

# **EQUAL JUSTICE PROJECT**

**End of Year Report 2016**



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# Directors' End of Year Report – 2016

Prepared by Co-Directors Rayhan Langdana and Jade Magrath

## Outline of Role

There are three key components of the role of Director: people management, strategy and vision for the organisation, and risk management as situations arise.

In terms of people management, the Directors hold fortnightly meetings with the EJP Executive as a whole. These meetings are important ways for the Directors to remain abreast issues that present themselves to different teams (such as questions over particular projects EJP is thinking of undertaking or people/groups EJP is thinking of forming a relationship with, issues with volunteers, event planning and organisation, and general administrative issues). The meetings also ensure that each team's Managers are informed as to the work of their colleagues, and allows EJP to foster a collaborative team environment.

The Directors also interact with volunteers to get their feedback on aspects of EJP. An important part of volunteer feedback this year has been feedback about the ADLSi subcommittees that many volunteers sit on. We will address this under heading II(1).

More broadly, the Directors set the tone for the Executive group and guide EJP according to their 'strategic vision.' Strategic planning involves meeting with the new Executive at the beginning of the year and clearly examining each team's goals for the year ahead. The goal of strategic planning is to set specific goals that are underpinned by a broad commitment to EJP's general values. It is important to establish clear timelines at the beginning of the year to ensure that EJP's strategic goals are being met.

Risk management involves the Directors assessing potentially contentious situations (such as projects or external relationships) and making decisions about whether EJP should engage in those areas or not. The Advisory Board is an important, helpful feature of the Directors' risk management processes.

The Directors are also responsible for securing EJP's sponsorship and maintaining EJP's financial records. In this sense, the Directors are de facto treasurers of the organisation. They must ensure that the internal records we keep are up to date and comprehensive, as this assists EJP when applying for external funding.

## 2016

### Work Completed

#### 1. ADLSi Committees

This is the second year that EJP volunteers have sat in on committees operated by the Auckland District Law Society incorporated (ADLSi). EJP volunteers sit on these subcommittees as a result of a Memorandum of Understanding signed in mid-2015: EJP would benefit from greater exposure to legal issues in practice, while ADLSi would have better youth representation. These subcommittees provide volunteers with excellent learning and networking opportunities, and allow EJP as a whole to access work that we otherwise would not be asked to help with. We have been in discussion with the helpful people at ADLSi about how to improve this programme, for example to ensure that volunteer engagement remains high throughout the year. This year, we had 22 volunteers participate, sitting on 11 different subcommittees. Going forward, we hope to improve volunteer engagement in the programme while increasing the amount of feedback volunteers get from other members of their subcommittees.

#### 2. Fundraising

We applied for and were awarded a grant of \$1500 from the University of Auckland's Clubs Grants in Semester Two. This has effectively serviced EJP's operations for the year and has allowed us to host extra events such as the EJP Hui and BYO Dinners to recognise and value the work of EJP volunteers. We have also increased our focus on fundraising by asking alumni and individual supporters for donations, bake sales and by having donation buckets at our Access symposia. We would note the importance of correctly formatting all financial information, as in order to obtain a grant from the University, correct procedure must be followed. We also received a generous donation from ADLSi.

### *3. EJP Hui*

This was the second year we held the EJP Hui, a way to reward volunteers by allowing them to attend interesting talks and workshops. We heard from Jacob Barry of Meredith Connell (giving career advice to law students), Nick Leader (a criminal barrister who ran an advocacy workshop), YouthLaw (whose workshop was about dealing with young people and the law), Paula Bold-Wilson of the Waitemata Community Law Centre (speaking about cultural sensitivity), and Brian Keene QC and Dennis Jenkin, who discussed their experiences in the courtroom.

The event was a successful way of building a better community within EJP and allowing volunteers to hear from distinguished members of the legal world. However, as with many of our events, we would be benefited by greater volunteer turnout and this is something that should be addressed in the future.

### *4. Opening Function & EJP Award*

Our opening function was well attended by students, professionals and alumni. This was a great opportunity to celebrate the successes of EJP in 2015 and build momentum for 2016. With much sadness, we bade farewell to Sir Ted Thomas, our Patron of 10 years. Sir Ted has been an invaluable part of EJP for a decade and his support and guidance was a key factor in our ongoing survival and success. We presented the EJP Award to Dr Andrew Butler, a partner at Russell McVeagh in Wellington, for his Pro Bono work (in particular his work on the Lecretia Seales case). Dr Butler illustrates the fact that pro bono work and a career in commercial law are not mutually exclusive.

### *5. Advisory Board recruitment*

We also said farewell to some members of our Advisory Board, who had been committed partners of EJP for many years. We reached out to members of the legal community that we had worked with in the past in order to find replacements, and are extremely excited about the new Advisory Board we have. There is a healthy mix of academics, senior lawyers, and lawyers with previous experience as EJP volunteers and directors.

### *6. Charity application*

We have begun the process of applying for Registered Charity status. This will allow us to access a larger amount of resources in the future.

### *7. Merging the Education and Outreach teams into the Access team.*

At the end of 2015 we decided to merge the Education and Outreach teams. This was for several reasons. First, neither team had enough work to give to its volunteers, resulting in gradual volunteer disengagement as the year went on. This paucity of work was due to the nature of each team – Outreach was project-based, and no number of volunteers could realistically allow it to host more than two symposia a year (due to the lengthy process of writing a symposium paper, organising a high-calibre panel etc.). Education suffered from a lack of engagement from schools around Auckland, meaning that while we had developed various high-quality presentations there was not enough demand from schools to allow each of our volunteers to contribute.

Merging the two teams has been a resounding success. We have observed a far closer-knit environment among the team, and volunteer engagement has improved. The school presentations have been well received and the team has looked into forming new partnerships with other organisations. The symposia have similarly been well organised. This is in no small part due to the exemplary leadership of Access team managers Linda Lim and Maree Cassaidy.

## **Reflections**

2016 has been a year of consolidation for EJP. We made a conscious decision to accept fewer volunteers than in 2015, where we had a record 170 members. This year, the goal was to create a leaner, more efficient organisation. We wanted to streamline each team to a) ensure that there was more work per volunteer (thus staving off volunteer apathy) and b) make teams more cohesive – smaller teams would, in theory, make each team easier to manage and create a better team environment.

In order to do this, we asked each outgoing team manager to evaluate how many volunteers their teams actually needed. We added to this minimum around 2 or 3 spots, so that there would be cover if volunteers ended up being overcommitted or were underperforming. In our view, this has been a successful change. Our feedback from each team is that while there remain a small proportion of volunteers who carry out less work than the rest of the team, on the whole smaller teams result in better outcomes (both in terms of work produced and in terms of ease of management).

Initiatives like the Hui and advocacy workshops, as well as the ADLSI committees, were successful in giving volunteers something more from their involvement with the organisation than just a sense of altruistic fulfilment. Through initiatives like this, we feel as though we are creating a clear culture within EJP: we think that volunteers are growing to realise that they can receive tangible opportunities and skills as a result of working with EJP. However, attendance at some events has been slightly patchy. This is a perennial problem, but we are confident that as we continue to present these events as opportunities for volunteers to learn (as opposed to events to passively attend) we will come closer to fixing this.

