



NEW ZEALAND

WORK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

AN INSTITUTE OF AUT UNIVERSITY

NEWSLETTER

December 2015 | Issue 21



From left: Kathryn Johns, Peter Behr, Gail Pacheco, Sarah Mitchell, Martine Abel, Sharleen Tongalea and Angsana Techatassanasoontorn.

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## VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AT WORK – IT ONLY PART OF THE ANSWER

Researchers from the Digital Mobility Research Group have shared the results of their research into the experiences of visually impaired professionals in the workplace and how those experiences are affected by information technology.

Assoc Prof Angsana Techatassanasoontorn and Assoc Prof Antonio Diaz Andrade from the Business Information Systems department at the AUT Business School are Co-Leaders of the Digital Mobility Research Group at AUT's New Zealand Work Research Institute.

Their research began with a pilot study in 2014, where they interviewed eight individuals with visual or hearing impairments.

This was followed by an in-depth study in April-July 2015, where two professionals with visual impairments were interviewed along with their colleagues and line managers.

"In New Zealand 11 per cent of the population is affected by sensory impairments. The purpose of this research was to look at the role IT can and does play in improving the workplace experiences of those with sensory impairments," said Assoc Prof Techatassanasoontorn.

"This qualitative study took an in-depth look at the experience of two visually impaired workers to understand how these workers utilise IT, and how close this takes them to the accessibility experienced by their fully-sighted colleagues."

Peter Behr and Martine Abel were interviewed for the research.

Peter Behr, who works as a chef at MiCamp, Taupo, has lost his central vision and relies on his peripheral vision for everyday activities. He constantly uses an iPad to magnify labels and other objects in the kitchen, which he could not otherwise see. The technology Peter uses includes an iPad and iPhone with accessibility features, the Magnificent (magnifying) App and Dropbox.

Martine Abel is a Disability Advisor at the Auckland Council. She is completely blind and navigates her work environment with help from a guide dog and sometimes her colleagues if she needs to attend offsite meetings. At work Martine relies on an iPhone with accessibility features, refreshable braille display and screen reader software.

"Sighted colleagues need to be mindful that our day-to-day tasks and work environment are designed for people with

full sight. Flexibility, accommodation and support are key for workers with visual impairments. It is inevitable that every now and then we may come across ways of sharing information that are not accessible. It is crucial that organisations use these accessibility problems as a learning opportunity for improvement so we are moving in the right direction toward a workplace that is welcoming for all," said Assoc Prof Diaz Andrade

The researchers hope to continue this line of research with professionals who have hearing impairments, to learn more about their experiences and challenges in the workplace.

Video about this research: <https://youtu.be/Eoo4cd1q0Tk> and <https://youtu.be/FY3wlbpSngM> (with subtitles).

## BUSINESS SCHOOL



# First word

## Associate Professor Gail Pacheco

As the end of the year fast approaches I enjoy taking the time to reflect on a busy last quarter to 2015.

Highlights include the release of research findings into the experience of visually impaired professionals in the workplace and how those experiences are affected by digital technology. The release of research findings was pertinent in the lead up to the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on the 3rd of December. This year's theme is 'Inclusion Matters: Access and Empowerment for People of all Abilities' and the research undertaken by Angsana Techatassasoontorn and Antonio Diaz Andrade highlighted the role of digital technology in terms of empowerment. Please take the time to view the video which gives an overview of their research (link on page 1).

The AAHANZBS conference returned to AUT this year and was again successful in attracting delegates from all over the globe. The conference is now in its seventh year and leader of the Business and Labour History Group and AAHANZBS president, Simon Mowatt did a great job at hosting this event.

The Institute was also proud to support the NZ Diversity Forum 2015, organised by the New Zealand Human Rights Commission. 'Empathy in the face of diversity' was the theme

of this year's forum. I spoke on the link between discrimination and health outcomes, while my colleague (Professor Edwina Pio) spoke on the topic of religion in the workplace.

The contents of this newsletter highlights the ongoing work and achievements of Institute members. It acknowledges the focus and dedication by all to creating *research that matters*, as well as purposeful engagement with business, government and the community, I am genuinely proud of what we have achieved this year.

In 2016, my Co-Director (Professor Tim Bentley) will step into the role of Deputy Director, as he takes up a greater workload in the Department of Management. We have been Co-Directors for the last two years and it has been a real pleasure to work alongside Tim. I will continue in the role of Director in 2016.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a safe and well-rested summer break!

Gail Pacheco

## NZ Work Research Institute Postgraduate Awards

The Work Research Institute is offering two postgraduate awards to support research students while undertaking honours/ masters/doctoral research in the Faculty of Business and Law. Research must be relevant to one of the following research groups within the Institute:

- Business and Labour History Group
- Digital Mobility Research Group
- Employment Relations Research Group
- Labour Market Research Group
- Wellbeing and Performance Research Group
- Immigration and Inclusion Research Group
- Future of Work.

Each award is up to the value of \$6,000 comprising a \$3,000 stipend for professional development costs plus employment up to \$3,000 in a research group. See here for more information including entry criteria and application details.

The closing date for applications is 1 February 2016.

