



Te Ope Whakaora

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BusinessReporter

corporate support in action



A new start for Christchurch trainees

After the Christchurch earthquakes, it was estimated the city needed 1000 extra workers to rebuild its infrastructure over the next five to seven years—a job that would normally take 20 years.

The Salvation Army Education and Employment service pitched in by setting up 'U Build 4 the Rebuild'—an initiative to train and qualify local unemployed people for roading and underground infrastructure work.

The first course began in June 2012 and the 13th is now underway. Since the programme started, it has had a 98 per cent attendance rate and 83 per cent of trainees have secured employment.

The six-week course was developed in partnership with infrastructure industry training organisation InfraTrain along with the Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT), representing companies involved in the rebuild, as well as local

and central government agencies.

U Build is funded by The Salvation Army Canterbury Earthquake Appeal, which was supported by many New Zealand companies.

Many trainees lost their jobs after the earthquakes. One had been out of work for two years and had been through a marriage break-up and has a three-year-old daughter. He was suffering from anxiety and depression.

He was helped with accommodation during the course and provided with other support to get back on an even keel. Following graduation, he started work at \$15 an hour, and a few months later was taken on permanently and given a raise to \$19.50. He is now in line for another promotion.

'I'm not on the minimum wage now, I've got a career,' he says. 'I'm not just paying child support—I can do things with my daughter and spoil her a bit.'

'We deal with every individual on a case-by-case basis,' says Salvation Army project manager Robyn Laurenson. 'We

address any barriers that may have inhibited people from learning in the past, and we're connected to other Salvation Army services for budget advice and other social service support if required.'

The free, full-time course begins with two weeks of 'work readiness'. Trainees attend the gym twice a week to get fit and undertake units that improve their knowledge of nutrition, budget management and allow them to develop teamwork skills.

Trainees are put through their wheels, tracks and rollers licence, which qualifies them to operate diggers and other machinery.

During the course, trainees gain 20 credits towards a National Certificate of Infrastructure to give them a step-up into the industry—including training in traffic management and site safety.

'It takes them out of the minimum wage trap and into a potential career,' Robyn says.

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Measuring our social progress

The world is full of numbers and some numbers are clearly more important than others. It is our view in The Salvation Army that some relatively unimportant numbers should be more important. More important in media debate and political discourse. More important in the hearts and minds of New Zealanders.

The Salvation Army wants to highlight the number of children living in relative poverty, the number of children neglected or ill-treated by their families, the number of young people out of work, and the number of domestic violence incidents police are called to. These numbers tell a story of the lives of the most vulnerable New Zealanders, many of whom The Salvation Army sees regularly.

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Curiously these numbers are not secret—they are a matter of public record. The problem for us is that they are often overlooked by most of the media. With this lack of attention, the stories of lives stunted by poverty, violence and alienation are ignored as well.

One of the intentions of our annual State of the Nation reports is to shine some light on these ignored numbers, and by doing so call to public attention the question of our social progress as a nation. We hope the stories behind these figures become part of the political discourse amongst New Zealanders. If this happens, we may make faster progress toward more just social policies.

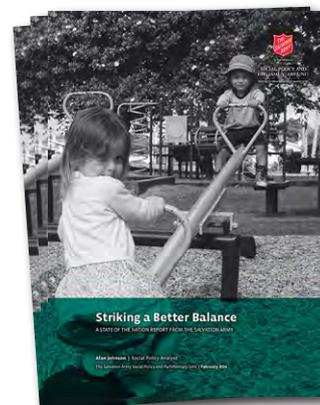
As the most recent report *Striking a Better Balance* notes, our social progress in many areas is credible, and as a nation we should take some collective credit for this. In some areas we have not made any noticeable progress, while in a handful of areas we appear to have gone backwards. This is perhaps as we should expect—few things in life are consistently positive or negative, so it is unlikely that all social change will be helpful or beneficial.

As we review this report, it is important that as a country we maintain perspective and not simply add things up to get a total sum of the goods and bads.

The indicators offered in this report cannot be treated this way.

A reasonable perspective would be to avoid the blame game or taking credit where it is probably not fully deserved, but to instead acknowledge that social progress is a collective effort that involves families, communities, business and the State.

Major Sue Hay
Assistant Director,
Social Policy and
Parliamentary Unit



To read *Striking a Better Balance*, go to salvationarmy.org.nz/StateoftheNation2014

Helping out with school stationery

Warehouse Stationery has again supported The Salvation Army by raising funds for families struggling to pay for children's school supplies.

Until 31 January, customers at Warehouse Stationery stores around the country could add \$1 to their purchase at checkout to donate to the company's Back to School Appeal. The funds raised went toward stationery vouchers for Salvation Army centres to distribute to families as children headed back to school.

The Warehouse Group General Manager Community and Environment Paul Walsh says Warehouse Stationery's community programme is centred around supporting families and young people who are struggling in many ways. 'Our partnership with The Salvation Army is focused on providing financial assistance to



Warehouse Stationery Chief Executive Officer Pejman Okhovat with Salvation Army Public Relations Director Shane Chisholm and Commissioners Janine and Robert Donaldson

families for back-to-school costs.'

