

WELLINGTON COMMUNITY JUSTICE PROJECT INCORPORATED
(WCJP)

Annual Report for 2023

2 October 2023

I. Student Directors' Report

The Wellington Community Justice Project (WCJP) has had a very successful 2023, despite the subsequent delays that were caused by the aftermath of COVID-19 and re-adapting to the in-person culture. Our Executive and volunteers have done fantastic work in adapting to the changing circumstances, delivering their events and volunteering.

First, we would like to thank Buddle Findlay for their generous support of the organisation, in particular Charlotte von Dadelszen and Francesca Dykes, who have worked closely with us and provided funding, advice and support for WCJP and the teams. We would also like to thank the various teams who have helped with our internal operations, as we seek to amend our constitution to be compliant with the new Act and establish/update our MOUs. Second, a massive thank you to Luke Fitzmaurice, Petra Butler and Yvette Tinsley on our advisory board for all their support and guidance this year. We would also like to thank Community Law Wellington, our other partners and WCJP stakeholders for continuing to support WCJP and the work we do, it would not be possible without everything you do for us.

A Organisational Goals

This year the WCJP had two main goals. First, the WCJP wanted to continue to build upon and deepen our commitment to our constitutional principles and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Key to this was developing better cultural safety and understanding in law school. We have consulted with our advisors and in particular Ngā Rangahautira (Māori Law Students' Society) and the Māori Faculty when dealing with events and the potential implementation of Te Reo Classes for next year.

Our second goal was to reinstate an in-person culture within WCJP to create a better foundation for team interactions both within the teams and between the teams. With the long-term effects of COVID-19, the majority of the students have become largely disengaged and digitalised. This made it difficult for the teams to operate together and form a team environment. As such, our goal for this year was to increase in-person collaborations and events to create a foundation for the years ahead. We were glad to see a slow increase in volunteer and team attendance in our in-person events. This goal extended to our partners and projects, as we sought to return to the “roots” of the organisation, which have always been its people. Our hope was to re-establish connections, better learn from each other to provide a strong foundation for the organisation in future years.

These goals were underpinned by a focus on reflecting as an organisation. The teams have been strengthening their relationships with volunteers and readjusting to the increased involvement of

international students and the decrease in incoming law student interests. We encourage future executives to continue these goals and constant reflection. Meaningfully respecting Te tiriti in our work and being actively conscious of the different positionalities of the people we work with will require building a reflective culture within the organisation.

B Membership

This year, we attempted a continuing membership system to respond to the silent quitting we saw last year. This caused complications regarding the computation of membership numbers: the executive of next year should attempt to carry an overall tracking of the volunteer list.

There were difficulties in getting new members this year compared to the previous years. A possible reason for this is the continuing effects of COVID-19 and the lack of presence of WCJP in law school.

Our decrease in volunteers reflects the trend in the law school of students taking on less commitments due to the external pressures on their time. We recommend that the incoming Executive engages in more promotion before the Launch event, or potentially engage the first year students, as suggested by Petra Butler, to increase WCJP awareness and loyalty. We have found that engaging students in their 200 and 300 level lectures has been an effective way to reach students and inform them about WCJP. However, this may not be enough in considering the level of volunteer intake this year.

Despite decreased volunteer numbers we have found more people have been actively engaged and participated in their various projects in comparison to previous years.

C Annual Launch

This year was the first time since COVID-19 to conduct a fully in person Annual Launch. In following the law school trend of bringing the students into university and as an attempt to increase WCJP awareness to students, we held the Annual Launch in the common room with kai and Luke Fitzmaurice as our speaker. Students were able to freely come and go between team booths to sign up or ask questions about the workload and type of work.

A good number of students came to ask questions. Unfortunately, the time the Annual Launch was conducted did not take into account the various classes that were happening during the day. This doesn't change the fact that the Annual Launch is an important avenue to promote WCJP. We recommend for the future executive to consider having the Annual Launch in the evening when there are no classes and perhaps use other organisation connections.

D Executive “Retreat”

Carrying on from the previous years, we had planned on holding an overnight retreat at the start of the year for the Executive. However, this was also disrupted due to the full-time work, internships and location of the executives. Instead, we chose to hold a dinner to create a team environment and for the Executive to get to know each other better. This was successful and it allowed people to interact with one another more freely.

We highly recommend the incoming Executive host some form of bonding event, whether an overnight retreat or a dinner as it allows the Executive team to meet each other and bond, as well as develop their goals for the organisation for the upcoming year ahead by holding a mission meeting.

E Renewal of Board Members

This year, we attempted to increase the number of board members from two to three to prevent an even split. Professor Yvette Tinsley kindly renewed her position as a board member for 2023 this year. However, Zoe Prebble was unable to participate as a board member this year unfortunately; therefore, we reached out to various lecturers and staff members. We were fortunate to have Luke Fitzmaurice and Petra Butler as our new Board members.

We attempted to build a closer connection with the board this year to increase our executive accountability and solidify our relationship with the law school faculty. Luke Fitzmaurice, Petra Butler, and Yvette Tinsley on board as they have provided valuable support throughout the entirety of 2023 WCJP as well as the development of MOU and events. We would like to thank them for their support and determination.

F Te Reo Lessons and Kai/Kōrero

Due to the COVID-19 disruptions last year, WCJP was unable to continue the Kai and Kōkero sessions that began in 2020. The attempt to reinstate this Te Reo lesson was highly supported by the volunteers and the Executive. However, there were delays in the establishment of the Te Reo lessons to change the original structure of the Te Reo Lessons. The partnership between WCJP and Ngā Rangahautira remained strong and WCJP was well supported by our partners.

Various discussions were held between WCJP and the Māori Faculty in an attempt to create a fully student-run session to increase the relevance of the Māori and tikanga presence in law school. To establish a firm foundation for the Te Reo Lessons, WCJP held back on offering such classes.

However, we hope that the classes will be operating in person next year as they provide a great opportunity to normalise the use of Te Reo within the law school and can assist in strengthening the relationship between our two organisations.

