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Works 4Us

Employment Advocacy Service

To find out more call Dave on

Wellington: **381 3244**

Free phone: **0800 40 40 49**

Email: **dave@peoplefirst.org.nz**

Disability Information Advisory Service

DIAS



If you have any questions or concerns about learning disability call People First New Zealand. We can advise you where to go to get help or give you information that you need.

Call us on Wellington

04 381 3242 or free phone
0800 20 60 70

Email: **mail@peoplefirst.org.nz**

People First NZ want to thank the organisations below for their financial support

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Social Development

NZ Lottery Grants Board

Telecom

Community Organisation Grant Scheme

Frozen Funds Trust

Te Pou o Te Whakaaro Nui

IHC Foundation



People First Leadership Development



People First held its first national leadership forum in Palmerston North in November last year. Five members from each region and staff attended the forum, and there were guest speakers and presentations on a range of topics. The forum was a great finish to the leadership development that had been happening in the regions throughout the year.

Guest speakers Robert Martin and Mike Gourley spoke about being leaders and their words were very inspiring. Each region made a presentation to the forum and all members were involved. Topics included: the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; how to dress for meetings and conferences; and being part of advisory committees. All the great messages from the two days were written up and sent out to the members.



People First thanks the Ministry of Health and Te Pou for funding to support leadership development in the regions and to make the national leadership forum possible. People First is very pleased to have received this funding again for 2011 and are already working hard in the regions on plans for this year's forum, which will be in Nelson in December.

From National Chairperson, Michael Aldridge

Kia ora, hello

I am very proud to have been elected as the new National Chairperson for People First. I am the Top of the South Regional President and live and work in Nelson.

I want to say a big thank you to Graeme Parish our past National Chairperson. Graeme did a great job representing People First over the past two years. Graeme lives in Christchurch and I want to say on behalf of People First, "best wishes" to all the people in Christchurch.

I also pay tribute to Robert Martin, who became People First's first-ever Life Member. Robert is truly inspiring and a great leader both here in New Zealand and across the world. He was very involved in the development of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and we are very proud to have him as a Life Member.

People First New Zealand is proud to be a Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO). This means we are an organisation governed by Disabled people. We are very pleased to be working alongside the other DPOs in New Zealand on monitoring the UN Convention. The Convention will be a big focus over the next few years and we want to make sure People First members and others know all about it and what it means for them.

People First is very excited to offer a small business grant to assist one or two people with a learning disability to set up their own

business for the first time. We are doing this through the Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Trust, which also gives our award for self advocacy.



At the beginning of this year I went with the rest of the National Committee to a self advocacy conference in Geelong, Victoria, Australia, run by VALID. This was a great experience and I all met lots of people from Australia and other parts of the world.

It is great that we have received funding to keep going on our leadership development and we are looking forward to another great forum at the end of this year, thanks to the Ministry of Health and Te Pou.

This year we have had some staff changes with Kaeti Rigarsford moving to the Northern region and two new Coordinators starting in Central and Top of the South. I welcome the new staff on board and wish Kaeti all the best in her new role.

I hope to meet as many of you as possible during my term as National Chairperson. Keep up all the good work in the local groups and regions.

Nothing about us without us

Michael Aldridge
National Chairperson

People First makes Robert Martin a Life member

People First NZ was very pleased to award life membership to Robert Martin, Whanganui, at last year's Annual General Meeting.

Robert is a founding member of People First and has been a leader in self-advocacy work for many years both in New Zealand and overseas.



Robert has many achievements to his name and has previously been honoured with a New Zealand Order of Merit for his self-advocacy work. Robert spent many years working within IHC's Self Advocacy and training teams where he became very well known as an empowering guest speaker on many topics, including promoting deinstitutionalisation and community living.

More recently Robert, in his previous role of the third Vice President of Inclusion International, played a major part in the development of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in New York. At the beginning, he was the only person with a learning disability to be part of the development of the Convention. Robert did not think that was good enough and spoke up. This enabled more people with learning disabilities from other countries to become involved.

These days Robert is a valued member of Whanganui People First, he is involved in teaching other people with a learning disability about their rights, and represents People First at a national level.

Robert was awarded life membership in recognition of his history with People First and his self-advocacy work.

Here are Robert Martin's messages from the 2010 National Leadership forum about being a leader:

BEING A LEADER



Remember – It's people, people, people

- Make a commitment
- Be passionate – follow your heart
- Have courage
- Take responsibility
- Build strong relationships
- Encourage others
- See everyone's potential
- Learn and value others' knowledge and skills
- Be a good listener
- Make the most of all opportunities
- It is OK to have assistance
- Have your Assistant walk alongside you
- Hold on to your vision

The Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Trust



Leona was passionate that people with learning disability should know about self advocacy. When Leona passed away her parents asked her family and friends to make donations to People First rather than bring flowers to her service.

