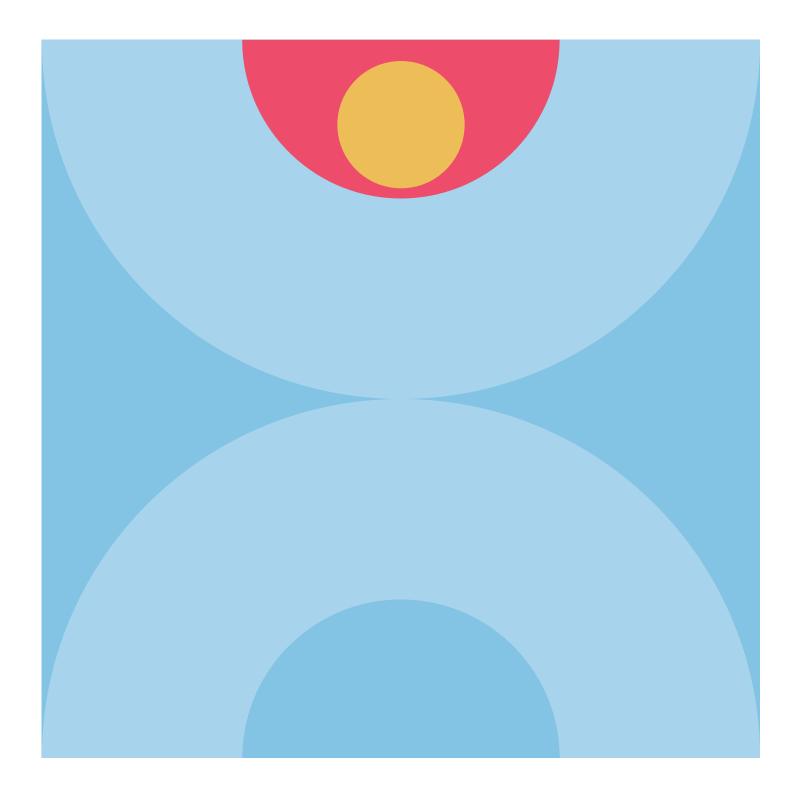
Annual Report



2022





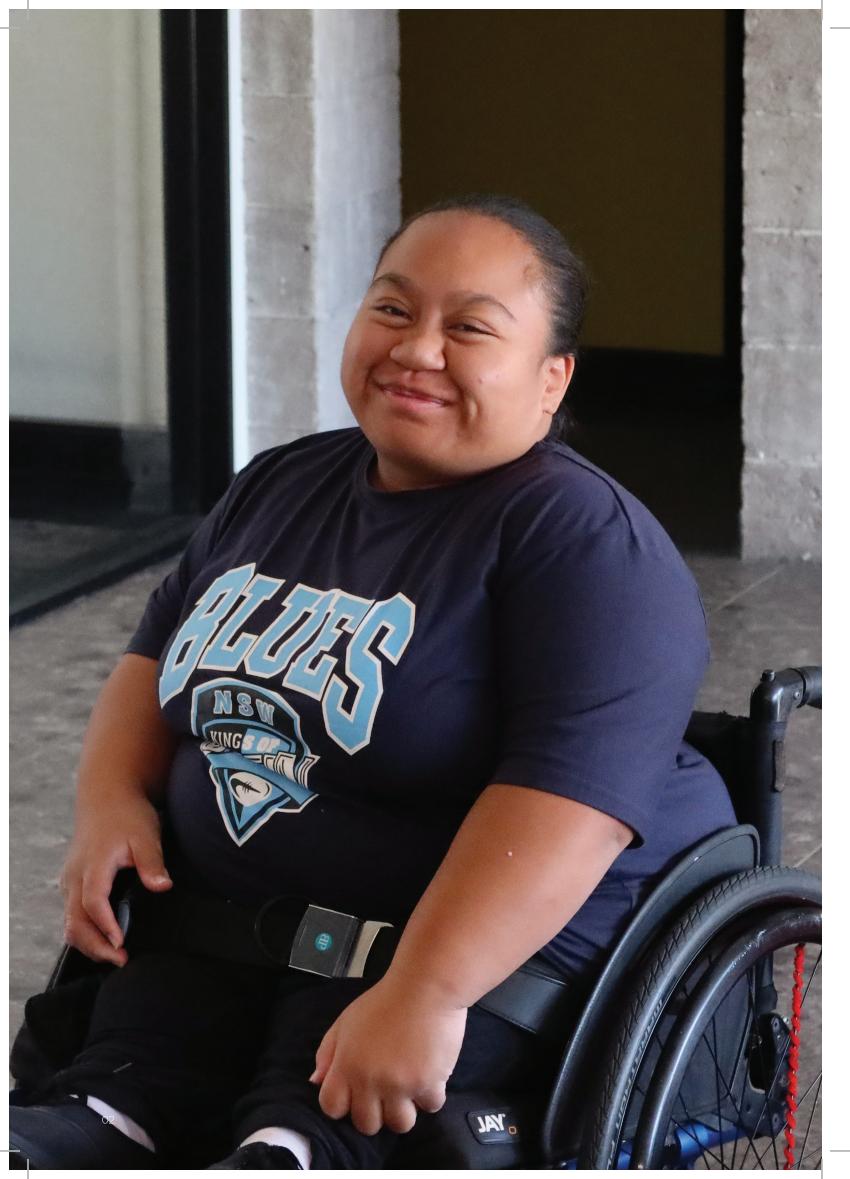
The vision at YES is to create a collaborative community that is equitable for all New Zealanders.