For further information including entry criteria and application details and application form, go to <http://bit.ly/21guUUK>

# Events, engagements and group updates



## AUT GROUP FOR IMMIGRATION & INCLUSION RESEARCH

### [ST MATTHEW IN THE CITY](#)

Professor Edwina Pio was invited to speak at the annual St Matthew in the City Business Breakfast held in September. The theme this year was 'The Value of Difference: Cultural Diversity in the Workplace'.

### [NEW ZEALAND ASIAN LEADERS \(NZAL\) CONFERENCE](#)

The NZAL Conference brought together key Asian leaders in September in Auckland. Professor Pio was an invited speaker.

### EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Congratulations to Professor Pio who received the Faculty of Business and Law Award for Excellence in Research.

### VISIT TO UK UNIVERSITIES

In October, Professor Pio visited five universities in the UK: Glasgow Caledonian, Cambridge University, Huddersfield University, Birmingham University, Middlesex University. Her visit involved presentations, networking and collaborating on her diversity research agenda.

### [ESRC seminar series](#)

[Seminar five: Virtue Ethics and Christian Values in Health and Education](#)

### ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION

Professor Pio presented two co-authored papers at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management in Vancouver. Both papers were on indigenous studies: *Energizing governance through haka and waiata*; and *Ambicultural governance*.

### ETHNIC COMMUNITIES AND THE FUTURE OF WORK

More than 70 people from diverse ethnic communities came together in August to find out more about the changing nature of work and workplaces in New Zealand.

Professor Pio spoke about how immigration was changing both the composition and the nature of the workforce. She urged organisations not to shy away from diversity issues.

The event was hosted by Labour MP, Andrew Little.

Photo, from left: Prof Edwina Pio and Andrew Little.



## In the news

### The word 'Christmas' gets the heave-ho

THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD | 25 NOVEMBER 2015

Expunging Christmas by New Zealand organisations "is a bridge too far" - Edwina Pio

[http://m.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=11548868](http://m.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11548868)

### Professor of Diversity Edwina Pio on not taking the Christmas out of Christmas

THE PANEL, RADIO NEW ZEALAND | 23 NOVEMBER 2015

Story begins at 14:30

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/audio/player/201779898>

### Superdiversity: Rainbow nation must prepare for change

THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD | 19 OCTOBER 2015

The evolving face of NZ will be felt most in Auckland

[http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=11531145](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11531145)



# BUSINESS & LABOUR HISTORY GROUP

NEW ZEALAND WORK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

## THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF AAHANZBS

The Business and Labour History Group hosted the seventh annual conference of the AAHANZBS (Academic Association of Historians in Australian and New Zealand Business Schools) on 2–3 November 2015. The collegial conference featured papers by academics from Universities in New Zealand (AUT, Waikato, Victoria), Australia (Sydney, Macquarie, RMIT), the UK (Worcester) and Sweden (Gothenburg), and served to connect academics within an interest in business and labour history across a variety of faculties, centres and departments including Accounting and Commercial Law, Economics, Economic History, Modern History, Management, Marketing, International Business, Strategy, Human Resource Management, Work and Organisational Studies, the Centre for Workforce Futures and Te Ara Poutama.

Professor Ray Markey, Director of the Centre for Workforce Futures (Macquarie University) gave the keynote on “Global business and labour practices in historical perspective: What’s Really New?” The address highlighted the long-term features of globalisation, which only reached pre-First World-War levels again in the 1990s, before examining current impacts on employment relations.

Further sessions explored the development of employment relations in a number of contexts, including colonial New

Zealand, Australia and Weimar Germany. The range of papers highlighted the contribution of historical research in business, and allowed for a rich comparative exploration of the influence of national and institutional contexts, and opened up new avenues for understanding the contemporary economy.

The strength of historical study at AUT was demonstrated as AUT Business school historians presenting, including B&LHG leader Associate Professor Simon Mowatt, Professor Erling Rasmussen, Dr Geoffrey Brooke and Dr Fiona Hurd were joined by Professors Paul Moon (Te Ara Poutama) and Rob Allen (Office of the Vice Chancellor) from the History@AUT project.

Two student travel prizes were awarded, to Malin Dahlström (University of Gothenburg, Sweden) and James van Disen (Victoria University Wellington) by the B&LHG.

At the AAHANZBS AGM Dr Nikola Balnave (Macquarie) took over as society President from Simon Mowatt, who remains Vice President, and was congratulated by the members present.

The conference dinner was held at the Four Seasons restaurant and sponsored by History@AUT, and, had both excellent catering and conversation, reflecting the convivial nature of the conference.



From left: Assoc Prof Simon Mowatt and Malin Dahlstrom





## BUSINESS & LABOUR HISTORY GROUP

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### TE ARA POUTAMA - AUT HISTORY

Members of the Business and Labour History Group were invited to speak at the [AUT History: Winter Public Lecture Series 2015](#).

