



New People First National Chairperson

The People First National Committee met in February for the first time in 2013. One of the first tasks was the election of a National Chairperson. We are happy to announce that Hamish Taverner from Palmerston North was elected to the role for the next 2 years. Hamish says "I was delighted that the Committee voted me in. One of the things I want to achieve as the National Chairperson is to get more members from the community coming along as members to our local People First groups". Hamish also says about Michael Aldridge, the outgoing National Chairperson "Michael did a marvellous job, he went to Washington DC to the Inclusion International Congress and represented People First really well."

Michael says "The highlight of my time as National Chair was going to Inclusion International and meeting new people from other countries I have never met before. I have really enjoyed being the Chairperson for People First". Michael also said the role kept him thinking and busy and he has gained more confidence than ever before.

People First would like to acknowledge the hard work Michael put into his role, his dedication to attending as many meetings as he could while holding down a full time job and for continuing to speak up for the rights of people with learning disability. Thank you Michael.

We welcome Hamish into the role, and look forward to seeing you grow and develop as People First New Zealand's leader.

National Chairperson
Hamish Taverner



Michael Aldridge



People First New Zealand's Education Arm: LearnWithUs

One of People First's national strategic goals is to develop the education arm of the organisation. At the 2012 Leadership Forum the participants were tasked with coming up with a name for the education arm. The names were considered by the National Committee who chose "LearnWithUs".

The courses that are currently available through LearnWithUs are: Speaking Up, The UN Convention and Work and Your Rights in New Zealand. These courses are designed to be delivered to people with learning disability by People First members with assistance.



People First will be also developing presentations to the wider community including doctors, lawyers and other professionals about what they need to know about providing services to people with learning disability.

Watch this space..... and then come and "LearnWithUs".

2012 People First Leadership Forum in Rotorua at Novotel Lakeside

The third annual leadership forum was a great success with 40 People First members and 10 staff attending. Members came from all across New Zealand to share, listen and learn about how others had been working on developing their leadership skills throughout the year. People First has developed a 2 stage model to develop People First leaders' skills. People First knows that traditional leadership development courses do not work best for most people with learning disability. Over the last few years we have seen leaders emerge through hands on real time learning and this is how we work with the members to develop leadership skills.

Through the year People First members are assisted to take part in; study groups, meetings, reference groups, committee meetings and submissions to name a few. People First has a team of very skilled Assistants who support members to take part. This is where the best leadership learning happens. Then at the end of the year, the 40 People First members who were involved across the 6 regions, come together with the staff and talk about what they have been doing, and also practice their leadership skills learned and developed through the year.

Here are what some of the members said about the 2012 Leadership Forum:

"Brought me out of my shell"

"Opened doors and I am able to help others more"

"Taught me heaps and I am now teaching people."

"Built up a lot. Got a lot more self-esteem"

"Able to do a lot more"

"Leadership has given me direction. I know what I want to do now and it's given me the confidence to try things I wouldn't have done before."

The funding for People First Leadership Development is a Te Pou Consumer Leadership Development grant. This funding has had the single biggest impact on the development of People First leaders over the last 5 years. Thank you Te Pou.



Christina Crawford raising a question



People First members working hard

2012 Leona Gitmans Te Aranga Award

This is an annual award that the National Committee of People First gives every year. Leona Gitmans was a young woman who was very passionate about the rights of people with learning disability. Sadly Leona passed away and her family asked her friends and family to donate money to People First rather than bring flowers to her service.

It is an award that goes to a person who has been a leader in self advocacy for people with learning disability and who speaks up strongly for the rights of people with learning disability. People First is very grateful to the Gitmans family.

The 2012 award was given to Rosemary Scully from Dunedin.

Rosemary is a founding member of People First New Zealand and has been involved in a long list of self advocacy activities over many years. Here are a few of the great things she has done.

Rosemary has been the Southern People First President and been a valued member of the People First National Committee. She has represented People First locally, regional and nationally in many roles such as People First representative on Workbridge NZ's Council of Disabled people.



Rosemary Scully, Michael Aldridge and Tariana Turia.

Rosemary has been very involved in research about people with learning disability being part of many research advisory groups for over 20 years.

Her work with People First, DPA, Workbridge, Idea services and researchers has had a profound influence on many people; giving talks to staff, students, teachers, service providers and the wider disability community.

Her friends have described her as a woman who is honest, reliable, trustworthy, thoughtful and caring and very perceptive and a superb advocate for people with learning disabilities.

Well done Rosemary!

New staff



People First farewells Debi Hayden from the Midland Region coordinator role and welcomes Nicolina Newcombe. Nicolina is based in Hamilton and has hit the ground running. Welcome to the team Nicolina.



Janet Doughty is back from her adventure in Fiji and has slotted into the Communications position. Janet is working on the redevelopment of the website and developing the organisations communication strategy.

Being a DPO- Disabled Person's Organisation

People First is proud to be a Disabled Persons Organisation/ DPO. DPO's are led by Disabled people and are organisations whose main purpose is to make sure the member's voices are heard.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities says that the government must consult with Disabled people so we are meeting with other DPOs to see what this means for New Zealand.

Article 4.3 of the UN Convention

People First is working together with other DPO's in New Zealand in the Convention Coalition whose job it is to see how New Zealand is doing against the rights in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. For the latest report ring People First on 0800 20 60 70.



People First travels to Inclusion International in Washington DC, America

Inclusion International is a global federation of family-based organisations advocating for the human rights of people with intellectual disabilities worldwide.

Past National Chairperson Michael Aldridge and National Manager Cindy Johns travelled to Washington in October 2012. The conference focused on Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, The right to be included and live in communities. People First now has an associate membership with Inclusion International, with Ihc being the principle member.

It was an inspiring trip, meeting lots of new people and finding out how others were working with the UN Convention and how they were

working with other DPO's in their countries. Michael said "It got you thinking and kept you busy and I really enjoyed it".

People First would like to thank Ihc for funding Michael and Cindy to attend.



International Acknowledgement for People First's Easy Read Employment Agreement



People First's Easy Read Employment Agreement has been selected to be included in the Essl Foundations "Zero Project Report 2013."

This report looks at the different ways that countries around the world are putting into practice Article 27 (work and employment) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This report has a focus on employment for Disabled people. The report highlights international good practice and

People First's Easy Read Employment Agreement was acknowledged as being a tool that can assist people with learning disability to understand

their employment agreement. The Easy Read version covers all the legal requirements of employment law in New Zealand. People First was invited to present at the International Conference on Employment Rights for Persons with Disabilities on 18-19 February, 2013 in Vienna, Austria. Sue O'Shea from the Human Rights Commission was attending the conference and kindly agreed to present on behalf of People First. We look forward to hearing from Sue about what people thought about our Easy Read Employment Agreement. The International Labour Organisation has commented that it is a world first!!



On the 16th of October this year People First New Zealand is celebrating turning 10. We are planning an event in Wellington in recognition of this great achievement.

Watch this space.....



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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

The Gitmans family