The Leona Gitman Te Aranga Trust was set up by People First in 2004. The National Committee decided to use the Trust to honour a person with a learning disability who had been a strong leader in self advocacy for people with learning disability in New Zealand.

In September 2010 at the Standards Plus conference, 'No One Alone', People First gave out the third annual award to David Corner from Wellington.

David is a founding member of People First and has been a strong advocate for the rights of people with learning disability over many, many years. David's achievements include being a popular presenter at many conferences, both in New Zealand and overseas on topics such as self advocacy in services, myths and truths. He completed

the Certificate in Teaching People with Disabilities and was the first person with learning disability to complete the course and graduate.

David is a past member of the New Zealand Disabled Persons Assembly's National Executive and a current member of the Consumer Advisory Group for the New Zealand Health and Disability Commission. He has also been involved in research for the National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability, in which he helped to lead focus groups for the "To have an ordinary life" project.

David is the current Self-advocate representative for the Asia Pacific Region of the Council of Inclusion International. People First is proud to award him with the 2010 Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Award.



Want help to set up a business

People First is very pleased to announce a new development with the Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Trust. This year for the National Committee is offering a small business grant to a **person with learning disability** who wants to start up their own business.

Introducing People First NZ's Start-Up Grant

- **Do you have a learning disability?**
- **Are you starting your own business?**
- **Do you need some money to help you start?**





People First NZ, through the Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Trust, has a START-UP grant you might be interested in.



This **START-UP** grant is a small amount of money to assist you to get the things you need to start your own business.



This year People First NZ would like to help one or two people with learning disability start up their own business.



To apply for a START-UP grant we need to have some information about you and your business idea.



You will need to fill in a form and send to People First.



Then at a meeting in October the People First National Committee will make a decision about who they will help this year.



For more information or a form to apply for the START-UP grant contact Cindy Johns or email: cindyjohns@peoplefirst.org.nz or phone **0800 20 60 70**

VALID Conference

In February this year the National Committee and three staff attended the VALID self-advocacy conference in Geelong, Victoria, Australia. It was a big conference with about 1200 people attending. There were many presentations and a great conference dinner. The National Committee presented on how People First works in New Zealand and they learnt a lot from the other presenters. The Committee meet lots of great people from Australia and around the world. Thanks to Lotteries funding for helping to make going to this conference possible.



People First Christchurch Advocate



In Loving Memory of Robyn Dorothy Rainey.

Robin Rainey died on Tuesday 10 May 2011 after a short period of ill health. Robyn was an energetic advocate for people with learning disability in Christchurch, New Zealand. For the past eight years Robyn was a central member of the People First Christchurch and Midsouth groups.

She helped set up and lead the first People First Speaking-up course, and served on the groups' committees and worked in the Southern Office. Robyn presented at several ASSID conferences with other People First members. Her charisma and friendliness won her new friends from all over the world, and her poise and intelligence were remarkable.

Robyn had the wonderful skill of noticing

when someone needed help and being able to make them feel comfortable.

Robyn's fellow advocates and friends feel that her 'finest hour' was when, in 2009, she became ill and was forced to stay in a rest home/hospital, because the residential service where she lived with her friends and flatmates, could not provide the increased care and support she needed.

Robyn's determination and absolute commitment to her right to choose where she lived was an inspiration. She lobbied the government, was interviewed by reporters and appeared on TV – speaking-up for the right to live in her own home with her flatmates – nothing less would satisfy her! So after 18 months, Robyn was finally able to return to live with her friends.

Robyn will be sadly missed. She will be forever irreplaceable and inspirational.

Introducing New Regional Coordinators



Central Regional Coordinator – Alexia Garbutt

Hi everyone, my name is Alexia Garbutt and I am the new Central Regional Coordinator.

I live with my family in Lower Hutt. I have worked and volunteered in the disability sector for a number of years.

I am looking forward to meeting everyone in the Central region and working alongside Stephen Hallett, the Central Region President.

I am inspired by all of the great work I can see being done by the members of People First and looking forward to getting more groups up and running in the Central area.



Top of the South Regional Coordinator – Darlene Purdie

Hi there, I am very excited to be employed by People First New Zealand. I have always been a strong advocate for people with

learning disabilities but to assist people to advocate for themselves is the best!

I grew up in Australia in country Victoria on a dairy farm. I completed a degree in Intellectual disability studies in Melbourne and have been involved with people with learning disability ever since.

I moved to Blenheim from Peel Forest in September 2010 with my husband, three boys and a wide range of animals. I look forward to working with you all and hearing your ideas for future projects.

PEOPLE FIRST NEW ZEALAND

NORTHERN



President
David Hughes



Coordinator
Kaeti Rigalsford

MIDLAND



President
Rachel Trubnick



Coordinator
Mary Barnett

TOP OF THE SOUTH



President
Michael Aldridge



Coordinator
Darlene Purdie

MID SOUTH



President
Graeme Parish



Coordinator
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CENTRAL



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