women's health clinic**; cervical screening, STI checks, contraception and more.

# **Community Education**

We had another successful year delivering our well-attended and highly praised womencentred classes in a supportive environment, where people can gain new skills, build their self-confidence and increase their feelings of community belonging. We offered a record total of **33 courses/workshops delivered on 14 topics**. Course satisfaction was high, as was impact on understanding, while feedback shows the high quality of instructors.

Respondents agreed:	
	"My <b>tutor</b> was
95% "I would <b>recommend</b> the course to a friend"	knowledgeable 97%
96% "I enjoyed or extremely enjoyed the course"	knowledgeable 9770
	suppportive 99%
100% "the course is <b>good value</b> "	
·	friendly" $100\%$ .



We were delighted to offer these classes for 2023:

Get Knitting (Beginners, Intermediate)	Barbara Woodman
Girls' Self Defence	Morgan Libeau
Women's Self Defence (including specialised courses	Julie Poirier and Bev Thomas
for Migrant, Māori and Pasifika women)	Dalawa Favratt
Menopause Information	Robyn Fausett
Memoir Writing	Maria de Jong
Questioning	Carol Davey & Cat Percy
Te Reo Māori me ona Tikanga	Yvonne Edwards
(Beginners, Intermediate)	
Money & You	Joyce Yu & Ilma Mani
CV/Cover Letter workshop	Catherine Hamilton & Kerry Harris
Babysitting Basics	Sharelle Rowntree
Meditative Art (one-off workshop, 7-week course)	Ilenia Di Nicola
Transformative Co-Parenting	Rose Ewing
Speaking Skills	Gaye Stratton
Basic Car Maintenance	Sarah Yates

# **Community Education continued**

Several of these courses were **new this year**. We partnered with **Plunket NZ** to provide an affordable Babysitting Basics holiday workshop, and Literacy Aotearoa to provide a free of charge CV, Cover Letter and Interview Skills workshop. Both were a great success, offering a range of women and girls practical skills applicable to their own lives.



Bev Thomas

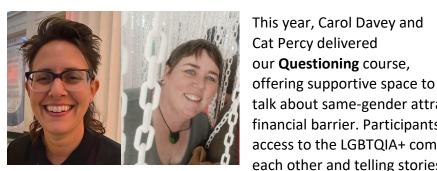
We have continued to offer a range of free women's self defence workshops this year, partnered with Kia Haumaru. Our wonderful tutors Bev Thomas and Julie Poirier continue to change many women's lives with their holistic and intersectional approach to personal safety. Some courses were specifically designed for Māori and Pasifika women, and migrant women to ensure the content and experience was culturally relevant and safe.

"I walked in feeling small, old, weak and helpless. When I walked out I held my head high with more confidence than I could imagine. No more being a victim, I'm 64 and *have never felt safer" -* Self Defence Participant

Te Reo Māori me ona Tikanga: Our fabulous kaiako Yvonne Edwards brought humour, kindness and expertise to her teaching; tauira reported Yvonne was patient, kind, amazing and safe. Most participants only wished the course went longer!



Yvonne Edwards



Cat Percy and Carol Davey

talk about same-gender attraction, with no financial barrier. Participants appreciate having access to the LGBTQIA+ community, learning from each other and telling stories to acknowledge that nobody is alone in their experiences.

Another standout workshop this year was Basic Car Maintenance, tutored by Sarah Yates. Participants described the course as hands-on, confidence-building and enjoyable. The workshop was particularly positive being women and gender minorities only as it touched on the inequities these groups face in the mechanic sector. Participants also noted they were impressed with Sarah's patient, inclusive and thoughtful leadership qualities. 70 per cent of participants recorded their level of understanding prior to the course was either very poor, or poor. After the course, 100 per cent said their understanding after the course was very good, or good.

our Questioning course,

Thank you to all our incredibly skilled and passionate tutors! We cherish your input in growing women's resilience, power and self belief. All the tutors are listed at the end of the report, along with the many agencies we partner with to improve outcomes for women. We also thank our funders whose generosity enables us to provide a wide range of services in community education.