## Key Relationships

### 1. ADLSI

As detailed above, this relationship has expanded on the connections made last year and has become one of EJP's core relationships. ADLSI are always willing to support EJP and have provided speakers for some of our symposia and training events as well as regularly publishing volunteer articles and upcoming EJP events in the ADLSI publication *LawNews*. Our contacts at ADLSi have consistently been willing to assist us with events, and hear our concerns as well as meeting with us to address these. This is a crucial relationship that next year's Directorial and Executive team should endeavour to maintain. We have learned that a key part of this relationship is feedback, especially with regard to the ADLSi subcommittees: regularly asking volunteers for feedback about their experiences and passing this on to ADLSi is an easy way of refining this process.

### 2. Law Faculty

This is a relationship that has waned somewhat this year and would be good to renew. We have had limited interaction with Dr Stockley, and aside from having Advisory Board members on the faculty, have little engagement with faculty members as an organisation. Despite this, when we contacted faculty members for assistance with events and projects they have been prompt to respond and incredibly helpful - indicating that this is a positive relationship which could be very beneficial to EJP. In terms of funding and assistance generally it would be good to have a better relationship with the Faculty as groups like the Mooting Society have been substantially helped by their positive relationships with the Dean.

### 3. Advisory Board

This should be one of the EJP Director's first ports of call in terms of help and tone setting for the direction of the organization. This relationship is an incredibly important one, and the Advisory Board have been extremely helpful in advice on updating EJP policy, setting guidelines for volunteers and managing the ADLSI relationship. This year, we invited several new members to the Advisory Board and made a much more concerted effort to meet with the Advisory Board regularly. While attendance at some of these meetings has been low (due, of course, to the incredibly high workload of all members of the Advisory Board), we have been extremely pleased by the willingness of the Advisory Board to reply to emails and offer advice when asked. The key to this relationship (like any relationship) is maintenance. If the Directorial and Executive team fail to set regular meeting times with the Advisory Board (of course, notifying them in advance), this relationship will wither.

## Position/Structure

### Management Structure

The management structure for the directors is quite clearly laid out. The directors decide the direction of EJP as an organisation, particularly in terms of strategy, fundraising and the overall vision of EJP for that particular year. On a day-to-day basis, the directors ensure that the managers are all completing the tasks they need to and ensure the organisation is on track to meet its goals. The advisory board then sit to the side of the directors as a sounding board.

#### 1. The Co-Directors

The co-directorship has worked very well this year in terms of having a fourth year and fifth year leadership team. We both feel that we have learnt from each other and have different skills that complement each other well. The fact that one of us will be taking a two year term as director has meant that we have both become more long term visioned and thinking about the longevity and success of EJP as an organisation over the next two to five years, rather than just the next six months. In terms of our workloads outside of EJP, we have been able to pick up the slack from one another where needed without too much trouble. We have supported each other well, and also tried to support our executive to the best of our abilities. Until this year, the fourth/fifth year split between Directors was an informal one. However, when recruiting for 2017's new Co-Director, we made a conscious decision to actively seek a candidate who would be able to stay in the job for two years. EJP's relationships with external parties relies heavily

on continuity. If, for example, two new Co-Directors were installed in October of a given year, it is easy to imagine a gap (during exams, and while the new Co-Directors are working their way through handover procedures) during which our external relationships fall by the wayside.

## *2. The Executive*

Each of our 4 teams has two Co-Managers, resulting in an Executive of 8 Managers and 2 Co-Directors. In previous years we have had assistant managers for certain teams. We ceased that practice when it became apparent that the role of assistant manager was too vague and hazily defined, resulting in the occupant of that role being unable to be particularly helpful to their manager or their team. The Co-Manager system allows for the workload of each team to be cleanly and evenly distributed between two people with equal authority to make decisions.

## *3. Teams*

EJP currently has 4 teams – Pro Bono, Community, Communications, and Access. As discussed above, we decided to merge the former Education and Outreach teams into the Access team. As hoped, restructuring these teams in this way streamlines the organisation as whole, created more meaningful work for volunteers, and allowed the frequently convergent goals and interests of the Outreach and Education team to overlap more formally.

## *4. Advisory Board*

As stated above, the Advisory Board is a valuable resource for the Co-Directors and the organisation as whole. The Advisory Board sit to the side of the Co-Directors: the Co-Directors do not require the Advisory Board's approval before finalising every decision they make, but should recognise that the Advisory Board primarily exists to guide the Co-Directors and help minimise the risk they expose the organisation to. We have been happy with the relationship we have forged with the Advisory Board this year.

## **Reflections**

In general the Director position and our roles have worked well. The responsibilities and tasks undertaken by directors year to year will vary depending on the ideas and goals of individuals. In that sense, it is quite a fluid role. Because of this, the directors need to set their own strategic goals and vision well before appointing an executive and volunteers in order to filter this throughout the organisation. Having said that, the strategic aims of EJP also need to include the manager's ideas and work needs to be done to ensure that they feel included in this process. Perhaps we could have done more work in this area this year.

In terms of the Executive, we believe we have successfully created a collaborative environment where managers are supported and we contribute towards the work they are undertaking. We have provided consistent oversight of their work through Executive meetings and have made concerted efforts to have one on one catch ups where needed. On reflection, however, we feel as though we could have made a greater effort to create a strong social relationship among the Executive. The nature of volunteer work like this is that it can be thankless and is often time consuming at inopportune times of the year (such as during assignment-heavy periods). We feel that an Executive that was more close-knit could have mitigated some of the stress that arose during busy periods of the year.

As noted, we made a conscious decision to formally seek a new Co-Director who will be able to commit to the role for 2 years. We are happy with this decision.

## **Volunteers**

### **A General Contributions and Experiences**

#### *1. Recruitment*

This recruitment of managers in December 2015 and of volunteers in March 2016 ran smoothly and we were happy to receive a large number of applications for both positions. A number of volunteers returned to EJP from the previous year, ensuring continuity within the teams and preventing a loss of organisational knowledge and experience.

We have attempted to simplify the process of reapplying this year. Volunteers who intend to volunteer for their existing team over the Summer Break and/or in the new year were able to express their interest via a simple Google Form. Approximately 40% of our current volunteers have expressed an interest in returning to EJP in 2017. This is positive as we now have a strong core of volunteers to build on in 2017, which will take some pressure off the recruitment period in March and allow us to focus on recruiting

high quality volunteers from outside of EJP. A number of volunteers in the Community and Communications teams will continue to volunteer over the Summer. This allows us to preserve EJP's external relationships as well as maintain a steady flow of content on our website and social media. In the past, EJP has suffered from a loss of engagement from readers over the Summer period and we hope to avoid this this year.

This year we also intend to recruit our Team Managers earlier than usual. Managers will be recruited before the end of the University year. We hope that this will result in more students applying for the roles, and will also allow the new Executive to meet and begin planning for 2017 sooner.

## 2. *Commitment and Performance*

Overall, our volunteers have performed extremely well this year, and feedback from external parties has been favourable. We recognise the importance of volunteers feeling valued by the organisation. This year we attempted to recognise volunteers who went above and beyond for their teams by contacting them individually to thank them for their contributions. We also invited some of those volunteers to sit on ADLSi Committees, which provide new opportunities for growth. As in previous years, top volunteers from each team will receive an award at our End of Year Function and AGM. This year we are also introducing a special award for an overall top volunteer.