We actively support all young people, including those with disabilities and their whanau, to take control of their lives. We are able to do this by running a number of programmes, including the innovative I.Lead movement, that empowers, inspires and enables young people to reach their full potential.

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Board Chair Report

2022 was all about consolidating, adjusting, refreshing and building on the work that has been done, particuarly during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns. We can all acknowledge and understand that this has been a particularly difficult and testing time for many, not least the disability community, and it has been a particular highlight for me to see the YES team provide so much support, understanding, guidance and practical assistance to so many in our community when they needed it the most.

The team have had to adjust and pivot on numerous occaisions in order to continue to run our programmes and the valuable mahi that we do. Not least of this was the I.Lead conference which, in a relatively short timeframe, was taken to a completely virtual conference, hosting over 54 participants on-line. The feedback and increased growth from the conference has shown how incredibly successful this has been and I thank all of the team and the sponsors who made this event happen. Similarly, a Discord platform was created and establisehd in order for Shore Junction and the I.Lead team to continue to connect and engage with their rangitahi, creating the first online youth hub which was very popular not just locally, but with participants around the country jumping on and joining us. Well done to all of the team, this is such a great example of the creativity, innovation and initiative that our you constantly bring. We are very appreciateive of the way you have worked incredibly hard, particularly during covid times, to continue to drive, expand and deliver everything that we do. Thank you to all of you, you each bring a different set of skills and experience and work together to ensure that we continue to serve our community so well.

At a governence level the re-structure of the Services and Foundation Boards has provided us with a more streamlined focus and with the support of both the Shore Junction and Finance, Risk and Audit Committees we are very well served and have a robust structure to enable YES to continue to grow and thrive. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Board Members and additional members of these committees who give their time, knowledge and expertise so freely, it is a pleasure and a privilege to Chair this group.

We also are very fortunate to have the services of Karen Ellis, our Accountant, who manages the finances of YES expertly, we have grown as an organisation considerably since Karen joined us, not only in the number of programmes and projects, but also in staffing and grants. This all takes a lot of work and we thank Karen for her professional, strategic and unflappable contribution to the team.

Of course, all good organisations are driven by a good leader and in Sonia Thursby we have not only a good leader, but an outstanding one. Her expertise, relationship skills and energy are second to none and we are very appreciative of all of the hard work and passion that she continues to bring to YES each and every day.

We are looking forward to a more settled and positive year ahead, and with the reputation of YES, I.Lead and Shore Junction growing fast, we are in a very good position to be able to expand and develop to take the work of YES further around New Zealand and Internationally, which is a very exciting prospect!



