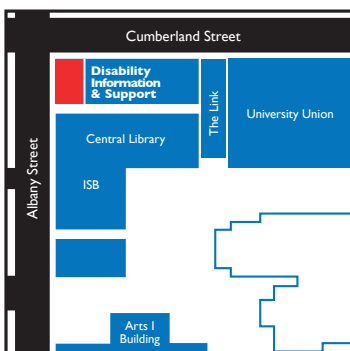


Imagine

“Kind words will unlock an iron door”
Turkish Proverb

Disability Information & Support Newsletter: Issue 2 2018



Our physical address is:
Disability Information & Support
West Lane
Information Services Building
Cnr Cumberland and Albany Streets
Dunedin

Welcome to 'Imagine', Disability Information and Support's newsletter. This is our final edition for the year and I think you will find it both interesting and informative. Our vision is to work in partnership to promote an inclusive environment that celebrates diversity, promotes comprehensive academic support and empowers individuals with impairments to achieve their full potential. You will see many examples of our vision in action throughout this newsletter.

2018 has been another busy and productive year for us. To date we have experienced a 20 per cent increase in the number of students accessing our service and were delighted

with the results of the 2017 Quality Advancement Student Opinion Survey – Support Services Improvement Survey, which indicated that 92 per cent of respondents were either “extremely satisfied” or “satisfied” with the service. We strive to provide a quality support service and an outstanding experience for students, so these results are very affirming. In addition to survey results, we have celebrated many student success stories and we congratulate those who have graduated this year.

The team at Disability Information and Support wishes students all the very best for the remainder of the year.

Melissa Lethaby
Manager



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Disability Matters

The University of Otago hosted a major international disability conference in Dunedin from 26 – 29 November 2017. *Disability Matters: Making the Convention Real* focused on seven articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). It offered an opportunity for presenters and participants to share their experiences, knowledge and research regarding the implementation of this important convention.

In Issue 1 of this year's newsletter we included articles which focused on two particularly interesting conference presentations. We have included in this issue two additional articles for your perusal.

Tauphipuhi – The fundamental bridge between disability and Whānau Ora

Post-earthquake Christchurch provided many challenges to a range of communities, especially disabled people and tangata whaikaha (disabled Māori.)

Ruth Jones and her husband Gary have been heavily involved in a range of projects since the earthquakes of 2011 to ensure the voice of the disability community is heard during the rebuild.

They established both the Earthquake Disability Leadership Group (EDLG), focused on the recovery and rebuild of Christchurch with the vision 'Christchurch for Every Body', and Hei Whakapiki Mauri.

Ruth says both groups originated from around their kitchen table, knowing that they needed to do something. The EDLG has now been formed into a trust and they are working on setting up one for Hei Whakapiki Mauri, which means the raising of one's mauri, essence or life force for disabled Maori and their whanau.

Ruth acknowledges the wisdom about mauri from Mr Kihī Ngata "Everyone and everything has a mauri and because of this we believe everyone has an equal right to be who they are. Hei Whakapiki Mauri uses this mantra to support disabled Māori and their whānau to reach their potential and have the confidence and skills to be Māori first."

"We want to make sure that a disability voice for Māori is heard and the city responds appropriately to that."

Ruth says that Hei Whakapiki Mauri sits within Whānau Ora – a whānau-centred approach to supporting whānau wellbeing and development.



"When Dame Tariana Turia was Minister for Disability Issues and established Whānau Ora she recognised the needs for disabled people to also be self-determining. Disabled people are experts in their own lives, that they do have capacity, they need to be resourced and that systems set up for the wider disabled community may not be OK for disabled Māori."

Post-earthquake challenges have been around access and attitudes, in particular institutional racism that sits across everything, especially the health, education and welfare systems, Ruth explains.

"People are whakamā or shy about coming forward about their issues - so often we are working with whānau or are contacted by whānau who haven't had either good experiences within the system or haven't been within the system because it is too scary."

The rebuild offers a genuine opportunity for the disability community but Ruth hopes it is not an opportunity lost.

"One thing is that the building code is out of date so even if buildings are compliant they no longer operate to best practice standards. The other thing is you need both expertise and lived experience."

It goes beyond having disabled people on advisory groups – it needs good process to be followed. Ruth says she is only one person and only knows what works for her and not all people with disabilities.