The Voice of the 99%: From the Knights of Labor to the Occupy Movement - Professor Rob Allen

The First Facebook: Card sending in New Zealand, 1820-1920 - Dr Peter Gilderdale

A History of Te Reo Māori in the Nineteenth Century - Professor Paul Moon

From Grub St to the iPad – How the magazine industry survived constant change - Associate Professor Simon Mowatt



## WELLBEING & PERFORMANCE RESEARCH GROUP

NEW ZEALAND WORK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

### WELLBEING IN AGED CARE

In September this year the Wellbeing and Performance Research Group presented a symposium entitled 'Wellbeing in Aged Care: Multiple Perspectives'. This was facilitated by Dr Katherine Ravenswood, and three invited speakers presented:

- Kerry Davies, Public Service Association, Assistant National Secretary. Kerry spoke about recent union action and negotiations with providers and government that have resulted in regulatory changes to improve work conditions in homecare.
- Laurie Hilsgen, Carers NZ Chief Executive. Laurie spoke about the issues that family carers face – lack of support, funding and OHS problems.
- Dr Michal Boyd, Senior Lecturer – Nursing, the University of Auckland. Michal spoke about the 'Silver Rainbow' research report which developed a toolkit for aged care providers to use in diversity training in order to provide safe and culturally appropriate care for LGB elderly in rest homes.

A total of 35 participants attended to the symposium and included postgraduate students from different institutions, independent researchers, academics, aged care managers/practitioners, aged care workers,

union members and district health board staff. The symposium stimulated much discussion on the issues presented with much of the audience contributing to the discussion and enjoying the opportunity to network afterwards.



From left: Kerry Davies, Dr Katherine Ravenswood and Laurie Hilsgen

### EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

Dr Katherine Ravenswood and Dr Marcus Ho were both winners at the Faculty of Business and Law Awards. Marcus for Excellence in Teaching and Katherine for Excellence in Engaged Research. Congratulations to them both.



Photo from left: Dr Marcus Ho and Dr Katherine Ravenswood



## Organizational resilience: Future of work

### Results from SRIF 2014 study

Recent estimates of the cost of business crisis and natural disasters have conservatively been put at billions of dollars globally. Organizational resilience, the capacity of an organization to rebound and to transform from adversity that potentially threatens their survival (Lengnick-Hall, Beck, & Lengnick-Hall, 2011; Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003), is now recognized as an important characteristic for businesses that run the risk of experiencing crisis such as natural disasters and the global financial crisis. Crisis in organizations, defined as low probability, high consequence events, can significantly disrupt the strategic orientation and capabilities of businesses. The uncertainty and ambiguity of organizational crisis have far reaching consequences for organizations including resource depletion, emotional toll, changing customer base, employee morale, productivity, stress levels and wellbeing. There is some evidence to suggest that learning to develop organizational resilience will produce benefits such as increased coping, ongoing flexibility to rapid changes in the business environment, enhanced wellbeing for employees, and increased business opportunities.

Our international team of researchers are exploring how organizations develop their organizational resilience. To date, our research has examined the concept of organizational resilience by mapping the differing perspectives on what organizational resilience is using content analysis (Ho, Teo, Verreyne, Bentley, Galvin, 2014). Additionally, our research team has uncovered two dominant micro-processes at the organizational level through which organizational resilience is developed in case studies of organizations going through crisis (Ho, Verreyne, Bentley, & Jenkins, 2015). The first is "building collective efficacy" to reconfigure the organization's core capabilities to suit the organization's changed environment. The second is "normalizing change" through actions designed to routinize these new behavioral patterns in the firm. These micro-level patterns aggregate to organizational-level change in the firm that in turn, shapes the firm's internal and external environment. Our next step is to map out the learning process and managerial capability development of organizational resilience through a large scale international survey set to roll out in 2016.



## DIGITAL MOBILITY RESEARCH GROUP

NEW ZEALAND WORK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

### PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to Antonio Diaz Andrade and Angsana Techatassanasoontorn who have both been promoted to associate professor.

Both Angsana and Antonio have significant achievements in teaching and learning, research and scholarship, and academic leadership and service. They have demonstrated an ability to sustain this performance over a number of years. This performance has been recognised by the University's Professorial Appointments Committee. In addition, their achievements have been recognised by both self-nominated and independently selected referees in their field.

### IN MEMORY OF ZAIDAH MUSTAFFA

The Institute was saddened to hear of the sudden passing of Dr Zaidah Mustaffa in October. Zaidah was a member of the Immigration and Inclusion Research Group. We extend our deepest condolences to her family and friends.



## LABOUR MARKET RESEARCH GROUP

NEW ZEALAND WORK RESEARCH INSTITUTE

### IBM KENEXA BEST WORKPLACES AWARDS 2015

The awards celebrate the significant achievements of all of the IBM Kenexa Best Workplaces finalists. These teams are putting their people at the centre of organisational strategy and decision making - by creating a smarter workforce for New Zealand.

How do we know this? Between March and August this year, Kiwi organisations of all shapes and sizes were invited to participate in the 2015 survey. Their employees were asked to answer 60 questions confidentially about their workplace – questions ranging from “does your organisation care about the well-being of its people?” and “do you have the systems and processes to do your job effectively?” to “is poor performance effectively dealt with?” and “is good performance rewarded?”. Every individual response contributes to an overall employer score.

Organisations were then grouped into 5 size categories and ranked by their score. Organisations that are finalists in these Awards are those that came in the top of their size category. With nearly 30,000 employees from 193 organisations across both New Zealand’s public and private sector participating in this year’s survey, being a finalist is a significant achievement!