G MOU Howard League

This year, we pursued the memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Howard League. The MOU serves to establish a clear relationship between the two groups, setting out their history, the governing principles and requirements, and purposes of the partnership. The MOU also guarantees WCJP's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the transparency and quality control over the Howard League letters. The overall purpose of the MOU was to clarify the nature of the Howards League leader's role in the Howard League board and the needs of both organisations. While the majority of the MOU was led by Howard League team leader, Madi Pomona, we were there to provide support to Madi and to ensure the MOU satisfied WCJP commitments.

The MOU has yet to be finalised this year, and we would encourage the incoming Executive to finalise the MOU for Howards League to stabilise the relationship between the two organisations. We would like to thank our liaison Charlotte Von Dadelszen and Francesca Dykes for the support during the negotiation of the MOU and Kate Barber and Rupert Rouch for helping us write the necessary elements for the MOU and the continued support throughout the process despite the delays that were caused this year.

H Annual Summit

Our second major event this year was our annual summit, held on the 16th September. Following on from last year, we chose to have the summit at the university rather than hiring a venue, as this allowed us to offset some attendance costs for volunteers and allowed us to allocate more funding towards koha for our generous speakers. As a result, the Summit was held on the First Floor of Rutherford House, Pipitea.

Compared to the previous years' structures, we decided to start with one speaker who would inspire kōkero for the team reflections in the afternoon, and then wrapped up the event with lunch and socialisation time. A reason for having a single speaker was that 2023 was an election year and the majority of the legal workers were heavily involved in the election process.

This year's speaker was Petra Butler, who gave us a phenomenal speech on how her background influenced who she is as a lawyer and member of the society. Her speech was very inspirational. She challenged us to persevere against the status quo and the obstacles that hinder our achievements in creating a better future. She also highlighted the importance of having values that guide us as a professional.

Following Petra Butler's speeches, we had a break off session where the volunteers were separated into two groups to encourage social interaction and to promote discussion of what they learnt through Petra's speech. The discussions were freely run by the volunteers to help create a team environment for WCJP.

We finished the event with lunch and a mingling session to promote collaboration for the years ahead and to allow the distribution of knowledge between students.

Given this was our second in person organisation wide event this year, we were thrilled to see a good turnout of volunteers. We felt this was a good stepping stone for the years ahead in having a community event which brought people together and which encouraged thinking about society beyond law school context. We believe more of these types of events can occur throughout the year in the upcoming years. We were very happy with how the event went and would like to offer our sincere thanks to our speakers, sponsors and all the volunteers who attended, with a special thank you to all of our Executive team who worked so hard to make the summit happen.

I Moving forward

The last four years of the pandemic have greatly affected the WCJP. Our organisation continues to deliver excellent work and provide numerous opportunities. However, we must be mindful that our volunteers, stakeholders, and wider community in Wellington have been strained by the emotional and physical toll that Covid-19 has had. We must also be mindful of the big changes that are occurring to revert the society to what it once was. This necessitates strengthening the bonds of our community and keeping the passion alive. While volunteers might not be able to commit to as much as previous years, we should continue to support them and celebrate everything we achieve. Making a difference and giving back to the community can be a motivating source of strength for people.

As we move forward, we would encourage the incoming executive in 2024 to consider working on strengthening our community at law school and promoting tikanga. Initiatives such as introducing mentoring in teams, more WCJP wide events that bring the community together and celebrating our successes will be needed. Additionally, strengthening the community will likely increase volunteer retention and attract new volunteers.

We would further like to stress the importance of continuing to persevere and promote WCJP to the law school community and staff to increase our footing in law school to allow students to access the opportunity to use the skills learnt in classes to support the greater community.

II. Secretary Report

Kia ora tātou. My name's Alison, and I've had the privilege of being the secretary for the Wellington Community Justice Project for 2023. The mahi in this role included social media promotion, event documentation and planning and management of the wider executive.

The year has brought challenges particularly in re-engaging participation at the university, familiarising students who have spent their law degrees mostly online with the extra-curricular involvements available to them. It's also been an extremely rewarding year with meaningful projects pursued, enthusiastic new volunteers recruited, and positive plans instated for the future of the WCJP.

A Events

To hit the ground running at the start of the year, we fostered early engagement with the student body at the Clubs Expo. Whilst volunteer applications were not yet open, we wanted to capitalise on the eagerness students have to get involved at the very beginning of the year. We created a form to sign interested students up as general members. When applications rolled around we re-engaged these general membership sign-ups and encouraged them to submit team applications. This was effective in creating an interested volunteer pool to engage later in the year.

In lieu of an executive retreat we opted for a dinner out for the executive to meet at the start of the year. This was a great event which fostered important connections between the leadership teams and made collaborating with one another easier throughout the year as we were all familiar faces.

We held our launch shortly after. We set up team booths in the common room where each team could have a relaxed conversation and promote their projects to students. This booth set-up worked nicely to create a relaxed and approachable environment. The event was promoted on social media and also aimed to target foot-traffic – however we did struggle with engagement. After reviewing the event we realised it was the morning after the 'Wine & Cheese' VUWLSS event and law school attendance was at a low as many students were in recovery. I recommend the incoming executive to check other law school calendar events and consider the potential attendance rates on campus when scheduling events next year.

Our most recent event was the summit. This was a very successful day, at which students heard from the impressive Professor Petra Butler. Petra shared stories from her life and her hopes for the future by way of the work WCJP does. This opened up valuable conversations for attendees which included planning for

the future of our organisation. Our volunteers shared their favourite parts of WCJP - highlights included the in-person practical application of their legal skills, community involvement and connections fostered. We discussed the values they've developed as a result - oft mentioned was the importance of intergenerational knowledge, whether that be hearing from accomplished individuals in the industry or older students in the law school. Students also expressed finding value in gaining insights into other life-experiences when they volunteer in the community, and appreciating seeing collaborative work lead to communal success.

B Social media

Our social media following has steadily increased throughout the year - we have 630 followers on Instagram and our Facebook page has 1,840 likes and 1,900 followers. Promotional materials have been effectively distributed through our social media channels, promoted through feed posts, and followed up by story reminders closer to the time.