Jason Alexander **Board Chair**

CEO Report

As I sit down to write this report for 2021-2022, I am wondering where to start in a year that was just unimaginable.

12 months ago, my report started with the words "it had been an invigorating and positive year". This year has been an unpredictable, ever-changing year where COVID came and went and came back again, along with lockdowns, traffic lights, masks and tests. But it has also been a year where I.Lead would step up and lead the sector in so many ways; a year where YES would support and encourage families to keep going; a year where 250 "smile parcels" were delivered to young people. A year of togetherness.

In 2019 the Board courageously made the decision to focus on young people with disabilities, they were forgotten and always a 'tag on/afterthought' in both the disability and mainstream youth sector. It was then that I.Lead was developed. The young people designed I.Lead with a by-line of "Lets Lead, Let Us Lead", and so they have.

Who would have thought in 2022 I would still be sharing some of the impacts of COVID, but with a renewed sense of normal? Our goal has always been to support young people with disabilities to affect Government department's policy and program documents to ensure they are included in a meaningful way.

The young people had a much bigger goal, "world domination". To that end, I.Lead was named three times in the New Zealand report in Geneva to the UNCPD, the Human Rights, United Nations Rights for People with Disabilities. This is huge achievement; we are the only NGO mentioned as key partners with the Government to support them to meet their obligations to young people with disabilities.

They have led in policy development, consultations, training teachers, teaching disabled people to drive, leadership programs, wellbeing programs and so much more.

The development of Whaikaha, Ministry of Disabled People, has been significant in the last year. Once again I.Lead have played a significant role in this, including being asked to have a young person as a member of the Establishment Unit that set the framework for Whaikaha, working closely with government and also to attend and perform at the launch event in Parliament. This new Ministry will shape the future of how supports and services are delivered for the disability community with a focus or "getting it right for young people".

The Ministry of Youth Development also requested a representative from I.Lead to be a member of their youth council. I think it is fair to say the young people have made themselves and I.Lead indispensable to Government Departments and other NGOs wanting to work in the youth with disabilities space. We are regularly receiving requests and referrals to consult on various panels within Government, other NGO's and various organisations.

The new commissioning for services policy announced by Minister Sepuloni is a piece of work I was involved in prior to COVID, and we are now moving into the implementation stage discussing and developing policy for the approach to funding using the new model. It is a privilege, and very useful for us as an organisation, to be at the table with only 6 other CEO's.

The House played a supportive role to families and providers during COVID times, as a collective we were able to respond quickly and in a united way to support families, disabled people, and each other. The Hub that is the House is a community of support in itself.

These are just some of the highlights of the year, to work with young people is not work at all, it is an honour to watch them grow and take their rightful place at so many influential tables. My thanks to our ambassador Cam Calkoen who continues to champion YES and I.Lead, co-writing and delivering the Empowered Program, sharing his "Dream Big, Achieve More" journey, encouraging and supporting others to follow their dreams as he has.

There is a separate report on Shore Junction in this annual report but I wanted to add the pride I have in the team and all that Shore Junction achieves in the lives of over 1000 young people. They have enhanced lives, changed lives and saved lives of young people who call "SJ" home. The staff team led by Annaliese and

Josh are a small but passionate team who always go the extra mile.

To the Board, I never lose sight of the fact that you give your time voluntarily and always find that time in your busy lives to support all that is YES, the last two years have been challenging, unpredictable and full of curve balls. Your wise counsel and keeping the ship steady in times of uncertainty have enabled us as a team to continue to keep our eyes on the work and supporting families.

To the YES team, I could not be more proud to work alongside you changing lives in a way that is courageous and fabulous, thank you.

Where will we be this time next year, with all the ideas, projects and young people wanting to be part of I.Lead it is in their words "world domination" time.



