



5 June, 2014

MEDIA RELEASE

TOP ZONTA WOMAN RECOGNISED IN THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Congratulations to Lynn McKenzie, our International President of Zonta International and the Zonta International Foundation. She became an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in recognition of her services to women in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

Lynn is the first New Zealand woman to hold Zonta's global office. "I feel so honoured to be given this opportunity," says Lynn. "It's not about me" she says. "This is about making a difference to the lives of other women and girls. Being able to do that is a complete privilege. Having seen first-hand some of our Zonta international projects - HIV transmission in Rwanda, violence against women in Nigeria and obstetric fistula in Liberia. I am very proud to be able to make a contribution". Under Lynn's leadership, Zonta has set up a domestic violence awareness programme in rural Samoa, the first of its kind in the Pacific. In addition, the Zonta says NO Campaign gave Zonta a voice and a face, and established it more firmly in the public perception.

Lynn joined the Zonta Club of Wellington when in her early thirties, she recollects, "I had the advantage of a supportive family, good education and career opportunities. It was pay-back time". Her potential was quickly recognised and she became a board member of the club then rose to be Vice President, then President of the club in 1993. She has devoted a quarter of a century to women's issues and her achievements are huge both here in New Zealand and internationally.

"'To serve is to live' is my mantra, she adds. "I borrowed this from Frances Hesselbein, a wonderful inspiring woman who is the President of the Frances Hesselbein Institute in New York. She has an amazing vision and way of engaging people. Both Frances and my mother Josey are role models for me. Both have insight, see possibilities and believe in people."

Lynn's commitment is steadfast and service and advocacy are everyday words. She is passionate for the cause. It is a testament to her drive, energy and international profile that she was elected to such a high office. Lynn is totally dedicated to Zonta, communicates effectively and frequently with members worldwide. She pushes the boundaries to ensure that the organisation remains effective, relevant and up with changing needs of membership organisations and the social mood with regard to women's rights.

“We must never become complacent and our support must be unwavering. We must continue to advocate for women's issues worldwide, demand gender equality and donate our time, talents and funds, locally and internationally to our projects and issues that secure gender equality. We must engage men and keep focused on both the present and future so Zonta remains vital and relevant for the women and girls who will count in the world of tomorrow.”

Lynn's term concludes at the Zonta convention in Orlando, Florida, USA at the beginning of July.

Over and above her Zonta interests Lynn has actively raised funds for the New Horizons for Women Trust, organizing, setting up and assisting the annual Pre-Loved Fashion Sale in Wellington which has raised many thousands of dollars since 2005. The sale has been hugely successful and this year alone raised \$12,500. This money has been donated to New Horizons for Women which gives awards/scholarships for second chance education for women, Lynn is a past Trustee and Chair of the Trust.

END

Maureen Heine
Governor
District 16

Mobile: 021 333 275

Agnes Espineda
President
Zonta Club of Wellington

Mobile: 021 630 023

**To arrange an interview with Lynn McKenzie
Please contact Mobile: 0274 756 057**

Background information on Zonta International

Founded in 1919, Zonta International is a global organization of executives and professionals working together to advance the status of women worldwide through service and advocacy. With more than 30,000 members in 66 countries, Zontians all over the world volunteer their time, talent and support to local and international service projects and educational programmes directed to improving the lives of women and girls. Zonta has general consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), consultative status with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), participatory status with the Council of Europe, and special relationships with United Nations entities promoting women's rights. To learn more, visit www.zonta.org.