

Kia ora tatou

Ko Diana Wolken toku ingoa

No Hōrana ōku tīpuna | my ancestors come from the Netherlands

Kei te noho au ki ki Pōneke | I live in Wellington

Ko ahau te kōtuitui-tūru o te poari o community network wellington

Hi everyone, I'm Diana, my ancestors are all from the Netherlands and I now live in Wellington and have the honour of being co-chair along with Dan Mustapic.

Firstly, let me thank you Your Excellencies for the opportunity to be here today at Government House and to acknowledge the work of all our members of Community Networks Wellington | CNW and the people we serve.

My thanks also to the Mayor Tory Whanau for being with us to recognise and celebrate the awesome mahi you all do.

Today we are here at Government House to recognise you. This event is all about you, your organisations and the staff you represent. We were limited in numbers today so I want you to take away this recognition, acknowledgement and celebration of you and all your staff and your communities and organisations - share this aroha with those who could not be here with us today.

We know that in Aotearoa one in five kiwis is either on a committee or otherwise involved in a not-for-profit organisation as a volunteer. Across the motu it has been calculated that \$18.1 billion is the total income of community and social services.

However, and this is the big one. it is also estimated that the added value provided by not-for profit organisations is estimated at \$12.1 Billion. Let that sink in \$12.1 Billion - so you can easily see the value you add each and every day rain or shine (although we could hope for better summers in Welly).

Without you many in our community would fail to thrive. We all know the community sector is an essential part of a healthy thriving society and the true measure; I can't say it any better than

Mahatma Ghandi - *the true measure of any society is how that society treats its most vulnerable members.*

Here in Wellington, we encounter it all: from housing to health, mental health and hardship crises - we know these are key priorities and the same issues that the Mayor, Wellington City Council and we all are facing.

Those on the executive, the Kites Trust, Atareira Mental Health Support, Community Law, Utilities Disputes, the Wellington Women's Health Collective are just like you and meet people in crisis every day – making it just that little bit better or potentially much better working with limited resources. As the whakatauki states He waka eke noa – we are all in this together.

Our Wellington Community is diverse and this is reflected in our membership of over 120 community organisations which may be a one person organisation to a small to medium organisation to a large organisation. Thank you for all you do and for being part of CNW.

I wanted to share with you a little about CNW. We have been around since 1952 – you heard me right 1952. The year that Yvette Williams, the first female Olympian won the Gold long jump at Helsinki. The Remutaka rail tunnel started in 1951 going to 1955 and cutting travel time between Upper Hutt and Featherston to 3 hrs and 45 mins – although sadly there was an explosion in 1952 with one man dying in hospital after being rescued. It was also the year that Tu Paea Hērangi died who had spent 4 decades establishing the status of the Kīngitanga movement – she worked hard for community and economic revival – an amazing wahine. 1952 was also the year that Aotearoa New Zealand had a new head of state Queen Elizabeth the Second and Lord Norrie became our Governor General.

So, amongst all these amazing people and events CNW was born. Known initially as the Wellington Community of Social Services we have continued to evolve to meet the needs of our community - our reason for being has stayed the same; we are about people and community.

Without people we cannot have a community and without community there is no people. CNW is here to connect people, to support people and to empower people and we hope to be here as Wellington continues to be the coolest capital in the world. Look around you and you can see why!

I also want to thank Debbie and Janette who are the lifeblood of CNW – making everything happen from website to speakers to meetings and more. Thank you.

Now just before I hand over to Amanda Ashby a member of the CNW executive and Manager for Volunteer Wellington, I want you to do something for me.

Please to turn to those around you and say you are awesome you do amazing mahi – thank you!

Thank for listening and being here today – you are extraordinary.