

Candidates Bios

Harvey J Brunt: (Incumbent Group)



I have been involved with the Society for the past 30 years as President, Secretary/Treasurer, GM and most recently just a regular Board member. I have a 34 year old daughter with CP living at home with us, my other 4 children having sallied forth.

The Society's mission of 'enhancing the lives of people with CP,' has and continues to be my compass. Over the last 30 years the financial health of the Society has grown to the enviable position that now exists. By the Society maintaining its financial wellbeing, people yet to be born, who will have cerebral palsy, can also benefit from the continuing work of the Society.

I will strive to help the Board stay focussed on the governance and the strategic direction of the Society and leave the operational team to implement that strategy. I believe that my presence on the Board will increase cohesion and efficiency, allowing more time for matters that are the Board's responsibility. Now that I am retired I have the time to commit to being on the Board. In my conversations with members at Boccia and other events, as well as living with someone with CP, I have a good knowledge of the challenges.

I have degrees in Engineering from the Auckland University and bring project management experience to the Board. I have good financial skills and have used these on the Society's Finance Committee.

We live in challenging times and I believe I have the critical thinking required to help the Society move forward in a positive way that will benefit members now, and in the future

Nominator: Dave Thomas **Secunder:** Anthony Smith

Daniel Clay (Independent)



I am running for the CPS Board because I want the Society to provide the best possible service to its members and those living with cerebral palsy. This requires its members' interests and achieving the Society's objectives being the focus of all decisions.

If appointed to the Board, I would seek to achieve good governance practices, transparency and responsibility to members. I would make decisions which promote the success of the Society and its commercial entities for the ultimate benefit of and focus on those living with cerebral palsy and their families. As a charitable and member-based organisation, the CPS must ensure it provides programmes, support and advice in a way that is both effective and responsive to the changing and growing needs of its members. I believe that advocacy to

Government (central and local) agencies and NGOs is a crucial part of the role of the CPS to achieve both recognition of and support for the cerebral palsy community.

My 8 y.o daughter has cerebral palsy and I and our whanau have a deep understanding of the challenges of living with cerebral palsy. I believe I can use my professional experience and expertise to benefit the CP community, with a personal insight to the issues and challenges that cerebral palsy can create.

I am currently Chief Executive Officer of a property development and investment company. I have held directorship positions on various company Boards, and was a practising lawyer for 20 years with two national commercial law firms and a partner in both firms for 10 years. I believe this experience provides me with the skills to provide the oversight and insight into shareholder/member facing organisations such as the CPS, investment companies (such as the CPS's commercial subsidiaries) and a keen client (member) focus. My legal background also provides me with the ability to ensure good governance practices are implemented and risks and compliance are managed well.

Nominator: Gemma Overton **Secunder:** Merryn Straker

Edward Collett (Independent)



My 14 year old son Matthew has CP, hence my keen interest in the Society and how it advocates and assists members. I also have a son who has Autism, James 16. Through Matthew and James I have gathered a huge amount of knowledge in the disabilities sector. Matthew attended Conductive Education in Auckland and now both James and Matthew attend Wairau Valley Special School.

I currently work for Air New Zealand. My role is to ensure the company is making good strategic business decisions, looking at its future customer needs, has good long-term plans and delivers those plans. It is crucial in today's ever-changing world that companies have good strategies to adapt quickly to social and environmental change.

I am very passionate about advocacy, support and inclusion for all disabilities. I founded, and I am chair of the Enable employee network at Air New Zealand. The Enable Network provides support for employees with disabilities, or employees that have family members with disabilities. It also advocates for employees and customers with disabilities to ensure a diverse and inclusive workplace. I also represent Air New Zealand on the Disability Employment Action Plan working group, along with the government and a number of other companies, looking at improving outcomes for people living with disabilities.

I believe with the current health crisis, we have been provided unique opportunity to take a breath, reset our values, and work out what we will need to support ourselves or family living with CP in the future.