We now have a Christchurch Accessibility Charter – *Te Arataki Taero Kore* which translates as no barriers, which the Christchurch City Council, Canterbury District Health Board, Ōtākaro and other groups have signed up to.

"For me that's a huge win because the Accessibility Charter asks for best practice and all those who have signed up to it are accountable for best practice in build and design – so that's exciting."

While she enjoyed the Disability Matters conference Ruth is also aware of the need for an indigenous conference. "We really need to talk about disability and Māori. We've heard a lot from people from overseas and now we need to think about what those things mean for us and whether they are appropriate for us. How is the Treaty working for us? How can we as whānau build reciprocal relationships with each other? How do we decolonise ourselves?"

I think we need to re-educate ourselves and think about how Māori communities can be more inclusive.

Where are our children? Recreation and young people with disabilities

Education researcher Kate Holland has found while, in theory, we have an excellent basis for the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) when we look at our school values and curriculum, it is not yet a reality in our classrooms and on our sportsfields.

“What’s happening in lots of schools is that we are tending to forget about these rights, it’s a kind of survival mode for physical education and sport at the moment,” she told the 2017 Disability Matters Conference in Dunedin.

“Our teachers, despite their very best intentions to include our young people, are trying to get our students past the post to achieve the standards and if anything inclusive happens along the way it’s a wonderful thing for them, but they are really pushed for time and resources.

“We’re looking at how we can actually work with what we’ve got - by simply engaging with our young people, by talking with them, to find out how we can incorporate simple changes to make inclusive sport and recreation happen more often in our classrooms.”

Kate has been focusing on what educators can do and the first point she makes with teachers is to ask whether children with disabilities start from a level playing field when they come into the classroom, and if not, what we can do as educators to address that?

“The second point is about reminding teachers, particularly those working in early primary and early childhood, not to forget about play and allowing our children to actually play and enjoy physical movement. Too often we are concerned with just making sure children have the right movement skills or they’re physically literate and passing the right standards, when really a lot of what we want to achieve in physical education can come from them playing themselves, and making sure we include our young people with disabilities in that play.

“Our kids can really do that themselves. Teachers don’t need to be too involved in play – they just need to make sure that time is allowed in the school day for young people to actually be inclusive themselves,” says Kate.

“My third point – which teachers really need to question themselves about is, what are our attitudes as educators? What do we assume about disability and what knowledge do we have and how confident are we working inclusively? With the right attitude and right perspective we can make a difference in what we actually teach in physical education.”

Kate says she has worked with young people who have felt that despite their teachers’ best intentions their assumptions are limiting them.

“So we need to work with our young people and talk to them about what they think they need and what they can and can’t do.

“One story I often tell is about a young girl who has a disability and in Year 9 she started a new school which had swimming sports in the first week. Her physical education teachers, with the best intentions, decided she couldn’t enter swimming sports because it would be too dangerous to have her in the pool. The teachers were just doing what they thought was best – however, had they put aside their assumptions and talked with her they would have found out that she was a para swimmer with national titles.”

Kate says a lot can be learnt from watching kids play because they are naturally inclusive.

“The younger the better really. We only have to go to a kindergarten to see how awesome kids are at including everyone. “As we get older, particularly within that late primary, early secondary level, we tend to really put our own assumptions on our young people. Trying not to structure their play too much is key to inclusion. As soon as we try and structure what happens in their play time, their morning teas, their lunchtime and the afternoon breaks – we’re really limiting the options they have to use their own initiative and use what they think is right towards including young people.”

“Using our initiative is the best way to go and makes the biggest difference really.”



Healthy body, healthy mind and fun too

The University of Otago Recreation Centre, UniPol, runs on the philosophy of providing “accessible, healthy activities for students to compliment and also assist them in their academic studies”. The manager, Dan Porter, believes that balance between all aspects of life is key to success, “healthy body, healthy mind.”

This balance between academic life, social life and active life are exemplified through the facility itself. While UniPol is dedicated to its students, it also reaches out to the surrounding community to provide programmes and support to all who wish to make use of the centre. Dan says that “in off peak time, generally mornings and afternoons, we have the opportunity to provide a service to more of the community.” During these times UniPol reaches out to the wider community – running programmes in partnership with community groups such as Parafed, PACT, Community Care Trust, Youth at Risk, Otago Wellness Trust, Moana House and the Family Works Buddy Programme.

