Elected Applicant Statements



Amanda Bennetts

Although I have limited experience in hair and beauty, I do represent your market and can provide a different point of view from those in the industry. As an innovation specialist, I can help the board develop and keep up with the ever-changing demands of modern commerce. Education has changed dramatically over the past few years with introduction of MOOC (Massive Online Open Courses) and the huge uptake of 'non-work related' education. All these elements and more will have a huge effect on developing educational standards & systems. Innovating will be key to this boards success.

Angeline Thornley

I would welcome the opportunity to serve the industry as a HITO Board Member. The future for hairdressing depends on the ability of the industry to train high quality hairdressers, barbers and therapists in all the beauty fields in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of industry. I promise you that by drawing on the experiences I have had in all these fields in diverse circumstances that I can contribute positively towards objectives that will achieve the bold goals that HITO have already set, and offer suitable skills to aid with the ongoing development of strategies that will continue to meet and exceed the industry's expectations.

Anne Millar

I am passionate about hairdressing, and devote my time to working with the youth in our industry. I am excited about the direction that HITO is embracing for the future of the hairdressing, beauty and barbering industry, and believe that the Board needs continuity for this to be successful.

Christa Rowling

I am currently a senior stylist and apprentice trainer at gf hair with 9 yrs industry experience. As an elected board member my aim would be to promote a future focus in our industry. I am a firm believer in the importance of apprenticeship training. I believe it is essential to support and promote training that will meet the needs of both employers and employees in the hair and beauty industries. My previous experience as the HITO board Employee Representative (2011-2015) and as an Industry representative on the Hairdressing Advisory Group (2012-present) gives me valuable insight into where we have come from and the challenges facing HITO and our industries.

Craig Stinson

I consider myself a visionary leader and strategic thinker. This can be demonstrated through my oversight and development of multiple hairdressing businesses around the Wellington Region over the last 20 years, reviewing and re-energising to meet the changing demands of our clientele. I am applying for this role as I see a need to keep our profession growing. I will be an advocate and a voice for the members of our organisation to ensure that we increase the number of qualified hairdressers in the marketplace and keep the apprentices engaged in their chosen profession. I believe it is the role of the Board to ensure that the youth of today see hairdressing for the exciting future that it holds.

Des Brennan

My wide-ranging career has progressed from senior management to governance. Experience as a chief executive has provided a strong organisational and strategic sense, together with a clear understanding of the distinct natures of management and governance. My leadership path spans a number of sectors. These include manufacturing, media, dairy, wine, public service, buliding, education and sport. I look for clarity of purpose, values and achievement in organisations. My interest is in the bigger picture, the challenges and drive for opportunities – that area of less certainty. Will our plan 'make the boat go faster'? I value a principled and collegial style towards governance and a pragmatic and transparent approach to decision-making and accountability to stakeholders. I am involved in a number of governance roles and value working with a range of orgnisations and people in the more cause-driven, not-for-profit field. Continuing education is a commitment for me as a Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors, and conciousness of the need to add value and bring a fresh perspective.

Donna Waterson

I have been part of the hair and beauty industry since I was 16 years old and have had many roles within the industry. I started my hairdressing journey as an apprentice under Ray and Georgene Astwood at Hairline in Hamilton. I was very privileged to be part of this amazing family. I learnt very quickly that if you worked hard you could achieve everything and more. They not only gave me a trade and skill I would have for a lifetime but also ignited a passion for this industry and they became my role models as they taught me the importance of giving back. In my current role as General Manager of Tauranga Hair Design Academy trading as Hair to Train, a position I have held for over 9 years I have built up a very strong rapport with local business and have a strong relationship with MOE, TEC and NZQA. I am extremely organized, I have a particular interest and care about our youth and am passionate about our industry. I believe "Hairdressing/Barbering/Beauty" are amazing professions to have and if I can give other people the opportunity to do this and have half the life I have had, this would make me very happy. I would bring a huge amount experience to the Board, through my various past roles and contacts and will be able to bring a fair perspective on what our industry needs now and the challenges HITO faces in the future.

Applicant Statements



Page 2

Gordon Legge

I will bring extensive commercial experience serving on the boards of several small private companies as well as the board of Motorsport New Zealand. I bring governance experience at small retail level and at 'not for profit' board level. I have industry experience as I am a partner in a small Christchurch hairdressing business. I have day to day retail experience. I have been a keen developer of young talent hiring many students straight from schools and enjoy watching them grow and develop. Having studied electronics I have a very good understanding of technology. My key strengths are my ability to think quickly and problem solve while leading a team to a shared goal. I am an ideas person, a rainmaker, I like to make things happen.

Grant Thomas

Over the past 10 years I have worked closely with my wife (Josie Swan) in developing business strategy for her two Salons. She is the Rodney Wayne franchisee for Manners St, Wellington City, and Queensgate, Lower Hutt. I have a sound understanding of the key drivers of success for a hairdressing business. One key factor is the training and development of qualified stylists. I would be looking to ensure HITO strategy aligns with employer and trainee needs regarding an efficient and effective industry training delivery. I have extensive experience working with other industry training organisations therefore understand the issues and challenges in working with the various parties involved with funding and delivering industry training to meet trainee and employer needs.

