



ANZASW 60th Anniversary – 23 / 24 October 2024

Whakatuwhera - President

Ata marie e te whānau

Kei aku nui, kei aku rahi, kei aku rau rangatira mā

Tēnā koutou katoa

He hōnore, he korōria ki te Atua, nana nei nga mea katoa

Kia tau mai te aroha, nga manaakitanga o te Atua ki a tātou.

Ki nga manawhenua o te rohe nei, ko Waikato-Tainui, ki ngā hapū Te Ahi Waru, ngā tāngata o Ihu Mataoho – Ihumātao

Tēnā koutou ki a koutou kua tae mai nei ki te tautoko te kaupapa o tēnei wa, te Whakanuia o te rōpū Tauwhiro i Aotearoa mō te tau, ono tekau

Ki ngā hoa haere o te motu nei

Nau mai, haere mai, tauti mai i raro i te Korowai o te Rangimārie

Ka nui te koa me te hari kia kite i a koutou

Ko Sharyn Roberts tōku ingoa

He uri nō Kai Tahu, Kāti Māmoe, Waitaha, Ngāti Kahungunu ki te Wairoa

Ingarangi, Airani, Kōtimana, Wera o nga tupuna

Ko au te Perehitana ki te rōpū nei

He mihi atu nei, tēnā tātou katoa.

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Kia orana, Mālō e lelei, Bula vinaka, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Fakatalofa atu, Mālō nī, Namaste, Nǐ hǎo, As-salamu alaykum, Greetings to you all, Gidday, Hello.

Welcome

Thank you, Longi, for that kind introduction. I've often heard people describe the feeling of hearing such introductions as an out-of-body experience; you find yourself questioning who they're talking about until it hits you that it's actually you. Now, to gather my thoughts and deliver something inspiring to meet those expectations. I truly hope I can accomplish that.

Longi and his partner Amanda are good friends of mine, and I miss them dearly since they moved to live in the far north, in Kerikeri earlier this year. Ka nui te mihi aroha ki a koe me tō whānau whānui hoki e hoa.

Welcome to this special occasion as we celebrate the 60th anniversary, our ruby anniversary, of the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers, ANZASW. It's wonderful to see you all here to share in this celebration. Reaching sixty years is a significant milestone, one that some of us have witnessed firsthand, and we are deeply grateful to each of you for being here to honour this remarkable achievement with us.

The theme for this anniversary is the whakataukī: 'kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua, I walk backward into the future with my eyes fixed on my past', which teaches us that our Association's progress is rooted in our history. By walking backward into the future, we honour and reflect on the experiences, lessons, and stories that have shaped our identity.

Reflection, a core social work practice, allows us to critically assess both our successes and challenges, and we have had plenty of both. By acknowledging and learning from our past, we gain deeper insights that enhance our ability to serve others and be progressive. Every milestone, whether celebrated or difficult, adds to the collective wisdom that

strengthens our resolve and ability to adapt to evolving circumstances. This thoughtful practice is a powerful tool in guiding both us and our communities toward a more informed and empowered future.

Past

Today, we honour the legacy of Merv Hancock, our first President and Professor J. McCreary, whose vision along with others has profoundly shaped the ANZASW. Six decades ago, the foundation was laid for an organisation grounded in integrity, social justice, advocacy, and professionalism. Their dedication has not only helped found and build a movement but also ensured that ANZASW remains a leading advocate for equity and ethical practice in Aotearoa.

As we reflect on the past six decades, we honour the visionaries who laid the foundation, the leaders who carried the torch, and the countless social workers who have enabled our association to flourish. Today, the spirit of those early leaders remains with us, and their commitment to social work principles continues to be deeply embedded in all we do as we carry their legacy into the future.

A decade ago, we celebrated our 50th anniversary in Ōtautahi Christchurch, and was a showcase of the people, events, and values that have guided us. This celebration is not only a moment to acknowledge our history and celebrate its legacy but it's also an opportunity to look ahead and envision a future where social work thrives, innovates, and drives positive change.

Now

Today, I stand before you with immense pride and deep reflection to acknowledge the remarkable journey of the past ten years, where we have seen tremendous growth, not just in numbers, but in the strength of our connections, the depth of our impact, and the support and leadership we have fostered within our social work communities.

Our mahi has been firmly grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi, promoting cultural competence by integrating cultural perspectives and values into our systems and practice. At the same time, we have provided essential support and resources to social workers across Aotearoa NZ, helping to advance our vision of excellent leaders of social justice and enhancing their resilience and capabilities.

Our work has never been about a single moment in time, but rather the enduring legacy of whakapapa, connecting the past, present, and future. From the whenua that grounds us to the whakataukī that inspire our actions, and the whakawhanaungatanga at the heart of everything we do, our strength has always been rooted in tradition, while embracing progress and change.

