

soundscape

NEWSLETTER OF THE OTICON FOUNDATION IN NEW ZEALAND



The difference being able to hear makes to our lives is easy to take for granted.

A recent social conversation with a first time parent brought this home to me.

This is the story of a healthy, happy three year old boy whose early childhood education teacher suggested one day that he get his

hearing tested. As a result the young chap was whisked off to a specialist quick smart with huge tonsils and adenoids and an ear infection. Less than two months later he was in Wellington Hospital getting his tonsils and adenoids out, and grommets in. The difference to his speech, hearing and general well being has been incredible. This first time parent thought her son's speech and hearing were normal – she didn't know the difficulties her son had been having.

Hearing impairment touches most of our lives one way or

another. The impact can be life changing for the individual, their family, friends or work colleagues.

This is one of the reasons the Oticon Foundation exists. We support activities to improve the lives of people with hearing impairment, and we do that by helping find better solutions to hearing loss and increasing public awareness and understanding of hearing impairment.

The Foundation has seen a lot of passionate, enthusiastic people who support this aim, and whose work and activities aim to improve the lives of people with hearing impairment. Applications are now open for the Foundation's 2006 grants. It's an opportunity for all of us to really explore and support activities that will improve the lives of the hearing impaired.

Karen Pullar, Secretary to the Trustees, Oticon Foundation

THE OTICON
FOUNDATION IN
NEW ZEALAND WAS
ESTABLISHED IN
OCTOBER 1976.

INCOME GENERATED
FROM THE FOUNDATION'S
INVESTMENTS IS
DISTRIBUTED TO GROUPS
AND ORGANISATIONS
SEEKING FINANCIAL
SUPPORT FOR
PROJECTS THAT
BENEFIT THE HEARING
IMPAIRED.

FEBRUARY 2006

Fresh drive for new projects to improve lives of hearing impaired

Deadline to apply 31 March 2006

A call is going out to hearing care professionals, researchers, and organisations with projects or ideas that will improve the lives of the hearing impaired to apply for funding from the Oticon Foundation.

"We are actively pursuing projects that will find better solutions to hearing impairment," says Oticon Foundation Chairperson Tim Olphert.

"The Oticon Foundation grants are a financial commitment to support the development of expertise on hearing impairment issues and understanding of hearing impairment in the community," says Mr Olphert.

"We provide an opportunity for professionals, in their work, study and development, to access support for their work that isn't available through other sources.

"In 2006 we are looking for strong,

quality projects that add real value to what we know and how we support people with hearing issues.

"That means we want to encourage and support scientific, research or continuing education projects that lead to or are intended to lead to the improvement or mitigation of hearing impairment," says Mr Olphert.

"Another key area we want to focus on is working for better understanding of impaired hearing by helping professionals and people in the field."

The Foundation supports and encourages visits to New Zealand by experts and professionals to lift the local knowledge



Oticon Foundation Chairperson Tim Olphert with Trustees Graeme Hall (left) and David Underwood (right) and secretary Karen Pullar.

and expertise of those working in the field.

"We're urging people to make applications this year in support of this type of work."

Applications must be made to the Oticon Foundation by 31 March 2006. Details on how to apply are on the back of this newsletter or available from www.oticon.org.nz.

the oticon foundation

Leading deaf educator questions approaches to deaf students' learning and achievement

A world leading deaf educator has challenged New Zealand and Australia to test the learning and teaching in schools to ensure deaf and hearing impaired students can achieve to their potential.

Dr Marc Marschark, from the National Technical Institute for Deaf in the United States and the University of Aberdeen in Scotland was a keynote speaker at the ANZCED gathering in Rotorua.

"Deaf students continue to read at unacceptably low levels and the language and problem-solving skills they gain often lack the flexibility needed for academic success and lifelong learning," Dr Marschark told the conference.

"Educators have failed to recognise that deaf and hearing impaired students may learn in different ways."

Dr Marschark concludes that deaf children entering school lack the social, cognitive and language skills needed to achieve.

"Their literacy challenges are not just about reading and writing, and their academic challenges are not just about literacy.

"Deaf children are not hearing children who can't hear," says Dr Marschark.

