



GWNZ News

Whakaminenga Wahine o Aotearoa Kua Whiwhi Tohu
Graduate Women New Zealand: Changing the world by degrees
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www.gwnz.org.nz

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EDITORIAL: Turning back the clock - Trump's first 100 days

We were curious to discover how the media is portraying US President Trump's efforts to empower women — one of his election promises. Here's what we found from trawling the internet.

Women in the US workforce

On March 27, President Trump revoked the [2014 Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces](#) order former President Barack Obama had put in place to ensure that companies with federal contracts complied with 14 labour and civil rights laws. The Fair Pay order had been put in place after a [2010 Government Accountability Office](#) investigation showed that companies with rampant violations were being awarded millions in federal contracts. The Fair Pay order had two advantages for women workers: pay transparency, and a ban on forced arbitration clauses for sexual harassment, sexual assault or discrimination claims. Forced arbitration clauses — also sometimes

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Public Affairs (Private) Discussions

Graduate Women New Zealand

We welcome your thoughts, suggestions and input on matters that relate to education for women and girls. Forming of submissions, responses and distributing media releases on behalf of GWNZ really needs to have members views considered and incorporated and so we have decided to set up a Closed face Book page where we can hold internal membership discussions.

If you would like to join our private discussion group please click on this link:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/GraduateWomen/>

Pip Jamieson
Public Affairs Convenor

called "cover-up clauses" — are commonly used to keep sex discrimination claims out of the courts and off the public record. CNS News says that 60% of the 50 worst wage theft violators examined by the US Government Accountability Office between 2005 and 2009 were awarded federal contracts, despite being penalised by the US Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division. Senator Richard Blumenthal told NBC News that Trump's overturning the Fair Pay order sends US women's rights in the workplace back "to a time best left to 'Mad Men'." Since they no longer have to detail earnings, pay scales, salaries and other details, there is now no way to ensure companies pay women workers equally to their male colleagues. According to the Economic Policy Institute's 2016 analysis of federal labour statistics, the [median wage for U.S. women is about 16.8 percent less than the median for men](#) — with women making about 83 cents to a man's dollar.

US Education

There has been a lack of clear policy direction on education in the first 100 days. To date, the biggest actions from the administration have been rescinding Obama-era regulations including transgender bathroom access and student loan customer service requirements. In March, President Trump released a budget "blueprint" for the 2018 fiscal year, calling for \$9 billion (more than 13 percent) in cuts to the Department of Education. The budget decreases funding at several agencies that provide support for education initiatives, such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. The administration also outlined a plan to eliminate the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Proposed education cuts include programs aiding primarily low-income and minority students, although there is increased spending for school-choice programs in elementary and secondary education. The School Choice and Education Opportunity Act in Trump's pre-election vision is supposed to "redirect education dollars to give parents the right to send their kid to the public, private, charter, magnet, religious or home school of their choice". Commentators say President Trump has fallen far short of fulfilling his pledges regarding child care, school choice and college affordability outlined in his "100 day action plan to Make America Great Again."

US policy affecting women and families

Nearly 100 days into the Trump administration US commentators were noting that there had been little talk or concrete policy actions to help women and families. Despite repeated promises that President Trump and his administration would invest in and empower women, President Trump's actions have made it clear that he and his team are completely out of touch with the needs of today's working families in the USA. "Trump has a fundamental lack of understanding of the myriad challenges women face". The following website looks at 100 ways the Trump administration harms women and families through the lens of eight themes: eroding family economic security; putting children at risk; attacking reproductive rights; undermining women's legal rights; weakening protections against gender-based violence; undermining women's leadership; tearing families apart; and slashing health benefits:

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2017/04/25/430969/100-days-100-ways-trump-administration-harming-women-families/>

From the President's Desk.....

Dear Members

The May meeting of National Executive was packed with decisions we needed to make.

National Charitable Trust

First, we had a Council meeting (as per clause 10 of the Charitable Trust rules) to formally approve the renaming of the Charitable Trust to bring it into line with the renaming of GWNZ at the last AGM. The New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women Charitable Trust is now the Graduate Women New Zealand Charitable Trust.

But further changes need to be made to the deed and rules of the Charitable Trust, not just with renaming the awards and scholarships, but also future-proofing the Trust. A working committee from National Executive is about to go through the deed and rules. They will recommend changes and these will be circulated prior to the AGM for members to discuss and then vote on at the AGM. (The AGM will be held later this year but we have not yet decided on format and venue.)