We have focused on strengthening and connecting our membership, while deepening our understanding of the complexities within the sectors where our members operate. In addition, we have undergone a change management process of our structure and personnel to ensure the ANZASW effectively fulfils its mandate to represent its members with greater efficiency and impact, while future-proofing the Association by embracing innovation and evolving to meet the needs of today's social work professionals. It is important that we remain relevant to the needs of members of the day.

This has required us to be bold and to make significant strategic decisions, such as relocating our CE office to Wellington, placing them at the heart of government, where key decision-making occurs, that impact both us and you are made daily. A bold decision yes, but definitely a worthwhile one.

This past decade, it is our relationships and collective commitment to uplift and empower one another that have shaped our success. We have seen firsthand how our efforts to build trust, foster belonging, and create spaces where everyone feels valued and included have made a lasting difference. These values of trust, respect, connection and valued are not merely words;

they form the foundation upon which ANZASW has thrived and will continue to build its future.

I want to highlight a few of the many changes we have made over this past decade.

In 2018, I joined the ANZASW board with a number of clear goals, a key one being the revitalisation of the Tangata Whenua Takawaenga o Aotearoa. To accomplish this, meant actioning our whakataukī - ‘kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua – I walk backward into the future with my eyes fixed on my past’, Kaumātua Te Naihi and I literally went back to its inception, to understand the whakapapa, to hear the voices of the people and listen to the pūrākau in order to determine a way forward.

This has taken time, as all meaningful work does. Now, with the appointment of the Kaihautū role, we are ready to move this space forward, beyond hui and whakawhiti kōrero (discussion), towards action and progress. I am truly thrilled and excited about the direction the tangata whenua space will now take, and I look forward to the journey ahead with the fabulous Lisa King at the helm.

A notable achievement from this decade was the release of the revised Code of Ethics in 2019, which offers a crucial ethical framework guiding our profession with integrity. Integral to the Code of Ethics is a set of values gifted to us by the Enhanced Readiness to Practice research project. The inclusion of these values as ethical indicators has been transformational, as we have endeavoured to embed them across our mahi:

- **Rangatiratanga** - Social workers value diversity and cultural identity. We use our practice to advocate for and support self-determination and empowerment of others
- **Manaakitanga** - Social workers recognise and support the mana of others. We act towards others with respect, kindness and

compassion. We practice empathic solidarity, ensure safe space, acknowledge boundaries and meet obligations.

- **Whanaungatanga** - Social workers work to strengthen reciprocal mana-enhancing relationships, connectedness and to foster a sense of belonging and inclusion.
- **Aroha** - Social workers acknowledge our mutual responsibility for wellbeing. We recognise our common humanity with people who use our services and hold people to account, using professional judgement without being judgemental. We focus on people's strengths and finding solutions.
- **Kotahitanga** - Social workers work to build a sense of community, solidarity and collective action for social change. We challenge injustice and oppression in all its forms, including exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence.
- **Mātātoa** - Social workers act with moral courage in situations that are uncomfortable, challenging and uncertain. We use critical reflection and questioning to work through contradictions and complexity.
- **Wairuatanga** - Social workers attend to the wellbeing – spiritual, emotional, psychological and physical – of self and others. We acknowledge the significance of whakapapa, self-awareness and self-care.

Central to our work has been Te Mahere Rautaki, our strategic plan which has guided our mahi since 2020, with its 3 guiding pou ensuring we stayed true to our vision, purpose and values.

- **Whakawhanaungatanga** – actively engage and connect all social workers in Aotearoa
- **Whakamana** – support and encourage social workers, to promote social change, social justice and wellbeing for all
- **Rangatiratanga** – building the value and voice of social work as a profession to lead social change, social justice and promote wellbeing

And a defining moment for our profession came in 2021 after years of meticulous planning, with the mandatory registration of social workers. This

was a crucial step in enhancing the professionalisation of social work, a journey that is ongoing and remains our shared focus with the SWRB. Like all crucial relationships, this journey has faced challenges that have ebbed and flowed like the tide, but it is essential for our profession that we continue working together.

Last year, in 2023, we launched the ANZASW Supervision Strategy following a four-year project process. This sector-wide Social Work Supervision Strategy was designed to enhance the quality of social work supervision across Aotearoa New Zealand, incorporating valuable input from our members and others within the sector. We take great pride in this initiative, as we are confident it will empower social workers to embrace best practices and become outstanding leaders and professionals.

These milestones are markers of the progress our association has made in becoming one of the leading voices of social work in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Recently however, social work in Aotearoa has faced significant challenges, including a global pandemic, a housing crisis, and a rising cost of living. We are navigating a Child Protection crisis, grappling with ongoing issues of inequity and social justice, and challenged by the complexities of professionalisation, regulation, and shifts in social policy, each with far-reaching implications for our sector.