We received a small number of resignations, and had to discuss commitment to EJP with a few volunteers. These occurrences were rare and non-unexpected in an organisation with as large a volunteer base as EJP. Nonetheless, we acknowledge that the lack of engagement from these volunteers may stem from them feeling underappreciated or disconnected from the wider EJP community.

## 3. *Community*

Building a sense of community among EJP volunteers, both within and between teams, is an ongoing challenge for the organisation. Attendance at this year's Hui was lower than expected, and we believe that this can partly be attributed to the fact that volunteers do not feel connected to the organisation as a whole. This may have been because the social aspect of EJP was lacking compared to last year. In 2015 we hosted two EJP-wide social events, whereas this year we only hosted one. Further, the Opening Function was held later in the year compared to last year, which may have resulted in volunteers losing the opportunity to connect with members from other teams early on. This is an issue that we hope to focus on improving in following years.

### **Volunteer Numbers**

2015 saw EJP achieve its largest membership to date, attracting 160 volunteers. This year we focused on consolidating our volunteer numbers to ensure that each volunteer was getting a sufficient amount of work and that our volunteers were of a high calibre. Further, less volunteers were required as the Education and Outreach teams had been merged to create a new team - Access. EJP accepted 109 volunteers in total, and we believe that we were able to fulfil our intentions of making the work for individual volunteers more consistent, engaging, and meaningful as a result. We hope to recruit a similar number of volunteers next year. As stated above, we have a large number of volunteers returning in 2017, so our focus in the new year will be placed on recruiting students from younger year groups as well as reaching out to older students external to EJP with the requisite experience and passion for social justice

### **Reflections**

2016 has been another highly successful year for EJP in terms of volunteer commitment and performance. We believe that volunteers received sufficient feedback and encouragement from their Managers and from ourselves, and we have looked for new ways to reward outstanding volunteers. We had a very few resignations and only a small number of volunteers with commitment issues. Further, a significant portion of this year's volunteers have expressed a desire to return to EJP in 2017. We are confident that this is reflective of EJP having provided an overall positive and engaging experience for our volunteers. Nonetheless, poor attendance at the Annual Hui does demonstrate that volunteers do not feel as connected to the wider EJP community. There were less EJP-wide events throughout the year which may have led to this sense of disconnectedness. Building a greater sense of community within EJP will be a focal point for the Directors in 2017.

## **Improvements for 2017 onwards**

### **ADLSi Committee Representation**

We have been in discussions with representatives of ADLSi about how we can improve the experience of sitting on the Law Society's Committees for our volunteers, as well as to ensure that the Committees are able to maximise the volunteers' potential to contribute to their work. Some of the issues currently faced by the programme include lack of active participation by volunteers (partly due to a lack of understanding of their role on the committee, and a lack of knowledge about the subject matter covered) and a workload disparity between different committees. Strategies that we hope to implement next year in partnership with ADLSi to address these concerns include the following:

- a. Adequate induction and training of committee representatives, and the creation of a manual for volunteers.
- b. A buddy system whereby each EJP volunteer will have one or two solicitors who can offer support and advice, as well as answer questions about the committee.
- c. Changing the sitting term from Oct – Oct to Feb – Feb to better align the commitment with the University year.
- d. A more rigorous recruitment process involving applications that will be reviewed by ADLSi staff, and an informal interview.

### **Advisory Board**

This year EJP welcomed a number of new members to its Advisory Board. We have found them to be an invaluable source of information, advice, and support for our Executive. Because of the delayed appointment of the new Advisory Board, the EJP Executive were only able to meet with the Board 3 times this year. In order to further involve the Board in EJP, we hope to meet with the Board quarterly in 2017. Further, we recognise that the Board members have incredibly busy schedules. Therefore we intend to schedule the dates for all of these meetings at the beginning of the year to ensure that the Advisory Board has sufficient notice.

### **Visibility**

We have received feedback both internally and externally that there is room for EJP to increase its visibility in the legal community and amongst the public. We believe that the work that EJP does in the community is valuable and want to ensure that we are reaching the maximum number of people possible. Accordingly, we would like to explore ways in which EJP could improve its exposure and accessibility.

### **Building a Community**

As stated above, building a sense of community among EJP volunteers has been an ongoing challenge for the organisation. In 2017 we hope to implement strategies to address this. We plan to have an increased number of social events and also to provide alternative opportunities for volunteers to meet one another through training or fundraising events. Another way that we can build a sense of community is by celebrating our shared successes. Currently, each team largely operates independently. This means that volunteers from different teams have little idea of what their fellow EJP members are doing throughout the year, which contributes to a feeling of disconnectedness. Next year, we hope to increase communication between teams and encourage volunteers to view other teams' successes as their own successes.

# Access End of Year Report – 2016

Prepared by Access Co-Managers Maree Cassaidy and Linda Lim

## Outline of the Role

As Access managers, our day-to-day role involves communicating with schools and volunteers, and organising behind-the-scenes symposium logistics. On the school side, we ensure our volunteers have the right facilities and contacts for their presentations, and collect feedback to keep improving our presentations.

For most of the semester, we are also in the process of putting together our bi-annual symposium. This involves working with our team to determine an appropriate topic, putting together a group to coordinate the symposium paper, then focussing on the logistical side of bringing the event together. This latter point includes reaching out to people to speak on our panel, booking rooms and equipment, and working with the Communications team to develop strong marketing campaigns.

The workload remains relatively constant with regards to the schools side, but tends to increase as each symposium draws near. This year, we focused our team-building and social activities towards those times where the symposium organisation was not as demanding.

## 2016

### Work Completed

This year we presented to the following schools:

- Mangere College x3;
- Eden Campus Teen Parent Unit x 1;
- Education Action x 2;
- Botany College x 1;
- Aorere College x 6;
- Alfriston College x 5.

Alfriston College and Aorere College were new connections for us this year and we are enthusiastic about continuing those relationships in the future.

With an aim to continually improve our schools resources, we had a Resource Development team working incrementally on our presentations throughout the year. Part of this was to better tailor the content to suit high school students, and to also improve the consistency of branding across our resources. Although there are still a few presentations that need to match this new image, we now have a template that will allow us to stick to this theme in the future. However, we think that some of our presentations, such as our civics presentation, are better suited at older year levels within high school. These are the sorts of things that we would like to see experimented with in order to improve the way in which we pitch our services to schools.

Our first symposium for the year was “The Rights of Transgender People in Prisons” and focused on the recent media attention regarding issues surrounding the placement of transgender prisoners and their treatment within the facilities. The symposium research paper that accompanied this event was highly informative and was printed on the University of Auckland Equity website.

Our second semester symposium was titled “Deal or No Deal? - Plea Bargaining in the Justice System” and focused on the media attention that had surrounded the Moko case, where a child’s killers were convicted of manslaughter as opposed to murder. The symposium aimed to explore the various sides of the argument about whether or not plea bargaining is appropriate to use in some cases. In this way it differed from our first semester symposium, in which it was much harder to have two conflicting points of view.