Gail Pacheco presented the awards for the Medium-Large, Large and Enterprise Workplace categories sponsored by AUT Faculty of Business and Law.

The deserving recipients were Mars New Zealand (Best Medium-Large); FMG (Best Large); and VTNZ (Best Enterprise).

### NZ WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

In September, Associate Professor Gail Pacheco was invited to present and facilitate a session at the NZ Women in Leadership conference.

### IR DISSEMINATION DAY

Gail Pacheco presented “Decomposing the temporary-permanent wage gap” at the Industrial Relations Dissemination Day at MBIE in September, as part of a network of economists working on understanding insecure work.

### AUSM LECTURER

Congratulations to Stephanie Rossouw in winning both the AuSM Faculty Teaching award and overall AUT Lecturer of the Year award. These awards are nominated by students and recognises the quality of Stephanie’s teaching. Congratulations Stephanie.

## In the news

### Women see NZ-wide pay gap

THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD | 1 SEPTEMBER 2015

Women surpass men in educational achievement, but the remaining pay gap could be due to discrimination – Associate Professor Gail Pacheco.

[www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=3&objectid=11505855](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?c_id=3&objectid=11505855)

### Rise of ‘casual racism’ in New Zealand

THE NEW ZEALAND HERALD | 2 AUGUST, 2015

Research shows 10 per cent of people surveyed had experienced some form of discrimination in the past year, usually associated with their ethnic group or skin colour – Associate Professor Gail Pacheco.

[www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=1&objectid=11490650](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11490650)



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### TRANSITIONING BUSINESS AND PEOPLE: THE CHANGING FACE OF THE WORKFORCE

Retaining and employing older workers is becoming an increasingly smart solution for business in the attraction of skills and talent. Opening speaker, Professor Tim Bentley, presented the latest research from the *Managing an Ageing Workforce* at the NZ Chambers of Commerce, Tauranga event on an ageing workforce.

### MANAGEING A 24/7 WORKFORCE

Conferenz 2015 focussed on practical advice on how to sustain a 24/7 workforce with inspiring leadership and creating an appreciative culture.

Professor Bentley' was invited to speak on the topic: *Dismantling perceptions of the aging population in the workforce*. He talked about the findings from two recent studies:

1. employer's perceptions and practices in relation to older workers, and
2. mature-aged (over 55 years) workers' perceptions of age-friendly practices.

Tim also discussed recommendations on optimising work to enable the engagement of mature-age workers.

### ORGANISATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND ORGANSATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

The fourth Aotearoa New Zealand Organisational Psychology and Organisational Behaviour Conference was held on 27 November.

The aim of the conference was for organisational psychology and organisational behaviour researchers to get together and discuss their research. More specifically:

- Better understand what other organisational psychology and organisational behaviour researchers are doing
- Develop a stronger community of organisational psychology and organisational behaviour researchers.

Institute members, Rachel Morrison and Tim Bentley were part of the organising committee. The event, which is designed to be local, informal and collegial, attracted over 60 participants.

### WOW PRESENTATION

Professor Bentley was invited to deliver a seminar at the Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing at Griffith University in Queensland in September. The presentation focussed on Managing an ageing workforce using two studies, examining management and employee perspectives.

This event presented an excellent opportunity to build our relationship with an Australia-based Centre working in areas related to the Institute's research interests.

## In the news

### How to keep a baby boomer happy in the workplace

STUFF.CO.NZ | 20 SEPTEMBER 2015

No need, they're stoked to be there. A new NZWRI report suggest baby boomers are a happy bunch at work.

[www.stuff.co.nz/business/better-business/72100228/How-to-keep-a-baby-boomer-happy-in-the-workplace](http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/better-business/72100228/How-to-keep-a-baby-boomer-happy-in-the-workplace)



## UNITED NATIONS WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES SURVEY

Two of our senior researchers, Associate Professor Gail Pacheco and Associate Professor Candice Harris, took part in the 2015 UN Women's Empowerment Principles Survey on behalf of UNWEPS.

### New research: UN Women's Empowerment Principles survey results for NZ

Diversity of thought and decision-making is the key motivator behind the recruitment policies of some of New Zealand's largest organisations, according to research presented for the first time at the White Camellia Awards event.

Survey results also revealed strategies specific to addressing women's empowerment were in place in 77% of the organisations that took part.

Associate Professor Gail Pacheco and Candice Harris from AUT University's New Zealand Work Research Institute carried out the survey on behalf of United Nations Women to uncover policies that supported equality and the women's empowerment principles within New Zealand's largest organisation.

The research showed strengths in some areas such as practices that support women returning from parental leave and zero tolerance for harassment but there were shortfalls in other areas.

Pay equity was on the agenda for 50% of companies but only a small minority of organisations were carrying out comparisons of starting pay rates for males and females doing the same job or analysing comparisons in male and female payroll data throughout the work cycle. [UN Women's Empowerment Principles Survey](#)

The judging panel for UNWEPS comprised – Gail Pacheco (Director, AUT's NZ Work Research Institute), Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie (CE, EEO Trust), Jackie Blue (EEO Commissioner, HRC), Sue Kedgley (Women's Rights advocate), and Vicky Mee (President, NZ Federation of Business and Professional Women Incorporated).

