



The Champion Centre
Tamariki Toiora

— Welcome —

Champion Centre 40th Anniversary Gala

Removing Barriers. Unleashing Potential.

SUMMER 2018 | 40th Anniversary Edition

CHAMPIONSHIP
Newsletter

It was a night to remember for the 250+ guests who joined us to celebrate the Champion Centre's 40th anniversary.

Hosted at the Christchurch Art Gallery, Te Puna o Waiwhetū, on Saturday 13 October, the black-tie fundraising gala was an auspicious occasion to celebrate 40 years' service, supporting infants and young children with disabilities.

Hosted by media personality, Mike McRoberts, the evening included decadent food and beverages; a powerful vocal tribute by Naomi Ferguson; reflections from past and present Champion Centre families; speeches and a toast from our founder Dr Patricia Champion and Centre Director Dr Susan Foster-Cohen; an exhilarating live auction, rallied by auctioneer Lisa Yardley; and the launch of a new donor programme 'Donate the Difference' which was announced by Christchurch Mayor, Lianne Dalziel.

The numbers are in...

Not only was the evening an opportunity to celebrate all that the Champion Centre has achieved, but it was a chance to acknowledge our valued supporters, and reinforce the need for us to dig deep to ensure that the vital services of the Champion Centre can support many more families well into the future.

Over \$110,000 was raised on the night, thanks to the enormous amount of generosity from all of the evening's guests. We were truly overwhelmed with the level of support, and once again thank everyone who attended and supported the event.

A special thanks

There are so many individuals and organisations who helped make the night such a great success. A huge heartfelt thanks to all the evening's volunteers and supporting acts, to the many businesses who generously donated towards our auction and raffles

prizes: and our supporting partners:

Fulton Hogan, White Tie Catering, van Asch Wines, Mount Brown, Giesen, DB, Barkers of Geraldine, Theme Pro, Pixel, Linton Photography, Imagic, Dynamic Controls, Bounce, AC Lighting, and ASB.

And of course, none of this could have been possible without the support, in the lead up and on the night, of our incredible Major Sponsors. A huge thanks to Saunders and Co, Spanbild, Ilam Toyota and Meadow Mushrooms for backing our anniversary celebration.

SAUNDERS & CO
LAWYERS

SPANBILD
DESIGN. MANUFACTURE. BUILD.

ILAM TOYOTA | TOYOTA

100% KIWI SINCE 1970
MEADOW
MUSHROOMS

Captured on camera

Thanks to Linton Photography, the 40th Anniversary Gala was captured on camera! Here's a few snaps from the evening. Check out our Facebook page for more photos of the evening's celebrations.

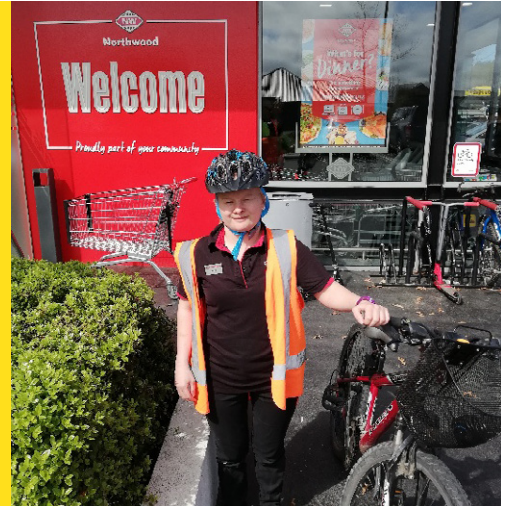




1. Champion Centre Founder, Dr Patricia Champion with MC, Mike McRoberts.
2. Guests enjoying the evenings events.
3. Nathan Wallis and Champion Centre Director, Dr Susan Foster-Cohen.
4. Musical tribute 'You raise me up' from Naomi Ferguson.
5. Past Champion Centre parents, Kirsty and Barry Donaldson.
6. Guests viewing the silent auction table.
7. Entertainment from Tom Rainey and Cameron Pearce.
8. Guests listening to Barry and Kirsty.
9. Current Champion Centre parents, Katy Dean, Steph Emery, Carolina de Leon, Laura Campbell, Cindy Bloxham.
10. Past and present Champion Centre team members, Margi Prisk-Vink, Paddi Thompson, Deborah Kerry, Jackie Hancock, Gae Cherry.
11. Sharon Anthony, Andrew Hall (Trustee), Al Duncan, Aline Taylor.
12. David (Trustee) and Lois Lang.