These partnerships focus on giving all people the ability to participate in activity and play space, focusing on the enjoyment of activity, rather than competing and rigorous training. “One of the underpinning drivers of what we do is providing play space,” Dan says. “We are here to enable the fun, being with people and the play.”

Dan says that this community integration is important for many reasons, including for students and student staff “to

see that we are greater than the inside of the University or Polytech, to see we have another purpose.” Dan believes that the “connection between students and these groups is quite a subtle but important learning process for student staff and others coming in. Being able to look after people in society and how we can contribute in that sense – It encourages students to go through a learning process of understanding the community around them, and “exposes our blinkered students to greater things,” showing that the “community is very diverse.”

Through all of this extended community engagement Dan is confident that they have faced few challenges along the way, mostly focusing on the rewards and positives that have come out of UniPol. “It’s a win/win, a synergy that’s well worth maintaining. The facility itself benefits immensely from having people in it. The fact that it can be used for different types of groups, as well as individual students just shows its versatility.”

At the end of the day, Dan says, “a basketball hoop is a basketball hoop, regardless of how tall you are. The challenge is to get the ball in the hoop – that’s it.” It’s the success that Dan wants to celebrate, “we do get some enjoyment from watching someone being able to put the ball in the hoop. That’s mastery – that’s gold. Not everyone is super athletic – but that’s the purpose of this place, to cater for all. That is what this place is designed to do, encourage a sense of belonging.”



SAVE THE DATE

Paralympics New Zealand are holding their Annual Mufti Day on 7 September 2018. Please support our Paralympian's as they prepare for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. Wear gold and donate a gold coin. Look out for fundraising buckets and activities.



The Liaison team

The Liaison team is based in Dunedin, Auckland and Wellington. Staff visit all secondary schools during the year to let students know about the learning opportunities at the University and to help students plan their studies. Students and parents are able to talk to the team at Information evenings, Tertiary Open Day, Careers Expos and during school visits. You can also contact the Liaison team directly if you have any questions.

Please click on the following link for more information.

otago.ac.nz/administration/service_divisions/otago029897.html

OUSA Teaching Awards

Voting for the OUSA Teaching Awards open on 12 September. Students will be able to vote for candidates for the OUSA Disability Awareness and Inclusive Teaching Award and provide comment on different teaching qualities. We would encourage you to have your say and vote!

Alternative Arrangements for Exams

Alternative examination arrangements are designed to assist students with impairments who may experience difficulty sitting examinations under conventional circumstances. Alternative arrangements accommodate a student's disability/impairment related needs with the aim of providing an equitable opportunity to participate and achieve. Disability Information and Support can arrange readers, writers, additional time (the standard extra time is 10 minutes per hour of examination), ergonomic equipment, examination papers in alternative formats, the use of a computer, separate rooms and other arrangements that best meet the documented needs of students.

To apply, students need to submit an application through their eVision portal; applications open after the examination timetable is viewable in the student's eVision timetable. As applications must be made by the deadline for the relevant examination period, it is recommended that students diarise to complete the process 1 week prior to the deadline.

The deadline for Semester 2 examinations is 7 September.

Please note that documentation, from a relevant health professional or specialist which clearly supports the arrangements required and indicates why the form of support is necessary, needs to be uploaded with each application (unless current and relevant documentation is already held by DI&S).

Just go for it!

Since graduating with a Bachelor of Music Bevan Gardiner has continued to excel in his career as a music tutor. Gaining a degree gave him the credentials he needed to expand his private tutoring, and he now instructs 36 students in guitar, singing and drums, as well as teaching guitar at Dunedin North Intermediate. "It's all one on one sessions. I do that 3 – 8:30 every day. I have built that up over time and I've been teaching for the last 5-6 years. The idea is to keep growing and expanding." In addition to this, Bevan also performs "music on the weekends in various line ups and duos. One band called Tempo, rock and roll band called The Crescents, a five piece pop band called nV." Bevan's band Tempo performed at the Disability Matters: Making the Convention Real conference in November 2017. As well as his bands, Bevan is involved with a couple of duos, one with renowned guitarist James Davy, and the other with Georgie Davidson, who toured with Bevan on his John Denver tribute tours.

Diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa at age two, Bevan is now mostly blind. "It's a sort of progressive disease. I had a lot of sight when I was younger, so learned to read and write. Through teenage years it starts to gradually go downhill. By the time you're an adult you are pretty much blind – I am getting to that stage now. I can see outlines and light," Bevan explains.