We then convened a meeting of the trustees of the Charitable Trust and carried out our usual business, ably led by the Awards Convenor, Vivienne Bryner. The awardees chosen by the trustees are very talented and carrying out interesting and worthwhile research.

National Executive

Pip Jamieson has continued working actively on our behalf and we issued a number of press releases on topics that are affecting women and education, including on the future of Salisbury School for Girls in Nelson and the impact of lack of access to sanitary products on girls' education. We are also monitoring the progress of the Equal Pay working parties through coalitions of interested and related organisations in Wellington and Nelson. Thanks to Loren Rutherford (Graduate Women Wellington) and the support of several of our National Executive we have an active social media presence. We are looking at setting up closed facebook discussion groups and if you are interested please contact either Pp or Loren via the link (above).

Internationally, we expressed our concern to the Malaysian Ambassador here in New Zealand about Malaysia's proposed change in legislation to permit nine year old girls to marry and the effect of child marriages on the educational and career prospects of young girls. There is much going on internationally and Sita Venkateswar is keeping us up-to-date on many issues.

Overall GWNZ remains active here and overseas advocating on behalf of members eager to see continuing progress in broadening women and girls' educational opportunities.



Bernadette Devonport
President





Dear GWI Family:

Yesterday was a beautiful Spring day in New York, made that much more beautiful by my meeting with our New York UN representatives. I came away from that meeting feeling inspired and hopeful. GWI has representatives to the UN in New York, Geneva, Paris and Vienna who work year - round in each of these locations. They are women who give off their time unstintingly and they are our unsung heroes.

As you know GWI has consultative status with the UN's Economic and Social Council, (ECOSOC). This means that in New York, GWI is represented at all of ECOSOC's Third Committee meetings that discuss issues that are relevant to GWI's mission. Additionally, our representatives engage with NGO CSW in the annual planning of the Commission on the Status of Women and CoNGO (Conference of NGOs with consultative status with ECOSOC)

In Geneva, our UN representatives engage with the Human Rights Council and the International Labor Organization (ILO); in Paris with the UN Education, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and in Vienna with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Our representatives communicate, to the UN, our position on a range of humanitarian issues and they specifically advocate for education for women and girls.

Advocacy at the UN is never straightforward. It requires skills in networking, identifying allies, in - depth knowledge of the issues and coalition - building to strengthen our voice. Above all, it needs passion and persistence in the face of monumental odds.

While it is difficult to quantify the outcomes of advocacy at the UN, it is safe to say that - whenever and wherever in the world, education policy was changed to include women and girls, disabled or indigenous populations or the educational curriculum was improved to incorporate a standard of quality, or opportunities were created for life - long learning or girls were encouraged to study Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics - our GWI and its UN representatives have had a hand in it.

Dear GWI family members, rest assured that your country- specific issues impacting education are being communicated emphatically to the UN and GWI is holding UN Member States accountable.

The world is being changed for the better, a little bit at a time because of you - because you care so deeply about the education of women and girls and have chosen to support GWI as its members.

Please read all about [GWI at the UN](#) on our website

Sincerely

Geeta Desai

President

Graduate Women International

Due to the subsidy on GWI dues from GWNZ (which was agreed at our last AGM because of the very late GWI decision on the increase), the Subscription Rates for the year ended 30 June 2017 are as follows:

Branch Members –

\$52 per Graduate Member, allocated as follows

\$25 GWI Dues Fund

\$15 NZFGW General Fund

\$12 Travel Fund

\$22 per Associate Member – allocated as follows

\$15 NZFGW General fund

\$7 Travel Fund

Independent Members -

\$55 per member – allocated as follows

\$25 GWI Dues Fund

\$15 NZFGW General fund

\$12 Travel Fund

\$3 IM Fund

The Executive will pay the balance due to GWI from reserves. Should you or your Branch wish to give a donation, however small, to help cover the shortfall it would be most welcome.

Public Affairs Convenor - What Does She Do?

The Public Affairs Convenor (PAC) works with members of Graduate Women New Zealand (GWNZ) to keep a watchful eye on what is happening in relation to key themes: education, human rights, environment and the economy as they impact on women and girls.

Key activities can include writing letters and developing submissions in response to proposed Government policy; sharing information on positive actions taken by Government and others; ensuring GWNZ policy resolutions are implemented; collaborating with like-minded organisations especially National Council of Women; organising public events in cooperation with other women's organisations; and initiating and contributing to local projects.