Sonia Thursby

CEO

Our Reach

54

100+

500+

1580

100+

47

780+

1600+ 7000+

Our Impact

Jonty

At 17, Jonty was preparing to transition from school to adult life. He was feeling unprepared for what seemed like a scary part of his life. Jonty uses a wheelchair and was concerned that he would not be able to attend university like his friends were. After using the internet to look for support, Jonty found our Future Ready website. From here, Jonty was able to find the right contacts at tertiary education providers and use the Future Ready website to put together a key contacts list that could help his transition from school to University seamless.

"I am very grateful to have the Future Ready website that I can use to point me in the right direction. Before I found it, I was feeling frustrated with the lack of information I could find. Now, I'm able to find the exact contacts for disability services at the University and be prepared for the next step in my journey"

Isabel

Isabel lives with an intellectual disability and was struggling to find support with gaining her learner license. At 16, her friends were all passing their learner license tests on their first try, but Isabel couldn't understand the questions. She reached out to YES and the I.Drive program to see if they could help prepare her for the test in a way that was individualized to her needs. After taking the two-day I.Drive course and working with the instructor on memorising and comprehending the questions, Isabel felt increasingly confident sitting her test and passing. Our I.Drive instructor worked with Isabel to book the test, discuss her needs with the AA and supported her to attend on the day. After 3 previous unsuccessful attempts, Isabel passed after attending I.Drive!

"I felt reassured and confident after sitting the I.Drive program. The instructor was patient and made the program work for me. Without I.Drive, I would not have my learners license and would not feel confident to be practicing for my restricted"

Jodie and Sunny

Jodie is a young woman with Autism, she had not left her bedroom since lockdown due to her anxiety. Her family bought her a support dog, Sunny. When Jodie joined the Empowered Program she was very nervous as she had never travelled with Sunny or been away from home, she had no goals as she had given up.

Fast forward one year, Jodie and Sunny have been on 8 flights to join the workshops, both are really comfortable with checking in and all that booking flights entails when flying with a support dog. They have stayed in 4 different hotels and eaten in many different restaurants. Jodie and Sunny now want to travel to America next year.

Since joining Empowered, Jodie has got back on her horses and set a goal of jumping 70 centimeters by the 14th February 2023, Jodie is currently at 50 centimeters. Once she has achieved her goal she can then commence training to teach horse riding. We are certain she will reach her goal with her new-found confidence, belief and motivation and with the support of the Empowered Crew.

This has been life changing for Jodie.

LLead

Trailblazers, game-changers! Another year has gone by and for I.Lead, it's been busier than ever before.

2022 marked the year that we were able to run the second I.Lead national conference. As the February covid-19 lockdown came quickly, the decision was made to take our conference online for a virtual experience for the first time ever. 54 young people from across New Zealand joined us online to develop recommendations for a more inclusive New Zealand.

Over 2 days, 16 recommendations over 6 different topics were developed and delivered to policy makers. It was a brilliant opportunity for our young people to reconnect with each other, gain new connections and learn. We were lucky enough to be joined by a few very special guest speakers, including Minister for Disability Issues Carmel Sepuloni, Human Rights Commissioner for Disabilities Paula Tesoriero, YES Disability Ambassador Cam Calkoen and strategic advisor Jade Farrar. Attendees not only had the opportunity to hear from these speakers, but also ask them some hard hitting questions. It was the perfect start to each day hearing from our speakers and getting everyone ready to develop their recommendations.

From here, the team put together report cards on all 6 topics - EDUCATION, TRANSITION, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING, SPORT & RECREATION, HOUSING AND TRANSPORT. Our attendees were also lucky enough to receive a gift box filled with goodies to celebrate the conference.



We're looking forward to running our next conference in person in 2023 but are equally excited that our groundbreaking virtual conference was such a success!

After the success of conference, the I.Lead committee set its sights on creating change for young people with disabilities in New Zealand. To do this, they've attended events, engaged with government on policies, performed at the launch of the new Disability Ministry and worked alongside tertiary institutions to train teachers on inclusive education. Change doesn't happen overnight, but I.Lead members are committed to ensuring that the rights of young people with disabilities are heard at every level. To date, I.Lead have engaged in 64 consultations with different government departments. This is a huge step in ensuring youth voice is heard, acknowledged and included within the decisions made for New Zealand's future.