Nominator: Merryn Straker **Secunder:** Melissa Neville

Tim George (Independent)



My name is Tim George and I am interested in running for a seat on the Board of the Cerebral Palsy Society. As a person with cerebral palsy I am aware of the everyday challenges that people with CP face. I would like to support our members, and their families to have the opportunity to have their voices heard. I have been a member of the Cerebral Palsy Youth Alliance Board since 2018 and have enjoyed the opportunity to work alongside other young people on projects that could create a sense of community among our youth members. On a more personal level, being a part of the Youth Alliance has given me the opportunity to further build my leadership skills, and understand the functionality of a Board. For

the past four years I have been working at CCS Disability Action. I initially worked in the communications department and then moved into a role as a Community Support Coordinator in the Youth Development and Adults team. My current role is to provide support and collaborate with disabled people on their personal goals. Another part of my role is to support disabled people to take leadership of their own lives and make their own choices. While at CCS Disability Action, I have also been a member of the Disabled Staff Group, where I was involved in training sessions for staff around unconscious bias and the social model of disability. This shared core philosophy, the idea disabled people have as much freedom and choice as everyone else, is part of the reason why I joined the CP Society, and why I have put myself forward as a candidate for the Board of the Society. I believe it is important that people with cerebral palsy are at the table making the decisions - if we want to put people with cerebral palsy at the centre of the society's work, then it is essential that people with cerebral palsy are involved in the Board's decision-making. If my application is successful I look forward to being a part of the decision making team, building greater communications between the Board and those who we represent, those whose voices are frequently unheard and devalued.

Nominator: Kurt Peterson **Secunder:** Pippa Huddleston

Michelle Hamilton (Incumbent Group)



I am a Mum and live on Auckland's north shore with my two boys (Thomas aged 14 and Lachlan aged 9). As a person with cerebral palsy I am passionate about making a difference in the lives of our members through understanding and inclusion. I am a passionate HR/People leader focused on positive cultural transformation within organisations. For the last 20+ years I have worked inside prominent NZ businesses as a champion for genuine understanding and inclusiveness for all people. I have educated and influenced CEO's, executive teams and managers to acknowledge and understand the power of diversity, acceptance and inclusion before we even knew what to call those things. I currently head the People Culture and Capability function for Invacare APAC, a role which I love as it combines my passion for people with the opportunity to assist in making life's experiences possible for our customers. I also actively channel my commitment to diversity and inclusion in the workplace through my business Wobbly Unicorns. My business partner and I deliver Diversity and Inclusion training using real life stories about discrimination, empowerment and acceptance to educate and coach people in workplaces across NZ and Australia. I believe that the work that the Cerebral Palsy Society does is important for both our current and future members and I am committed to the Board and to continuing the work that we have done.

Nominator: Harvey Brunt **Seconder:** Dave Thomas

Immanuel Koks (Incumbent Group)



I grew up in Papakura, South Auckland, but now live in Ōtautahi, Christchurch with my wife, Sarah, and son. I teach applied Christian studies and disability studies at Laidlaw College, a private tertiary college in Christchurch and Auckland. In my theology PhD, I am bringing my perspective, as a person with CP, to the question of how people can use their strengths and weaknesses to offer hope and friendship to those who are different to themselves.

Along with serving on the Board of the Cerebral Palsy society from 2007 to 2009, I sat on the executive of the disability association of Massey University, served as a member of the Laidlaw College Student Exec, and currently sit on the Disability Advisory Group at Laidlaw College.

I am passionate about meeting the needs of disabled individuals with bespoke solutions that meet our unique needs, not just "one-sized-fits-all" solutions. This is especially important for our members because CP is so diverse and impacts individuals from every part of New Zealand's society. This is crucial right now, in the wake of Covid-19 and the recession, because disability spending might be seen as a lower priority by the government. I want to see the Cerebral Palsy Society as a vocal advocate, saying to government "our needs have not changed. We still need better services that meet our unique needs quickly and effectively, so that we can live the life we choose."

While, my vision for the CP society is that we should be a progressive voice in society, in these uncertain times, I believe the board will meet the needs of members' best, with a steady vision that prioritises maintaining our resources, and where best, providing programmes that help our members live the full lives we want to live.

Nominator: Anthony Smith **Seconder:** Harvey Brunt

Renata Kotua (Independent)



I am Renata. I am 37 years old and I have lived with Cerebral Palsy my whole life.

I am like most Maori Samoan girls: warm, hearty, a bit feisty, good at cooking, better at eating. My smile is wide, my laugh distinctive and I make the best of whatever cards life deals me. I am a confident, happy and resilient person. I work hard to make sure my life is good.

My daughter Te Akau is 3 and I look forward to welcoming a new addition in 2021. I am in the process of training to be a developmental psychologist, and I am current serving as a member of the Auckland Council Disability Advisory Board.

I am running because there are not enough voices of people who have CP on the board. I believe that the Society should be guided by the aspirations and needs of all our members.