And globally, we are confronted daily with geopolitical challenges such as the indiscriminate murder of innocent women, children and elderly civilians, wars, conflicts, famines, genocide, racial division, and neoliberal right-wing politics that undermine the core values of social work. Each day, we face issues of inequality and racism, compelling us to reassess our commitments and the principles we hold dear. Our empathy is consistently tested, and our hearts ache as we work to improve the lives of individuals and communities while grappling with the harsh realities of today's world.

Perhaps most concerning issue for us has been the impact of these pressures on workforce wellbeing and the prevalence of burnout among our members. As we've navigated these challenges, we have been called to demonstrate resilience, embrace innovation, and advocate for systemic change.

In all of this, the ANZASW remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing a profession that is responsive, inclusive, and forward-thinking. We uphold our vision of being “Professionally excellent social workers and leaders for social justice”, and our purpose, to promote and support the social work profession, uphold ethical practice, advocate on matters of social policy, and advance social justice, human rights, and human dignity which guides us in every endeavour.

As we look to the next generation of social workers, we remain steadfast in our dedication to whakamana, uplifting, empowering, and equipping them with the tools and knowledge needed to succeed in our everchanging world, te ao hurihuri.

Leadership, we know, is not about positions of power but about service, integrity, and commitment to the greater good. The future leaders of ANZASW will emerge from the communities we have nurtured, carrying with them the values that have guided us for over six decades, ensuring the continuation of our mission to promote social justice and uphold professional excellence.

Forward

Our journey is far from over. We stand at the threshold of new challenges, climate change, increasing social inequities, and the ongoing need for strong, values-based leadership. It is our responsibility to continue evolving, to ensure that the kaupapa of our association remains relevant, resilient, and responsive to the needs of our members.

As we navigate the complexities of the future, we remain united in our mission, dedicated to fostering a supportive environment where social workers can thrive and make a lasting impact on the communities we serve.

As Chinese Philosopher Lao Tzu (Sue) wisely observed, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," and indeed, over the past decade, we have taken many such single steps, each contributing to the collective progress of our journey.

These individual efforts have moved us forward, shaping who we are today. And together, we will continue to strengthen our Association, ensuring that our efforts are not only effective but also deeply rooted in the values that define us.

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Programme

Over the next two days, we will have the opportunity to pause, explore further, and reflect on our progress. This reflection will allow us to celebrate our achievements, learn from our challenges, and envision the future with a renewed sense of purpose and direction.

We will hear from inspirational speakers and engage in meaningful whakawhiti kōrero, and there will be ample opportunities for interaction, collaboration and 'networking' – a key social work skill.

Today our focus is on 'reaching back,' exploring our whakapapa, engaging in reflection and hearing from some rangatira. Tomorrow, we will look to the future, hearing from our emerging leaders and influencers as we catch a glimpse of what lies ahead. Together, we will chart a course cantered on our hopes, dreams, and aspirations.

Slide 5

So – Day 1:

What a fabulous way to start our day with an inspiring message from our Governor-General, Dame Cindy Kiro. Even while attending the CHOGM event in Samoa, she took the time to send her greetings via video, offering us words of encouragement. Dame Cindy, who began her journey as one of the first social work students at Massey, also taught Social Policy there for a time and was a member of ANZASW. It's truly uplifting to witness the diverse and remarkable pathways that social workers can aspire to.

Following this welcome, our new Kaihautū, Lisa King, will outline her new role and share her vision for the Tangata o te Whenua mahi of the ANZASW.

This morning, we will spend some time in facilitated breakout groups for whakawhanaungatanga, where we will take some time to caucus and reflect on some pre-prepared questions to consider.

Later this afternoon, we will have the privilege of hearing from a panel of rangatira in a 'round the dining room table' kōrero, building on the kōrero and questions from our earlier caucus discussions. This unique opportunity will allow us to weave together the past, present, and future, fostering meaningful dialogue that honours our whakapapa while addressing upcoming challenges and aspirations. Together, we will draw on their wisdom and insights to inspire our collective journey and strengthen our commitment to social change and empowerment.

Following that, Board member Sally Dalhousie will present the ANZASW Digital History project, which captures the rich history of each of our six decades. This promises to be a captivating experience, and I'm sure you will appreciate the significant work and milestones achieved throughout this time. You may even recognize yourselves and the contributions you've made along the way!

We will then take a break for a few hours to prepare for dinner, which will include both entertainment and the exciting launch of *Ngā Taonga Tuku Iho*, our Living Legacies project. It will be a wonderful evening of good kai and kōrero, as we come together to celebrate and share in the richness of our journey.