Katie's story

As we celebrated 40 years of the Champion Centre, it was a time to reflect on the individual journeys of over 2000 families, who have accessed our services. We were fortunate enough to welcome past Champion Centre parents, Kirsty and Barry Donaldson, who shared their personal story and memories of being at the Centre with their daughter Katie. Here is an excerpt from their reflections...



"Katie is the 2nd of our 4 children and has just turned 27.

Katie has cerebral palsy. She looks younger than her age and her speech can be hard to understand. So sometimes people underestimate her. However, while she may look like a kitten, she has the self-belief and confidence of a lion which has seen her do things such as walk the 10km event in the Christchurch marathon, enter sports events for people with disabilities, achieve the Queen's Guide Award (presented by the Governor General), work full-time and ignore the stares of others when people speak over her.

We attended Champion Centre weekly for 6 years until she started school.

Katie was kind-of unaware of the left side of her body, so we did lots of activities to get her to notice and use

her left side. She was able to walk at 4 years and ride a bike at 11 years, with lots of tumbles and bruising along the way.

Her other significant difficulty was with speech. She had only sounds (no words) for several years. We did lots of work around her breath, sounds, the muscles and sensation in her face.

When her brother Tom was born, and she modulated her pitch and sort of cooed softly to him, we were really excited because this meant that, even though she couldn't actually talk, she knew there was a special way to talk to babies. Then once she got underway beginning to say words, she had trouble regulating her pitch, volume, and pace – things tended to be pretty garbled. She's much better now, but this still remains tricky for her."

"Despite her challenges, the team at the Champion Centre always recognised Katie's personality and potential. It was fantastic to see her acknowledged and affirmed for who she was rather than a collection of things she couldn't do."



Above: Kirsty and Barry sharing Katie's journey at the Champion Centre's 40th Anniversary Gala.
Above left: Katie heading into work at New World.

The team also always made us feel like we were the only people they'd see that day, even though there were obviously others in the same programme. They made other people feel the same way too, which was special and really appreciated.

It's a funny old world being the parent of a child with a disability. You see the gorgeous personality and the potential; but the rest of the world can't see past the disability – why is that child walking funny or not walking, looks or speaks funny etc? But here's the thing: While it took me 5 years to teach Kate to ride a bike, I would never have had the opportunity to nearly break my back by running around the park holding her bike seat had it not been for the Champion Centre. And, as it turns out, this was a good investment in time and pain as Katie will now be able to bike to work following the recent restructuring of the Canterbury bus routes. Katie's attitude is "Well dad it will be good for my fitness and cheaper". For Katie the cup is always half full.



40 YEARS

Want to contribute towards our 40th anniversary fundraising efforts?

We recognise that for many reasons, not all of our supporters, families and friends were able to participate in our anniversary fundraising endeavours.

But don't worry, if you missed out on joining us, and would like to contribute towards our 'anniversary fund' you can donate directly to the Champion Foundation Trust.

Funds raised from our anniversary celebrations will support the long-term future of the Champion Centre.

DONATE TODAY

Direct deposit
Champion Foundation Trust
Account: 03-1351-0558270-000
Please include ref: 40th Anniversary donation

Cheques may be addressed to The Champion Foundation Trust
C/- Burwood Hospital
Private Bag 4708
Christchurch 8140

ARCHIBALDS



We need your support - your vote counts!

Instead of throwing a 100th birthday bash, Archibalds Motors is donating \$100,000 to three local charities.

10 charities have been shortlisted, including the Champion Centre, to be in the running to receive a share of \$100,000. **And it is down to your vote to help us get one step closer to being one of these lucky recipients!**

The charity with the most public votes will get \$50,000 and the other two will get \$25,000 each.