I have primarily used Canva templates for social media advertising, and recommend the incoming secretary to utilise Canva, too. I focused on creating clean and effective designs and using WCJP-branding – sticking to dark green and cream colours to create a cohesive and attractive social media feed.

I also used social media to promote community volunteering opportunities available to students throughout the year that aligned with WCJP's values, encouraging our members to be involved beyond WCJP. I hope this will foster habits of engagement beyond university life and open students up to pathways they had not considered taking with their law degrees.

I created a video advertisement for WCJP recruitment at the beginning of the year which involved quick introductions from team members, overviews of each team, and animations. This was a step forward from our previous static advertisements, and this video accumulated positive feedback from students. I invite the incoming secretary to use the video template I created, supplementing the current team leaders' introductions and project overviews for incoming ones, and to create other video-based content.

For future social media posts, I would also encourage more candid action-shots of teams at work. These can be posted on stories and in digest posts throughout the year to consistently showcase the mahi we do and encourage new engagement.

C The future

As the year draws to a close I've been reflecting on the challenges we faced this year. Some events did not come to fruition, and we see some elements of the WCJP in need of evolution.

We attempted to introduce an all-members bonding event in last part of the year via a quiz night, however we struggled to lock down a date for this amongst busy university timetables. I'd encourage the incoming executive to implement a similar event, but recommend doing this at the very beginning of trimester two as students return from the mid-year break before study commitments become more intense.

We also would like to introduce alumni events in the form of a speaker panel. This initiative would invite current WCJP members to hear stories from past members and gain insight into life outside law school, learning where their experiences from WCJP can take them. This will also invite past members to reflect on their time in the WCJP. When attempting to kickstart this event this year, we struggled with securing speakers as many were busy with the election. I encourage the incoming executive to continue the planning put into this event and begin it next year. This would be a valuable addition to the WCJP experience.

We have also been attempting to set up routine Te Reo classes for all students. We encountered road blocks in being granted approval for this as we aimed to run this in conjunction with other university groups. Next year I recommend the executive to begin these classes as an independent initiative so as to actually get them up and running.

Finally, we had toyed with the idea of a re-launch and re-recruitment event in the second trimester. But this was abandoned as not all teams needed new volunteers. We instead worked on a case-by-case basis and where particular projects were interested in recruiting new volunteers, we would direct interested candidates directly to those team leaders. This worked effectively to balance volunteer and team demands.

At our summit, our members also offered suggestions for the future. The resounding suggestion was to involve first year students. Engaging students at the very beginning of their law school experience will foster a connection with WCJP early on and provide students support systems in their often alienating first year. The incoming executive should explore ways to achieve this. In addition, I encourage the executive to find ways to include general members, who are not part of a team but are members of the WCJP. Hosting the aforementioned panel and bonding events would be a productive place to start.

D Conclusion

Before I wrap up, I'd like to thank everyone for their mahi this year. While university life finally feels like it's reaching an undisrupted 'new-normal', there have been growing pains from previous years of low in-person engagement. The team leaders have worked diligently and passionately throughout, and it's been a huge privilege to support you all in the work you've undertaken to better our community. None of it could have been done without the support of the rest of the sub-executive either – our student directors Chloe and Olivia and treasurer Sameer. It's been incredible to work alongside you all. It's always impressive to me how much you put into the WCJP on top of your study commitments. I look forward to seeing where the new executive takes the WCJP next year, and where those of you who are graduating from university take the work you've done!

III. Our Projects

In 2023, our teams worked on building and developing their projects, whilst navigating the return to in person activities.

A Advocacy

In 2023, the Advocacy Team was led by Madi Pomana, Charlotte Dey, and Charlotte Gambrill. They lead the ongoing projects of Howard League Prisoner Support Project, Welfare Advocacy, and the Student Rights Service respectively.

At the beginning of the year the Advocacy leaders organised a Welcome to WCJP Advocacy event as an opportunity for everyone in the separate advocacy teams to meet one another and celebrate the beginning of the WCJP year. This event was plenty of fun and received really positive feedback from the volunteers that attended. It was a great way to begin the year and encourage our community of volunteers to get to know one another.

Further, at the beginning of September, the Advocacy team was generously hosted by Meredith Connell (MC) for our annual Advocacy Kaupapa Event. This year Crown Solicitor for Auckland Alysha McClintock flew from Auckland to speak to the Advocacy volunteers. Alysha presented on how to effectively advocate within the court system, and spoke of her experiences prosecuting and working in the justice system. Her knowledge and passion inspired the volunteers, this experience continues to be a yearly highlight for our Advocates.

A) Welfare Advocacy

The Welfare Advocacy Project has entered a new phase in 2023. A new and exciting opportunity was offered at the beginning of this year, around the time of recruitment. After discussions with supervising

duty lawyer for the Wellington and Hutt District Courts, Leah Davidson, who had guided the work of the volunteers for the past 11 years, it was decided it was best to place the energy of the volunteers in a different direction. The previous work of the volunteers operating out of the district court was no longer an effective or feasible use of volunteers' expertise or energy. Leah, along with Olivia Hyland - Solicitor and past leader of the Welfare Project, had begun organising a pilot program led by Yousuf Ahmad, an original WJCP Advocacy leader. Advocacy Welfare Leader Charlotte was approached by these three with an opportunity to take the project in a new direction.

This opportunity meant that it was uncertain whether any new volunteers would be needed. Throughout the recruitment process this was advertised to potential volunteers. There were only 2 remaining volunteers from the previous years left on the Advocacy team as many had graduated in 2022. Three volunteers were accepted into the advocacy team, with the option of volunteering for both the welfare project and the Howard League project, as we could not confirm whether any volunteer work would be viable for the volunteers. The progress of the project has been slow moving and minimal, so unfortunately there has been no need for any further work from the newly recruited volunteers.

