



## From the Director...

Catapult originated in August 2003. At that time there were no general disability services which was recognised by Canterbury Development Corporation, Catapult's initial funder. Other local supported employment services provided services to specific elements within the disability or mental health sector, e.g. mental health or intellectual disability.

Initially the service consisted of me and my car as an office, fortuitously, appropriate office space was soon identified, the Christchurch City Council donated some furniture, Trevor Cattermole joined the service, and we started to look like a business.

Today we have a staff of ten who enjoy a comfortable office suite, and at the time of writing this report, over 900 people have been referred to Catapult, of which there have been over 500 paid employment placements as a result.

With four main contracts, Catapult still adheres predominantly to its core business of providing supported employment. We also provide transition services for high needs students, and this, where appropriate, has a strong focus on employment.

Catapult prides itself on the growth and development it has experienced in such a short period of time, enduring periods of both high and low unemployment.

Catapult is having a professionally facilitated strategic planning day in September to develop an effective map of the service's future direction. It is doubtful that it will make any major moves in direction from employment. My feeling is that supported employment is an effective contributor to the social fabric and fiscal economy of the country. It's still an infant profession and there is a great deal of development work that can be done.

Catapult has also appointed a professional marketing company to promote its image and success to local employers, thus enabling Catapult to enhance its employer networks.

Finally, a few unproven, but interesting perceptions...

People living of the autistic spectrum are responsible for over half of the world's scientific discoveries. Where would the world be without them.

Without artists who experience mental illness, the world's art scene would have little semblance to what it is today.

Supported employment service users generate twice the cost of the service they accessed through increased PAYE and GST payments, and reduced benefit dependence in their first year of work.

Supported employment is one of the most complex multi faceted disciplines, requiring skills in counselling and mentoring, networking, sales and marketing, teaching, advocacy, disability awareness, etc, and yet, as a social service, the outcomes are so easily measured: the client either has a job or not.

Many people have potentially high skills and talents which are never identified, or identified late in life due to ineffective teaching methods as children.

There are no bad ideas, only good ideas and not quite so good ideas. Without mistakes, there would be much less learning.

A person who does not take risks in fact risks his or her ability to grow and develop.

## Connections Made at Expo

Recently Catapult participated in the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Careers Expo held at the Westpac Trust Stadium.

This provided an excellent opportunity to reconnect and network with other supported employment agencies, educational institutions, and other course providers.

Most importantly it gave us an opportunity to meet students and teachers from schools across Christchurch and discuss what makes an effective transition from school to adult life.

Many students and teachers were interested in our role in the job search /career planning process which includes support looking for a suitable job and which can carry through to on-the-job support.

# 10

the careers expo  
POWERED BY ORCA FISH MARKET, NEW ZEALAND  
 auckland wellington christchurch dunedin



Our staff explained how Catapult's role also includes recognising the skills a student has and the help we can offer to find avenues for up skilling. We also talked about how we could help students make informed career choices and the options available in a competitive job market.

Catapult enjoyed the chance to meet everyone at the 3 day Careers Expo and look forward to the exciting developments that are emerging in this field.

For more information on the services Catapult provides visit our website

[www.catapult.org.nz](http://www.catapult.org.nz)

## “Special Access” Radio Show Update

Over the last 9 Months the radio show “Special Access” on Plains FM has continued with sponsorship from Catapult and Blue Star Taxis. Originally four shows were planned and included a group of volunteers and four ORRS funded students transitioning from their last year of high school into adult life. The “Special Access” group is now about to make



Jonathan Petty at Plains FM

show number six and the project has been a wonderful experience for all involved. Since the show started there has been much fun and friendship not to mention coping with those unpredictable tricky moments that have further built the sense of camaraderie picked up by everyone along the way.

Some of the trickier moments include a time recently when the team put together an item on late motherhood. We spent over three hours researching, preparing and then interviewing an older mother at her home only to find the following day that the recorder hadn't recorded anything at all. Fortunately being



Susie Scott recording “Special Access”

“Super-Mum” our older mother was able to drop into the studio where we re-recorded the whole thing in about half an hour.

The students have often had to cope with some stressful situations too. One usually very extroverted young person suddenly found she was unable to speak in front of the microphone when the tape was running, so we did a couple of practice runs without taping. These went brilliantly with the student even throwing in some ad lib singing to spice things up.

Strangely someone had accidentally bumped the recording button at the start so we got the whole thing. (Lucky that.)

At the completion of the first four shows we went out to the Bohemian Café to celebrate. Since the project started one of two ORRS funded students has gone on to paid employment and another looks likely to start paid work soon at a hair salon. Two other ORRS students have decided to continue their interest in audio by

studying music. Of the volunteers with the project who have also experienced a health issue one has gone on to access paid work as a Community Support Worker.

Thanks to all those involved in the making of “Special Access”. (The next show goes to air on July the 5<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 on Plains FM.)

~ Brent and Moana

## Transition Student Succeeds at Work Experience

*Michael Parker is a Transition student currently doing work experience at Green Acres Trust.*

“My name is Michael Parker. I am a year 13 student at St Bede’s College. With the help and support of Catapult I am able to do work experience with Green Acres Garden Centre every Monday. I have always been interested in gardening and have been mowing the lawn since I was ten years old.

I have worked with three different owner/operators of the Green Acres franchise group. Warren, Justin and Anthony have been very friendly employers and have taught me many new skills. They supplied me with a uniform, safety goggles, and gloves. I also own my own ear muffs.

Green Acres workers sometimes help their elderly customers by doing extra tasks such as changing light bulbs, fixing the garden hose or lifting heavy furniture

The work has been very interesting. I have learnt how to deal with customers as well as look after their lawns and gardens.

I am really enjoying my work experience and I look forward to Monday each week when I will be working with Green Acres.”



Michael (centre) with his supervisors Anthony and Maria Williams from Green Acres

*Catapult would like to thank the staff at Green Acres Garden Centre for providing this great opportunity for Michael.*

**Are you an employer who needs new staff?**

Catapult is a free service to both employees and employers, contact us now on 365 7005.

We have just the right person for the job!