At the beginning of the year, we had two team bonding/social/training events. Our first event was an induction type meeting where we got to know each other and set some expectations for the year. This was followed by a team dinner at Tyler Street Garage. The second was a Training Evening, where we provided pizza for the team and had YouthLaw come in to educate the team on cultural sensitivity and presenting to young adults. These both had great turnouts from our volunteers and started the year off on a great team vibe.

Instead of a purely social gathering in semester two, we decided to get our philanthropically minded volunteers together for a morning at Eat My Lunch. This is an organisation that, for every gourmet lunch sold to the community, provides a lunch for a child in need. Several members of our team showed up to make 1,200 lunches early one Tuesday morning, and found this to be a very fun activity despite the 6am start.

Another exciting initiative for the Access team this year was the long-anticipated introduction of Equal Justice Project t-shirts. The majority of our team chose to purchase these and they were brilliant to bring out at EJP events and for team activities such as Eat My Lunch. We think they have been an integral part of our EJP community and overall branding.

One of our final activities for the year was to host a bake sale, which was something originally held regularly by the Outreach team. As a team we opted to fundraise for national abuse charity, Shine. This featured EJP branded cookies, plenty of brownies and some delicious savoury muffins. We raised a total of \$307 for charity.

## **Reflections**

As a brand new team, we think that Access brought to the table exactly what we had hoped, and more. As a whole we believe our variety of activities and emphasis on doing things as a team rather than individuals led to a very integrated team culture. In turn, this saw better volunteer engagement and therefore more involvement in the community.

There is always scope to get out and present to more schools, but we have been mindful of the commitment this would ask of our volunteers. Ultimately, we think it is safer to risk going to less schools than working our volunteers so hard that they lose their passion. We think that the emphasis in future years should be on reinforcing relationships with schools to enable future bookings to be more easily facilitated, so that each subsequent year doesn't feel like you are starting completely anew.

This year we created a standard feedback form for our volunteers to fill out after their schools presentations so that we could make note of what went well, and any particular things to remember about the school. We also asked our volunteers to take photos with the kids and post it to our Access team Facebook page. This was a good way of staying up to date with presentations, maintaining a team culture and communicating about the presentations to the rest of the team members.

We decided to get involved in Eat My Lunch and fundraising for Shine through our Bake Sale as a means of going back to the "grass-roots" that Outreach tended to bring to the table before it was subsumed by Access. We were hugely impressed by the amount of enthusiasm our team had towards these occasions. They were good bonding activities, and really fit with what EJP stands for as a whole.

We would be very keen to see EJP t-shirts rolled out across the whole organisation in 2017. We regretted that we didn't have the resources (time or manpower) to take this on ourselves. We recommend the Access team getting t-shirts early on in the year to wear at their school presentations. This is beneficial for the branding of EJP.

## **Key Relationships**

Our relationship with YouthLaw was very helpful in a successful year for Access. We found them an invaluable point of contact for assistance in presentations, extra resources, and general support. They are supportive of Access' mandate in educating schools across Auckland and were keen to work together to ensure we reached a wide number of schools with our resources combined.

## **Position/Structure**

### **Management Structure**

The Directors were always available when we needed a second opinion or another set of eyes to proofread. As such we always felt supported by them without feeling micro-managed.

We had a good relationship with the Communications team who assisted us with marketing and event pages for the symposia. We found this relationship worked much better when we made a marketing schedule so that everyone was prepared well in advance.

### **Team Structure**

This year we had 3 sub-teams. Two of them were fixed term and focused on developing the symposium papers for each semester. These were led by Victoria Brownlee and Rachel Buckman respectively. The third was our Resource Development team, which was ongoing throughout the year, led by Zoe Mahon.

We felt that these worked fantastically - we were able to put a lot of responsibility in our volunteers and know that they would produce top-quality work for Access. As managers, we put together the teams and handed communication over to the Team Leaders. This saved us a lot of time and confusion and allowed us to focus on emails regarding schools and symposium-related matters. Without these sub-teams we probably wouldn't have been able to accomplish as much as we did this year.

## Reflections

As a newly formed EJP team, this year was all about creating and determining the scope of the Access team. We needed to combine both the presentations from the Schools team and the community education that Outreach achieved through symposia. We also endeavoured to find something special that Access could offer as a new team. The eagerness and positive attitudes of our volunteers meant that we were able to find other ways to give back to the community. We did this through volunteering at Eat my Lunch and a bake sale. However, we think that with more planning, more grass-roots type charity activities could definitely be undertaken by the access team.

## Volunteers

### General Contributions

We were fortunate in having an amazing selection of volunteers this year. We had a strong turnout at our team meetings and EJP wide events. Further, we never struggled to find volunteers to sign up for the symposiums and school presentations, including later in the year where volunteer engagement usually dissipates. They were always keen to find other ways we could reach out to people - the bake sale idea was predominantly volunteer driven! We managed to retain every single volunteer to a satisfactory degree.

An emphasis on the strong team culture of Access is necessary in ensuring the team keeps thriving. We made it clear from the beginning that regular team meetings, communication and participation were expected and our volunteers definitely delivered.

### Volunteer Numbers

We had 24 volunteers, which we found worked well for the amount for the amount of work we had. However, we were fortunate in that our volunteers stayed engaged and ready to sign up for projects, which may not be as simple to replicate each year. Despite this, we would only recommend opting for a larger team if there were concrete plans to get out to more schools or incorporate new activities. The focus should remain on quality.

## Reflections

Access applicants should be asked whether they have a car and full licence in order to ensure there will be enough people per presentation who can carpool non-drivers to schools. It is also worth asking whether they can commit to attend regular meetings, and whether they have any experience working with youth or giving interactive presentations.

## Confirmed 2016 Volunteer List

Ella Stolwerk  
Edward Krishna  
Gary Hofman  
Tarahneh Mohaghegh  
Zoe Mahon  
Victoria Brownlee  
Rosie Bingham  
Lily Rajput  
Hannah Piggin  
Scott Williams  
Emilou Hohaia  
Rachel Castelino  
Rachel Buckman  
Nadia Sussman  
Luseane Valu  
Andrea Lim

Caitlin Anyon-Peters  
Hazel Miekle-Downing  
Rima Shenoy  
Melissa Hu  
Helen Savage  
Hart Reynolds  
Dejealous Palota-Kopa  
Kathryn Goodman-Creed

Victoria Brownlee was the team leader for the first symposium paper, the Rights of Transgender People in Prisons. She coordinated the team and compiled the final paper which was well received, and has even been published on the UoA Equity website. Victoria has also presented at a number of school presentations and has been an asset to our team during Eat my Lunch and the bake sale where her Nutella brownies were a hit!

Zoe Mahon has been our resource development whiz for this year. Her impeccable eye for detail has shaped our presentations into a uniform, clear, informative set of presentations. She has gone above and beyond by also creating additional presentation guides for our presenters and creating a style guide for future presentations. We were also fortunate to have her involved in every other aspect of Access, with great meeting and event attendance as well as presenting at Alfriston College.

Ella Stolwerk is another of our EJP stars. She has signed up to numerous school presentations where we received awesome feedback singling her out for her engagement with the students. Her organisational skills have been a huge asset to the team and a great help in relieving some of the pressure off us during symposium setup and the bake sale.