The project that has been in development this year is named 'Accelerated Employment Pathways'. The goal of this initiative is to provide expedited employment opportunities for individuals with criminal convictions. The Ministry of Social Development will refer clients to AEP, and the project's volunteers will then interview these referrals before passing their information to Drake International who will coordinate suitable employment opportunities. This is an exciting new opportunity for the Welfare Team. The volunteers role in this project initially is in assistance in the structure and set up of the programme. This year this has included meeting with the project runners (Olivia and Yousuf) to coordinate how it will operate, and in particular co-ordinating the privacy arrangements for the organisation. Advocacy Welfare leader Charlotte, with the assistance of volunteer Luciella Burke, have led this. Together they have produced a privacy policy and a Privacy Impact Assessment for AEP. This is awaiting further consultation from Chapman Tripp, and then a pilot for this programme will be initiated. When this occurs, the project will call for further involvement with volunteers, and will be able to offer more consistent volunteering opportunities. The role of volunteers once the pilot is initiated will involve interviewing clients, assessing their employability, and then providing this information to our partner recruitment company.

This will put the welfare team in an excellent position for recruitment next year, where this year's planning and discussions can be executed. This is an exciting time for the Advocacy team, 2024 will be the start of new opportunities for volunteers to positively impact our community.

B) Student Rights Service

The Student Rights Service has had another successful year, with 15 new volunteers on board. A special thank you to Ben Drury at Community Law for their dedication and mahi in training our new cohort of volunteers and the support that you have provided throughout the year.

This year we wanted to continue to improve the experience for our volunteers and ensuring that they felt as though they were part of a community at law school. Getting volunteers back into the community law offices was key so that they were able to feel fully emersed in the experience and as though they were connecting with other volunteers and members of our community.

Being a large team of volunteers that need specific training for how to provide the support necessary due to the nature of the work meant that training was crucial. The Student Rights Service had a get-together session and training at the Community Law office in June which gave our volunteers the opportunity to meet and get to know one another in order to build on our team culture.

I would like to extend a huge thank you to our whanau at Community Law for supporting this kaupapa and the continued support for the service. Lastly, a massive thank you to our committed volunteers, it has been a fantastic year!

C) Howard League Prisoner Support Project

Working with the Wellington Howard League Prisoner Support Project has been an honour rather than a job. Our volunteers have been inspired to ensure all prisoners across Aotearoa have access to advice, guidance and advocacy and hold prison staff and management to account.

A key goal for this year was strengthening our sense of kotahitanga within our group. Upon the lifting of covid restrictions, we have transformed the nature of our mahi by bringing volunteers together in sessions to facilitate discussion and teamwork while writing our letters of reply. This also gives us an opportunity to discuss other ventures our volunteers are involved with and share our personal knowledge, collectively.

This major change for the Prisoner Support Project significantly boosted productivity. Creating a collective-thinking environment meant that questions could be answered immediately and specific expertise of volunteers could be utilised.

This year, the Prisoner Support Project has developed its relationship with the Wellington Howard League and looks forward to working alongside its committee in the future. Both teams worked side by side to create a Memorandum of Understanding which will guide and facilitate our working relationship for many years to come.

This year's letters have brought forward some common themes from prisons across Aotearoa. Some of these included:

- Access to case managers; due to understaffing issues, prisoners have found it difficult to find a case manager who can be assigned to them or have gone through significant periods without a case manager.
- Access to rehabilitative programmes; specifically where requested by the Parole Board.
- Both psychological and physical abuse by specific Corrections' staff.
- Frustration at the complaints system.

These are just a few of the issues we have received over the year. Our volunteers have worked alongside prisoners to ensure that in a system that is broken, the rights of our prisoners never cease to be advocated for.

The Wellington Howard League has kept our newsletter running strong. We have also had many prisoners writing to share their thoughts on topics within the newsletter or shared general observation, thoughts and

feelings on issues within prisons. This gave the Prisoner Support project invaluable insight into the current issues of prisoners' lives.

In 2023, I encourage new leadership to grow our rōpū and nurture the relationships between volunteers so that the kindness we share naturally bleeds out into our letters of reply to our prisoners. I also encourage the 2023 leader to look beyond our group and to our community.

I would also like to express my tremendous thanks to all our volunteers this year who have worked selflessly to provide advice to our prisoners. I have learnt a great deal from each and every one of you and am so proud of the team you are.

I orea te tuatara ka puta ki waho

B Education

The Education Team was led by Claire Rees, Stellar Shaw, and Jack Lee. The team's two projects were the Rights Education Project and the Know Your Rights Project

A) Projects

1 Rights Education Project

As of October 1 2023, the REP team has presented 22 Rights Education modules across multiple schools in the greater Te-Whanganui-a-Tara region. Two presentations were cancelled due to schools striking. This number is significantly lower than previous years, however, the presentations that we have done, especially the ones with WEGC have been far larger than previous years, presenting to up to 70+ students. Like previous years, we are happy to have continued our special partnership with Taitā College. Across the year, our volunteers managed 7 total presentations at Taitā. Though this relationship has continued to grow, this year Taitā instead engaged us for their Year 10 classes. Presenting to Year 10s has presented unique challenges, and it may be best to reserve the modules, at the very least, ones that are aimed at older students, to the senior years.

This relationship continues to be invaluable to our work and a rewarding experience for our volunteers. Much of our time as law students concerns multi-million dollar contracts, international law disputes and complex trust relationships. Yet our partnership with Taitā and other schools help us all to remember what the law really means to the many New Zealanders who don't make the law reports, yet whose relationship with the law is just as important. We hope our volunteers have valued these opportunities and that they continue to use their privileged positions to serve our community in their legal futures. Our relationship with Taitā College is better than ever, and we look forward to continuing our mahi there next year.

We were also unable to deliver “Flatting Forums” at halls. This is due to a change of event management at university accommodation which would have made these modules difficult to present. Notwithstanding this, there is further scope to reach out to halls next year and see whether they wish to continue this model or not. Flatting forums have previously been a valuable experience for our volunteers, and we would like to present them again in the future if possible.

Like in the previous years, REP’s biggest issue has been scheduling. This year our initial attempt to make contacts with schools was largely unsuccessful, with only a handful of schools showing interest.

During our second round of invitations, the email domain was offline, and emails that may have been sent to us had bounced back. This was only brought to our attention when one school informed us of this technical difficulty. It is very likely that we lost some presenting opportunities due to this unfortunate circumstance.