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Day 2 – Tomorrow

The day will begin with a message from our Chief Executive, Nathan Chong-Nee, who is currently returning from Samoa, where he represented us as part of a Pacific social work delegation at CHOGM – Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. This delegation was led by ANZASW member Associate Professor Dr. Yvonne Crichton-Hill, as the chief delegate for the Commonwealth Organisations for Social Work (COSW) of which ANZASW is a member, alongside delegates Dr. Malakai Waqa Kaitani, Interim President of the Association of Fiji Social Workers, Professor Jioji Ravulo from the University of Sydney, and Naomi Spencer, a COSW Board member from Australia.

Nathan will share insights from their joint presentation to the 'Peoples' Forum' on the topic 'Indigenous Perspectives from Across the South Pacific' which aligns with the CHOGM theme: 'One Resilient Common Future: Transforming Our Common Wealth,' as represented by our Pacific delegation.

Following Nathan, our first keynote speaker for the day will be Dr. Claire Achmad, Chief Children's Commissioner at Mana Mokopuna. Claire is a familiar and respected figure in our sector and is widely recognized as a leading advocate for children's rights both in Aotearoa and internationally, with extensive experience across legal, policy, and practice areas. We look forward to hearing her insights and reflections on championing children's wellbeing, and perhaps her experiences navigating a challenging political and public sector.

We will then warmly welcome back our esteemed rangatira panel from Day 1, who will each facilitate an interactive workshop. These sessions will focus on key topics that resonate with the core values of solidarity, activism, and future-focused development in social work. Each rangatira will share their unique insights and experiences, fostering a space for robust discussion and collective learning.

These workshops are designed to inspire action, providing us with the knowledge and strategies needed to tackle the challenges our communities face, while reinforcing our commitment to social justice and advocacy. Together, we will explore practical ways to apply these values, ensuring the continued growth and transformation of the social work profession as we move forward into the future.

Our second keynote speaker in the afternoon is Jeremy Faumuinā, a valued family friend and winner of the 2023 Social Work Awards in the Pacific Peoples Practice category. We are excited to hear from him, as his diverse talents and dedication to uplifting Pacific communities continue to inspire those around him especially back home in Ōtautahi Christchurch.

Following Jeremy's session, we will hear from the Emerging Social Workers Panel. This will be a wonderful opportunity to engage with some of our rising leaders, thinkers, and change-makers from the Graduate Support Programme and the Social Change & Equity Committee. The panel will be facilitated by Jeremy Faumuinā, fostering insightful discussions as we learn from the perspectives and experiences of these emerging voices shaping the future of social work.

Our incredible two-day celebration will conclude with a recap of the proceedings, reflecting on the meaningful kōrero, insights, and connections we've shared. We will then close with a karakia to send us all safely on our way, grounding us in the values and aspirations we take forward from this gathering.

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In closing, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of ANZASW over the past six decades. Whether you have joined us recently or have been part of our journey from the very beginning, our achievements are the result of collective effort. Your passion and dedication have been instrumental in shaping the vibrant, diverse, and remarkable community that the Association is today. Thank you for your unwavering commitment and for being an integral part of our shared history and future.

I am truly humbled to stand here today to honor our people, both past and present. I want to acknowledge our Kaumātua Te Naihi, my co-conspirator, as well as the Board members, both past and present, along with our Chief Executives and staff. Your unwavering commitment to ANZASW has been invaluable. Your leadership and support have been instrumental in advancing our vision and ensuring the ongoing success of our association. Thank you for your dedication and for the vital roles you have played in shaping our journey.

To our supportive membership, who are the backbone of our association, I want to emphasize that there is no "us" without you. From grassroots social workers to researchers, policy analysts, educators, leaders, managers, supervisors, and administrators, your unwavering commitment to our cause is truly inspiring. Thank you for the vital role you play in strengthening our community and driving our mission forward. Your dedication and passion are what make ANZASW thrive.

To the organizing committee of this event, you are all amazing! Thank you for your tireless efforts, your energy, your vision, and your unwavering commitment to making this event a success. Your dedication is evident in the countless hours of meetings, the tough decisions, the financial challenges, and the sleepless nights, not to mention those late-night 'AHA' moments. Today, we celebrate your hard work, which has truly paid off. This

event is a testament to your commitment and perseverance, and we are here because of you. Thank you for everything you've done to bring us together!

Today, I acknowledge and express my heartfelt thanks to each of you. Your dedication to social change, transformation and empowerment has been invaluable in shaping the ANZASW and ensuring that we continue to uphold our vision, mission and guiding principles.

As we celebrate this milestone, our 60th Anniversary let us recommit ourselves to the values that define us as ably set by our forefathers, integrity, compassion, advocacy and social justice. Together, we will continue to strive for a future where every person in Aotearoa New Zealand can live with dignity and hope.

Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua – today is the future of the past and the past of the future – a conundrum, so let us celebrate today.

Kia ora mai tātou.