



Meet our 30 WOMEN OF THE YEAR

Vision, courage, passion and a determination to make a difference are the qualities that define our Elizabeth Arden and NEXT Woman of the Year finalists. Prepare to be inspired



The obesity epidemic, the rise of superbugs, inequality, poverty, illiteracy... These are issues the everyday person might feel they can't do much about. Yet these challenges, and more, are being tackled head-on by the nominees in this year's NEXT Woman of the Year Awards, in association with Elizabeth Arden. The awards celebrate exceptional Kiwi women who succeed in all aspects of their lives while making a remarkable contribution to other New

Zealanders. Our aim is to throw a spotlight on the inspirational work this incredible and diverse set of women do. Across six categories: Arts & Culture, Sport, Education, Community, Health & Science, and Business and Innovation, these 30 women are proof of what can be achieved with determination and drive.

We also thank prestige beauty brand Elizabeth Arden for their support and involvement in this project. "We are extremely pleased to be sponsoring the

2017 NEXT Woman of the Year Awards, which highlight remarkable achievements of New Zealand women" says Elizabeth Arden general manager Valerie Riley.

"Our company's game-changing, rule-breaking founder, Elizabeth Arden herself, was a legendary innovator and entrepreneur who left an unmistakable mark on the beauty industry so it is certainly fitting that we honour and acknowledge these outstanding women in our community." ➤

Our 30 Finalists



Arts & Culture

ELIZABETH SNEYD

Virtuoso Strings Charitable Trust

Liz set up Virtuoso Strings Charitable Trust with fellow-musician and husband Craig Utting to provide free instruments and tuition to students at 11 low-decile Porirua schools. The 100-plus Virtuoso Strings Orchestra performs at dozens of community and cultural events each year. Liz works long days with the trust (but is only paid for 1-2 hours) – planning, running the orchestra, driving kids to lessons, fundraising and teaching. For many, it's a life-changing experience, and she regularly has up to 15 students and their families joining her own five children at her dinner table.

PAULA MORRIS

Writer

Paula is an accomplished author and is passionate about New Zealand's literary landscape. In addition to teaching at the University of Auckland, Paula is a trustee for the Michael King Writers' Centre and the NZ Book Awards Trust; is a member of the New Zealand Book Council's Sector Steering Group; an assessor for the Māori Arts Panel of Creative NZ and the General Arts Fund, and is aiding the development of Māori literature. She recently launched the '1001 Nights' project developing writing talent at three South Auckland schools and in 2016 she founded the Academy of New Zealand Literature to promote local writers.

CATHERINE CHAPPELL

Founder, Touch Compass

The dancer and choreographer's renowned inclusive dance company Touch Compass turns 20 this year. Founded in 1997, it has created a space where those with disabilities can join together with non-disabled dancers to express themselves artistically, and where they can be recognised, respected and be part of a community. Catherine's artistic vision, passion and empathy have helped to transform the lives of the vulnerable and the isolated, creating powerful performances that change people's perceptions around dance and disability.

MARY AMA

Artist, educator & cultural leader

Mary has played a key role in developing and preserving Pacific arts and culture in New Zealand. From the 70s onwards, Mary brought the traditional arts practices of the Cook Islands to Aotearoa. In the 1980s she established a collective of Pacific artists, master-knowledge holders and community leaders, now known as the Pacifica Mamas arts collective. She also founded the Pacifica Arts Centre (which attracts more than 30,000 visitors annually), the Pacifica Experience school education programme and the Polynesian Creations programme for Pacific inmates at Spring Hill Prison.

CARLA VAN ZON

Former artistic director

Carla has been a driving force in the arts for more than 40 years, putting Kiwi performers on the world map. Fondly dubbed 'Aunty Carla' by those in the industry, she recently retired as artistic director of the Auckland Arts Festival, where she tirelessly championed Māori and Pasifika work. Despite being diagnosed with chronic kidney disease last year, she ensured the 2017 festival was one of the most successful ever. In all her roles – including international manager for the Arts Council of NZ Toi Aotearoa – she has inspired and mentored others, and striven to demystify art.