"They come to learning with different experiences, knowledge and learning styles and education systems and

teaching must acknowledge and respond to this," he says. "Different does not imply deficient."

Dr Marschark believes that to improve academic success there needs to be better understanding of cognitive underpinnings and design of appropriate tools.

The key to success is to help deaf children become more aware of their learning styles. That means recognising whether they are independent learners, facilitating metacognition and metacomprehension and integrating language, learning and literacy.



"It also requires giving parents honest and objective information, and keeping them involved," says Dr Marschark.

More information about Dr Marschark is available from <http://www.rit.edu/~memrtl>.

Learning from the international experts

Educators of the deaf from New Zealand and Australia hit the ground running this year, thanks to the Australia New Zealand Conference for Educators of the Deaf held in Rotorua in early January.

Experts and educators benefited from local and international expertise, learnings and research into ways to enhance learning and teaching for Deaf students.

The Oticon Foundation was a major sponsor of the conference which heard from experts from the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, as well as our home grown talent.

"The conference was privy to insights from the world's leading educators of the deaf," says Oticon Foundation Secretary Karen Pullar.

"We all have a role to play to help support educators, parents and schools to increase their knowledge to ensure students reach their full potential," says Ms Pullar. "The conference was a positive step towards sharing knowledge and expertise to continue to support the work

of Deaf Educators and for our young people."



Delegates at the ANZCED Rotorua Conference check out the Oticon and Phonic Ear stands.

Auckland University's Oticon Hearing Education Centre – update

The Oticon Hearing Education Centre at the University of Auckland is planning its year of activities.

25 MARCH: The Centre's Dr Andrea Kelly and Dr Grant Searchfield will be bringing their audiology expertise to the Goodfellow Symposium continuing education conference for GPs and nurses in the weekend of March 25.

Dr Kelly will be presenting on hearing loss in children, and Dr Searchfield on

adult hearing loss and hearing aids.

More information about the workshops is available at www.cce.auckland.ac.nz/conferences.

MID 2006 – Planning is underway for a major symposium focused on Otitis Media/ Glue Ear.

The Centre will be hosting international experts during the year talking about auditory processing disorders in children.

Documentary to celebrate New Zealand Sign Language as an official language

Parliament is currently considering a new law that would make New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) an official language of New Zealand and the Oticon Foundation is backing a project that will help celebrate the passing of this NZSL Bill and what it means for the Deaf community.

A feature length documentary film looking at NZSL in the Deaf community is being worked on by husband and wife team, Victoria Manning and Paul Wolfram.

Victoria is Deaf and an active member of the Deaf community. Paul has experience in writing, producing, directing and editing short films.

"In 2006 the NZSL Act is expected to come into effect marking a major reversal in the historic oppression of the Deaf community's language and culture. Our documentary will look at the significance of official recognition of NZSL for the Deaf community; and the community's future aspirations for their language," says Victoria.

The film includes interviews with key people in the Deaf community, and footage of community events and the Deaf schools.

"The film celebrates and promotes Deaf culture and language for both deaf and hearing audiences. It is aimed at an unfamiliar, hearing audience, and we hope it may be used as a resource by the Deaf community.

The film will be available after the NZSL Bill is passed in Parliament.

"We also hope to submit our documentary for various public screenings, such as the International Film Festival, so that more New Zealanders learn about the official recognition of NZSL and our rich Deaf culture" says Victoria.

Improving the counselling of young deaf and hearing impaired New Zealanders

Drawing on the experience of deaf counsellors across the Tasman is adding new dimensions to the counselling of deaf and hearing impaired students in Northland, Auckland and South Auckland.

Dianne Hill is a counsellor with Kelston Deaf Education Centre, where she works with Deaf and hearing impaired students and their families and caregivers across the region.

"Hearing, deafness, communication and self esteem are crucial factors in my work and in the everyday lives of my clients," says Dianne. "My aim is to help deaf students identify, understand and deal with personal issues and challenges to ensure they can live and learn effectively."

Although Dianne's main role is to counsel, she also takes part in meetings,



facilitates courses, and provides pastoral care.