Furthermore, we have had the smallest team Rights Education has had in the past years. The initial round of recruit, though usually very busy and lively, was empty and quiet. This is likely due to the falling number of law students at Victoria, and the lack of on-campus engagement. We suggest that future leaders take more steps in increasing social media publicity.

In summary, a small volunteer group with a small number of school engagement has resulted in the lower number of presented modules. However, we have maintained strong relationships with Taita, and this is the second year in a row presenting with St Catherines College, and our new presentations at WEGC have been some of our biggest presentations. We strongly believe that St Catherines College and WEGC have the potential to have strong bonds just like Taita. Thus, despite the lower numbers, there has been some qualitative gain through these relationships.

2 Know Your Rights

This year, the Know Your Rights Instagram page has continued successfully. Led by Stellar Shaw, the team of four created informative and colourful infographics which display information about people's legal rights in an engaging way. If you have not done so already, we strongly encourage you to follow @rightseducationproject on Instagram to keep up with the amazing work this team is doing. In 2023 our team should look at ways to more closely collaborate with our Know Your Rights volunteers and find ways to receive better engagement across Wellington and all of Aotearoa.

B) Administration

Coming into 2023, the Education REP team had 5 returning volunteers. We accepted a further 7 volunteers, to make a team of 12. This at times made it quite difficult to schedule volunteers. Engagement on campus has been complicated. REP has unfortunately been no exception, though we are nonetheless very grateful to our many great volunteers who have consistently put in the effort for REP.

Like previous years, we hosted training sessions - one run by Community Law. This gave our volunteers the opportunity to connect with our fantastic community law contacts Teeze, Olive and Queenie, as well as other presenters who helped hone our collective public speaking and presentation skills. Our training provided our volunteers with an opportunity to practice their presentation skills in advance of their first module presentations.

A significant focus of our training was getting the new volunteers comfortable with presenting in front of their peers. We believe this was beneficial for the new volunteers, as they could feel confident heading into their first real presentation. Sadly, returner engagement with this training was not quite where we would have liked it to be, as greater attendance would've ideally helped to form a close-knit, familial group of volunteers. We recommend that next year's exec ensure mandatory trainings to increase the rapport within the cohort and ensure the new and returning volunteers feel comfortable with each other.

Given that Taitā is located further away, we had restricted transport options. The trains now running through Snapper systems made it easier for Community Law to provide aid in transport. We are incredibly grateful for the hard work of the presenters who went out to Taitā College.

The end of the reduction in public transport fares will have to be considered by next year's exec in their budgeting. We were lucky to have been able to make the most of this government act.

A new initiative we took was to directly reimburse drivers through our own budget and fund rather than going through Community Law (which they have stopped doing). Doing so, we were able to create a more direct and accessible pathway for driving volunteers to be compensated.

C) 2023

Like in the previous three years, REP's biggest issue has been scheduling presentations in the pandemic era. Many of the previous relationships we had with schools in these years are hard to revive, given the relationship breakdown after two years of constant disturbance due to COVID. Despite our efforts to conduct a second round of emails to schools, only one or two more schools took us up on that offer.

To address this issue, we recommend that leaders conduct more rounds of emails, ideally before each school term begins when teachers have not yet finalised their class schedules. Another strategy would be to be quite persistent on reaching out to schools with which we have previously maintained strong relationships pre-pandemic, e.g. Hutt Valley High. We have also had some success in emailing individual

teachers (e.g., Y12 and Y13 Deans, Pathways Coordinators) as opposed to the generic school office email. All in all, reviving old relationships and creating new ones should be a high priority for our new leaders.

Next year, as much as circumstances will allow, we recommend the Education leaders try to foster a greater sense of community within the teams throughout the year.

D) Thank You

We have been incredibly lucky in 2023 to have an excellent set of volunteers in the Education Team. Thank you to every member for your commitment to turning up to presentations, being organised and the values that you demonstrate in your contributions.

Lastly, thank you to Community Law and all the schools we have had the privilege of volunteering at. In particular, we want to thank Teeze for her help throughout the course of this year. We both feel very privileged to have held our leadership roles this year and be a part of the WCJP.

C Human Rights

We really wanted to focus on creating a social space for Human Rights this year, and try to enable for friendship and collaboration. We had successful trainings and launches for the letter writing project, and ASEP. It was also really nice to have a launch with all the volunteers so the teams could mingle.

We made an effort that all the co-leaders participated in the interviews of the volunteers and recruitment process. This ensured we would build up relationships with each of them, and hopefully make it less intimidating to approach us if there were any questions throughout the year or issues.

Our main issue this year was due to late recruitment, volunteer work began in trimester 2. This limited the mahi done and engagement. Still, trimester 2 has been very productive with some great work produced and lots of learning and connections made.

The launch

- Our launch was incredibly successful; with almost all 17 volunteers able to attend and guest speakers Kodrean Eashae from Voice of Aroha and Murdoch Stephens from the Red Cross speaking on refugee issues in Aotearoa.
- We had kai and drinks; with brainstorming sessions between the teams.
- This happened at the end of trimester one.

Trainings

- The trainings were separate for the two teams; each occurring after Trimester one.
- They were both very successful and all volunteers were highly engaged which was great to see.

Our Advice for 2024

- Do recruiting earlier on in the year; rolling recruiting for tri two might also be useful.
- It should be possible to start work from tri one - this links to recruitment. Set deadlines soon after teams are made to ensure projects start swiftly.
- Be engaged in brainstorming and facilitate sessions / meetings for the different teams. This ensures deadlines are met.
- Collaborate and network with others at the law school - this can widen recruitment efforts and engage those with connections.
- Make room for team meetings intermittently to keep up with engagement.
- Have a debriefing meeting with all teams prior to the AGM.

Letter Writing Project

Team's Role

Our mission is to provide a service that is both empathetic and professional to settled refugees who are looking to appeal to the UNHCR to have their family members recommended for settlement in New Zealand.

1. For each pair of volunteers to write and complete at least one letter
2. To build a relationship of accountability with our volunteers, through regular check-ins and discussion.

We had four letter writing teams this year, with three pairs and one team with three volunteers. All teams were engaged and interested in the work. We are really proud of the work done.