I am open minded. Well-spoken and keen for constructive discussion. I have had over 20 years' experience advocating for myself, disabled teenagers and young adults working in the disability sector. I consider myself well-placed to advocate for members from a diverse range of backgrounds.

I am a pragmatist, but not afraid to call things out when needed. It needs to be said, I will say it, but I can accept when I am wrong and see it as an opportunity to learn and grow.

Whilst we are all connected to CP, I acknowledge we are all experiencing it differently. If you vote for me I will serve the CP Society by supporting management to focus on delivering programs and better outcomes for all people with Cerebral Palsy. I would love to see balance in how support, resources and programs are distributed to members regardless of what life stage they are in.

Nominator: Red Nicholson **Secunder:** Rachel Mullins

Emma Lovett (Independent)



I currently own and run the business Adaptive Footwear which I founded, bringing orthotic and user-friendly footwear options to New Zealand. Managing and operating this business has enabled me to meet and talk to many of our members and further understand what supports and resources people of all ages need. Being entrepreneurial means I like to look at things from various points of view to find solutions & options to move forward. I was previously a Customs Officer for 8 years and during the time I was a Senior Customs Officer in Learning & Development in which I trained new Officers, and implemented a national training framework to formally structure the learning of policies and processes. My son Reid

is 5 ½ years old with Cerebral Palsy. We have undertaken many rounds of intensive therapy both in New Zealand and overseas. We fund-raised to take Reid to St Louis, USA for SDR surgery, which we were successful in achieving. He had the surgery last year and is making huge progress with some independent walking this year. I can relate to many families who travel through the hurdles medically, financially, educationally, and personally. Although my son is young, and we are early in the CP journey there is so much that can and should be done in multiple aspects of our Society to set up pathways for the future into adulthood. I am not afraid to stand up and speak out when it is needed. I will continue to extend that voice on behalf of other members (whether I am elected as a Board member or not) I believe the Society has so much potential to grow and support our members. I believe services need to have thorough member engagement and feedback alongside strong analysis of the overall operations of the Society before any major decisions are made. In 2020 the world is changing, people are changing, thoughts and expectations are changing. We have an opportunity to bring about the right change and move forward positively for the Freedom and Choice of our members.

Nominator: Murray Waring **Secunder:** Kat Thomas

Trish McQueen (Independent)



My name is Trish McQueen and I have cerebral palsy. I am starting for the Cerebral palsy board this year. I believe all cerebral palsy have a rights to have live the life to the full. I have alot to offer especially around therapy for adults who are coming into older life and I would like to see this to be offered from day 1.

Nominator: Marcia Nelson **Secunder:** Melissa Jones

Rachel Mullins (Independent)



Hi I'm Rachel from Christchurch. I'm standing for the board because I have benefited from many of the programmes the Society has and know what a difference these make in many peoples lives. I am passionate about the rights of everyone with CP (actually all impairments) and want to see the Society remain in its strong position of being able to make tangible differences in our lives

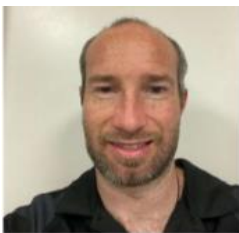
I have worked in the disability sector for the last 20 years including the last 10 at the Christchurch City Council and along with my lived experience have a background that covers many areas affecting disabled people including(in no particular order) Advocacy, Disability Awareness, Recreation Education and the Arts. I'm a people person and love

working with others to achieve outcomes that benefit everybody

I've been told I have a good sense of humour and am definitely known for my talking more than walking! In my spare time I love to travel (Thanks COVID) and shop. I also love reading music movies and theatre.

Nominator: Matthew Whiting **Secunder:** Kerry Bonner

Kurt Peterson (Independent)



Hello, my name is Kurt Peterson and I am running for a position on the Cerebral Palsy Society Board. I have minor Cerebral Palsy that affects my left side but that has never stopped me from taking on a challenge, rather it has motivated me to hit the gas-pedal and achieve my dreams. Through my goals, I have always had the pleasure of having the CPS on my side and I have made it my goal to help everyone the same way I was. For me, my cerebral palsy has always been a strength that has made me differently abled. I remember being inspired and allowed to shoot for the stars as a young boy. As life went on, I have done everything I could to try and be an inspiration and I reckon being on the

board of members for the CPS gives me a chance to maximize the difference I can make. I find it is incredibly important to make sure that people are surrounded by empathetic and motivating individuals, and have their differences celebrated, which is something that the CPS has always done for me and something I strive to continue. For me, it is all about making a positive change and creating an atmosphere of positivity.