A common theme among the White Camellia Award winners was that they are on a journey and that achieving gender equality requires lots of small, conscious changes in every part of the business.

Unconscious bias training was identified by nearly all of the winning organisations as playing an important role in making progress toward gender equality and raising awareness of the need for change.

GM of HR for Coca Cola Amatil NZ (CCANZ) Martin King said the tipping point for real change was getting gender equity on the business agenda and not just an HR focus. He also said it was about constant improvement. "We've come a long way but we keep asking is there more we can do?"



From left: Martin King and Gail Pacheco.

### COCA-COLA AMATIL LEARNING HUB

As a follow up to CCANZ being announced supreme winner in the UNWEPS White Camellia Awards, Gail Pacheco and Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie (EEO Trust) were invited to be part of a learning hub event at Coca-Cola.

Gail presented a summary of the results from the UNWEPS analysis, discussing what were both the low points and high points in terms of firms making advances towards achieving all 7 United Nations Women's Empowerment PRINCIPLES.



From left: Martin King, Bev Cassidy-Mackenzie, Gail Pacheco and Wayne Simeon.

# Empathy in the Face of Diversity - NZ Diversity Forum at AUT

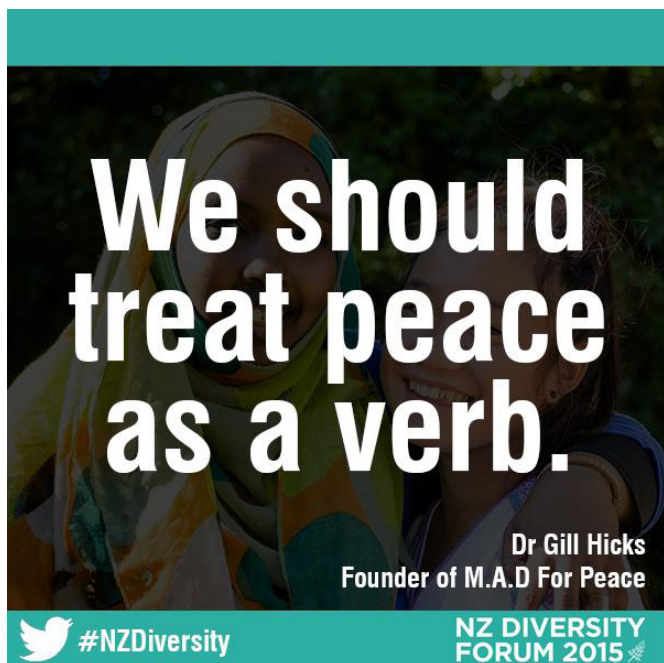
Professor Edwina Pio and Associate Professor Gail Pacheco found an audience keen to hear about their diversity research at the NZ Diversity forum in September.

The NZ Work Research Institute was a proud supporter of the NZ Diversity Forum 2015, organised by the New Zealand Human Rights Commission. 'Empathy in the face of diversity' was the theme of this year's forum. The forum was held at the AUT City Campus and attracted hundreds of participants from community groups, the business sector and advocacy organisations.

The aim of the event was for individuals and organisations to share ideas and good practice on how to foster positive race relations. Keynotes at the forum included Gail Pacheco (Associate Professor in Economics and Director of the NZWRI, AUT) and Edwina Pio (Professor of Diversity, Leader of the Immigration and Inclusion research group) who respectively presented findings from their research on the discrimination and health nexus; and religion in the workplace.

## M.A.D. for Peace

The keynote presentation was given by Dr Gill Hicks, a double amputee survivor of the 2005 London bombing and founder of M.A.D. for Peace, an organisation that promotes the idea of our individual responsibility in creating a world in which extreme conflict and its human consequences are ended.



More information about the [NZ Diversity Forum](#)

## Sick of Discrimination

Associate Professor in Economics Gail Pacheco presented her research into the link between discrimination and health, particularly mental health. She shared some startling statistics with the audience, including the fact that one in ten New Zealanders have suffered discrimination. There is also a linkedin discussion related to the presentation "Sick of Discrimination" by Gail Pacheco, available at <http://tinyurl.com/o698hhk>

## Religion in the Workplace

Professor of Diversity Edwina Pio spoke about religion in the workplace, urging the audience to move beyond talking about diversity and to think about how they could act to further diversity positively. "In New Zealand we have more ethnicities (213) than there are countries in the world. We need to move beyond talk about diversity, to action," said Professor Pio.

## Other speakers

Other speakers at the NZ Diversity Forum included the Police Commissioner Mike Bush who spoke about empathy as a core value for the NZ Police, Race Relations Commissioner Dame Susan Devoy and Aquinas College student Kimberly D'Mello, winner of the Race Unity Speech Competition.



From left: Assoc Prof Gail Pacheco and Prof Edwina Pio



# The only constant at work is change

Engage Magazine | Issue 26, 2015

**Work has changed hugely in the past decade and looks set to change even more in the future. But how can something as fundamentally important as working for a living evolve in such a manner?**

Social change in the 20th century was brought about largely on the back of the working environment – from the Russian Revolution of 1917 through the post-War period that saw many women no longer willing to give up the jobs they'd held while the men were off fighting. Today we have the digital revolution and the impact that computerisation has had on many traditional jobs – jobs which simply no longer exist.