We also worked with Community Law to set up deadlines for upcoming years, to ensure that our collaboration with Community Law is maintained and meets the clients needs.

The start of the year was difficult, as our Community Law representative had left the organisation. Our emails were left unanswered, but our new representative was understanding and very on top of things. We appreciate the swiftness of the training being set up when we got into contact with Abby.

There were some issues with one team where the client did not meet up at the meeting due to the client never receiving the time and date. The team promptly let us know, and were able to meet up with their client later on.

All teams worked well together and were quick to raise concerns or issues if needed. The letter writing project was very good this year. Go team!

What happened in 2023

- All teams met with their client, collaborated to compile information and produced a letter for their client.

Our Advice for 2024

- Keep good communication and contact with Community Law
- CONTACT the clients that were missing from 2022/ got lost in the system FIRST.

ASEP - Publications

Team's Role

The publications volunteers wrote a joint piece together to make it less scary starting publications. Then, they were able to each select a topic or are prompted to write on a key topic, and then seek to have an article completed by the mid-semester break. This means that if any opportunities arise or there are significant delays, that the volunteers will have definitely completed at least one piece of work by the end of the year.

There are also opportunities beyond article-writing that come up throughout the year for the publications team to get involved in.

What happened in 2023

- The volunteers were incredible and finished the joint piece which became very extensive.

Our Advice for 2024

- Continue with having the first publication be a joint effort - it creates a lower threshold for writing, as volunteers can often be intimidated by the prospect of writing something alone for the first time.
- Give deadlines/ goals for when the publications should be finished.
- Make room for team meetings intermittently to keep up with engagement.
- Continue to upload articles to the WCJP website. Ensure that there is a graphic to accompany each.
- Increase the reach of publications: our social media presence would be a great way to leverage key publications next year.
- Continue to make the most of opportunities as they arise! The ASEP team is focused on advocating for people seeking asylum and supporting our stakeholders. Always remain open to opportunities. Even if you think something might not be exactly within the scope of campaigning for equal support, you can always offer it to your volunteer base broadly and see if anyone is interested and has capacity.
- Expand publications beyond articles into different types of media. We have done this in the past but looking at mediums is a great way to reach more people and gain a wider audience.
- Build on our relationships with key organisations such as ASST. By remaining responsive to what they notice about the asylum seeking space in NZ, we can use our time and energy where it counts.
- Work on making the publications team more collaborative. For the past couple of years volunteers have often worked in isolation in publications, this is usually the nature of writing and researching, but more of a team environment could be really good for engagement.

ASEP - Events

Team's Role

Have an event each mid-trimester promoting refugee rights or awareness of refugee issues in Aotearoa NZ.

What happened in 2023

Events had a great idea on making a panel focused on refugee issues and policies for the upcoming election. Due to a lack of panelists (not to a lack of reaching out), this idea did not come to fruition. The events team have been really keen on having an event for the second trimester, and have organised a movie screening for the 5th of October showing the movie 'Born in Syria' with pizza and drinks.

Our Advice for 2024

- Always have a backup plan if the event idea includes outside speakers.
- Reach out to guest speakers early to ensure the event is feasible
- Provide deadlines for when the event will have to take place by
- Widen the scope of events to maybe also include team building activities for ASEP and Letter Writing.

ASEP - Marketing

Team's Role

This year, we widened the marketing role to not being social media anymore. The role requires collaboration with the rest of ASEP to market the events; and promote the publications team work.

We struggled with engagement, realising we ought to have pushed for more work done. It seems like the marketing role forgot about the work to do after the brainstorming sessions, which were really fruitful.

What happened in 2023

There were ideas of making posts about the ASEP volunteers and the work done throughout. Further ideas included promoting the events to occur and info posts on issues refugees face in Aotearoa.

The marketing team will promote the upcoming ASEP movie night to occur later in the week.

Our Advice for 2024

- Provide deadlines and set expectations throughout the year.
- When recruiting volunteers it is essential that they have some experience and/or passion for design and conveying information through media.
- Aim to increase engagement on Instagram and Facebook. At the start of the year, take note of our engagement and following, and create a number or goal that you would like to aim for. Increasing engagement means increasing the numbers and ways that people connect to our stories and issues.
- Continue to use our "10-Step Checklist" (found in the Social Media Run Sheet) to ensure quality posts.
- Make sure that the days of posting are clear, i.e. one post on Monday, and make sure that it is clear to the volunteers that they have to have drafts completed for the following week by a certain date and time. For example, 2 posts for both Facebook and Instagram need to be drafted and sent to leaders by 5pm each Thursday so we can check them on Friday and you can begin the posts on Monday.

D Law Reform

The 2023 Law Reform team was led by Jessie MacEwan, Lisa Nguyen and Mereana Ave. The Law Reform team began the year by running Research & Submissions, Adoption Action, Lex Guide, Editing and Green Team. However, the team was further called in to help create an amicus brief to the Inter American Court of Human Rights run by Petra Butler.

IV. Looking Ahead

The WCJP has experienced another year of growth in 2023. Although our membership has fallen slightly, many of our projects have been able to expand their scope or outreach. The challenges for future Executives will be to continue this growth whilst also growing our membership so that WCJP continues to be a sustainable project.

A Finances

This year, we stressed to team leaders that we were in a strong financial position, as well as the importance of fully utilising our budget. Given that the WCJP aimed to offer a Summit and Launch this year, and potentially Te Reo lessons we requested a lesser administration budget this year in view of the surplus we carried forward from 2022 and were very lucky to receive funding from Buddle Findlay. While both the Summit and Launch were able to go ahead, the Te Reo lessons did not run as mentioned above. We found the small surplus of the administrative budget to be useful to contribute to any potential deficits in other teams or unforeseen expenses for 2023 and 2024.

Despite this unused portion of our budget, we would still recommend to future Executives to ensure they get a level of funding appropriate for the activities they plan to do, but given our current surplus, place less of a strain on our financing providers. Although it is difficult to know exactly what this entails at the start of the year, a stricter outline of the budgeted funds for each team (including the Student Directors), could create more accountability and ensure we ask our sponsors for an appropriate level of funding.

