



## Message from the CEO



Welcome to our Spring Partners update. Spring is a season of growth, and you could certainly say that this is the season for VisionWest at the moment! This growth is enabling us to offer support and assistance to more whanau and a wider number of people in our community. People like the families we house through the new initiative Housing First, or the people that are accessing our whanau services like our foodbank and budgeting service. These are people who are finding hope and looking forward to the future after seasons of despondency and desperation.

As we walk alongside these people we are supported in the work by our partners, people like you. In September we launched our annual partnership campaign "Sleepless In September". The community took hold of the vision and joined with us to make this inaugural event a great success.

Thank you to all our partners for your support as we work towards bring hope and transformation into our community.

Blessings,  
**Lisa Woolley**

## HOUSING – a journey of transformation

**By Brook Turner – Head of Community Service Development**

A little while ago I read a news article about Auckland's boarding houses. Boarding houses are half way houses for families and individuals who have no house to live in. In a lot of cases they are very unsafe places for people to live, especially children. They are the closest thing we have in Auckland to living in a slum. Flea infested rooms, blood stained carpets, mould on the ceiling and walls. You get the idea. Not the kind of place you want to end up. But for too many of our Auckland neighbours, boarding houses are their only choice.

After reading this article written by Fairfax, I found myself glassy eyed for a little baby 18-month old girl featured. Her name was Julia. Her body was riddled with flea bites. Her face without expression. Blank, cold and sad.

In Unicef's recent Innocenti global report card, New Zealand performed poorly on children's wellbeing. 19.8 per cent of children in this country are living in relative income poverty.

In that report Dr Prudence Stone said "Contrary to the way we'd like to think, New Zealand is evidently not the greatest place to grow up in. The more we've focused on New Zealand's economic well-being, the more we've lost sight of our children's."

It is for this reason we have little beauties like baby Julia stuck in boarding houses riddled with fleas. But fortunately, there is a part of baby Julia's story I haven't said yet. Sometimes when you least expect it, the story can change. It did for baby Julia.

After I posted the article, one of our support navigators, Linda Paealiki from our south Auckland Emergency Housing site decided to do something. She tracked down baby Julia and her parents and got them out of the boarding house. Linda did not wait for someone else to act. She was simply moved with compassion, and her actions changed the life of a little girl born into poverty.

Baby Julia and her parents are now learning life skills with



Linda Paealiki, VisionWest Support Navigator, changed the life of baby Julia and her family. Removed from horrific living conditions in a boarding house to a safe and secure environment at Luke Street Housing.

VisionWest and are well housed in our Emergency Housing. We will transition the family to their own home some time in the near future. A place without fleas, mould or blood-stained carpet. And because of this story I sleep a little easier. ■

## HEMOCARE – Bay of Plenty acquisition completed

**Press Release from June 2017**

VisionWest Community Trust have announced that they will be taking ownership of The Salvation Army HomeCare service in the Bay of Plenty.

From July 1, staff and clients from The Salvation Army Homecare service in the Bay of Plenty will transfer over to VisionWest Baptist HomeCare. This follows VisionWest's acquisition in October last year of The Salvation Army's Homecare services in Rotorua, Waikato and Auckland.

VisionWest's offer to bring over all current staff was at the heart of their desire to keep the service provided to clients continuing as smoothly as possible during the transition. Clients often have a very close bond with their support workers and VisionWest see that keeping this relationship is of great benefit to the ongoing well-being of clients. Office staff are also key to the connection the client has with the service, answering the many queries and arranging care visits.

VisionWest has offered the assurance to the clients and staff of The Salvation Army HomeCare

in Bay of Plenty that from July 1st, it will be very much business as usual in regard to their care and employment.

Along with taking over this service, VisionWest have committed to invest in upgrading systems and technology to enhance the service provided and hold it in good stead for future growth.