Gail Pacheco, who is a Director of the New Zealand Work Research Institute (NZWRI) at AUT, says Europe has seen a concerted effort to loosen the ties on employment protection legislation over the last two decades and the repercussions of those changes are starting to be examined. "Research recently has debated whether encouraging greater flexibility has contributed to the development of a strata of workers locked into precarious or insecure employment."

The Employment Protection Legislation (EPL) index figures from the OECD show that New Zealand ranks last in terms of strictness of employment protection for individual dismissals for temporary contracts.

Erling Rasmussen, an AUT Professor of Work and Employment, says zero hour contracts along with relatively low health and safety requirements means younger workers in particular are at risk.

"Current New Zealand employment relations are in a state of flux and the lack of a fundamental consensus over key public policy positions is well-established. This is particularly the case when it comes to changes to employment legislation." Rasmussen says a number of concerns have been raised about the current state of policy in the area of employment.

"Disappointing productivity levels, substantial income differences, prevalence of low paid and low skill work, 'brain-drain', regulatory failures in health and safety (especially the Pike River mining disaster), as well as the labour market implications of the Christchurch earthquakes."

The future of work is the cornerstone of the research conducted by the NZWRI, and plays a major role in how we should educate our youth in NZ. The changes to vocational training mean we have a shortfall in terms of practical skills so we import labourers where we need them and the number of Y-NEET (youth who are considered "not in education, employment or training") is high.



# SERVING UP A FAIR DEAL

Insight | 2015



## The implications of zero-hour contracts extend well beyond casual restaurant and hotel staff.

“Very few people have what could be considered ‘decent work’ these days, with basic protections of their right to a decent wage and secure employment. The rights that are in place are just being gradually eroded, slowly chipped away.”

That’s the conclusion AUT’s joint Head of Hospitality David Williamson has come to while working on his PhD which looks at the history of employment relations in the New Zealand hotel sector from the mid-1950s on.

“The point of my PhD is that by understanding what has happened over a long time in hospitality, you’re actually understanding what is happening in service jobs and if you understand what’s happening there, then you understand what’s happening in the economy. People don’t work in factories anymore, they work in service.”

Williamson’s point is echoed by Unite’s National Director Mike Treen who, in the midst of the public outcry about zero-hour contracts for fast-food workers, pointed out these same contracts are being used in multiple service sectors including healthcare, age care, cleaning and catering. (Parliament was even found to have zero-hour contracts operating for some catering staff employed through one of its suppliers – a situation the Parliamentary Service has since agreed to rectify.)

“While fast food outlets and areas of the hospitality industry are perhaps at the most egregious end of the scale, the erosion of rights is really widespread across a number of industries,” says Williamson.

Hospitality is a particularly vulnerable industry because of the 24-hour, 7-day-a-week nature of the businesses and their seasonal nature. But while Williamson acknowledges the industry will always require casual and part-time workers he says protections must be in place around wages and conditions.

**“Zero-hour contracts represent the ultimate transactional relationship with no mutual rights or obligations but with the power mostly in the employer’s court. This is ‘race to the bottom’ employment.”**

“This is not decent work. The contracts only address the very narrow scope of limited work hours and take no account of employees’ wider life and the impact of travel time, insecurity of wages, inability to take loans or to plan for childcare and other commitments.”

Even putting aside any moral arguments for fairer conditions, Williamson says substandard working conditions can’t be ignored because of the vital role the industry plays in the country’s economic health.

“The hotel sector forms a crucial part of the New Zealand tourism industry, which in itself is a major contributor to the economic health of New Zealand.”

Figures from the Ministry of Economic Development put tourism expenditure at over \$22.4 billion dollars, accounting for over 18% of total export earnings and nearly 9% of New Zealand’s GDP. At last count, in 2010, tourism in New Zealand supported 182,400 jobs or 9.6% of the country’s total workforce.

In 2009 figures for the hospitality industry showed it employed 126,000 people or 6.6% of the total workforce, with hotels alone accounting for more than 18,000 jobs.

So if hospitality jobs are employing such a significant chunk of New Zealanders, what happened to these service workers’ rights?

One of the less obvious barriers to equitable conditions, according to Williamson’s research, is New Zealanders’ historically-rooted disdain for service roles.



“The British immigrants who came to New Zealand came to build a better life and move on from indentured servitude and there seems to be an enduring attitude that has grown from that where serving others is seen as the lowest profession. That’s really not the case in other countries, many European countries for instance place a value on service roles.”

Williamson’s PhD research offers compelling evidence of the attitude quoting the New Zealand Government in 1955: “I do not believe we want to see in New Zealand the servility that we have in other countries. A great number of tourists expect servility. They want people to be there to wait on them hand and foot ... I do not believe that New Zealanders want to be in that position.”

It’s an historic attitude creating contemporary issues. For many New Zealanders, Williamson says, hospitality is still seen as “a part-time job while you study” which means it falls to migrants to fill a lot of service roles.