B Volunteer Engagement and Community

We had initially planned to attempt to bring the entire WCJP community together through a WCJP wide event or project. We had also considered an alumni event so that our current volunteers can learn from past volunteers and keep in touch with our wider WCJP whanau.

With the various events held this year, we attempted to foster whanaungatanga with our wider volunteer base. We believe that there is scope for another event which brings the entire volunteer base together,

which could possibly be set throughout the year. Not only will this promote whanaungatanga but also prevent silent quitting that has been seen throughout the years of WCJP.

We also believe that future Executives should also work on fostering whanaungatanga within their own teams, which could be done through more casual regular team meet ups so volunteers can get to know each other. We encourage the incoming Executive to incorporate this into their budget.

In terms of volunteer engagement, many teams have reported struggling with this issue, which has also been seen in low turnout to team projects and events. We hope that this is largely due to people readjusting to in person university and the stress from previous years of COVID-19, and that this will change next year due to the refocus on in person learning at the law school.

We also believe that more attempts could have been made earlier in the year to promote the WCJP Launch, which may have increased the number of applications made.

C Constitutional Challenges

It was one of our plans at the beginning of the year to increase collaboration among teams and volunteers, as well as increase partnerships with other groups at Law School. While some collaboration was achieved, the nature of each project means that they tend to default into siloes, making it difficult for volunteers from different teams to collaborate with each other.

For the last 13 years, the WCJP has existed in largely the same structure, and because of this teams have been able to build up a wealth of knowledge and experience that allows them to contribute positively to our community. However, although the work we do is important, it is equally necessary for the organisation to change and adapt. We recognise that each project has deep connections with stakeholders and communities, delivering high quality services.

We further received suggestions to open up WCJP to incoming first years to both provide them an opportunity to apply legal skills and to promote whanaungatanga within the entire law school community. Recognising the importance of continuing these services, we would recommend that the incoming Executive continue these projects, but potentially look at renaming and reorganising the way the projects are run.

D Law School Relationships

This year we were again invited to the Representative Group Committee Meetings, by VUWLSS. The Representative Group Committee was made up of other Rep Groups and Law School members. This was a great platform to discuss important issues and opportunities to collaborate. However, as an advocacy

group we have recognised that some of the issues discussed in the Committee are not for us to comment on.

This year, we did not attend any of the Representative Group Committee Meetings run by VUWLSS due to the very concerns mentioned above.

Whanaungatanga and kotahitanga are some of the central values of the WCJP and we aim to foster these values in all aspects of our work. As mentioned earlier in the report, the WCJP has finalised and signed the MOU with Ngā Rangahautira, establishing a relationship between our two groups. At the beginning of the year, we were also able to meet with the leaders of all the other Rep Groups at the Law School and build individual relationships with them and their members. We strongly encourage the incoming leaders to continue this process of relationship building.

However, the concern is that WCJP is still not very visible to the law school community. It would be a great opportunity for the incoming Executive to improve on this to gain further volunteer intake.

E Conclusion

It has been our absolute privilege to be Student Directors of the WCJP this year. We hope that we have been able to build upon the amazing work that Amandie and Jono did before us, and that we have provided new opportunities for WCJP to pursue in the future. We encourage the incoming Executive to revitalise the organisation with new ideas and projects, and we cannot wait to see what the WCJP will do in the future.

Finally, we would like to thank our Executive team. You have all worked so hard this year and the success of the organisation is a testament to the passion you have poured into it. To our remaining Executive, we are so happy to see you take on another year, the organisation is very lucky to have you. And to our outgoing volunteers, we would like to wish you all the best for your your post-WCJP and post university journey, we cannot wait to see what you all do next.

V. Thanking Our Sponsors

We are grateful for the support of so many people and organisations, without which we would not have been able to achieve all that we have this year. We would like to thank the following groups:

- Buddle Findlay, and in particular Francesca Dykes and Charlotte von Dadelszen for their generous financial support and advice to various projects this year.
- Faculty of Law, in particular Carol Sorenson and Olivia Dickson, for their support, assistance, and providing us with an office and meeting venues.
- Our various external stakeholders who partner with us on our projects.

- Victoria University of Wellington Law Students' Society, Ngā Rangahautira and the representative Committee for their solidarity within the law student community.
- Our advisory committee, in particular, Petra Butler, Luke Fitzmaurice and Yvette Tinsley for their guidance and support.
- Our amazing Executive Committee for their incredible work this year. It has been such an honour to get to know you all and work cohesively as a team as a result.
- Finally, a sincere thanks goes to our members and volunteers. The WCJP will only ever be as good as the work of its volunteers, and it is because of your dedication, energy, and passion, that we have achieved incredible things in the Wellington community.

Ngā mihi nui,

Chloe Kim and Olivia Overfield

Student Directors 2023

WELLINGTON COMMUNITY JUSTICE PROJECT INCORPORATED

Financial Report

Year Ending 30 September 2023

Sameer Mandhan

2 October 2023

VI. Treasurer's Report

This document has been prepared by the Treasurer for circulation among the members of the Wellington Community Justice Project (WCJP) and for presentation at the AGM of the WCJP on 2 October 2023 in compliance with rr 11.3 and 30 of the Rules of the Wellington Community Justice Project Incorporated.

For the 2023 financial year, Buddle Findlay has generously continued to be our primary sponsor. The important mahi that the Wellington Community Justice Project (WCJP) carries out every year would not be possible without Buddle Findlay's financial and legal support.

We were fortunate enough to begin this year with a large surplus balance, owing both to Buddle Findlay's generosity and the ongoing slowdown of our operations as a result of the Covid pandemic and the ensuing difficulty with recruiting, forging meaningful relationships with community partners, holding in-person events, and promoting collective buy-in from a law school environment that is very different from what it was only a few short years ago.

For the WCJP's financial year from 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023, we received a total of \$1,000 in sponsorship all of which was from Buddle Findlay. Owing to the large aforesaid surplus, we found it unnecessary to go to Victoria Clubs for any additional funding, unlike in previous years.