"When I started at University my vision was getting worse. I probably had a little more than I had now – sort of visual cues if I was navigating around with a guide dog. But not to the point where I could see anything on projectors or whiteboards."

Bevan used a guide dog to navigate campus. "I had my dog, Denim, which was a great way of getting around. Navigating the University was a challenge at times. You boiled it down to the places you needed to go. An instructor would work with us to train Denim. As soon as I knew my time table and where my lectures were, then we would learn how to get there. Also, where's somewhere I can get some food? All the important stuff. How do I get to Eureka?"

Bevan was initially nervous by the idea of going to university, "I wanted to go to University to study music because I enjoyed it so much. But I was always put off because it was so daunting." However, his drum teacher at the time encouraged him to go, and he organised an interview with Rob Burns who said to enrol in the course.

After starting Bevan contacted Disability Information and Support to see what services would be available to him. "DI&S assessed you to see what needs you had. I thought it was great that you could have someone come and write notes for you." Laughing, Bevan remembers that he was still required to attend those lectures "I found out I actually had to go to the lecture... So I turned up."

Having access to typed notes helped him in his study a lot. "I know how to touch type and all my notes were all on my laptop – I have a laptop that talks to me. It's one of the biggest things I used at university and now still."

Using this laptop also helped him in accessing course materials that he wouldn't be able to use otherwise. "I found the library was hard to access," Bevan says. However, "the lecturers were great and would send me the readings I needed to pay attention to."

"Those relationships were important... the support that the student advisors [from DI&S] gave was good as well. DI&S was always happy to copy or scan things for me. Quite easy." Bevan also found that lecturers were able to ask his Advisor questions around how to best present information to him.

Bevan has toured around New Zealand and Australia performing John Denver tribute shows. "I did those when I was at university – the music department was great to let me do those tours. I would go away for a couple of months fronting this John Denver tribute show." He initially got involved in the tribute show when he visited America to attend a John Denver festival. "They heard that I played guitar and sang, so they asked for my demo. I didn't have one at the time so I rallied together some recordings and sent them to these people who were impressed with it. 'Here's a young kiwi, let's get him to perform at this festival.'" When he got back the ODT wrote an article about the experience. "There was a local company based in Mosgiel that was looking to do a Denver show at the time. They were looking overseas for someone and then found me."

Bevan encourages any one to attend University. "I was initially quite daunted. I wanted to go, but I didn't know what it was going to be like in terms of how intense it would be and access as well. After going through it and knowing all the assistance is there I say 'go for it!' Students that are currently studying – keep on wading through the tides. For any student in the middle of study, sometimes you can't see the light at the end of the tunnel while being bombarded with assignment after assignment. You just have to keep on chipping away at it. Some are more difficult than others, and sometimes with an impairment you might have to take a bit of a longer route... You can get through it with the support of DI&S, friends and family and [laughing] going into a bar on Friday. You have got to have the balance right."

"If there is a certain subject you want to excel in and further your career, absolutely go for it because the support is there."



Important dates

- University of Otago Donna-Rose McKay scholarship – closing date **15 August 2018**
- Alternative Examination Arrangements – deadline for applications **7 September**
- DI&S scholarship for Hands-On at Otago – applications due **28 September**
- Semester Two Exams – **17 October to 10 November**
- The N G Stewart scholarship – closing date **15 January 2019**

Check out DI&S's website

If you are interested in reading more about the experiences of other students at Otago have a look at the profiles on our website.

otago.ac.nz/disabilities/index.html

DI&S provides learning support, advice, advocacy and information to students who have a disability, impairment, medical condition or injury that affects their study for a period of four weeks or more. Please look at our website for information about the services we provide.

otago.ac.nz/disabilities/services/index.html

If you would like to provide confidential feedback on our service, please click on the following link.

otago.ac.nz/disabilities/questions/feedback/index.html

The University of Otago offers a range of scholarships for students worth in excess of \$15 million. Please click on the following link for information about The Graduate Research School and available scholarships.
otago.ac.nz/graduate-research/scholarships/

University of Otago Donna-Rose McKay Entrance Scholarship

This scholarship is offered to students who have demonstrated academic ability and who can show financial need arising from a disability.

Applicants must:

- be New Zealand citizens or permanent residents, or have completed Year 12 and have completed, or in the process of completing Year 13, at a New Zealand school.
- be intending to enrol for full-time or approved limited full-time undergraduate study at the University of Otago for the first time in the year following the closing date.
- be studying with a significant disability of at least six months previous duration, which will have substantial financial implications for their studies.