## Improvements for Next Year?

We would love develop a brochure that sets out all of our different school presentations and what we have to offer. This would be an effective way of showing our professionalism and the range of presentations we offer to schools. We have photos taken from this year that we would also like to see circulated.

We would also like to build on our school resources. We have one governance-related game from YouthLaw, but it would be beneficial to acquire or design more of these sorts of games to improve the presentations. As lollies are great for engagement with the students, we think it would be worth having a supply of these funded by EJP, as well as a fun box of props that could be taken to each school.

Ultimately, we are very happy with the way that Access has developed as the newest EJP team this year. We would like to see the incoming managers focus on building this foundation before attempting to expand Access' scope.

# Communications End of Year Report – 2016

Prepared by Communications Co-Managers Eugenia Woo and Rebecca Hallas

## Outline of Role

### Publications

As Communications managers we have a pretty consistent workload. We edit roughly 2-4 articles a week depending on how many have been submitted by volunteers. The editing is the most time-consuming aspect of the job. We then upload the articles to the EJP website, format them, and post about the articles on our social media pages once they've been published. The time that it takes for an article to be ready for publication varies depending on the volunteer – we make edits to their work, send it back to them for approval, then undertake the relevant formatting and make graphics for the final draft. Ideally this turnaround would be quicker in the future, but we are wary of putting an exact time limit on replying because we realise that volunteers have academic and work commitments that may prevent them from reading and responding to our suggested edits.

Sometimes checking up on volunteers is necessary in order for our publication schedule to run to plan, but for the most part, our team is self-motivated and committed to doing their part. We're relaxed with extensions so long as they are within reason and do not disrupt the posting goals that we have to meet (and most volunteers only need one). We understand the pressures placed on all of our volunteers, and they always pull through with a great article in the end.

The Communications Team produced two categories of publications – *Amicus Curiae* and *Cross-Examination*. We believe that we were able to ensure a healthy balance between ensuring that both types of pieces had regular, good-quality coverage. As was the practice with last years' Managers, we regularly posted in the Communications Facebook group when relevant topics came up in the media, Twitter, and other outlets that we thought would make great articles. Volunteers were then encouraged to contact us with a short pitch explaining what they wanted to write. We would give feedback, decide on whether the topic was appropriate, then inform the volunteer of a due date and have them confirm it before entering it into the schedule. Getting "fresh" pitches from volunteers and encouraging them to talk us through it was beneficial for both them and us. Often a volunteer would have a great topic but not have enough legal knowledge about the area to start, and knowing where they wanted to take the piece made editing much easier later on and allowed us to make constructive comments about the subject matter if needed.

In 2015, 1 volunteer handled the majority of short-form *Amicus Curiae* pieces. This year, we decided that every volunteer in Communications would have to do at least 3 pieces from a mix of *Amicus* and *Cross-Ex* formats, and that the mix would have to include at least 1 of each different type of piece. We believe that this gave our volunteers a better understanding of journalistic techniques and research techniques for both short-form and long-form pieces, and it also meant that they could write to their interests. Articles on current topics were often *Amicus* pieces because they were written within a day or two of regular media coverage being released, whereas *Cross-Ex* pieces were more a labour of love (allowing for volunteers to write about areas that they were passionate about that were not necessarily topical but still well-researched and presented).

Communications produced a number of *Cross-Ex* pieces that were longer than the average length of last years'. We noted that the Managers from last year were willing to trial a longer type of *Cross-Ex* that reflected elements of feature articles, and were happy to find volunteers who were willing to embark on that type of intensive writing this year. In terms of topics, we were more relaxed this year about the requirement for long-form pieces to have a legal bent. We believed that restricting volunteers from writing about social justice issues purely because there had not been much legal intervention or connection with them in the past was unfair, and our efforts have so far been rewarded by volunteers writing long-form, extensively-researched pieces about areas previously unexplored by EJP.

### Public Relations

This year, Communications attempted to build upon the work of last year's team by maintaining media relationships with organisations who support us and who have an interest in similar causes. We have successfully done so by formalising a lot of the relationships that were previously created – No Pride in Prisons, Gay Express, and Shine have all officially agreed to reciprocal media relationships whereby they endorse our organisation and promote material that we produce relating to their interests, while we share material from theirs on our various social media outlets. These relationships were only finalised during the middle to late portion of this year, so there will be additional scope to grow upon them in the future, but the seeds have been sown and the response so far from all avenues has been positive.

While we tried very hard to revive our Twitter account in terms of user engagement, this year the account received even less outside engagement. This was despite our efforts to increase the quality of live-tweets at events, and attempts to share material

that was created by others. The Equal Justice Project Twitter account is clearly not a place that our readers feel comfortable contacting us on (all serious enquiries that we received were via email), and it may be for the best that the organisation does not maintain a Twitter account in the future – it should go the way of our Reddit account. Twitter is a difficult platform to remain popular on without the use of gimmicks, memes, and controversy. We do not believe that EJP would benefit from the use of any of those professionally, which has contributed to our recommendation.

## 2016

### Work Completed

This year, Communications was excited to welcome a bill submission element to our team. The now-defunct Outreach team was previously in charge of this, and they assisted in transitioning the workload over to us by making previous submissions available. We assembled a handful of volunteers to write a submission for Parliament for a reformed Te Ture Whenua Maori Act. Notable contributions were made by Meg Williams and Daniel Gambitsis, who both worked extremely hard on their parts of the submission and made great suggestions to Parliament. We would have welcomed the opportunity to work on more bill submissions this year, but were unable to find appropriate topics that fit with the availability of the volunteers who were assigned to this task. We delegated some of the organisational aspects of the bill submission activity to a Team Manager, and this strategy worked quite well. Volunteers were motivated to complete the task in a timely manner, and we believe that it fostered a greater degree of connection amongst the team.

### Reflections

One of our central goals this year was increase our Facebook engagement. As it is our primary means of communicating with volunteers and publicising the organisation's many efforts, we were particularly conscious of ensuring that any engagement on our end in terms of publicity and social media was ultimately meaningful. As of February 2016, we were sitting on 846 Facebook likes. As the year draws to a close, we are currently sitting at 1,073 likes, with a spike projected to occur after the conclusion of our Second Semester Symposium.

While the increase in likes was not as prodigious as last year, we believe that we have exchanged casual likes for engagement from those outside the university sphere. Our posts have seen repeated shares and comments from Green Party MPs, owing in part to our own volunteers' commitments to spreading the word about EJP when engaging in their extracurricular activities. We have also seen an increase in post shares – bodies such as JustSpeak and the New Zealand Human Rights Blog have shared our posts. This is a new development that speaks to the strength of our current marketing strategy of branching out beyond the basics established by the 2015 Managers.

Our predecessors delegated a lot of their tasks – including final edits of articles, uploading and formatting them on the website, as well as social media posts – to volunteers. We decided to complete these tasks ourselves. In hindsight, the amount of work necessary per week was quite overwhelming. In the future we may implement a team of 2 or 3 volunteers who have the title of "Communications Team Editor" to take turns editing articles on weeks when the Managers are particularly busy. Having more than one person complete this job would also mean the burden on these volunteers isn't too high – the sole editor for 2015 did not return in 2016 and we are concerned it was due to the weight of their workload.

### Key Relationships

Our key relationships were primarily with the Access Team and with the Directors. The nature of the other teams meant that they did not need our input or to liaise with us for promoting events and the like. We believe that our relationship with Access worked well, although at times there may have been a muddying of the organisational waters when it came to publicity and social media initiatives. In Semester 2, we were approached by Access with a detailed plan regarding how they wanted us to promote the symposium. This level of planning was much appreciated, although in the future it may be better for both Access and Communications to coordinate at every step of the way instead of merely at the formation of the plan or when deadlines are not met.

Our relationship with the Directors was comfortable, and we believe that it worked well. The Directors were very helpful in terms of advising us how to deal with a variety of issues ranging from volunteer engagement to the kind of material that we should produce, and we welcome their future input on the work that Communications undergoes.

## Position/Structure

### Management Structure

We felt comfortable going to the Directors whenever we had an issue. We enjoyed working closely with Access and hope to continue to do so in the future. We found the workload this year was quite heavy, and in future we might consider creating a new position within the Communications Team (e.g. Social Media Manager) to lessen this burden.

### Team Structure

The nature of our work is very individualised. However, for the purposes of the bill submission, we developed a sub-team of volunteers with Daniel Gambitsis named as Team Leader. Again, the volunteers ended up working predominantly alone, and next year we may try to implement a more collaborative approach to bill submission research. Furthermore, next year we may increase the number of our volunteers involved in a bill submission to around five, as we feel it would lessen the workload on each individual.

## Volunteers

### General Contributions

The majority of our volunteers were very motivated and submitted work to a high standard. However, it seems that every year our team will struggle with one or two people who fail to respond to messages or submit work. Thus, high volunteer numbers is not particularly beneficial as it means more time chasing up people about articles rather than a smaller team of dedicated individuals. This is partially the reasoning behind our proposal to reduce our volunteer numbers next year (see below).

### Volunteer Numbers

We had 16 team members this year. Next year, cutting that number down to around 12 or 13 may be beneficial, as we are concerned with quality over quantity.

### Reflections

Next year we may introduce a mandatory requirement that those applying to Communications include an example of a piece of their writing in their application. It need not be journalism – even a tutorial essay would be helpful in seeing what level of writing that volunteer is capable of.

We would also implement a three strikes policy – continually handing out extensions to volunteers who do not care about their work is an incredible waste of our time and frustrating on our end. Under this policy, if a volunteer failed to hand in their work after three extensions, they would be removed from the team (barring exceptional circumstances).

### Confirmed 2016 Volunteer List

Ashley Wainstein  
Chris Ryan  
Claudia Russell  
Daniel Gambitsis  
Emily Ferguson  
Hannah Yang  
Isabel Ko  
Jade Du Preez  
Jasper Lau  
Jenna McLachlan  
Jess Fitzgerald  
Meg Williams  
Paht Satjipanon  
Pooja Upadhyay  
Ruby Grubb  
Tara Leota-Seiuli

## **Honourable Mention**

Hannah Yang

## **Outstanding Volunteer Award Recipients**

Daniel Gambitsis

Meg Williams

## **Improvements for next year?**

We recommend the removal of EJP's twitter. It received significantly less interaction from the public than our Facebook page, and the process of live-tweeting events has gone almost entirely unnoticed by our followers and members of the public. It is a lot of effort to run a consistent, on-brand twitter account, and as advised above, what is needed for popularity and the attraction of engagement would be inappropriate for an organisation like ours to engage in.

Reducing the amount of questions asked in Communications applications might also be beneficial. Typically we ask potential volunteers why they are attracted to EJP/are interested in social justice – and the answer is pretty much consistently because they care about justice and equal rights. The fact that they are even applying to join EJP clearly demonstrates they care about these issues. So rather than running the risk of volunteers repeating themselves throughout their application, we feel the process should be shortened, and for Communications specifically, the focus should be shifted to their ability to write. This can be ascertained by a requirement of a submission of a piece of writing with their application.

We also would like to start posting about other content in addition to our own on our Facebook page – advertising other charity organisations and social justice based events will not only help spread word to these awesome causes, but also help us forge connections with other charities and therefore (hopefully) help more people.

# Community End of Year Report – 2016

Prepared by Community Co-Managers Alice Palmer and Honor Kerry

## Outline of Role

Our day-to-day role as managers has involved communication with our volunteers and the external organisations that they are placed in. Our other key responsibilities have included general oversight of our volunteers and the projects and centres they are working in while also trying to build new partnerships and opportunities for future volunteers.

The beginning of the year is a crucial time for the community team and we spent a lot of time re-establishing relationships between EJP and the Community Law Centres and determining their expectations of how our volunteers would fit into their work this year. Communication and checking in with the Centres continued throughout the year to ensure that our volunteers were getting the best experience they could and were providing valuable assistance to the Centres. Communicating with our elected liaison officers at the Waitemata and Auckland City Centres has also enabled us to keep tabs on the work our volunteers were doing.

We keep regular communication with our volunteers through email and our Facebook page both about their work at the Centres and EJP wide events. We have been available by email daily to answer questions and sort administrative issues regarding volunteers' shifts.

We have started a new project this year with Korowai Manaaki – a Youth Justice Residence in South Auckland. This initially involved a lot of organisation with the Child Youth and Family head office, and the Youth Justice Residence management, but our day-to-day role once the programme was established became much less hands on.

## 2016

### Work Completed

This year we have sent volunteers to 3 Community Law Centres throughout Auckland and one Youth Justice Residence.

Our volunteer count was:

- 16 volunteers assigned to the Auckland Community Law Centre;
- 27 volunteers assigned to the Waitemata Community Law Centre; and
- 6 volunteers assigned to the Mangere Community Law Centre.
- 4 volunteers assigned to Korowai Manaaki Youth Justice Residence.

Our volunteers have been involved in a range of tasks at the centres including drafting, providing phone triage services and assisting lawyers to advise clients in clinics.

### Key Relationships

Our key relationships this year were with Louise at the Waitemata Centre and Darryn at the Auckland Centre. Justin, our key contact at the Mangere Centre, left the position mid-way through the year and we have since struggled to keep up communication with this centre. We are looking forward to hearing of his replacement in the role and building a relationship between EJP and them.

Our liaison officers, Rebecca D'Silva at the Auckland Centre, and Stephen Duggan at the Waitemata Centre have also been a valuable means of communicating with the centres where we have larger numbers of EJP volunteers.

This year we met with Darryn and Justin in order to discuss the centres' needs and how our volunteers could fit in with this. It was great to establish communication with them before selecting volunteers as it meant that we could work to the numbers they required. It was also good to meet face-to-face early on so that ongoing communication could be more effective. Next year we will endeavour to also meet with Louise from the Waitemata Centre before recruiting new volunteers.

Our key relationship at Korowai Manaaki was originally with Matt Beattie at the Child Youth and Family head office who helped to set up our relationship with the Residence. Once this had been established, our primary contact was with Julie Trigger who runs the grievance advocacy programme at the Korowai.