“Migrant labour tends to be vulnerable labour, unlikely to push back against unreasonable – or non-existent – contracts, so it’s another way that service workers’ rights are being weakened.”

Another challenge for employment relations in the hotel sector is the structure of ownership of the major hotel brands that operate here. Williamson says global brands like InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) which have hotels in New Zealand have policies relating to employee conditions but they don’t protect local workers because of franchise and leasing arrangements.

“Property owners are the employers, not the brands, and they’re not being held to account.”

It wasn’t always like this for New Zealand hotel and service workers. Williamson’s research highlights the 1969 New Zealand Licensed Hotels Employees’ Award which operated for two decades identifying as the primary employee type “a full-time, weekly worker, Monday to Friday; ordinary hours in that week are a maximum of 40 ... part-time workers can only be employed once a written permit [is] obtained.”

Changes began with the creation of the government-owned Tourism Hotel Corporation in 1955, a gradual but steady push for a unique level of labour flexibility in the sector and – after the reforms of the 1984 Labour Government – a move to a privatised, predominantly internationally-owned hotel sector.

In 1991 the last of the protections for employees in the hotel sector – and every other sector in New Zealand – were undercut with the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act which made union membership voluntary, allowing anyone, or no one, to bargain on behalf of workers. It had the immediate impact of a drop in union membership and, says Williamson, paved the way for New Zealand employers to pursue flexible, efficient labour agreements with very little recourse for workers.

New Zealand is far from alone. AUT Associate Professor of Economics Gail Pacheco, who is also Director of the New Zealand Work Research Institute, says Europe has seen a concerted effort to loosen the ties on employment protection

legislation over the last two decades and the repercussions of those changes are starting to be examined.

“Research recently has debated whether encouraging greater flexibility has contributed to the development of a strata of workers locked into precarious or temporary employment.”

Pacheco quotes the University of London’s Guy Standing who argues in his book *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* that: “The pursuit of flexible labour relations has been the major direct cause of the growth of the global precariat.”

Standing also contends that the drive for flexibility is ongoing, with the push for more flexibility increasing at times of an economic downturn, resulting in an erosion of all forms of job security.

“New Zealand actually presents for a very useful case study for research investigating outcomes associated with greater labour market flexibility,” says Pacheco.

“Latest Employment Protection Legislation (EPL) index figures from the OECD show that New Zealand ranks last in terms of strictness of employment protection for individual dismissals for temporary contracts.”

In other words, New Zealand is extremely flexible.

There’s been some acknowledgement of the need to reign in this flexibility following the public debate over zero-hour contracts.

National MP and Workplace Relations Minister Michael Woodhouse has signalled he will amend employment legislation to rule out the worst of zero-hour contract clauses – such as requiring people to be available for work without any guaranteed hours of work, restraint of trade and cancellation of shifts without notice.

For the sake of the hospitality industry and for the thousands of service workers looking after Kiwis and tourists, Williamson hopes the changes will go further.

“If you want to build a highly trained, motivated, engaged workforce that is capable of delivering consistent excellence in service, you can’t do that on zero-hour contracts and no job security.”

“What is being lost in the name of efficiency and flexibility?”

# TIME TO SAY 'JE SUIS DIVERSITY'



Edwina Pio | EFMD GlobalFocus | Volume 09 Issue 03, 2015

**Global migration has introduced us to new communities and new religious practises. Edwina Pio asks how we can best reconcile them.**

How we handle the challenges of today will determine the future of our fragile planet and our humanity. Immigration is changing the composition and texture of workforces both nationally and globally.

The world contains over 5,000 ethno-cultural groups. Technology, cheap airfares and the global economy have scattered people in countless combinations around the planet and in organisations.

We need to move away from solitary identities that stereotype and put people and organisations into boxes. An individual may be a mother, sister, daughter, corporate lawyer, a Muslim, from Afghanistan and a New Zealand national.

Our corporate organisations need to ask some urgent questions: What if our actions were imbued with the sacred? What if activism in organisations evokes better local society and responsible global community? What if sacred activism signals the performance of a deeper understanding and mindful actions for organisations?

We need to understand where the sweet spot is in organisations as we scrutinise gateways of opportunity and pathways to success and influence. And yet organisations are reflections of the environment and so we have to look outside organisations to understand what is happening inside them.

Re-storying our relatedness may mean replacing a master narrative with multiple narratives, each of them true in a

particular context and within a given set of circumstances, dependent on religion, geography, culture, migration history and economic prowess. In a planet which is so diverse perhaps the mantra that needs chanting is Je suis diversity.

Diversity is always politically charged and is a complex weave of historical and socio-economic legacies. These weaves affect the practices of organisational and societal life.

There are many approaches to viewing diversity, including ones that primarily focus on the negatives of diversity.

However, a positive approach to viewing diversity asks the following questions: What is the nature of opportunities minority groups have access to? How does diversity impact group performance in areas such as creativity?

This approach focuses on what makes individuals push towards optimal functioning within the context of five diversity megatrends within which religion is embedded.

## Demographic patterns

Increasing global mobility and growth of “nontraditional” migrants in Western countries. Worldwide in 2013, international migrants were approximately 232 million, accounting for some 3.2% of the world’s population.