Warehouse Stationery continues to stand side by side with Kiwis in

need by selling Salvation Army pens in their stores during this year's Red Shield Appeal.



Stan Walker gets behind this year's Red Shield Appeal with Captains Jenny and Marcus Collings

Standing *side by side* with Kiwis in need

New Zealander Stan Walker, 2009 winner of national singing competition *Australian Idol*, has shown what a fan he is of The Salvation Army's work by becoming an ambassador to the Army's Red Shield and Christmas appeals.

Stan says he has always been a huge supporter of The Salvation Army, or 'the Salvos' as they are affectionately referred to in Australia. 'They're about bringing hope to people,' he says. 'That's what I love about the Salvos—they do everything for people in need of help.'

Stan first decided to put his face behind what the Army is doing in Australia last year. And now he's doing the same thing back home in New Zealand, with his song 'Freedom'—written specifically for The Salvation

Army—the theme tune for this year's Red Shield Appeal.

'Everyone knows who the Salvos are but not really how much they actually do for the community,' explains Stan. 'I started to get to know them and had so much fun. I think the best thing for me was learning more about The Salvation Army, what they stand for, what they're about and how they began.'

'I love it. They're awesome as. They're ruthless. They deal with some trippy stuff, eh. They're strong people and selfless as. They're helping people detox, they're helping them recover, they're helping people heal, they're finding people at their lowest and helping them back up again.'

Stan is now a strong supporter of The Salvation Army's appeals, urging donors, their friends and the public to jump on board with this year's Red Shield

Appeal. 'Not because this is something that gets done every year, but because it actually makes a whole lot of difference in people's lives. It just brings hope.'

Salvation Army Public Relations Director Shane Chisholm says it's great to see a young Kiwi backing the Army's fundraising campaigns. 'A major benefit of having Stan's support is that he appeals to a different audience than our usual donors,' Shane says. 'This means word about our work is spreading among potential future supporters.'

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Pack the bus

Morrinsville Primary School students helped Northern Knights cricketer James Baker collect donated food for the 'Pack the Bus' appeal that roved around the Waikato in December.

Organised by The Breeze and sponsored by Greenline Coaches and Speedy Signs, this appeal was just one of many throughout the country that collected food for our centres to distribute at Christmas.



Rachel Thomas/Fairfax Media

Red Shield Appeal

We invite you to stand side by side with The Salvation Army during this year's Red Shield Appeal and give hope to those who need it most.

Help as a street collector during 28 April to 4 May, or attend a Red Shield Appeal Breakfast in Wellington on 29 April or Auckland on 1 May.

To find out more email
pr@nzf.salvationarmy.org

It's all about family

Businesses that stand side by side with The Salvation Army are helping struggling families take positive steps toward a brighter future

Fifteen years ago, Murray was a personal fitness trainer, taking out the masters categories in the Mr Fitness Olympia title in Greece and the Mr Fitness Universe in the United States.

But when his daughter's health began deteriorating, Murray gave up competition and took on the care of his grandchildren. He is now the sole caregiver to five grandchildren and more recently a great-grandson.

'Yeah, I left the world stage,' he laughs. 'But when I look back, I wouldn't change a thing.'

Proudly independent, Murray has raised his grandchildren, now in their teens, with little support. He works 20 hours a week around the children's school hours and prides himself on keeping a tight household budget.

Murray knows the importance of maintaining a stable family environment. He was a ward of the state from age three to 15, living in a series of foster homes and boys' homes.

'There's times when we have to go without and I feel sorry that I'm not able to provide certain things, but they keep on reminding me that they've been grateful for the fact I've hung in there for them,' he says. 'At the end of the day, all they want is love.'

But in the lead-up to the new school year, Murray knew that for the first time in 19 years his budget would not cope with the back-to-school costs after the added expenses of Christmas and having teenagers at home during the school holidays.

'I decided to push all pride aside and seek some other assistance,' Murray says.



The Salvation Army provided a few food parcels to take some of the strain off the household budget and helped with some back-to-school costs, including supplying donated Warehouse Stationery vouchers.

Some clients need only minor support and encouragement to get them through an isolated crisis. But many have endured chaotic, even traumatic lives since childhood and require more intensive work to help them become independent and better prepared to deal with the day-to-day tensions of living on a low income.

With demand for services still yet to subside since the peak of the recession, Salvation Army Secretary for Social Services Major Pam Waugh says public and corporate support for social services has become even more important if

people like Murray and his family are to avoid debt and long-term poverty.

'Our traditional sources of funding have been in decline for some time, making the Red Shield Appeal increasingly important if we are to maintain the depth and breadth of services,' Pam says.

Thanks to your support, Murray and his family now have a brighter and happier future. Please donate to the Red Shield Appeal today and give hope to other Kiwis living in desperate situations.



Shane Chisholm
Public Relations Director
p: 04 382 0744
m: 027 449 4540
e: shane_chisholm@nzf.salvationarmy.org



Stand *side by side* with Kiwis in need

Every day, The Salvation Army works hard to provide better options in life for families living in desperate situations. But with thousands in need, we simply cannot do this alone.

Please donate to the Red Shield Appeal today and give hope to those who need it most.

Donate at salvationarmy.org.nz



Te Ope Whakaora
RED SHIELD APPEAL