# **Support Groups**

#### **Solo Mums on Sundays**

Our monthly group provides an opportunity for solo mums with preschoolers to talk together and connect in a non-judgmental space. "I have had such a wonderful time meeting other solo mums. It is so nice to be able to come and have something to eat, sit with others and not have to chase my little one around. [...] Thank you for running such a wonderful group, I really look forward to the company and attending each month"

— Attendee Mum, feedback to Emily

Children are welcomed and

engaged in play by childcare workers, providing some space for both mums and children. This year, we have had a core group of 12 māmā coming along regularly, with others

coming on occasion (in between Covid and other illness). We also run special Christmas and Mother's Day events to make space for our mums to feel treasured and cared for. This

> year's Mother's Day celebration was memorable, with the women attending all receiving a basket of



receiving a basket of "cosy winter night" goodies.

Mums have also invited others in their community to come with them to the group, because they've found spending time with other solo mums so valuable. We've had a steady stream of enquiries from women interested in attending throughout the year, with this increasing when we advertised the group on social

Mother's Day gift packs

media. The majority of our funding has come generously

from the Grassroots Giving Programme, administered by the Auckland Foundation.

"Dear magnificent, miracle mama-helpers, Thank you for your wisdom, kindness, support and for everything you do. We appreciate you so much!"

— Attendee Mum Christmas card

#### **Supporting Rainbow Communities**

Providing support and connection to rainbow communities is an important part of our work. This year, we started offering a free space for **Radiqal Movement** monthly movie nights for Rainbow and takatāpui people of all genders. Radiqal Movement is a queer, body-liberating inclusive fitness organisation expanding its services into social events.

As well as the **Questioning** course, our monthly **Rainbow Social Nights** run this year by the wonderful Sharon Bolderson alternate between a DVD night and a Board Games night. These nights are a fun, inexpensive, relaxed way for lesbian, bisexual, takatāpui, and trans women to connect outside the bar scene. It is a culturally diverse group with 16 - 30 women attending each time. For some, being accepted within this community feels like coming home, easing tension they weren't always aware they were carrying.

# A Voice for Women's Equity

Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Women's Centre is a leading champion of women's rights, providing independent, constructive commentary and also supporting others to reduce intersectional inequity.

The **Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children**, coordinated by Auckland Women's Centre, welcomed three new members this year: **NZ Centre for Human Rights Law, Policy and Practice** hosted by the Law School at University of Auckland; **Hestia Women's Refuge**; and **Women's Refuge - Tāmaki Makaurau**.

The main focus of Coalition work was the need for a new, effective stalking law that not only provides legal protections but also supports training for professionals; public education; and communications and tools which denormalise stalking and harassment behaviours. The aim would be to work to address the underlying drivers (such as patriarchal norms) to prevent stalking from occurring in the first place. Throughout the year the Coalition was in conversation with the then minister **Marama Davidson** and **Te Puna Aonui** about their work to eliminate family and sexual violence, at the Minister's request.



Last February we established a new advocacy group working to eliminate violence against women which meets in the evening (in-person and on Zoom). We wanted to give women who work during

the day the opportunity to join in advocacy, and also wanted to increase the number of people advocating against gender

violence. The group chose the name **AVA: Anti-violence Action** and, in partnership with the Coalition, AVA lobbied successfully during the election campaign persuading four electoral parties (National, Labour, TOP, and Green) to commit to reforming the stalking law.





Leonie talking stalking on Newshub Live (3 news)

## Young women — community

It's been another great year running the **Intersectional Feminist Club (IFC)**. The IFC is a casual, safe, and low-pressure environment to discuss feminist issues, build community,

and make friends. The club is facilitated by Kaitlin with Sylvia Treep and has a consistent monthly turn out of around 20-35 young women, and a wider emailing list with over 150 members.

This year IFC has been able to:

- Build community amongst fellow-minded feminists
- Promote and discuss intersectional values: recognising that gender, ethnicity, class, age, disability, nationality all interact and shape the unequal world we live in.
- Discuss topical feminist issues relevant to Aotearoa NZ, covering topics such as prisons, sex work, the 2023 election, beauty standards, money, LGBTQIA+ issues, parenthood, and digital technologies.



# **Community Kōrero**

Our four 2023 **Community Kōrero** celebrated ingenious wāhine Māori creatives and leaders, and tackled some serious issues – offering thought-provoking, hope-giving, challenging and inspiring public kōrero.