Voting runs for three months at driveforgood.co.nz with the winning charities to be named in March.



The Champion Centre
Tamariki Toiora

Vote for us

We're in the running to
receive a share of \$100,000.

Vote for us now at
www.driveforgood.co.nz

**Please vote for the Champion Centre at:
www.driveforgood.co.nz**

**Please share this link with family and friends, so they too
can cast their vote in support of the Champion Centre.**



2018 wrap up



It is hard to believe that this is already the final edition of our newsletter for 2018.

This has been a momentous year for us as we have celebrated our 40 years in operation with a fantastic gala event at the Christchurch Art Gallery and a convivial afternoon tea for past and present staff and trustees at the Centre. The gala event was an opportunity to celebrate, to remind our community why our services are so needed, and to raise funds to

continue to support children and families into the future. Two of our parents gave a heartfelt speech about what the Centre meant to them (see 'Katie's story') and I gave a speech to introduce Dr Patricia Champion, without whom there would not be a Champion Centre.

Now, as the year draws to a close, I would like to thank every one of you for supporting us this year. I would also like to thank those in Wellington who are finally beginning to come to grips with the enormous levels of unmet need in our country in families raising children with development

delays and disabilities. And, finally, my thanks go to the staff of the Champion Centre who have, as always, given so much of themselves to the children and families in our relationship-driven service.

I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season and a positive start to 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan H. Foster-Cohen".

Dr. Susan Foster-Cohen
Centre Director

Introducing Peri



In late 2017, the Champion Foundation Trust embarked on a very special project for families of children born prematurely. And as a result, we are absolutely delighted to welcome Peri Pukeko to the Champion Centre family.

Peri, like so many of our clients was born prematurely and had his own unique start to life. Peri's journey has been beautifully told in the stunning new children's book *Earlybird* which has been brought to life thanks to the Champion Foundation Trust and its incredible project supporters The Wright Family Foundation, The Elizabeth Ball Charitable Trust, Blogg Charitable Trust and CERT.

What makes this more special is that families who spend time in one of the six Neonatal Units around the

country, will be gifted a free copy of the book.

The book was officially launched on Monday 19 November, two days after World Prematurity Day.

A huge thank you to the Champion Centre families who shared their personal journeys to help shape the story of *Earlybird*, to the generous funding partners, and to the Champion Foundation for creating such a special story for our families and others to enjoy.

Copies will be available to purchase from early 2019, at a cost of \$19.90 with proceeds coming to the Champion Centre.

To secure your copy, email: office@championcentre.org.nz



Annelise working with the physiotherapists at the Champion Centre.

An advocate for Annelise

Our daughter, Annelise, was diagnosed at four weeks old with an extremely rare, brutal, and life-limiting genetic condition. The doctors told us it would impact all of her organs and joints over time and would mean that her physical and intellectual development would fall well behind her peers. Everything we had imagined our lives would be, what Annelise's life would be, was blown apart in moments.

It took a bit of time to get over the initial shock of that diagnosis, but I think it is human nature to pick yourself up after a while and begin to count your blessings. Annelise was born in Sydney, but my husband was offered a transfer just before she was born to return to NZ, so we felt so fortunate to be able to come home to NZ to be closer to family and to a health system that we wouldn't have to fight for everything Annelise would need as she got older. We came to Christchurch and even though we hardly knew anyone here, we felt so fortunate that the pediatrician and other specialists at the hospital made us feel welcome and cared for from the first week we arrived. Another

way in which we have been extremely fortunate, was that we were referred immediately to the Champion Centre and that is a blessing that I truly believe has altered the course of our lives for the better.

Some of you will have had first-hand experience of the Champion Centre and others will have heard about it, or hopefully had the chance to visit. A friend of mine has described coming to the Champion Centre as walking into a big, warm hug, and that is exactly what it felt like for us.