Members are encouraged to engage with the PAC and a Closed Face Book page has been developed to enable this (see first page of this edition of GWNZ news above). If members would prefer to liaise directly they can email pip@pjamieson.co.nz

PAY EQUITY UPDATES

GWNZ has been involved with the latest development on pay equity through the Wellington Pay Equity Coalition and recently formed Nelson Coalition [see below].

Terranova settlement

The Care and Support offer (to settle what is often referred to as the Kristine Bartlett equal pay case) and the release of the proposed new equal pay legislation have both occurred and we hope these are celebrated. The three unions involved in the settlement (E tu, PSA and NZNO) will be holding meetings with those working in the care and support sector to vote on the offer. If accepted, care and support workers will start seeing increased pay from 1 July 2017.

Pay Equity Bill exposure draft

On Thursday 20th April, a draft Employment (Pay Equity and Equal Pay) Bill was released for public consultation. This Bill would repeal and replace the Equal Pay Act 1972 and the Government Service Equal Pay Act 1960 and amend the Employment Relations Act 2000¹.

It repeals the 1972 Equal Pay Act and sets out the process for taking equal pay and pay equity claims. It sets out that any worker may raise an equal pay or pay equity claim, describes how and when the employer must respond and how the merit of the claim is assessed, requires parties to enter bargaining over the claim using the pay equity principles and comparators, and provides that if bargaining does not resolve it, then the Employment Relations Authority or Court can be involved.

A key problem is that **the draft Bill places barriers for women taking equal pay claims** by putting significant restrictions on the 'comparator' male dominated jobs that women and their unions select to help determine whether their job has been undervalued because it is female dominated. This is the main reason the Bill reduces women's entitlement to equal pay as it is currently written.

Pay equity means that women and men should receive equal pay for work of equal value. This involves working out the rate of pay that would be paid to male workers with the same (or substantially similar) skills, effort, responsibility and conditions as the female workers taking the pay equity case. A pay equity process identifies one or a number of male 'comparators' to help assess this.

Sometimes the appropriate comparators might be from the same industry, but sometimes they will need to be from a different industry – particularly when a whole industry of work has been undervalued and affected by gender discrimination because it's an industry for which the work has been performed largely by women.

The Bill (at Clause 23) sets out a limiting mechanism for comparators by establishing a hierarchy which tries to keep comparators as close as possible to the equal pay claimants' workplace. The hierarchy would mean comparators would have to be selected as follows:

1. Comparators within the same business, or if not then
2. Comparators from within a similar business, or if not then

¹ <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/employment-skills/legislation-reviews/exposure-draft-employment-pay-equity-and-equal-pay-bill>

3. Comparators from within the same industry/sector, or if not then
4. Comparators from a different industry or sector.

In order to have a real opportunity to claim equal pay women need to be able to select the most appropriate comparator for their particular role, regardless of who their employer happens to be.

The Government has opened consultation on the draft Bill before it goes to Select Committee. This is a key opportunity to make it clear that the Bill needs fixing to ensure it delivers pay equity for women, particularly on:

- issues of workability
- whether the Bill effectively achieves its purpose as set out in the Cabinet paper
- specific feedback on specific clauses 8, 14,19 and 24
- any other aspects of the Bill including how to transition to the new pay equity regime.

Individuals and Regional Hubs were asked to write submissions on this Bill and GWNZ contributed through the Coalition's submission.



L to R: Sue O'Shea, Pip Jamieson, Jackie Bleu

Jan Logie's Bill

Further to the above, MP Jan Logie's Bill Equal Pay Amendment Bill was drawn from the ballot and the First Reading is set for 11 May². The purpose of this Bill is to remove discrimination in pay rates between men and women in the same jobs by making publicly available statistical information relating to their rates of pay. Individuals and regional coalitions were encouraged to write to local MPs to support this Bill.

Nelson Pay Equity Coalition [Pay Equity Partners]

On 27 April Nelson NCW, in conjunction with the CTU (Sue O'Shea) and the Human Rights Commission (Dr Jackie Bleu) held a Pay Equity forum to prepare to establish a regional Pay Equity Coalition. There was strong support from those present to do so and it is suggested that this "partnership" approach to the issue be referred to as "Pay Equity Partners [PEP]" Since that meeting GWNZ National Executive agreed to partner with both the Wellington Coalition (though Christine Ross) and the Nelson PEP (though PAC Pip Jamieson).