In the past, I have co-led the Cerebral Palsy Youth Alliance. We organized and worked on various projects such as Steptember, Mentoring Course with Hearts For Youths and the 10 Freedoms camping. I have conducted as an MC the September Prize-Giving, The Cerebral Palsy Have a Go day and numerous other events, that have not only been fun but also important for all the young minds with us. Apart from that, I have also been an active mentor to help lads like me reach their potential and live fulfilling lives. I have volunteered at Parafed to provide an awesome experience to differently abled individuals and make them feel like they belong. Finally, I am always trying to create awareness about Cerebral Palsy as an active spokesperson by spreading understanding of and insights into our unique and charming distinctions. Today, I run an up and coming successful business selling health focused natural drink flavourings. On the side, I also race motorcars which has been my passion since I was young. I do not think any of my achievements would have been possible without having to face adversities at a young age. From my past endeavours, I can safely say that I never shy away from a challenge and will always bring my 100% to all the work I will do. As an experienced and committed individual, I know I can bring

my expertise in business and management to make CPS run more efficiently and effectively. One of my main goals as a board member will be to nationalize the Society in hopes of reaching more individuals in need. I also plan on organizing fundraising events, regular catchups, and a mentoring program. Finally, as the board member I will strive to work hard for my people and aim to create positive changes in as many lives as I can. I know if I am elected, I will be determined to meet all my goals and objectives, and exceed all expectations with a smile.

Nominator: Tim George **Seconder:** Pippa Huddleston

Karl Sangster (Incumbent Group)



I am a previous Board member, having served for ten years from 2003-2013, (eight of those as President from Feb 2005 to Oct 2013). I became involved with the CP Society when my son William first attended Conductive Education at Coyle St as a 2 year old back in 2001. I saw first hand what wonderful improvements William had with the daily therapy that was provided by CE and I wanted to give something back to the Society so I joined the Board in 2003 to help create a more positive environment for our members.

William is now 22 years old and still lives at home with my wife Lon, I and our 18 year old son James. William graduated from AUT last Dec with a Bachelor of Communications degree and has proven that having Cerebral Palsy and being non verbal is no barrier to succeeding in life.

The CP Society have assisted William in not only enhancing his life but also in providing William with an opportunity to connect with other members through the CP Alliance to support his well-being and to build his confidence in communicating with other people with similar abilities. The various programmes that are offered by the Society have been very well received by William and I would like to give back my time to the Society after being away from the Board for the last 7 years.

I currently work as a Crew Planning Manager for Air New Zealand and believe that with the skills that I have gained over the last 7 years, as well as my knowledge of the Society, its governance and its membership from serving on the Board previously, will hold me in good stead for coming back on as a Board member. Not only this, but William and I are also very passionate NZ Warriors supporter so I have learnt a lot about resiliency over the years 😊

Nominator: Harvey Brunt **Seconder:** Anthony Smith

Meg Smith (Independent)



I am mother to Molly who is 10 years old and has cerebral palsy (CP), and Archie who is 8 years old. We have been members of the Cerebral Palsy Society (CPS) for over eight years and during this time I have become increasingly more involved. I am part of the NZ CP Clinical Network, a quality improvement program that aims to provide clinical leadership in the development and maintenance of a nation-wide clinical service for children and youth who seek services and support for CP care. This work is led by the CPS and the Paediatric Society of NZ and its success is heavily dependent on this close partnership to ensure there is a strong linkage with families, children and adults living with CP. The work includes

progressing in areas such as, detection and early intervention, improving transition between youth and adult services, exploring the potential for NZ based SDR surgery and intensive therapy opportunities. I see this work as crucial for improving and progressing the way people with CP are supported in NZ and ultimately with optimising outcomes and quality of life. I have been a nurse for over 25 years and in the last 15 years I have worked mainly in health management. I have a Masters in Health Management with first class honours. Previously I worked as the Charge Nurse Manager for the Paediatric Orthopaedic service at Starship Children's Hospital where many children with CP came through the service. This allowed me to gain insight into the challenges and barriers that families living with CP face. In my current Clinical Nurse Specialist role, I facilitate a quality improvement program across three hospitals within Waitemata DHB. The program focuses on capturing the patient's experience of care received, which is used as a driver for quality improvements to care delivery. Like many parents of children with CP, I have dedicated a lot of time and energy into navigating the

health and education systems in order to optimise outcomes for my daughter. This, along with my professional experience, has given me a good understanding of systemic structures across government services in NZ for our children living with CP. I am standing for board as I have a strong desire to be able to use my skills, knowledge and experience to help make a difference to improving the lives of all people living with CP and to help navigate our society into a strong position of advocacy and leadership in health, wellbeing and inclusion.