Dianne was awarded an Oticon Foundation grant to visit Australia to compare and contrast the work she

does with her counterparts across the Tasman. She visited six educational settings in Melbourne and Sydney, and stayed on campus of the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children.

"I returned to Kelston with fresh eyes, and with reminders to use visual counseling methods, be creative and ensure appropriate communication," says Dianne.

"It was valuable to be able to spend time with people who have a passion for their profession and understand its challenges. There are limited opportunities in New Zealand to do this."

Oticon Foundation grant recipients 2005

ACADEMY OF NEW ZEALAND AUDIOMETRISTS INCORPORATED, for Professor Ruth Bentler, University of Iowa, key note speaker at 2005 ANZAI Conference

ANNA MCMILLAN, Audiologist – travel grant to attend Eriksholm Summer Camp for Young Audiologists in Denmark

ARA MOORTHY, Audiologist – travel grant to attend Eriksholm Summer Camp for Young Audiologists in Denmark

ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF THE DEAF – to send representatives to DEANZ Forum meetings

AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND CONFERENCE FOR EDUCATORS OF THE DEAF for Professor Mark Marschark, National Institute for Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology, key note speaker at 2006 Conference

DEAF ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC – research grant to research employment services designed specifically for deaf people

HEARING ASSOCIATION – KAPITI BRANCH, equipment grant for a “Dry and Store” for their rooms

HEARING ASSOCIATION – MANAWATU BRANCH, equipment grant for demonstration vibrating smoke alarms and a flashing doorbell

HEARING ASSOCIATION – NELSON BRANCH, for Hospital bedside notices for patients with hearing loss

HEARING ASSOCIATION – TIMARU BRANCH, equipment grant for loop system for new rooms

JULIE MA, Audiologist – travel grant to attend Eriksholm Summer Camp for Young Audiologists in Denmark

KELSTON DEAF EDUCATION CENTRE – Dianne Hill, School Counsellor, travel grant to visit Australia to observe counselling work and related teaching in several schools

KELSTON DEAF EDUCATION CENTRE – Michael Heeney,

Regional Coordinator, travel grant to ICED Conference, Holland.

OTICON NEW ZEALAND LIMITED – educational weekend for recent audiology graduates

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND – Sign Language Interpreters for biannual conference for students with disabilities

VAN ASCH DEAF EDUCATION CENTRE – Joanne Lake, Specialist Resource Teacher – Speech/Language study grant towards Masters Degree, Renwick College/Newcastle University.

VICTORIA MANNING AND PAUL WOLFFRAM – to produce a documentary of the Deaf community's celebration of the official recognition of NZSL.

how to apply for grants

Applications must include:

1. The name and address of applicant
2. If relevant, the organisation represented and position of applicant within the organisation, plus copies of latest balance sheet and annual report
3. Details of expenditure involved
4. Information about funding you are seeking from any other organisation for this or supplementary projects
5. Overseas travel details where applicable. Please state whether an applicant/s will be returning to New Zealand permanently after the visit is completed
6. How the hearing impaired in New Zealand will benefit from your project/research
7. Information about how you will publicise your project and its results. (We would like you to seek as wide an audience as possible)
8. Details about how you will promote the Oticon Foundation if your application is successful

Applicants applying for project funding should also include:

1. Title of project
2. Summary of project (not exceeding 150 words)
3. Qualifications of applicant relevant to project
4. Aims and design of project, and expected completion date

Applications for grants other than project funding should also include:

1. Details of grant requested
2. Reasons for request

Successful applicants will be required to:

1. Submit a report (five copies) within three months of completion of the project
2. Disseminate results or information from the project to as wide an audience as possible, such as to the bulletins and newsletters of professional groups, hearing impaired and Deaf groups
3. Acknowledge the Oticon Foundation in any reports or publications about your project/research

deadline

Grants are allocated annually.

Applications (together with five extra copies) should be made no later than 31 March in any year. Applicants will be notified whether their grant application has been accepted by 30 June of the same year. Please address applications to:

The Secretary
Oticon Foundation in New Zealand
C/- PO Box 9128, Te Aro
WELLINGTON
Phone: 0800 OTICON
E-mail: info@oticon.org.nz

www.oticon.org.nz