The work of PEP will be around letters (joint and individual) to the local MP to support issues such as the First Reading of the Equal Pay Amendment Bill, submissions (joint and individual) on the Draft Employment (Pay Equity and Equal Pay) Bill, planning a celebration event inviting Care Givers in the region, to acknowledge the win achieved to date, and connecting with the groups of current equal pay cases [social workers, clerical admin workers in hospitals (PSA) and education support workers (working in early childhood),and school support workers (NZEI).

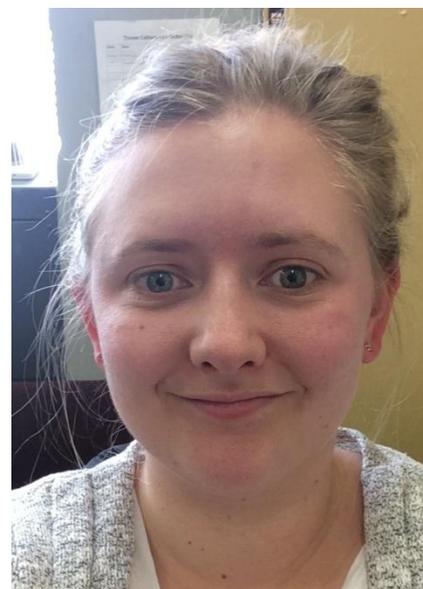
Pip Jamieson

Public Affairs Convenor

² https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/bills-and-laws/bills-proposed-laws/document/BILL_72692/equal-pay-amendment-bill

Fellow's Midterm Report: Samantha Dudley

I am currently studying for a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Canterbury, where I have just entered my third and final year. My project is focused on estrogen mimicking compounds and their role as breast cancer risk factors. Breast cancer is the number one most diagnosed cancer for women in New Zealand, with nearly 3000 new cases each year. Currently New Zealand women have a 1 in 9 chance of developing breast cancer during their lifetime. Their risk is determined by many factors including age, ethnicity and environmental exposure to chemicals such as xenoestrogens.



Interest has spiked over the last few decades with respect to xenoestrogens and the potential role they may be playing in the breast cancer development and progression process. They are compounds that structurally mimic one of the female hormones 17β -estradiol (E2), and therefore, can elicit a similar effect to that of E2 in the human body. Generally, individual xenoestrogens are found to be at low enough concentrations in the environment and diet that they are deemed 'safe'; however, when exposure to more than one xenoestrogen occurs their combined estrogenicity may lead to an effect that could be deemed unsafe. Daily human exposure to these compounds are likely to be to different combinations of these xenoestrogens, depending on a person's daily routine (e.g. make-up application, food choices, etc.) rather than to only one individual compound at one time, leading to combined estrogenic effects. Therefore, it has been proposed that they are likely have at least an additive effect; however, it is becoming clear as my project progresses that this concept is over simplifying the real-life situation.

My research project is specifically investigating daily exposure to xenoestrogens and studying different combinations in a range of cell model systems. Thus far, our investigations have shown us that not all xenoestrogens are behaving in the additive manner, in fact, some have been able to ameliorate the effect (i.e. reduce the overall estrogenic effect). It is well documented that some xenoestrogens are protective against breast cancer at high exposure concentrations and it is these compounds that are showing the overall reduced estrogenic effect. I am currently investigating the mechanism behind this effect and the possible implications for breast cancer prevention. By the end of my project I hope to be able to provide insights into ways in which women may be able to reduce their risk of breast cancer.

Being part of the Chemistry department has so far has been an incredibly valuable experience. I have been fortunate enough to be surrounded by a wealth of expertise and have benefited greatly from being part of the Human Toxicology Research Group. Importantly, my fantastic supervisors, Professor Ian Shaw and Professor Ann Richardson, have been invaluable mentors and I am truly grateful for all their guidance throughout the course of my postgraduate journey.

Additionally, I have also joined ChemSoc, the chemistry society at the university. My role is one of the outreach coordinators which involves organising outreach opportunities for primary, intermediate and high school pupils. I'm really excited about this role and love that I can give back to the chemistry community. Particularly it has been great to see the pupils get excited about science.

Finally, I would like to thank Graduate Women New Zealand for their support in my PhD. I hope that my research can make a difference to many women's lives around New Zealand by reducing their risk of developing breast cancer. This area of research has definitely become a passion of mine over the last 2.5 years and it is something that I wish to continue in the years to come.

Please advise us of key events and news from your award recipients, or members undertaking activities that promote our goals - email gaila@waikato.ac.nz with items for the June edition of GWNZ News by 1 June 2017

Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information in this newsletter, neither the Editors nor GWNZ accept liability for any errors of fact or opinion.