DR PRIVAHINI BRAODOO

CEO, BlueOak

Privahini is combining the disciplines of science and business to help fight climate change. She gained a PhD in Neuroscience from the University of Auckland, where she was founding CEO of student-entrepreneurship programme Velocity (then called Spark) – which has helped start over 110 companies in the past 12 years. In 2006 Privahini began an MBA at Harvard and it was in the US that, four years later, she co-founded BlueOak. The company has raised over \$50 million to build and operate 'mini-refineries' to recycle high-value metals from e-waste, sustainably and economically.

BLANCHE MORROGH

Founder & director, Kai Ora Honey

Blanche is the driving force behind Kai Ora Honey, a successful export business that produces some of the country's highest active honey. The Māori brand operates 2500 hives in Awanui, with a net worth of \$4 million. Just four years after it began shipping overseas, it now sells 50 tonnes of honey annually to Japan, the UK, the US, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore and Kuwait, with plans to export 90 tonnes by 2020. Kai Ora aims to inspire and support a whanau beekeeping enterprise network and deliver positive economic outcomes for Te Tai Tokerau (NZ's northern-most region).

RANJNA PATEL

Director, East Tamaki Healthcare

This grandmother of seven with no formal education co-founded the largest independent primary healthcare group in New Zealand. Winner of Deloitte's Visionary Leader Award in 2016, it was a desire to improve access to healthcare that prompted Ranjna and her husband to create New Zealand's first all-purpose medical centre, now known as Nirvana Health Group. Nirvana employs 1000 staff and includes nine White Cross centres. In addition, Ranjna has founded Gandhi Nivas, where men involved in domestic violence can receive counselling and has built a Hindu temple in Papatoetoe.

KAZ STAPLES

Founder/director, Pure Delish

She started out making cakes as a struggling young mum; now Kaz runs Pure Delish, a business she built from scratch with no investors. With its range of premium breakfast cereals, cakes and snacks stocked in the main supermarkets, the company has 30 staff and exports to Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand and Tahiti. Building an award-winning business hasn't been without struggle; but despite two bouts of breast cancer, Kaz has remained committed to the success of her company and its staff. Having been mentored by Diane Foreman, Kaz now mentors up-and-coming businesswomen. ➤

ANNA GUENTHER

CEO, PledgeMe

As co-founder of crowdfunding company PledgeMe, Anna has helped redefine the way Kiwis support campaigns and how NZ companies do business. In five years PledgeMe has run over 1100 successful campaigns and had \$15 million pledged. It now also provides platforms for equity and lending. Anna crowdsourced a list of inspiring women that now has over 700 names. In 2016 she co-instigated The Women Who Get Shit Done Unconference. The four-location event aims to connect and inspire women across different ages, ethnicities, backgrounds and experience levels. ➤



Community

LANI EVANS

Philanthropist

Named Philanthropy New Zealand's 2017 emerging individual, Lani has been involved with social enterprises for more than 10 years. Her company, ThankYou Payroll, provides small businesses and charities with a free payroll service, with \$5 per client per pay donated to community organisations through a charitable trust. Lani also created Female Founders, supporting women leading social enterprises, and as the manager of the Vodafone NZ Foundation, she launched its \$20 million strategy aiming to halve the number of young people at risk in New Zealand by 2027.

DR ASSIL RUSSELL

Founder of Revive a Smile and ICARE

Assil is dedicated to helping Kiwis in need regain their confidence, and their smile. Through Revive a Smile, she has delivered free dental treatment to more than 1500 people, including domestic abuse victims, refugees, low-income adults and the elderly. Last year the charity expanded to set up New Zealand's first mobile dental clinic. She achieved another first in her home country of Iraq with ICARE, a charity providing dental and medical services to disadvantaged and orphaned children, with all five branches under the direction of young businesswomen.

STACEY SHORTALL

Lawyer and philanthropist

A partner at Minter Ellison Rudd Watts, Stacey Shortall has 20 years of pro bono experience. She started the Mothers Project in Auckland Region Women's Corrections Facility, to connect incarcerated mothers with their children. The programme has since expanded to Wellington and Christchurch, with more than 100 women lawyers volunteering. Stacey also founded the Homework Help Club, partnering decile one primary school children with businesses and organisations, and WhoDidYouHelpToday, connecting volunteers with non-profit community projects.

DIANE VIVIAN

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

After unexpectedly raising her foster daughter's two children, Diane saw a need for support for grandparents facing the same challenges, often on limited incomes. The trust has grown from the first support group in 1999, in Birkenhead on Auckland's North Shore, to a recognised national provider of support services for 6000 grandparent and whanau caregivers. Almost 20 years on, Diane still personally answers the phones from 8am-2pm on weekdays. She was made a Companion of the Queen's Service Order for services to seniors and youth in 2017.

