



Message From OMEGA Chair Pauline Winter

October 2010

OMEGA was officially launched by Committee for Auckland in March 2008 with endorsements from over thirty of the region's top employers and civil leaders, and with many providing both business leadership and a voice on the issues of underemployment amongst new immigrants to New Zealand. The initiative was financially supported by the Tindall Foundation.

With this excellent heritage, what was then the project of OMEGA, has gone from strength to strength, and I am thrilled to say that the last twelve months has been an exciting time of transition, establishment and growth.

A quick look at some of the milestones: it was always the intention for OMEGA to grow wings, and this started to unfold in early 2009, when six well-respected New Zealand businesses committed to being OMEGA funding partners – an essential vote of leadership and support that was crucial in transitioning OMEGA to becoming an independent not-for-profit organisation led by business. By the end of 2009, a new board was established to lead the organisation, taking over the reigns from the establishment board, and working closely with the OMEGA Trust, whose members comprise the organisation's funding partners and others. My sincere thanks go to Sir Ron Carter, Kaaren Goodall and the wonderful leadership network that makes up The Committee for Auckland for all they did in guiding OMEGA to its present state.

Two more staff joined OMEGA in early 2010 to support the programmes' growth. The fact that the work of OMEGA has grown and progressed in this way, and the fact that so many business people are joining the community of support and standing up for the value that skilled immigrants bring to our workplaces and economy, is evidence that what we are doing is fulfilling an essential need. More than that, it is sounding a warning note regarding the future skill need of our country's economy, and we are encouraged that this is resonating with forward thinking workplace professionals.

The note is not without action, and OMEGA's practical solution-based programmes are giving people something to do in response, and thereby providing win-win outcomes for businesses and skilled immigrants, putting the country's future economy on a better footing. There is a strong sense that we are all in this together – the future of New Zealand's economy is in our collective hands.



It has been my privilege and pleasure to lead as Chair during this challenging but rewarding transition. I am amply supported by a board of colleagues: John Body, Albert Brantley, Robert Carter, Paul Spoonley, Vijaya Vaidyanath, and (until recently) Fiona Michel; whose insight, wisdom and tenacious commitment to making a difference is outstanding. I extend thanks to them, and also to CEO Justin Treagus and his small but dedicated team, whose hard work and committed leadership have been the energy behind the growth and changes in OMEGA. A huge thank you to the funding partners who make the work of OMEGA possible with their enthusiasm, time, commitment, and financial support: ANZ, Auckland City Council, BNZ, Genesis Energy, Gen-i, New Zealand Post Group, State and Vodafone.

Promises have been made regarding New Zealand and its economy. I am thrilled to be part of helping to keep those promises and to be preparing for a good, if not better future.



Opportunities for Migrant Employment
in Greater Auckland