"Amazing to have a space for disabled young people to meet others who may have experiences and values in common, and to have a safe place to share this." – Conference Attendee

I.Lead were proud to host Minister Sepuloni on December 3rd 2021, for the International Day of Disability, where the Minister announced her excitement for the new Ministry of Disabled People (Whaikaha). We were then invited to attend the Ministry launch and perform at this – what an honor!











I.Educate

After the success of our Empowering Inclusive Education series last year, we were invited back to AUT and Massey University to present to their Bachelor of Education students. Over a combination of in-person and zoom presentations, the I.Lead education team presented stories and experiences from their own education. These sessions allow training teachers to understand how they can ensure inclusivity within their practice; particularly as recent statistics show a large proportion of disabled students make multiple changes in their schooling for their needs to be met. Our strong relationship with these universities means we are able to meet a range of student teachers and current teachers who are eager to gain skills in the inclusive education sector.





Future Ready

The much-anticipated Future Ready website launched in February 2022. The first of its kind, Future Ready is a one-stop-shop website for young people with disabilities to find resources for their transition out of school.

Future Ready covers the whole of New Zealand and provides a holistic range of services so that students and family can filter information for their exact needs. Whether it's from school to tertiary education, employment or training, Future Ready is set to close the gap that many people with disabilities experience when transitioning through this important stage in their lives.

In collaboration with the University of Auckland, we celebrated the website with a rocket building workshop launch for students. The event took off, and our second launch was held in South Auckland at King's College. The next step is to introduce the website to schools and organisations across the country for young people to discover the possibilities it opens for their future journey.



Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Hillary Award Aotearoa New Zealand Programme

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Awards is a program for young people to explore and develop themselves personally and professionally, and the Hillary Award Aotearoa New Zealand Programme is unique to New Zealand.

Aligned to our mission of supporting young people with disabilities, we have been accredited and trained to deliver and support the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, Hillary Awards program.

Specifically tailored for young people with disabilities, we ensure they are given the opportunity to develop their skills, experience new adventures and build leadership capability. The participants of the Award must choose an activity in each of the four sections (Physical recreation, Volunteering service, Skill and Adventurous Journey). The activities the participants choose are usually based on their interests and something they are currently involved in; however, they are also able to explore new activities and interests which is something we also encourage.





The participants have completed their Adventurous Journey; for their practice journey they visited the Auckland Museum and for their qualifying journey went slightly further afield to Waiheke where they explored the island and participated in archery and clay pigeon shooting. Both trips consisted of traveling on ferries and other forms of public transport, which was something the participants hadn't experienced before and therefore contributed to their personal growth.

The Empowered Program

The Empowered Program has been co-designed with Cam Calkoen, YES Ambassador, International Speaker and a person with a disability along with the members of I.Lead. Many of these words are from the young people as they embarked on the co-design journey.

From Cam "In November 2021 I received a call from Sonia Thursby saying something very simple yet very powerful "We need awesomeness, we need to celebrate awesomeness, we need to cultivate awesomeness, we need to empower awesomeness! That same day I noticed something on my morning walk. Many more closed windows and curtains, and much fewer people on the walks. Whether this is that the people on the inside don't want people seeing what's going on or they don't want to see what's going on, this is a sign of the COVID times and all this leads to greater stress and uncertainty around study, work, socialising and most significantly our dreams".

Here in Aotearoa, New Zealand we have a network of young people who could fall victim to distress, sadness, worry, and confusion; but who choose to focus on their power. A power that we never want hidden behind windows, or out of sight, a power that can take them to great heights and inspire many. Inspire not because of the way they were born, or what happened along the way, but for the actions they have taken, that they will and that they can take.

To awaken people's power there are three things that give us a pretty strong base – Inspiration, Motivation, and Community stories to empower a nation.

Starting in February 2022 we held a number of 'empowered weekend getaways' with inspiring keynotes, motivating workshops and weekly empowered stories based around 4 core themes.