Although today we are able to say that we are generally operating in a post-Covid New Zealand (as much as that is possible), the flow-on effects of the pandemic on the law school environment continue to impact the WCJP, our work and thus our financial situation. Unlike last year, this year we were able to hold a successful Launch at the start of the year, as well as a much-needed social event for the executive in lieu of a more formal Executive Retreat. Despite these positive changes in the right direction, this year has been a generally slow one as regards our ability to meet our anticipated spending targets. But, in spite of this, the teams and entire executive have come together and, by adapting to difficult circumstances, done some incredible work this year.

Teams have continued to provide valuable services to the community, with the majority of these costs being covered by funding from Buddle Findlay. This year, Advocacy covered postage costs for the Howard League Prisoner Support Project and training costs for all three teams. With their funding, Human Rights was able to pay for its website, trainings, and host in-person events with

the aim of continuing to raise awareness of important human rights issues in New Zealand. Law Reform continued its great work; Buddle Findlay's funding allowed them to host a number of successful catered training sessions and have a renewed focus on team-building events. Education, like previous years, was disrupted by the Covid pandemic reducing (i) accessibility to schools and (ii) relationship-building and maintenance opportunities with schools. Nevertheless, the team was able to utilise their funding to travel to schools and teach students about legal issues which could impact their lives.

Despite increased costs, with our funding we were able to provide catering and koha for the speakers at our Annual Launch as well as our Annual Volunteer Summit. We were also able to, given our surplus, eliminate the Summit's attendance fee, something which is an important step toward improving student accessibility. Unfortunately, however, we were unable to continue last year's Cultural Safety Initiative, which included Te Reo Māori classes. Notwithstanding our best efforts to find a new provider, administrative difficulties meant that it was untenable to restart our offering of Te Reo lessons. In light of our aim to increase cultural competency — both within the WCJP as an organisation and the law school at large — it is encouraged that the restarting of this important offering should be a priority for next year's executive. And in view of our substantial surplus, it is recommended that no koha be charged for the Te Reo lessons when they are reinstated. It would also be prudent to work alongside Ngā Rangahautira to provide these lessons, potentially with the aim of having them be offered to all law students, so as to increase overall accessibility to the learning of Te Reo.

In 2023, all four teams as well as Administration came within their budget, with some significantly more than others. While this represents strong fiscal responsibility by the team leaders, it also illustrates the continuous flow-on effects of Covid-19 on Victoria University's Law School as well as our operations. The WCJP's current account balance, which includes the funds we keep in reserve, has decreased from \$7,519.78 to \$5,108.93 over the last financial year. As mentioned earlier, since we did not request any funding from Victoria Clubs, there are no funds that need to be reconciled, and therefore (in the absence of any last-minute reimbursements) this represents our closing bank balance for the financial year. As such, the WCJP has a significant surplus and, since we are a charitable organisation, I would recommend that next year's executive take advantage of this surplus to fund new projects and increase engagement with the community. I am hopeful and optimistic that this is achievable as more and more students return to the hallowed halls of OGB, and the law school regains its pre-Covid vibrancy. In particular, I would recommend that some of the surplus is set aside for next year's Launch, with the hopes of gaining as much traction as possible, as early on as possible. I would also encourage next year's executive to learn from the past few years — noting, especially, that we simply have not been able to spend as much as we anticipate (with expected spending based on pre-Covid figures). This has led to projected spending figures, and thus sponsorship requests, which are far in excess of what is required. This year, despite us requesting significantly less

funding from Buddle Findlay, we have managed to make only a relatively small dent in the substantial surplus we ended last year on. As a brief reflection on the vast difference between projected and actual spending (which, it should be noted, has plagued us ever since the Covid pandemic and is not simply a present concern for this financial year), Education projected a spend of \$1,159 but ultimately ended up using only just north of \$50 of this budget. That being said, such an observation applies across the board — for all teams as well as Administration. It should be noted, however, that some events and ongoing community work will continue to happen beyond the end of our financial year. As such, they represent costs that were probably budgeted by this year's teams and team leaders, but which costs will, because of the structuring of our financial year, technically comprise next year's spend.

The Wellington Community Justice Project is in a healthy financial position going forward. This will enable the incoming Student Directors and wider executive to incur project costs before receiving funding for 2024. The WCJP is in an excellent financial position to continue its successes from the last year and to carry out its projects to support the Wellington community going forward. Thank you again to our supporters, Buddle Findlay, without whom the WCJP would not be able to carry out the truly awesome mahi that it does to positively impact the community. The executive members have worked incredibly hard this year and it has been a privilege to work with such passionate and caring people. A personal highlight was being able to come together more as an organisation this year, compared to the previous year which was riddled with Covid-related difficulties. Although we are all united under the WCJP banner, team building and buy-in has proved difficult in the past. As such, it really was a pleasure to get to know the rest of the executive on a deeper level, and spend some quality time with them.

I am so very glad to be a part of an organisation that constantly looks for ways to better itself and give to those around us. I am sure the incoming executive will continue to build on what we have accomplished this year and I look forward to continuing working alongside them to make next year as successful as possible.

Ngā mihi nui
Sameer Mandhan
Kaitiaki Moni | Treasurer 2023
Wellington Community Justice Project

1 October 2023

Wellington Community Justice Project Incorporated
Statement of Financial Performance

For Year Ended 30 September 2023

Income

Buddle Findlay	\$ 1,000.00
Summit Fees	\$ 0.00
Interest	\$ 93.49

Total Income ***\$ 1,093.49***

Expenses

Launch Expenses	\$ 706.48
Executive Social Expenses	\$ 361.80

Team Activity and Project Costs

Advocacy	\$ 543.46
Education	\$ 50.65
Human Rights	\$ 581.67
Law Reform	\$ 339.09

Administration Costs	\$ 628.24
Summit Expenses	\$ 292.95

Total Expenses ***\$ 3,504.34***

Net Profit (Loss) for Period **\$ (2,410.85)**

Wellington Community Justice Project Incorporated
Statement of Financial Position
For Year Ended 30 September 2023

Assets

Cash	Bank Balance at 30 September 2023	\$ 5,108.93
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Total Assets ***\$ 5,108.93***

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$ 0.00
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<i>Total Liabilities</i>	<i>\$ 0.00</i>
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Net Position	\$ 5,108.93
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