We started the year on a high note – with wonderful warmth and quick wit, Stacey Morrison (Te Arawa, Ngāi Tahu) kept up with musician-turned-author **Coco Solid aka Jessica Hansell** in the intimate venue of the CBD's Classic Comedy Club. And Coco Solid made so much sense! Superbly articulated with punk poetics and comic timing, her caring, funny vibrating kōrero, and coherent and strong Kaupapa, showed that visionary, deep-thinking philosophers can be localised, grounded, connected in community – and alive.



Coco Solid

Our largest forum of the year was on **Preventing Violence Against Women** – showing the deep concern held by the community (including men) about this crisis. Skilfully chaired by Stacey, the korero was rich on important, sensitive and complex issues. The harm done by the staunch, invulnerable man-alone "myth of masculinity" was put under the spotlight by "She Is Not Your Rehab" founders **Taimalelagi Mataio Faafetai (Matt) Brown** (of Samoan descent) and **Sarah Brown** (Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa), and by **Dr Kris Taylor** and doctoral student **Minha Kim** of University of Auckland psychology project "Shifting the Line". As Matt put it: "*I was born into violence but I am living proof it is possible to change the narrative.*"



What Women Want Election forum

Our What Women Want (from the next election) panel included Professor Jennifer Curtin, disability advocate Dr Huhana Hickey and was chaired by Alison Mau. Zoe Aroha Witika-Hawke (Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Paoa), of E Tipu E Rea Whānau Services, spoke about barriers facing wāhine Māori: "The discrimination,

the judgement and the racism is still strong. Our young whānau hide away because of it". **Agnes Magele**, of Auckland Action Against Poverty noted "Our reality isn't bright, to be honest" due to poverty and its stress on health and relationships. **Merran Lawler** ( the Kaiarahi & National Advocate for Te Kupenga Whakaoti Mahi Patunga / National Network of Family Violence Services) noted the system supposed to assist victim-survivors "can be as abusive – certainly as traumatising and retraumatising – as the abuse they face at home" so they have little choice but to stay where they are.

Finally, we were honoured to host ground-breaking Māori and gender activist **Ngahuia Te Awekotuku**, lauded scholar of cultural heritage, gender & sexuality, creative practice & ritual – and a creative writer herself. The online event chaired again by Stacey covered wide-ranging "stories, wisdom and delightful historical titbits" (as one participant put it), including her involvement in the Women's Liberation movement and Ngā Tamatoa. A legendary living taonga indeed.



Ngahuia Te Awekotuku

# Fundraising

We had a wonderful year — ensuring, as always, our fundraising activities were not only about securing our sustainability as an organisation, but were also about spreading the word about equity and having fun together as a community.

Our first movie fundraiser was the fabulous feminist throwback film **Legally Blonde**. For most of us it had been a long time in between screenings but the laughs were still there, and the opportunities to dress up were too great to miss!



Legally Blonde movie-goers

Next up was our annual comedy fundraiser **Feminists are Funny**. This year our theme was Cats and Dogs. Ticket holders dressed up, dressed their tables and generally got into the mildly competitive atmosphere (pictures on next page). We brought back the silent auction and had some really beautiful items to bid on, generously donated by our local community. As always, **Michèle A'Court** gathered together a wonderful group of comics and when Covid prevented some of our line up from attending at the very last minute, we were blessed with equally-talented comics stepping in. What a great night!



Our second movie fundraiser was **Barbie**, secured very soon after the general release date thanks to some good planning – thank you Lido Cinema! Our community turned out in force and in PINK and we loved it. All funds raised went to resourcing Auckland

Women's Centre and supporting our Solo Mums on Sundays Christmas party.

We truly appreciate all of

your donations, support and participation, and thanks to all our wonderful volunteers!

We had a wonderful year, and look forward to seeing you all again next year!



Pink front-row lock-out



WWTM / AWC crew

*Feminists Are Funny* 2023 volume: Dogs and Cats



# Thanks to our fundraising sponsors!

- Ripe Deli
- Classic Comedy Club
- Pixel Photo Booth
- Wild Forest Estate
- Comensa Group
- QT Hotels
- Barkley Manor
- Yellow Lab
- Women's Bookshop
- Westmere Butcher
- Fido and Friends dog behaviour consultant
- Honey Bones

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- Florets Bakery
- Georgia Hood Ceramics
- Fina Iris knitting

# **Thank You!**

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

We owe a huge vote of thanks to members of the Governance Board who provide AWC with big picture thinking, strategic guidance and support within a collective framework. We wish to especially thank our



