



## Nominee Biographies – AGM 2023 Cerebral Palsy Society of New Zealand

The Cerebral Palsy Society's Constitution allows for nine (9) board member positions and also requires 50 percent of previously elected board members to stand for re-election at each AGM.

This year there are four (4) positions available, and six (6) candidates.

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Below are the biographies submitted by the 2023 nominees.  
Biographies are listed alphabetically by surname:

- Helena Chan
  - Daniel Clay
  - George Hewitt
  - Emma Lovett
  - Trish McQueen
  - Reuben Woods
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## Helena Chan

Kia Ora Koutou/ 大家好,

Ko Helena taku ingoa, 我的名字是 Helena. I was born and raised in Tāmaki Makaurau to immigrant and refugee parents from Cambodia and China. I grew up in South Auckland.

I'm now in my 30's and have lived experience of Cerebral Palsy (Spastic Hemiplegia), which is ideal for working in this space.

I'm confident that the adversities I have overcome, including being a female from an ethnic minority group will enable me to bring a balanced and diverse perspective to the board. At heart, I'm a people person and I'm energised by connecting and helping others.

I look forward to having a kōrero with members and improving the quality of life for Kiwis living with CP.

I'm not the type to let my CP get in the way of things I want to do! I was an AUT Uni Scholarship recipient and graduated with a Bachelor of Business (Marketing and Advertising) and then completed postgraduate studies.

I have worked across a variety of sectors, including local and central government, engineering consultancies and the not-for-profit sector.

My current role is at Vector working in Wellbeing, Diversity and Inclusion.

I have been involved in re-establishing our accessibility network for employees.

I am passionate about raising the profile of disabled people and maximising their potential to succeed by listening to them and focusing on their strengths, instead of focusing on "What we can't do".

It is paramount to shift the mindset from seeing CP as a "deficit" and focusing on what value individuals with CP can bring to the table.

Noho ora mai,  
Helena.

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## Daniel Clay

Kia ora koutou

I have been on the CPS Board since 2020 and would like to continue on the Board to help maintain the momentum of improving member services and provide stability and continuity to the governance team.

My 11-year old daughter is a power chair user and lives with CP.

This gives me a thorough understanding of the challenges and successes of living with CP. I have also had opportunities to connect with adults with CP, enabling me to build my knowledge of their needs and goals.

This insight and experience motivate me to promote solutions that address the systemic issues and challenges that CP can create for families and individuals.

The new CPS Board has made several bold and positive changes to the strategy and investments of the CP Society, which I believe were necessary from both a member focus and good governance perspective. We are focussed on transparency and good governance.

I am proud to have been part of these changes and hope to continue to provide my time and expertise to implement the remaining changes and new strategy. Maintaining continuity is important to the stability of the Board and to achieve even more improvements to member services.

I am an active Board member, and am the sole Director of Cerebral Investments Ltd, and have been working to divest its investments in accordance with the CPS strategy.

I was a practising lawyer for most of my career, and now head an investment business. T

his 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 client (member) focus.

My legal background also provides me with the ability to ensure good governance practices are maintained and risks and compliance are managed well.

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## George Hewitt

Kia ora, George here, I am 27 and live with CP. I'm seeking re-election. Joining the board in 2021 this was my first role in governance and I now feel like I am hitting my straps.

I have non-profit communications experience working for both Pukaha National Wildlife Centre and CCS Disability Action promoting Accessible Housing, youthfulness at 27 and living with CP, I can share a unique understanding with youngsters

growing up in a similar situation.

I have a keen interest in disability advocacy and sport and its positive impact on lives; I am based in Masterton. I have strong connections to rural New Zealand and being the sole board representative living outside of Auckland I can continually help people growing up in the regions that may struggle to find the opportunities others have in our metropolitan centres.

If re-elected onto the board, my goal will be to continually build opportunities and connections with our members who live with CP in regional communities.

I will do this by continuing my advocacy for more regional business to accept the CP Society's E-card and continuing my work to push for a nationwide CP peer support network.