Iris Richter

My name is Iris and I am applying to become a board member of HITO. I have worked in different management teams for 12 years with a focus on general management, strategic planning, product management and marketing. I am experienced in local and global markets, across a wide range of industries. I now successfully run a business coaching company, Business Kitchen as well as being a wedding celebrant. I also act as a trustee on the boards of Bellyful NZ and Plunket Waitemata. All my positions seem different but what I enjoyed the most in all of them was my ability to apply my critical thinking, influence the strategic direction and inspire people to perform. I believe that my successful career is down to high ambition, drive, honesty and strategic thinking. I am passionate about businesses and hold an executive MBA and a BSc in International Marketing. One of my managers stated the following words when describing my strengths in his recommendation letter: ambition, drive, high sense of urgency, team player, leadership skills and strategic thinking. What helps me to deliver is that I am very result oriented and I consider the key to this is to remain highly focused on priorities, as well as having fun doing it. I encourage you to visit my website, read about me and watch my videos on www.businesskitchen.co.nz and www.celebrant-iris.co.nz and to view my profile and references on Linked In nz.linkedin.com/in/irisrichter/.

Jacqui Victor

I have been in the hair industry now for 32 years. I have been a salon owner for 22 of those years. I have learnt that to grow your own stylists in your business is the best way to succeed. Apprentices are the life line of your business. What an incredible buzz I get out of nurturing, mentoring and training young hairdressers to be the best they can be. I enjoy seeing them blossom into stars. This is the best feeling in the world for me as an employer. I really want to encourage more business owners to take on apprentices. The feeling of accomplishments is phenomenal as the business owner and from the apprentice's perspective. We need more Qualified hairdressers in New Zealand. This means we need more salons taking on apprentices. I believe True Grit is an excellent example of a salon that has put so much into the industry and I would like to see more of it from other salons and salon owners. I feel I can help encourage and prove that it does work to our advantage. It's a win win for everyone.

James Turner

I am a passionate and experienced leader and director, with excellent knowledge of education and training policy and regulation in New Zealand. I have worked closely with and provided advice and guidance to a number of Private Training Establishments over recent years, having previously been a senior manager at the Tertiary Education Commission. I am keen to contribute to HITO's ongoing success and aside from my technical knowledge and governance experience, am a strong communicator and very good at establishing and maintaining effective relationships

Joanne Naish

I have worked in the hair and beauty industry for 6 years and observed a very high standard bof education in-salon. It became clear to me early on that there are mixed opinions in the industry about the consistency and value of classroom based tertiary training. I am very interested in seeing these qualifications become respected and suspect improvements need to be made in the accountability of training organisations. I believe it is important to deliver to consistently high professional standards while meeting the requirements of funders and industry stakeholders.

Applicant Statements



Kevin Bryant

Having spent 15 years in the ITO sector, 13 as CEO of Agriculture and the Primary ITO, including some time on the ITF board, as a director and a chair, I have considerable experience, to offer to this role. I am passionate about helping people achieve more than they believe they can and in turn helping businesses achieve great results. I have been fortunate to have been able to operate in this space for some time both as a CEO and as a self- employed consultant. I am seeking the opportunity to extend this experience to a governance role. I believe I have the energy and passion and the background knowledge and understanding to deliver for HITO.

Leila Ryan

Thank you for the opportunity to be part of an amazing organisation.

Lisa Mohi

I am a fully qualified hairdresser with a passion for the industry, I have owned a salon for the past 4 years and loved everything about it (even the hard parts!). In those 4 years helping 3 other hairdresser get their qualification was a huge achievement for me and currently have an apprentice in her second year. I want to be a part of the board to gain knowledge and share my own and to help improve HITO to the best of my ability.

Maree Jocelyn Falconer

I am a qualified hairstylist and have been hairdressing for thirteen years. I opened my own salon three years ago, which I love having and it has meant it works well around family life too, which is important to me. I am an assessor for HITO in which this will be my sixth year assessing. I really enjoy going into the different salons and seeing the stylists succeed and view there amazing work. I am very passionate about the hair industry. I love how ies forever changing with new and exciting things, and you are always learning with such inspirational people and ideas out there. I am honest, reliable, hardworking and really enjoy a new challenge. I would love the opportunity to be apart of a board that is striving to improve and help the hair industry.

Michael Hope

Sponsorship/internship/apprenticeship. I've successfully trained a few.

Shelley Kelsen-Macdonald

My passion is education and acknowledging the importance of our responsibility towards learners, both in the workplace and within training establishments. I recognize students as first priority and aim to provide support and encouragement to ensure that their personal and academic success is achieved.

Veronica Aris

With over 15 years in senior level positions overseeing marketing, sales and brand strategy I bring a commercially focused approach to drive strategy and growth. I relish the opportunity to be on the board of HITO and feel that I have the attributes to be successful in this role. I am a strong advocate of apprenticeships having started my working life via that route which has enabled me to build the foundations of my career. A professional member of the Institute of Directors I hold a number of board positions, instilling robust governance practices to enable listed companies, community groups and sporting associations achieve their long-term goals and vision. Through my board positions I understand the complexity of working with Government. I am also a Chartered Marketer and have worked with global, multi-million dollar organisations to increase brand presence, expand marketing initiatives and deliver value back to a wide range of customers. I am a professional yachtswoman and was a member of the winning crew in the 2011/12 Clipper Round the World Yacht race. I continue to sail and coach others in the sport.

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