Board members: Treasurer Olivia McGann, Chair Katherine McAlpine, Maggie Jakob-Hoff, Juressa Lee and Liv Roe

wonderful Chairperson, Katherine McAlpine for her excellent leadership skills, including building great relationships and being able to inspire and motivate people. Sincere thanks are also due to Maggie Jakob-Hoff (Secretary), who is always willing to help when needed and Olivia McGann (Treasurer), who gifts her accounting skills to the Centre, Juressa Lee (Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi, Rarotonga), Stacey Porter (Rongowhakaata, Ngāi





Board members Izzy Montague and Stacey Porter

Takoto, Ngāpuhi & Ngāti Kahu ki Whangaroa), Izzy Montague and Liv Roe, for their invaluable knowledge, problem solving skills, and lateral thinking.

Sadly, Jess Loudon who was elected at our last AGM was forced to resign during the year due to ill health. Others generously contributed time, skills and effort to our crèche, forums, garden, posters and newsletter design, fundraising, and Women's Support. These volunteers include: Mina Patel, Lauren Hartridge, Kayla Tonge, Sammi Maza, Amber Tharakan, Abby Pedersen, and Katrina Wolff.

A huge thank you to our Feminists are Funny comics: James Hilary Penwarden, Donna Brookbanks, Audrey Porne, Courtney Dawson, Justine Smith, Liv McKenzie, Kura Forester.

Thanks to Frank Accounting for their guidance and dedication to our accounts.

Thank you to all of our regular donors who give so generously. We would particularly like to express our thanks and appreciation to our amazing Patron, Professor Emerita Dame Judy McGregor, who continues to works tirelessly for women's rights. Recently Judy spoke out publicly in support of the care workers who are, once again, having to fight for pay equity.

We sincerely thank the tutors of our courses and workshops, listed on the following page. 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 funders, tutors and organisations who supported our work:

#### **FUNDERS**

#### **ORGANISATIONS**

BlueSky Community Trust COGS Dragon Community Trust Foundation North Four Winds Foundation John Ilott Charitable Trust Lion Foundation NZ Lottery Grants Board New Zealand Community Trust One Foundation Pub Charity Inc. The Trusts Community Foundation Ltd **Trillian Trust** Waitematā Local Board

#### TUTORS

Barbara Woodman **Bev Thomas** Carol Davey Cat Percy Gaye Stratton Julie Poirier Jovce Yu Kristina Todd Ilenia Di Nicola (Dinny) Ilma Mani Maria de Jong Morgan Libeau Robyn Fausett Rose Ewing Sarah Yates Sharelle Rowntree Yvonne Edwards

Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP Auckland Women's Refuge Barnardos **Belong Aotearoa Breast Screen NZ** Business and Professional Women, Auckland Charlotte Museum CADS Citizen's Advice Bureau **Dayspring Trust** Dear Em Eastern Women's Refuge Family Works Northern Family Planning Framework Trust Fundraising Institute of New Zealand Gender Justice Collective Grey Lynn Community Centre Te Rito Rodney Grey Lynn Library Hearts and Minds Human Rights Commission Inner City Women's Group **INSPIRASI** (Indonesian Young Leaders **KiwiHarvest** Levs Institute Library Lifewise Living Wage Movement Aotearoa NZ Maitland and Associates National Council of Women NCW, Auckland New Zealand Family Violence **Clearing House** North Shore Women's Centre

NZ Pacific Women's Watch NZ Prostitutes Collective Oranga Tamariki **OUTline NZ People Against Prisons** Aotearoa Plunket Radigal **Rainbow Auckland Rainbow Youth Rape Prevention Education** Salvation Army Shakti Asian Women's Centre Shine Tauiwi Tautoko Te Ohu The Women's Bookshop The 312 Hub Tū Wahine Trust Violence Free Waitakere Waitematā Local Board Well Women Clinic Women's Health Action Women's Centre Rodney Women's Centre Waitakere Working Women's Resource Centre Youthline YWCA, Auckland Zonta Club of Auckland

# Tēnā koutou! Thanks so much!

We would like to thank all of our 2023 funders for choosing to support us. We are incredibly grateful that you continue to support improving the lives of women and children.







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Charitable Trust





Four Winds



### Lottery Grants Board Te Puna Tahua

LOTTO FUNDS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY











