

GENDER PAY HISTORY IN THE MAKING

YWCA Equal Pay Awards 2016 launches at a historic time for wage equality

28th June 2016 – YWCA Auckland launches its third annual YWCA Equal Pay Awards this week, sponsored by EY, Coca-Cola Amatil and the SKYCITY Entertainment Group, proudly leading the change debate for equal pay.

The Awards come at a time when there are systemic and historic changes to the *Equal Pay Act 1972* underway. The recent recommendations made by the Joint Working Group to Government, outlining principles in implementing pay equity, are at the forefront of driving change.

Human Rights Commissioner, Dr Jackie Blue, says the recommendations will have a significant impact on employers, who should look to initiatives like the YWCA Equal Pay Awards for guidance and support.

“YWCA Auckland and its sponsors should be congratulated for launching a third round of this unique and successful programme.

“Past winners of the YWCA Equal Pay Awards, in both the private and public sector, are leading lights and great examples of what can be achieved. But we need to be far more ambitious when it comes to wage equality.

“We should be aiming to be the first country in the world where there is a zero gender pay gap, where women are worth 100%,” Dr Blue says.

“In light of the Joint Working Group recommendations, it will become much harder to overlook the wage equality issue. Employers must be cognisant of the changes ahead. They need to be prepared to ask themselves the tough questions and start formulating a plan of action,” says Dr Blue.

“I personally advocate that, as per UK legislation, companies over 250 employees publish their pay gender and bonus gaps. Under a system like this, employers must ask themselves how they’d stack up,” she adds.

YWCA Auckland CEO, Monica Briggs, agrees it is a historic time for wage equality in New Zealand.

“There has never been a more relevant time to launch our third annual Awards,” says Briggs. “The YWCA Equal Pay Awards is business-friendly and we are determined to demonstrate equal pay can be achieved by more organisations through the success of our winners.

“This is where the solutions really come to life for those contemplating change within their organisations.”

Briggs is welcoming entries from organisations at any stage of the equal pay journey, even those in the early stages of addressing the issue.

“We have created emerging categories, as we believe entering the Awards benefits newcomers to equal pay too. It helps establish milestones for the future but also sends a clear message to staff and customers, that gender equality matters to their business and they are facilitating positive change in this space. Why wait until you are at Gold or Silver category status to deliver this compelling message? We would encourage you to declare your intent as soon as you embark on your journey, and our Awards programme is the perfect platform to do this.”

Briggs believes that there will soon be a real need for organisations to pledge their commitment and support to gender equality in the workplace.

“This has become a highly visible issue,” she says. “For those organisations not declaring their equal pay status, their silence will be deafening. We know from our own research, 65% of women are aware there is a gender pay gap in New Zealand. Furthermore, 41% of women believe men are given increased opportunities to get paid more in the workplace.”¹

Today, there is a 14% gender pay gap in New Zealand, which means men are being paid \$4.09 per hour more.²

Other industries and sectors report larger gaps. Accountancy, for instance, reports male chartered accountants in New Zealand earn an average of \$45,573 more than female chartered accountants.³ Male engineers earn 22 per cent more than their female counterparts.⁴ The public sector suffers too, with reported pay gaps as high as 39 per cent (Crown Law Office).⁵

“The statistics are damning, but we’ve seen the flipside,” Briggs continues. “As a judge of the Awards since our inaugural campaign in 2014, I have been taken on inspirational equal pay journeys of many organisations.

“These journeys answer to every single barrier and hurdle imaginable. They show that with true commitment and dedication, we can be fair and equitable to the hardworking women of New Zealand. And we should.

“We are thrilled to bring our third annual campaign to the business community of New Zealand and to continue to make an important contribution to the change debate and action around equal pay.”

To learn more about the **YWCA Equal Pay Awards 2016**, entry details and criteria, visit www.ywcaequalpay.org.nz.

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¹ ACNielsen Ltd for Westpac New Zealand: Equal Pay Survey: YWCA Equal Pay Awards 2015

² NZ Income Survey: June 2015: based on average full-time hourly earnings.

³ NZ Institute of Chartered Accountants: 2015 Remuneration Survey by Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand

⁴ Institution of Professional Engineers NZ: Remuneration Survey 2015

⁵ State Services Commission: January 2016

For more information, panel biographies, images or interview opportunities, please contact:

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ABOUT THE AWARDS:

The YWCA Equal Pay Awards are judged in four categories:

- Gold – Champion; Silver – Distinguished; Bronze – Emerging; Small Business
- Judges determine categories depending on where businesses are positioned on their equal pay journey
- Last year, due to the standard of entries, a Supreme category was awarded

Key dates:

- YWCA Equal Pay Awards 2016 are open from Tuesday, 28th June until Friday, 30th September 2016
- An equal pay workshop is being hosted at the HRINZ Annual Conference, taking place on the 24th August 2016 at 2.30pm. Please visit www.HRINZ.org.nz to book
- Award winners will be announced at a special event on the evening of Thursday, 3rd November 2016 in the Auckland CBD

MEET THE PANEL:

The YWCA Equal Pay Awards 2016 will be judged by a first class panel who are experts in their respective Human Resources and consultative fields, with an in-depth knowledge of diversity and change management, gender equality and equal pay in the work place.

- Susan Doughty, Partner, People Advisory Services, EY
- Gráinne Troute, General Manager, Corporate Services, SKYCITY Entertainment Group
- Dr Keith Macky, Associate Professor and Programme Leader: Business & Enterprise, Music & Audio Institute of NZ (MAINZ)
- Jason Blakemore, National HR Manager, Rewards and Insights, Coca-Cola Amatil NZ (CCANZ)
- Monica Briggs, CEO, YWCA Auckland

For all judges biographies & images, <http://www.ywcaequalpay.org.nz/#judgebios>