## Religious growth

Multiple religions diffuse historically religious monopolies and drive religious diversity. In 2014, Christians constituted 31.5%, Muslims 23.2%, Hindus 15.0%, Buddhists 7.1% and Jews 0.2% and in total account for roughly three-quarters of the world's population.

## Corridors of Commerce

BRICS, Asia Pacific and halal areas are billion dollar markets.

## Human Rights

Fusion of sacred and secular, accommodation and good faith requiring employers to accept religion and/or ethical observances as long as the practice does not unreasonably interfere with the business, guidelines on religious diversity in the workplace.

## Whole self@work

Framing diversity in terms of relationships focuses attention on the nature of people's encounters with one another. These encounters are embedded in the history of societal relations between diverse groups, including the distribution of power, which shapes social roles, expectations and meanings at various group and individual levels.

The Sufi poet Jalaluddin Rumi reminds us: "Sell your cleverness and buy bewilderment", which is the purpose of the following three conversation points.

### CONVERSATION ONE

#### Help! I am inundated with diversity

Organisations can check their own religious data. What are some of the compelling questions which need to be asked? What kind of literature and discourse is available on diversity? Ask managers in organisations how do we co-create this knowledge?

Raising sociocultural awareness and consciousness can explode a skewed understanding of diversity. Governance changes can render organisations more beneficial to humanity and reduce the costs they inflict on humanity, where long-run consequences can dominate short-term benefits, where there is a willingness to transport wealth, imbibe knowledge and disseminate inclusive organisational practices through novel ideological constellations.

We want organisations to be diversity-sensitive in a holistic manner – we want both gateways (access) and pathways (career progression) – we want accountability at all levels, we want contribution at all levels.



### CONVERSATION TWO

#### Exposure to tales of difference and circumventing religious phobia

Structural disadvantage resulting in a "shackled runner" is a powerful force to consider when investigating diversity and encourages the implementation of positive discrimination or the specific recognition of characteristics such as ethnicity, which may disadvantage a group through no direct fault of their own.

In seeking to side-step diversity penalties, a decisionmaking process that is premised on social justice and fairness can lead to transformative change.

Within countries across the European Union the Muslim population numbers around 20 million and represents 3.8% of the European Union's total population, making it the largest minority religious grouping in the region.

Over the next 15 years, Pew Research predicts that there will be about 58 million European Muslims. The significant population of Muslims in many countries in the West is also contributing to their economic, political and cultural influence, particularly in urban areas. Indeed, the usual negative images and stereotypes pertaining to Islam are in sharp contrast to its etymology, which means peace, and ignores Islam's cultural and ideological heterogeneity.

Recently there has been an enormous growth in the Islamic banking and finance industry and products in the West, providing Muslims and others with an opportunity to engage in interest-free transactions, which is consistent with the Islamic ethic of creating a world free from economic exploitation and disparities.

David Cameron, UK Prime Minister, announced in 2013 that the UK will issue a £200 million Islamic bond, or sukuk, making it the first non-Muslim country to tap into Islamic financing.

Organisations can eschew fundamentalism by paying attention to their religious minorities, reaping diversity dividends and making a difference by blessing our uncommon humanity.

**CONVERSATION THREE****In praise of an expanding circle of inclusiveness**

The challenge before societies in an era of economic globalisation is the need to work towards a pluralistic and sustainable world order on principles that transcend the temporary goals of pure economic efficiency and expedient realpolitik.

The antidote to the short attention span of the global market oriented society is mindfulness to what is unique, specific and irreducible in human events and existence.

We need an inclusive, less arrogant and more attuned approach to social knowledge and action, including a global appreciation and respect for diversity.

Minorities, too, need to challenge the model of victimisation and stand tall and resilient, without arrogance or cleverness but with dignity, respect and know-how to negotiate the rivers of our lives.

Crafting policies, talent management, learning and development are key to expanding circles of inclusiveness. Inclusion in the workplace necessitates a discourse to integrate multiple voices. Diversity has to be constructed, deconstructed and reconstructed. Je suis diversity seeks recognition and depends on social relations and acknowledgement.

Global migration has ensured that organisations have a rich base of potential employees to select from and to promote. Migration has also clearly complicated simple divisions such as work and religion, private and public, the sacred and secular.

Yet such migrant complications also mean access to multifarious worlds, markets, technologies and knowledge bases. Religious radio stations have quadrupled over the past 25 years, while religious television shows increased fourfold. Corporate chaplains, who number in the thousands, represent a booming industry and careers related to spirituality and counselling in the workplace continue to gain in importance.

The diaspora tends to unsettle existing stasis in organisation and urges the need for multiple voices to be acknowledged. A special issue of *The Economist* (2011) focused on the diaspora phenomenon highlighted how migrant business networks are reshaping the world by providing not only financial investments but also the critical managerial and technical skills needed for economic development.

In a woven universe we are all intimately linked, we are called to be future makers through respectful reciprocal relationships.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Edwina Pio is New Zealand's first Professor of Diversity. She teaches at the Business & Law School of the Auckland University of Technology.

A Fulbright alumnus, she is Research Leader of the Immigration and Inclusion Group, Co-director of the Global Centre for Equality and Human Rights and Associate Director of the New Zealand India Research Institute.