## Position/Structure

### Management Structure

Moving from having one to two managers of the community team certainly reduced each manager's individual workload and meant that emails and Facebook queries were answered quickly. Having two managers this year did, however, require making extra effort to distribute tasks between us. Alice took the lead on the ongoing project of establishing volunteering opportunities at Korowai Manaaki and Whakatakapokai and Honor took responsibility for more administrative tasks of keeping volunteers in the loop about events and their responsibilities. In future, establishing the individual roles of each manager at the beginning of the year will be important, as will maintaining effective communication between them.

The Directors and other executive members provided valuable support and assistance with our decision-making through our fortnightly meetings and other correspondences.

### Team Structure

This year we had liaison officers at each of the Centres where we have a larger number of volunteers; Stephen Duggan at the Waitemata Centre and Rebecca D'Silva at the Auckland Centre. As the Mangere Centre only had 6 volunteers we did not feel it needed to have a liaison officer, however, this may be something to look into in the future if the centre accepts more EJP volunteers.

This structure worked well as it streamlined communication and somewhat mitigated the issue that the team's managers are not actually present for volunteers at the centre.

The volunteers at Korowai set up a Facebook chat to organise rosters and shifts. This also proved very effective.

### Reflections

All of our established projects and partnerships have worked well this year and we have been pleased with the positive feedback we have received from the Centres.

The work of a large number of our volunteers at the Waitemata Community Law Centre has remained fairly steady this year and we hope to continue to have EJP volunteers working there next year.

We have had great feedback from the Auckland Community Centre and the contribution that our volunteers have been there. A number of our volunteers will be continuing shifts at the Centre over the summer.

A smaller number of volunteers were placed at Mangere. We would be keen to try and expand the number of volunteers here next year.

Korowai Manaaki has expressed interest in expanding the number of students involved at the Residence next year – and we are also looking at expanding our role as grievance advocates into Whakatakapokai as well.

## Volunteers

### General Contributions

We have had some excellent feedback about our volunteers from the Centres. On the whole they were motivated and dedicated to their work. Given the nature of the community team's work being at external locations, it is difficult to monitor volunteers' commitment levels, as we do not personally see them performing their volunteer shifts. However, our liaison officers have for the most part been able to keep us up to date and report any issues. Commitment tends to vary a little especially around busy assessment and exam periods. The Centres are generally aware of this, however, commitment is something that in future we may emphasise more to volunteers.

It is difficult for us to give our volunteers feedback given that we ourselves are not at the centre. This may leave volunteers feeling not as valued as they should be. We have endeavoured to pass on any feedback that we have received and to seek feedback from the centres, volunteers and liaison officers.

We ran an introductory social event at the beginning of the year in the form of a training evening and pizza social event. We have also really enjoyed seeing a number of community volunteers regularly attending EJP wide events. Due to strategic difficulties our plan to organise a social event later in the year fell through.

## Volunteer Numbers

This year we selected a smaller number of community volunteers than in previous years (49, down from a previous 68 - not including those volunteers working at Korowai Manaaki). This was effective as it made for a more dedicated group who we could liaise with more effectively. Electing two liaison officers for the larger centres also made communication more streamlined and gave us a point of contact at the centres.

## Reflections

Next year we would be keen to have the number of members in the community team to remain at around 50. It would be great to increase the number of volunteers that we can send out to the Mangere centre given levels of interest for this location in applications. We would also like to increase the number of volunteers able to work at the Auckland centre given its convenient location for volunteers.

We were pleased that those volunteers who elected for another centre as their first choice of location were happy to be placed elsewhere and made extra effort to get to locations that were out of their way.

## Confirmed 2016 Volunteer List

- Monica Kim
- Urvashi Singh
- Carla Dawson
- Alex Parker
- Hannah Bergin
- Chooi-An Khoo
- Gordon Kang
- Jayde Mead
- Ramali Madagammana
- Rebecca D'Silva
- Kevita Naresh Patel
- Bridget Mclay
- Anna Cusack
- Kate Fletcher
- Katie Kyung
- Charlotte Lewis
- Eleanor Burkin
- James Toebes
- Stephen Duggan
- Penelope Jones
- Anna Percy
- Tina Fu
- Denisha Chetty
- Timothy Robinson
- Susie Wang
- Lauren Eastlake
- Christina Low
- Emma Littlewood
- Hannah Chen
- Aditya Sharma
- Jessie Rao
- Steven Boon
- Zenia Kumar
- Poppy Mitchell-Anyon
- Holly Bullock
- Chantal Gribble
- Lucy Oh
- Georgina Niu
- Louise Meng
- Sandamai Gunawardena
- Ashley Grueber-Ballantine
- Bre McDonald
- Ji Yeon Ha
- Lyna Luo
- Shivani Thirayan
- Katarina Hejrskov
- Joy Walpole
- Louisa Yockney
- Waiora White
- Charlotte Adam
- Santana Ioane
- Olivia Griffiths

## Improvements for 2017

It would be valuable for future managers to keep up stronger lines of communication with the centres for regular feedback going both ways. We would also recommend having communication with *all* of the Centres before selecting volunteers.

We would like to extend our grievance programme into Whakatapokai, a Care and Protection Residence. Whakatakopokai has very close ties with Korowai Manaaki – and they are very eager to have our volunteers involved with their Residence in the same roles as we are at Korowai – as grievance advocates. This will involve developing new relationships with the management there, selecting suitable volunteers, having them go through the security checking process and running a training programme.

# Pro Bono End of Year Report – 2016

Prepared by Pro Bono Co-Managers Jack Alexander and Christina Laing

## Outline of Role

This is Jack's second year as a manager of the pro bono team and Christina's first. The role of the pro bono manager is wide-ranging and requires consistent focus to ensure the volunteers are getting the support they need, projects are running smoothly and our network with practitioners/academics (clients) not only remains strong but continues to expand.

The pro bono team's principal purpose is to complete legal research and provide legal assistance to our clients who are working on cases or issues with a social justice theme or element to them.

In our role as managers we spend a significant amount of time corresponding and meeting with our clients in order to secure work for our team. We then draft project briefs, which are finalised in collaboration with the client before being distributed to a select number of volunteers. Once the volunteers have completed their research they send their memoranda to us for review and often we edit and send back for revisions to be made.

Aside from the principal activities, we also organise meetings and social events for our team and attend bi-weekly EJP Executive meetings. The workload does fluctuate throughout the year; during periods of project-brief drafting anywhere between 10 – 20 hours in a week is required. While the researchers are doing their work the time-commitment drops but constant monitoring of the emails and attending meetings etc. is always on the agenda.

## 2016

### Work Completed

This year the pro bono team completed a number of projects that were very well received by our clients. This year the team tackled substantively large projects, sometimes with separate phases of research, as opposed to lots of smaller projects.

**Project One:** A project grounded in the issues surrounding refugees, their children and their access to social services for Davoud Mansouri-Rad, Barrister.

**Project Two:** We provided legal research for Alexander Steed, Barrister, with regards to the lack of cohesion between the Drug and Alcohol Court and the Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Act 1966. We ran a jurisdictional comparative analysis to review what other States do in this regard and also looked at the potential for dual-diagnosis facilities when the Court is presented with a defendant labouring under both an addiction and a mental illness.