Nominator: Marlene Green **Secunder:** Emma Lovett

Merryn Straker (Independent)



The journey with our son Oscar 13, has challenged and shaped me in ways I didn't imagine. I'm passionate about a future with better opportunities for those with CP, supported by a strong Society, with a strong voice across all members – children, teens and adults.

I am the Chief Operating Officer of Straker Translations and was a winner with my husband of the New Zealand Entrepreneur of the Year - Masters Category 2018. I am a Director for Te Tiro Toi Whakangao a Maori technology initiative in NZ to build large NZ export businesses.

Neuro-plasticity is for our families and we benefited immensely from our early years with Conductive Education. We've also experienced 3 rounds of intensives with Pia Stampe who through my relationship came and educated parents, physios, SLT, and OT's about possibilities. You are lucky if you find therapy near you lucky if you can afford it and lucky if you can balance the time with work and family. You are lucky if you start in a supportive school, lucky if you can find a good transition from school to the working world. Even luckier if you can get full time meaningful work, not on a minimum wage. Life for those with CP shouldn't be about luck.

To change the 'luck' factor I passionate about the Society to advocating at the governmental level with the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Development, I am well connected into the Government through our business. We need to ensure the government is providing enough to cover our essentials. It is not about crazy spending but about a targeted and structured higher level advocacy programme. It's about changing thinking in the ministries.

I would like to see an end to Cerebral Investments Ltd - it is a risky proposition with poor governance and not something a registered Charity should be involved in. It has provided no direct returns to the Society and the funds would have returned more invested.

I would love the opportunity to help steer the Society on a new journey to make meaningful change in our members' lives.

Nominator: Sarah Anderson **Secunder:** Edward Collett

Sally Thomas (Incumbent Group)



I have had a long involvement with the Cerebral Palsy Society through my son Alex who is 33. Alex has benefitted in many ways through his membership to the Society – with practical assistance through member programmes and equally important, a great social network.

It has been a privilege for me to work alongside a passionate and committed CP Society Board since 2017 and I am happy to put my hat in the ring for a further term, during what I believe is an exciting time for the Society.

2020 has been a challenging time for the Board as we have navigated through uncertain times. I fully stand behind the tough decisions that we have made this year and believe that these will ensure the Society can continue to support people with CP in the generations to come. It is my hope that the Society's next phase will see more of a focus on advocacy at Government level which will positively impact right across our membership and the wider disability community. While the Society's identity

is important to us, I believe there is a need to work alongside like-minded organisations to create a ground swell which leads to systemic change. Disability organisations are not large enough to achieve this on their own, but together could form a really powerful lobby group.

I have worked in the disability sector since 1997 in a number of roles, currently as National Coordinator for the NZ Foundation for Conductive Education. I am passionate about the rights of people with disabilities and their families to have a great life and choice and control over how this looks – we are all individuals!

I hope to continue to utilise my passion and lived experience of disability, along with the views of the cross-section of people that I connect with through my work and in the community, to create positive change in the lives of people with CP who sit at the core of the Society.

Nominator: Anthony Smith **Secunder:** Harvey Brunt

Reuben Woods (Independent)



Kia ora koutou, I am a senior corporate partner at global law firm DLA Piper. I was born and raised in West Auckland and am of Ngai Tahu descent. I have three fantastic children - Phoebe (pictured) and identical twins Nico and Quinn. Nico (aged 6) has spastic diplegia. My partner Ilse is a doctor at Auckland Hospital.

I am ranked by Chambers (global legal directory) as one of New Zealand's leading corporate solicitors. I act for private equity funds, venture capitalists and on M&A transactions and capital raisings. I also advise boards on director duties and governance issues. My work experience is relevant for the CP Society right now.

For those that are not aware, our society owns and has advanced \$2m to a concreting business, an air-conditioning business and a landscaping business and has also engaged in residential property development

The CP Society board should be focused on enhancing and promoting the interests of people with Cerebral Palsy in NZ.

My intention, should I be elected, would be to seek to refocus the board on its core purpose.

I have spent approx. 10 years on non-profit boards. My interests include surfing, rugby and guitar.

Nominator: Meg Smith **Secunder:** Merryn Straker