- Dream Big Achieve More: Providing tips, tricks, and models for people to do just that.
- Turning Rejection into Affection: Without even knowing it defeat, potential, commitment can become our identity. This program has supported young people to unleash their potential through rejection.

- Bend Perception and Eliminate Assumption: We can never underestimate the power of storytelling to demonstrate who we are, to build greater rapport and embrace our vulnerabilities. This part of 'Empowered' has seen participants create their speech and develop their story. This speech may be simply to create a greater confidence in one's identity, or it may be to reach new growth personally or to further their professional development, giving participants a greater sense of identity, pride and motivation. Professionally it will give participants a skill that many have not invested into, a skill that is well sought after and highly valued if you just put a little bit of time into it. A skill that could enhance their lives more than they currently expect.
- Live for awesome: Our greatest success is not determined by what we achieve individually, but from how we learn from our experiences to move, to connect and to empower the lives of others.

 So, we will end what will be a massive year with a massive dose of awesomeness. AWESOME is made up of A little bit of WE and SOME of ME. Using this model participants will identify their strengths individually, their strengths as a group, and go on to create, re-crate or reimagine a project that sees them 'giving back'.



2022 **VCS**

Response to our Community during Covid-19

Covid-19 brought with it a unique set of challenges for our community and required some innovative and quick thinking from our staff. As well as providing many hours of support to individuals, we also created a safe accessible space for people with disabilities to be vaccinated which was featured on TV. Our I.Lead members also featured in advertising encouraging people with disabilities to get vaccinated and newspaper articles on the challenges faced by young people with disabilities at that time.

We packaged and delivered over 100 covid care packages to our community to ensure they had the items needed and also felt connected and cared about.

Our CEO, Sonia Thursby, participated in weekly zoom calls to ensure disabled people were always considered and not left out in the policy decisions and Covid-19 response measures by Government.



Inclusive Faith Project

The Inclusive Faith Project is an opportunity for people with disabilities to connect with their faith communities and express their experiences of faith. This is also an opportunity for the faith leaders to understand the perspective of people with disabilities and the potential reasoning for them not being involved in the faith communities. We have held workshops and huis around New Zealand to encourage and facilitate the discussions that are needed for people with disabilities to have with faith leaders, which will form an understanding between both.

We have already completed one workshop in Palmerston North, which was a great success with some valuable feedback and learnings, and are aiming our sights at our next destination. The next workshops are to be held in Hamilton, Wellington, Auckland, Northland, Christchurch and Dunedin.

Once completed a set of resources and recommendations will be developed for faith communities across New Zealand to assist them in raising awareness and education, which will ensure people with disabilities are able to fully participate in their chosen faith.



Shore Junction

There are so many lessons learned through our experience over the last few years with a global pandemic and for us the challenge was how to run a youth innovation hub and keep our young people engaged and feeling included when they could not physically come together. Our amazingly dedicated team at Shore Junction worked hard over this time through our social media engagement and using our Discord platform to communicate and get young people participating, sharing and growing their connection with our 'on line' community.

This held us in good stead and meant that when we were able to open the doors again and welcome youth to Shore Junction there was a steady influx of positive, eager young minds ready to look for all the opportunities available to them, from song writing and production of their music, to hip hop and cultural dance vibes, to art creativity and sewing design. We have seen a massive growth in e sports and our tech space, we have seen friendships forged and collaboration of many exciting and innovative projects that are fostering the engagement we had hoped would be the benefit of having a safe creative space available to all North Shore youth from 13 - 24years.

We have had 1,699 young people sign up to Shore Junction and since January we have had 7,051 youth visits from a diverse range of young people choosing this as their happy space on a regular basis.

We have also welcomed over 600 external events this year from charities, community groups and businesses using the space during school hours as a meeting venue and place to connect, meaning over 7,000 external visitors to Shore Junction this year.

We have forged relationships and partnerships with sponsors and supporters to ensure we are able to meet the needs of our young people and we are constantly looking for growth opportunities.