**Project Three:** Dr David Harvey has been a key source in the 2016 pro bono team's work. Since May we have worked on a major project regarding the access (or lack thereof) for self-represented litigants to legal materials required to ensure their access to justice is not compromised, particularly in light of the recent changes to the Legal Aid scheme in New Zealand. Phase one included a comprehensive analysis of the materials readily available to self-represented litigants in NZ including a comparative jurisdictional analysis to identify gaps in the NZ regime when compared with its comparative States. Phase two, which is ongoing, involves creating a decision tree-type scheme in order to eventually implement an online database for self-represented litigants to utilise. Treading the line between offering procedural steps and substantive law is a primary consideration. In phase two, our researchers are collecting information, by analysing a wide-range of Disputes Tribunal and District Court decisions, on the most frequent legal issues that present before these two lower-judicial bodies. This is in hopes of building a web-based decision tree scheme that is most beneficial for the self-represented litigant fairly accessing justice.

**Project Four:** The team provided legal research for Kelly Ellis, Barrister, in relation to the potential discrimination grounds and illegality of the Department of Corrections' policies with respect to transgender prisoners. The specific issue in the case we assisted her with was the express policy of Corrections that when a transgender female offender sexually offends against a female, she is housed with her birth gender (male) whereas when a cisgender female sexually offends against a female she is still permitted housing with females. This disparity of treatment was the crux of the case.

**Project Five:** Sylvia Bell and Rosslyn Noonan, formerly of the New Zealand Human Rights Commission, engaged the pro bono team on two separate projects in 2016. The first of which is research into the role of the intervener and the implications of

intervention in human rights based case under the Human Rights Act. This involved identifying and providing succinct summaries of all Human Rights Commission interventions since 2001 and any other interventions that have occurred.

**Project Six:** The second of the two projects worked on by the pro bono team from Sylvia Bell and Rosslyn Noonan was in regard to the access to justice issues facing the elderly community. These two projects are still in the process of being completed with submission expected in November.

**Project Seven:** The project for the Civil Litigation Committee. We are currently in the process of finding volunteers to take this on.

In 2015 we implemented a new system of having “project managers” in charge of each individual project. This year we continued this system and it worked very well for us. It allows the project managers to get some leadership experience but also takes the burden of editing 20 memoranda off the manager’s shoulders and allows the team to function more smoothly on the whole.

In 2016 we also implemented a legal referencing question as a mandatory requirement of the application process for the pro bono team. We took a previous Auckland University Law Review referencing question, graciously given to us, and it proved very helpful. Our volunteers, on the whole, did an excellent job at referencing their work in accordance with the New Zealand Law Style Guide throughout the year.

## Reflections

Our projects were, on the whole, hugely successful. We had a great team this year of dedicated and talented volunteers who worked very hard to produce a very high calibre of work. We managed to maintain a good rapport with clients and expand our network to include some very important contacts for the future.

It would have been great to have a more social aspect to the team. This year was particularly strenuous with some University wide policy changes (such as removal of plussage from the compulsory Land Law course and mandatory inter-course graded assessments for electives) so we were unable to do this – next year it would be nice to add some more social aspects to the team.

We sought to offer professional and comprehensive legal research and assistance to clients, which we certainly have. As managers we have been very happy with our team’s dedication to the Equal Justice Project and are proud of the work we have submitted over the course of the year.

We sought to secure a variety of larger projects for our volunteers to immerse themselves in and we achieved this goal very successfully.

## Key Relationships

A key relationship formed this year that has proven very beneficial for both sides is that with Dr David Harvey, former District Court Judge and current University of Auckland Law School lecturer.

We also developed a number of new relationships this year such as that with Kelly Ellis, Rosslyn Noonan and Sylvia Bell.

## Position/Structure

### Management Structure

We feel that we worked very well together and felt that we added real value to the Pro Bono team. Jack managed the Pro Bono team in 2015 and was able to preserve and pass on key techniques to Christina and the 2016 pro bono team.

Last year it was noted that, from a management perspective, the biggest weakness was that the managers took on too much of the work themselves. For example, they spent a significant amount of time completing basic editing work. This year, as was implemented late in 2015, we continued the process of having project managers which helped with work-load delegation.

The support from the Directors and Executive has been great. We have really enjoyed working with the Directors, other Managers on the Executive and the advisory board. We really thrived within the supportive team environment.

### Team Structure

This year, as mentioned above, we implemented project managers and this worked very well. Our senior law students took on a more leadership-based role within the individual projects. Their role was to coordinate and supervise research from the point of sign-up through until the compilation of the final memorandum. We retained responsibility for meeting with practitioners, writing project briefs and checking the final memorandum prior to send-off.

We were very lucky this year in that our volunteers keenly signed up to projects and we did not face much (if any) apprehension in getting people to work on projects. We believe the interesting nature of the work we secured, as managers, was instrumental in the key engagement of our volunteers.

## Reflections

In terms of the overall direction of the organization, we would like to see a wider brand-recognition marketing scheme taking place. Building stronger ties with reputable organizations will help solidify EJP's place in the legal and academic spheres. We would be very excited to see the Communications Team's work published to wider sources and perhaps the legal research produced by the pro bono team, when it is not confidentially related to a case, published more broadly.

## Volunteers

### General Contributions

As mentioned throughout this report, we had a fantastic group of volunteers this year. We did not really have trouble securing sign ups for projects and were reasonable when assessments at the University were peaking.

We hope that our volunteers felt valued, particularly with the upcoming awards. We believe that our volunteers felt like part of the team.

One area that we could improve on would be making sure that our volunteers have feedback after every project. It is difficult when, beyond our control (and often the client's), the pressures of practice render clients unable to provide us with comprehensive feedback that our volunteers so desperately seek. Not only does it validate their hard work but it also assists them to improve on their legal research and drafting skills. Perhaps we could contemplate making our assistance conditional on feedback but we do have concerns that this would limit the amount of work we gain access to.

### Volunteer Numbers

We had 15 volunteers this year. Assuming everyone continues to do their share of the work, we were happy with this number and would keep it constant in 2017.

### Reflections

The implementation of mandatory referencing question during the application phase proved very successful. We would suggest that academic transcripts are submitted for consideration, particularly for the pro bono team and in alignment to the AULR, because it allows us to select from the very top students in the law school and provide the best possible assistance on behalf of EJP.

### Confirmed 2016 Volunteer List

Arthur Ung  
Callum Burnett  
Caroline Coates  
Ellie Ryan  
Bridget Keene  
Ryan Kelly  
Jae Jun Kim  
Lucy Kelly  
Christine Chung  
Kayleigh Ansell  
Sal Lennon  
Tiaan Nelson

Daniel McGivern  
Holly Edmonds  
Anna Chernyavskaya

## Improvements for Next Year?

As noted above, next year Christina hopes to work closely with the new co-manager at promoting a social aspect to the team. EJP is a great (and perhaps even rare) opportunity to work closely with like minded students and a proven chance to make close friends. We would like to tap further into this.

From Jack – I think the main thing to improve on is getting feedback from practitioners – perhaps drawing attention to the requirement that they provide feedback when we get in contact with them. Other than that, more of the same!