KRISTINE BARTLETT

Equal pay campaigner

Having worked at a rest home for 24 years for only \$14.46 an hour, Kristine made history for herself and countless other New Zealand women this year when she campaigned for, and won, equal pay for 55,000 care and support workers.

Backed by her union, E tū, Kristine's five-year fight for equal pay took her all the way to the Supreme Court, was hailed by the Human Rights Commission as a "historic step forward for gender equality", and led to the government establishing a working group to develop principles for dealing with pay equity claims.

DOROTHY BURT

Programme leader at Manaiakalani Education Trust

Dorothy has been an educator for more than 35 years, with a focus on working with Māori and Pasifika children. Since 2007, she has been leading the Manaiakalani education programme, an internationally-recognised scheme to accelerate progress in low socioeconomic communities. Improving education outcomes for primary school children influences them years later – in 2005, fewer than 30% of students at Tamaki College achieved NCEA Level 2; now, it's more than 70%. Dorothy is also an Apple Distinguished Educator and received the Google Certified teacher award.

DR DEBORAH LAMBIE

Co-founder of LearnCoach

A believer that cost shouldn't be a barrier to students getting help with their studies, Deborah co-founded LearnCoach, a social enterprise providing free online tutorials, summaries and practice exam questions. From its beginnings five years ago, the programme has helped around 100,000 students in more than 200 secondary schools. This year, it made its first course available to health science students at Otago University, where more than 23% of the course signed up in the first three months. Deborah is also a practising doctor on the cardiology ward in Wellington Hospital.

DAME WENDY PYE

CEO of Wendy Pye Publishing

For the past 35 years, Dame Wendy has been helping millions of children to learn to read – believing firmly that literacy is the key to lifting people out of poverty. The owner of Sunshine Books, she has seen the company grow to feature more than 2000 titles and be rolled out to more than 20 countries, including China and Russia. Sunshine Books has developed a solar- and electricity-powered tablet, pre-loaded with more than 300 books and 1000 literacy-based activities, which will be trialled in Asia, to improve literacy in some of the area's most remote regions.

TABBY BESLEY

Founder of InsideOUT

At 19, Tabby set up her LBGTIA+ charity to make New Zealand a safer place for youth of minority sexualities, genders and sex characteristics. At 22, she became the first New Zealander to receive the Queen's Young Leader Award. Now, at 25, she's working to achieve the aims of InsideOUT, by providing resources, education and national awareness days to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of rainbow youth. InsideOUT also supports schools to start queer-straight alliances and provides workshops and training for companies and youth groups on how they can be more inclusive. >>

KARLA SANDERS

Director/co-founder, Sticks 'n Stones

Karla didn't buy into the idea that bullying was 'part of growing up', and instead created the by-youth, for-youth anti-bullying movement Sticks 'n Stones. The programme started out in 2012 with just 30 students, and now involves 400 young people from Years 7 to 13 in the South Island. This year Karla was named as one of five recipients of the Vodafone Foundation's 2017 World of Difference Awards. The \$100,000 prize money will be used to take the programme nationwide, and means Karla will be able to be funded full-time for her work in the programme. >>



Health & Science

DR MELANIE CHEUNG

Neurobiologist

A research fellow at Auckland University's Centre for Brain Research, Melanie leads the world-first research project 'FightHD' for people at risk of neurodegenerative disorder Huntington's disease, which is especially prevalent in New Zealand. Fight HD aims to delay and potentially reverse cognitive decline using neuroplasticity: the brain's ability to 'rewire' itself. Early results show a significant number of individuals with broadly restored abilities.

Melanie's journey is also a personal triumph; she returned to uni four years after being kicked out for failing her papers two years in a row.

DR SIOUXSIE WILES

Microbiologist

Siouxsie is tackling the crisis of antibiotic resistance by searching for new antibiotics from New Zealand fungi. As head of the Bioluminescent Superbugs Lab at the University of Auckland, the work she and her team are doing is influencing researchers worldwide. Siouxsie has also pioneered a new way to study how infectious bacteria evolve, earning a spot on an international team awarded US\$3.4m by the US National Institute of Health to look at ways to identify disease outbreaks. Her book *Antibiotic Resistance: The End of Modern Medicine?* has won praise for drawing the public's attention to the issue.