Shore Junction is ever evolving with innovative ideas inspired by our youth and with constant assessment to make sure that what we are delivering is relevant and engaging.



Some of our successes this year include:

- · E Sports
- · Stage one Music and Dance event
- · Shore Junction Records
- · Barista Level Coffee training with Starbucks
- · Arcade Machine building
- Youth Engagement Groups set up for each of our Pillars

We had a dream to deliver a place for young people to come together, feel safe and build friendships. A place to expand and explore their skill sets, share ideas and a place they could feel they belong.

With the help of a community who came together with funding, ideas, belief and generosity we have been able to deliver on the 'two floors of amazing' that is Shore Junction and we are proud of where we have got to in such a short time and excited for the future possibilities.

We are so grateful to all of those who have been part of the journey so far.



Sue Stanaway

CHAIR SHORE JUNCTION STEERING COMMITTEE













Shore Junction Highlights

THE LAUNCH OF SHORE JUNCTION RECORDS

Working alongside professional producers such as Vince Harder and Mazbou Q, we were fortunate enough to launch our inhouse record label in May. All songs were written and performed by youth members who attend Westlake Girls High School, Rosmini College, Takapuna Grammar School and Glenfield just to name a few. These songs now stream on Spotify, apple music and Youtube. If you haven't listened yet, search "Shore Junction" on any of those services.

ZAK DEVEY

Zak Devey was a Co-founder of the charity Youth Arts New Zealand, who were the first organisation to be in Shore Junction's incubator space. Zak, at just 22, has been award a Rhodes scholarship which will see him heading to the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom in October 2022 to join a cohort of more than 100 Rhodes Scholars from around the world. Whilst at Shore Junction Zak studied towards his Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Sociology and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Auckland. Zak's many prizes and scholarships at Auckland include a 2021 Senior Scholar Award for highest overall performance in the Bachelor of Arts programme, two Summer Research Scholarships (one of which was in his second year when they are awarded mostly only to third-year students) and a Blues Award for service and leadership. He has received two New Zealand Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia. At Oxford, Zak wants to study for a joint Master of Science in Sociology and Master of Science in Evidence-Based Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation.

JANAYAH WADSWORTH

Takapuna Grammar School student Janayah
Wadsworth loves to sing and perform. Her goal is to
become a successful international recording artist and
she says that every performance, every song she has
sung since she first stepped on a stage at 7 years old
is all working towards this end result. Her talent was
first recognised by the North Harbour Club with Junior
Excellence Award in 2018. She has been accepted
into the BRIT School of Performing & Creative Arts in
London UK. Famous alumni from the school include
Adele, Jessie J and Amy Winehouse. The music strand
that she has applied for takes approximately 50 people
a year. Out of those 50, they take an average of 7 people
from outside of London and the rest of the world.

Janayah has spent many hours at Shore Junction and has been a regular user of the recording studio as well as the music suite and other hang-out spaces.

DISCORD

As a result of the desire by our rangitahi to stay connected during the Covid-19 lockdowns, a particular highlight of the past year has been the design and implementation of our digital youth space on Discord which engaged 300 youth during the 100-day lockdown. This platform, led by our Shore Junction team, was the first of its kind in the world and led to indepth conversations, fun games, exciting connection opportunities and most of all a way to engage with young people during a challenging time for their mental health. This platform continues to be popular and operational and is monitored by our youth workers to provide ongoing support and help whenever the young people need it.

A Special Thanks

A Special Thanks



Cam Calkoen AMBASSADOR



Jackie Reeve SHORE JUNCTION PATRON

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And a very special thank you to all our Shore Junction Heroes and supporters of our fundraising events and activities.

We couldn't do what we do without our generous supporters.

We'd love you to join usand these are just some of the ways you can get involved

DONATE

With just a single donation you can make a difference to a young person with a disability. Donate via our website.

JOIN A COMMITTEE

If you are a young persor with a disability, why not get involved with one of our committees? Get in touch via our socials to learn more.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

Support from Corporate partners helps us to support more young people with a disability. Please get in touch if you think you can help us.

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