Additional information about this scholarship is available by clicking on the following link.

The closing date for applications is 15 August 2018.

otago.ac.nz/study/scholarships/database/otago033024.html

The N G Stewart Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded to a student of the University who has a disability that makes attending university a challenge. The N G Stewart Scholarship was established in 2003 with funds bequeathed by Norman George Stewart (1913-1997) through the Stewart Coombs Trust.

Applicants must:

- Be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident.
- Have a disability of at least six months or longer.
- Be intending to enrol, or already be enrolled in an undergraduate degree at the University of Otago.

A student who has held the scholarship may apply again for up to a further two years, provided that he or she continues to make satisfactory progress in all respects.

Additional information about this scholarship is available by clicking on the following link.

The closing date for applications is 15 January 2019.

otago.ac.nz/study/scholarships/database/otago0146531.html

Tips to manage exam stress

Exercise. You may be thinking that you have no time for exercise, but even a ten minute stroll around the block could help to clear your head.

Keep hydrated. Keep a water bottle with you at all times. Try to avoid having too many drinks that contain high levels of caffeine and sugar, these can affect your sleep and lead to an energy crash later in the day.

Eat well. Your body needs regular fuel to keep that brain working. Be prepared, if you know you are heading into a full on study week, head to the supermarket and pick up some healthy study snacks. Healthy snack ideas could include fruit, banana chips, pretzels, nuts, carrots, humus, salsa and muesli bars.

Talk about it. If you are feeling stressed talk it through with a mate, a family member, or one of the counsellors at Student Health. They may have ideas or helpful strategies and sometimes just talking it out can help lighten the load.

Try to get a full night's sleep. Set up a relaxing routine before bed. This will help switch your mind from study-mode to sleep-mode.

Have a laugh. Sometimes a good laugh is the best way to unwind. Balance out all that serious studying with a comedy film or stream some comedy festival clips on YouTube.

Keep it in perspective. You can only do your best so set realistic goals and be proud that you are doing the best you can. When exams are over try not to dwell on things you may have missed, instead look for the positives.

Plan for fun. Start planning your holidays or what you'll do to celebrate when that last exam is completed. It's great to have something to look forward to.

Have a change of scenery. Try taking your readings to a café. Dunedin also has beautiful botanical gardens which make a lovely spot to sit and read on a sunny day.



Hands-On at Otago 2019 Whai Wheako i Ōtākou



Disability Information and Support Scholarships for Hands-On at Otago

Disability Information and Support (DI&S) Scholarships provide a great opportunity for secondary school students with an impairment or disability to participate in the weeklong Hands-On at Otago programme. Each of the scholarships will cover flights, accommodation, meals and programme activities to a maximum of \$1500.

All successful applicants will travel to Dunedin from **13-18 January 2019**, and experience what it is like to be a student at the University of Otago. These opportunities aim to inspire and motivate secondary school students who have an impairment or disability to develop their passion for learning.

Applications are open to students who will be in year 12 or 13 in 2019, have an impairment, disability, medical condition or long term injury, and have not previously attended Hands-On at Otago.

What do I need to do?

- STEP 1** Download the *Hands-On at Otago Scholarship Application Form* at: otago.ac.nz/hands-on-at-otago/cost and fill it in.
-
- STEP 2** Write an essay of approximately 500 words explaining why you would be a worthy recipient of one of these scholarships and what you would expect to gain from your experience at Hands-On at Otago.
-
- STEP 3** Provide a letter of support from a teacher at your school. The letter of support must be written on your *school's official letter-head* paper.
-

Applications

Applications for the scholarship must be received by 5pm **Friday 28 September 2018** at the address below.

Don't forget to attach all this information to your application form and send it to:

Hands-On at Otago
Division of Sciences
University of Otago
PO Box 56
Dunedin 9054

or email: hands-on@otago.ac.nz

For further information please contact:

Disability Information and Support on disabilities@otago.ac.nz
or phone 03 479 8235



Contact Details

Please contact us directly if you have any enquiries.

Disability Information and Support
University of Otago
PO Box 56
Dunedin 9054
New Zealand

Tel: 03 479 8235
or 0800 80 80 98
Fax: 03 479 5873
Email: disabilities@otago.ac.nz
Web: otago.ac.nz/disabilities
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.00pm