DR SUSAN MORTON

Epidemiologist

Susan is changing lives as the founder/director of Growing Up in New Zealand: the most comprehensive study about the lives of New Zealand children and their families ever undertaken. The study tracks the development of almost 7000 children born eight years ago and its findings into how childhood factors influence later outcomes are helping to shape public policy. Susan's work has played a large part in bringing about change such as more paid parental leave, working smoke alarms in rental homes, and more support for the most vulnerable children in their first 1000 days of life.

DR ROBYN TOOMATH

Endocrinologist

Robyn is clinical director of General Medicine at Auckland City Hospital and has had a prominent career as a diabetes specialist. In 2001, the rising numbers of people, especially younger patients, in her diabetes clinic led her to found advocacy group Fight the Obesity Epidemic. For 14 years she was a vocal campaigner for public health measures to protect people (in particular children) from an obesity-inducing environment. Now she has written a book titled *Fat Science* explaining why individuals are not to blame for obesity, what is responsible, and how we can bring about change.

DR ROSALIND ARCHER

Professor

As Auckland University's first-ever female Engineering Department head, Rosalind is at the helm of a faculty ranked in the top 20 academic units in New Zealand. The Deloitte Energy Engineer of the Year for 2016, international keynote speaker and internationally-respected consultant, she also works with industry to turn her academic findings into real-world results. Her research develops tools to integrate knowledge and forecast the behaviour of oil, gas and geothermal reservoirs. She also mentors women via the university's Women in Leadership programme.

ANNA HARRISON

Former Silver Fern

Over the course of her 15-year career with the Silver Ferns, Anna, who retired this year, played 88 test matches for New Zealand, including two world cups and three Commonwealth Games. She has had a huge impact on netball, with an unrivalled style of defence. Anna has the distinction of being a double international, representing New Zealand in netball as well as in beach volleyball for three seasons. She has been a remarkable role model for young women, fighting her way back from a number of injuries, and returning to elite netball after having children.

HEATHER TE AU-SKIPWORTH

CEO, IronMāori

Co-founder and CEO of the world's only annual indigenous half-Ironman triathlon, Heather has nurtured IronMāori from its original 300 participants to the 2500 people who now compete. Heather's aim is to facilitate a journey to better health, with the IronMāori team helping with nutrition, exercise, motivation and accountability. More than 400 IronMāori participants have since taken part in Ironman New Zealand. Along with being elected to the Hawke's Bay District Health Board in 2013, she was awarded a Queen's Service Medal in 2014 for her commitment to improving Māori health.

ANDREA HEWITT

Elite triathlete

Currently ranked as New Zealand's leading triathlete, Andrea has demonstrated immense resilience in the face of personal tragedy. Less than a year before the 2016 Rio Olympics, Andrea's fiancé passed away unexpectedly. She went on to compete in the Games, placing 7th overall. She has continued to perform strongly, producing two back-to-back wins in the World Triathlon Series, to place fifth with three more events left on the calendar, and qualifying for the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Sydney. She launched the AH Foundation in 2007, to support young multisport athletes with the costs of competing.

FIONA ALLAN

CEO, Paralympics New Zealand

Fiona has been the driving force behind para sport in New Zealand for more than 10 years. Under her leadership, New Zealand has competed at five Olympic Games, from Beijing 2008 to Rio 2016, where Paralympians have won a total of 52 medals. Fiona also worked to secure the most extensive free-to-air broadcast of a Paralympic Games ever in New Zealand, which saw 2.2 million Kiwis tune in to see their athletes at the 2016 Rio Olympics. She is a well-known advocate for para athletes, both here and abroad, and is committed to growing the profile of the Paralympic Movement. *

KIMBERLEY RAMSAY

Founder of All Star Cheerleaders

Kimberley has been a key player in the international campaign to grant cheerleading provisional Olympic recognition. Back home, she established the NZ Cheerleading Association in 1999, and has grown the sport through All Star Cheerleaders, creating roles for more than 60 coaches nationwide. Under her leadership, Team New Zealand has medalled 12 times in American-dominated championships. In 2016, she started the Global Dance and Cheer Games, a non-elite world championship, which saw 1000 athletes from seven countries participate. *