Right from the start, everyone made us feel welcomed and supported. All of the staff make a real connection with Annelise and I know that they genuinely care about her and our family. I can't really describe to you what a difference that makes when you are feeling overwhelmed and grief-stricken.

At the Champion Centre, the focus is always, always, on what Annelise can do and what we are going to help her to do next. She gets stronger, understands more, and can do more each week and everyone is always so

excited by her every achievement. A central philosophy of the Centre is supporting whānau to be their child's primary therapists and teachers. I have learnt so much and feel so empowered by the support we have been given. As a parent you will always do your very best for your child, but with the help of the Champion Centre, I know my best is better than it might have been otherwise.

We arrived at the Champion Centre with our known world in pieces and no idea how to navigate our new reality. The Champion Centre was a place to come and be welcomed for who we are. The team helped us understand how the system works and how to become the advocate and teacher our child needs. We have made wonderful friendships with other families who understand what it is like to have a child that will always face different challenges.

The Champion Centre
celebrates our kids when
the rest of the world
sometimes has difficulty
seeing their strengths
and value.

It helps to make us parents stronger and to achieve more.

Katy Dean
Current Champion Centre parent

Donate the Difference gets a special launchpad

How fitting to have one of the new supporter programmes launched at our 40th anniversary, where we heard first-hand the impact that the Champion Centre has on the life of a child with a disability.

It was a huge honor for us to have Mayor, Lianne Dalziel, officially launch Donate the Difference at the 40th Gala, and we were overwhelmed with the immediate response of support on the night.

Donate the Difference has been established for individuals, businesses, and friends, giving them the opportunity to contribute towards the financial shortfall that we must raise every year, for each child who accesses our services.

Those who sign up to Donate the Difference are not only eliminating the \$7000 annual shortfall for one child, they are enabling the difference to the life of a child, their family, and the extended community by securing the vital early intervention services that our children simply require and deserve.

We had an immediate commitment from three incredibly generous donors on the night, and have now also welcomed our first syndicate, whereby a wonderful group of 7 friends have each contributed to collectively donate the \$7000 difference, signing up for the programme.

If you would like to find out more or sign up for Donate the Difference, contact our Development Director, Abby Shaw, on 03 383 6867 or abby.shaw@championcentre.org.nz

If you are interested in establishing or being part of a syndicate of donors to together Donate the Difference, touch base with us and we can work alongside you to make this possible.



You can make a difference today, that will shape their future tomorrow.
Contact us to 'Donate the Difference'.

Graduates

It's been a few months since our last newsletter, in which time we have had to say goodbye to several of our families as children have graduated from the Champion Centre.

Here's a few snaps from some of our recent graduates! We wish all our graduates the best of luck as they transition to the next phase of their educational journey.



Chelsea Fischer



Asha Leibenberger



Hunter Lamborn



Ryder Stewart



Jackson Turner-Osborne



Louie Avery



Tessa Low

A sad farewell

As the last term for 2018 draws to an end, we will be saying a heartfelt thanks and farewell to a number of key staff.

Jan Ballin and Jackie Brown will sadly both be retiring at the end of the year. Together Jan and Jackie have a combined tenure at the Champion Centre of 43 years. We have been so fortunate to have their expertise and skills throughout this extensive time.

We are sad to say goodbye also to Inga Currey and Beth Rees. Inga will be spending more time focusing on her Icelandic horse trekking business, whilst Beth is headed to Tauranga to take up a role as an audiologist.

On behalf of the Trustees, staff, and all our families, we wish Jan, Jackie, Inga and Beth all the very best for their new endeavours.

What's happening

With 2019 just around the corner, we are all looking forward to having a few weeks to catch our breath over the festive season. And it's no wonder, because the team have been super busy on all fronts! Here's a quick snapshot of just a few things which have been happening recently.

In August, the Champion Foundation Trust hosted Art from the Attic, a fundraising event which was held at the CoCA Gallery. \$20,000 was raised on the night, and a great evening was had by everyone who joined in to bid on artwork and raise funds for the Foundation.