VisionWest Community Trust is a well established Homecare provider, delivering this service to the community for the past 20 years. Operating in Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Rotorua and Christchurch, they are a large not-for-profit organisation providing services to the community. These services include social housing, whanau services, training and education, counselling and support into employment. The Trust was initially set up by the Glen Eden Baptist Church in mid 1980s and has grown from small beginnings providing a drop in centre, to where it now delivers social services and training to over 20,000 people per year. The work of VisionWest, and its CEO Lisa Woolley, has been acknowledged with a number of awards over the years in the areas of leadership,



Susan, Lisa and Jade celebrate at the Tauranga office – the new branch of VisionWest Community Trust.

not for profit management, and best practice.

HomeCare is seen to be a key service for VisionWest to deliver as it meets their commitment to see healthy communities thriving. HomeCare enables people who may be affected by an age related condition, or who have other disabilities to remain in the community, living in their own homes as long as possible. It also enables those recovering from a health issue or rehabilitating from an injury to do so in their own home. In addition to this it provides those people who may otherwise be isolated to have regular connection to the community. ■

## KINDERGARTEN – continuing to grow

Our kindergarten is one of the longest running services of VisionWest. It was first registered as a kindergarten in 1983 and has grown from being licensed for 15 children back then, to 35 today.

The Kindy can operate with 35 children at any one time, with around 50 children attending throughout the week. The centre has a staff of 6 enthusiastic teachers delivering the curriculum from a Christian perspective. One of our teachers attended the kindergarten herself when she was a pre-schooler!

The team at the kindergarten offer much more than a childcare service as they are able to tap into the wrap around services of VisionWest for any of their families in need.

Families benefit from the commitment and care of our dedicated team. This was evident in a recent situation where due to the teachers work with one particular child with special needs, this child has made progress well beyond expectations. The mum expressed her gratefulness to the team for being so supportive and continuously helping her child to improve, and the staff from the Ministry of Education working with this child commended the kindergarten team for being "wonderful teachers". ■



The old Manse became Sunday School rooms and eventually the Kindergarten.



Some of our Kindy kids checking out the church renovations.



## BUDGETING – spreading the word in the community

Due to the demand in our community, the budgeting team have outgrown their offices here at VisionWest Glen Eden campus and are now setting up drop-in services at churches and community centres Auckland wide.

Over the past few months VisionWest Budgeting have been working hard to partner with other organisations across Auckland to provide services to the whanau they work with.

Working from Massey to Epsom, they will be stretching their tent pegs across West and Central Auckland to provide budgeting services, financial mentoring, group sessions and advocacy to those in need.

The team has expanded this year with Debbie Griffiths returning to VisionWest, Sandra Jensen starting part-time as a budget advisor and Nettie Burton as a volunteer budget advisor. ■



The budgeting team... Sandra, Georgia and Debbie. Absent from photo is Nettie.

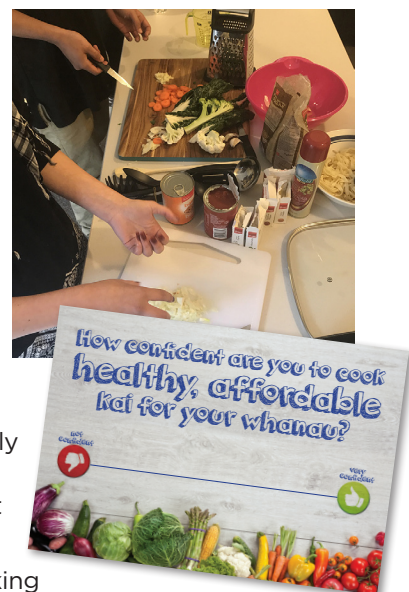
## COMMUNITY BANKS – kai time!

At VisionWest we love to be able to offer practical hands on help to our clients, help that can make a positive difference in their lives.

As we all know, full tummies lead to happy families and to children who can thrive and learn! For any parent, being able to provide your family with healthy, nutritious meals within your budget is empowering.

At our first Kai Time cooking group Linda Potauaine, our Community Banks manager, worked alongside some of our West Auckland housing tenants, sharing with them her knowledge on preparing healthy meals on a tight budget. Making 5 meals for a family of 6 for \$30!