I believe my young adult voice, communication expertise, outside Auckland representation and lived experience as one of two board members with Cerebral Palsy will be invaluable to the board.

I bring unique attributes to the table, including:

- Established networks in the disability and sporting sectors.
- Established connections with current and potential members.
- Knowledge of advocacy and a drive to raise awareness for CP in the wider Aotearoa Community.
- 5 years' experience in communications and marketing

I want to keep encouraging the next generation to embrace who they are and seek opportunity, never for one moment think that they have a disability that will deflate their dreams.

Ka pai for considering me to represent you, I look forward to helping create a better society for you all.

Nga mihi,  
George Hewitt



## Emma Lovett

I have been on the CPS Board since 2020, I am the current Vice Chair and Secretary.

I served as the Board Chair and President until 2022. I am extremely proud of the hard work and dedication of the Board in some very challenging circumstances.

We have made some bold decisions and it is a pleasure to work alongside the diverse members of our Board.

I look forward to being part of implementing further positive outcomes with strong Governance.

My husband Steven and I have a now 8-year-old son, Reid, who has Cerebral Palsy.

My family and I can relate to many people who are travelling the hurdles medically, financially, educationally, and personally.

I have an operational background in Government Departments including Child Protection Services and New Zealand Customs Service.

In 2019, I founded the business 'Adaptive Footwear' which started bringing orthotic and userfriendly footwear options to New Zealand.

Managing and operating the business enabled me the privilege of meeting and talking to many of our members and gaining a greater understanding of the support and resources people of all ages require. I sold this business to focus on other projects.

Being entrepreneurial, I look at things from a holistic view, am collaborative, and not afraid to seek solutions outside of the box.

I invite open, honest conversation to ensure decisions are made in accordance with the evolving needs of our community.

I make time to spend outdoors as much as possible. As a family we have taken up fishing regularly along with kayaking and biking in ways where Reid is actively involved. I also know a whole lot about how to play Minecraft!

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## Trish McQueen

hi there My name is Trish McQueen. I believe that I can offer you to hear my voice to get my ideas. I have got Cerebral Palsy and I believe I can Make a difference for children and adults who have a Cerebral Palsy . I believe everyone has the right.



## Reuben Woods

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 from Ngāi Tahu.

I have three fantastic children - daughter Phoebe and identical twin boys Nico and Quinn. Nico has spastic diplegia. My partner Ilse is a doctor at Auckland Hospital.

I am ranked by the global legal directories (Chambers and Legal 500) as one of New Zealand's leading corporate solicitors and was named in NZ Lawyer's "most influential" list in 2021. 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, including in situations of insolvency.

I was appointed to the CP Society board in October 2020. The almost three years spent on the board have been very busy. My initial focus was on understanding the concreting business, landscaping business and air-conditioning business previously owned by the CP Society. We sold the concreting business and landscaping business and put the insolvent air-conditioning business into liquidation. Recent focus has been on getting better information concerning our membership and people with cerebral palsy in NZ more generally, to better inform and guide our strategic priorities.

I have also been focused on seeking to diversify income streams for the CP Society to fund such things as the getDriving programme.

The role I currently play on the board involves providing a legally trained perspective on the various decisions required of the board. I am the CP Society's current representative on the board of Essential Assets Limited, which holds a portfolio of investment assets for the benefit of the society. Regarding other governance positions, I'm a board member of DLA Piper New Zealand (law firm), I'm a trustee of Waihao MR 903 Sub No. IX Maori Reservation (my marae trust), and I was on the board of a regional sports trust for over a decade (Sport Waitakere).

My intention, should I be re-elected, will be to continue to assist the board to drive the strategic priorities articulated in the strategy plan, including to seek to diversify income streams and to position as the go-to commentator and advocate for people with CP in NZ.

My interests include surfing, rugby, music, food, and many other things - but all interests currently give way to my kids' interests (as they should!).

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