We had the absolute pleasure of hosting the Children's Commissioner, Judge Andrew Becroft, at the Champion Centre on 31 August. The Commissioner joined us for an afternoon to hear about the work that we do at the Centre, what makes us unique. He also spent time with some of our families to hear the challenges that they face. We thoroughly enjoyed his visit and look forward to seeking out opportunities to further connect with him and his office.

October saw our Centre Director on the airwaves, speaking with broadcaster Chris Lynch about the ongoing funding strain on our services, a challenge which we have faced for our 40 years in operation.

We have been really heartened that the Government has stated increasing the support for children with disabilities nationwide. We have begun to see increases to our Education grants and hope this is indicative of things to come.

Our mums have had a special evening together and were treated as the wonderful women they are at the annual Pamper Evening. A huge thank you to the many people and businesses who generously donated towards the night, including those who gifted us with spot prizes and goody bag items. It was a great evening for all the mums who attended.

An official book launch was held for Earlybird, a book published by the Champion Foundation Trust which will be gifted to families who need to spend time in NICU. The launch took place at the University Staff Club, coinciding with World Prematurity Day.

Imagic brings their magic to the Centre

Have you seen our stunning new video which shares the story of some of our Champion families and how the Champion Centre has supported them? Check it out by visiting: www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVp4lzYHEIk&feature=share

Over a three-week period we had the wonderful Mike, from Imagic, join us at the Centre, as well as spend time in the homes of some of our families to beautifully capture on film the voice of our parents and their personal journeys with the Champion Centre.

We are so incredibly grateful of the time and expertise donated by Imagic to create such a beautiful video. They certainly captured our essence perfectly.

A huge thank you also to the families who welcomed Mike and our team into their homes and shared their stories. A big thanks to Steph and James, Kailee and Matt, and Natalie and Ken.



Nia (above) and Blake (below), two of our Champion Centre children, who feature in the new video.



A mothers reflection

We love keeping in touch with our past Champion Centre families and hearing how they are doing. It was wonderful to reconnect with so many families at the 40th Gala and reflect together on individual experiences.

Following the Gala, we received a very special message from one of our past families which we feel very humbled to share.

"I have thought back over our time at The Champion Centre every day since then {the Gala}. Our journey through the Champion Centre was incredibly emotional and therefore very challenging but it is now with time and distance that I can fully appreciate the amazing job that everyone does there."

"I just want you all to know how truly grateful I am for everything that you have done for our wee girl. You have all helped us achieve so much in her first formative years and we go off out on the next part of our journey much stronger and wiser for all of the knowledge and wisdom you have imparted."

Dates to remember

Here's a few key dates to remember; so, mark them down in your diary!

- **Children's Christmas Party**
5pm Thursday 6 December 2018
- **Last day of term 2018**
Friday 14 December 2018
- **First day of term 1 2019**
Monday 28 January 2019

Keeping in touch

Drop us a line on ph: 03 383 6867 or email: office@championcentre.org.nz to let us know your email address and preferred correspondence method so we can keep you up to date with news and events for the Champion Centre.

Contact us

The Champion Centre is open
Monday - Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

Phone 03 383 6867
office@championcentre.org.nz
www.championcentre.org.nz

Burwood Hospital Campus
Main Entrance, 300 Burwood Road
Burwood
Christchurch 8083



Find us on Facebook:
[www.facebook.com/
TheChampionCentre/](http://www.facebook.com/TheChampionCentre/)

CALLING ALL CHRISTMAS HELPERS



This year the Champion Centre has been offered a Christmas wrapping station at the Palms Shopping Centre, with all proceeds coming to the Centre to support our fundraising efforts.

We have a few 2-hour wrapping slots still available, so if you (or better yet you and a friend) could spare 2-hours to wrap Christmas presents at the Palms, we would love to hear from you.

Contact Grants and Funding Coordinator, Karon Storr, on email: karon.storr@championcentre.org.nz or ph: 03 383 6867 for more information and a list of available time slots.

Your support is greatly appreciated!

*Wishing you a safe
and happy festive season!*

Warm wishes from all of the team at the Champion Centre, we look forward to seeing you all in 2019.