Linda will be running more of these group sessions in the future, offering them not only to our clients and tenants, but also to anyone in the community who is interested in providing great family meals on a tight budget. ■



## EDUCATION & TRAINING CENTRE – transforming lives!

### Feedback from two of our past carpentry students...

*Tutor texted:*

Hope all good, have you started your new job yet?

*Student:*

Yes, I'm doing mint! Started work with (name withheld) Construction last week and have learnt so much since. I'm working down on Wynyard Quarter where all those sites are. Been putting up RAB and villa board onto the sides and ceilings of the building and waterproofing them plus working on the scaffolding sometimes at the top, which was real scary at first but it is all good now. I went and bought some more tools, like a rafter square, chalk line, new measuring tape and Stanley knife because I was using them all the time. Really enjoying myself at the moment. Getting \$20 an hour and it feels like being back at course minus

the theory, learning heaps and having fun at the same time. Finally feel like I'm where I need to be. Thanks heaps Key, couldn't have got where I am now without your help though, so yeah really appreciate everything you've done for me, Thank you.

### One of our other students from 2016 has begun working for a construction company in Whangaparāoa.

He began with the company in January of this year and his boss has now offered him an apprenticeship. He is working real hard, getting paid, paying board and getting fit as well. He is purchasing some new tools for himself as the tools we gave him when he finished his course last year are now worn out! He is buying a bunch of new clothes as well. Last week he visited us at the Training Centre to catch up with the tutor and seek some advice on

tool maintenance. He had a big smile on his face and was greeted warmly by all the staff and faculty.

The courses we offer are changing the directions in our rangitahi's lives. Transforming lives is what we do. ■



## VISIONWEST VOLUNTEERS – we couldn't do it without you!

VisionWest was founded by volunteers with a heart for their community and a desire to help others. Thirty years later, volunteers are still the mainstay of our community banks and we also have volunteers assisting in other services such as our kindergarten, adult education classes and budgeting service.

Every year we like to show our appreciation to our volunteers by taking them out to lunch to thank them for the time, energy and aroha they give to the organisation and its clients every week. At our lunch this year we had volunteers who have been with us for just a few weeks and others who have been serving the community through VisionWest for decades!

## FACEBOOK – Building our profile

VisionWest has recently launched our own Facebook page with the goal of increasing our profile in the community, sharing about the services we provide, our people and our achievements. Come and like our page @visionwestcommunitytrust and keep up to date with what's happening and how you can show your support.

## EMERGENCY HOUSING – Luke Street open and doing great work

Back in March, VisionWest, in conjunction with Monte Cecelia Trust and The Salvation Army, celebrated the official opening of the Luke Street Emergency Housing project.

The Prime Minister, the honorable Bill English with Social Housing Minister Amy Adams and Associate Housing Minister Alfred Ngaro, opened the first of 43 transitional houses that will eventually support up to 160 families annually.



Luke Street Housing hosted a hui on Tuesday 12th September with the Wellington Head Office Ministry of Social Development Team and the Auckland Housing New Zealand Team.

## FUNDRAISING – Sleepless in September brings the community together

This month, VisionWest kicked off our inaugural Sleepless in September fundraising and awareness campaign. While our goals included raising funds, we also hoped to create an awareness of what VisionWest does and to facilitate support and partnerships with the local community.



What a fantastic response we have had! Thanks to Glen Eden Intermediate, Green Bay High school, Oratia Primary, Freyberg Community school, Western Heights Primary and Immanuel Christian school our food pantry is bursting at the seams with food and hygiene products. VisionWest staff have loved going out and meeting students and teachers doing amazing projects to nurture a spirit of giving in the community.

In addition to building community awareness we ran a Quiz Night and Silent Auction fundraising event at Black Salt bar. Again we were so uplifted by the generosity of local businesses who donated goods and services for our silent auction. We raised over \$7,000 on the night and would like to say a huge thank you to all who came out and bid generously on auction items. What a great night!



Our weekly blog posts, shared via our facebook page, were also incorporated into 'Sleepless in September' to explain what we do and how it benefits others. A massive thank you to all who helped make this campaign a huge success. ■