

# Innovative breast feeding pad design wins Enterprise Award

**B**reast-feeding pads may not be the first thing that jumps to mind when choosing to develop a business but Christchurch woman Lene Alexandersen spotted a gap in the market and has secured an Industry New Zealand Enterprise Award for her venture.

The Enterprise Awards Scheme offered by Industry New Zealand assists businesses and entrepreneurs with the development of well-defined business projects and concepts. The project must have commercial potential and lead towards the creation of a new business or the expansion of an existing one.

As a new mother four years ago, Lene searched for breast feeding pads that would

effectively absorb any leaks, remain warm when wet and not chaff or adhere to sore breasts. Lene found the answer in Denmark and began importing the breast-feeding pads to New Zealand under the brand name Lanowool.

Lene has since recognised the additional benefits of using soft New Zealand merino wool and has been working with the Wool Research Organisation of New Zealand (WRONZ) to develop her own version of breast pads.

"WRONZ and I applied for the Industry New Zealand Enterprise Award under the product design and development category. I have been working with WRONZ for the past year developing a prototype design for the new pads and testing their effectiveness," Lene says.

Lene believes the New Zealand made pads will be an improvement on the type she imported from Denmark.

"The fine merino wool will be softer against the skin, having been washed in biodegradable soap and treated with purified medical grade lanolin sourced from the UK, which is harmless to the baby and with no risk of allergy to the mother," she says.

Gaining the enterprise award has provided Lene with the means and impetus to plan for future development of the Lanowool brand and she is certainly not afraid to create opportunity for herself.

"It's a very exciting time. Apart from making the pads readily available in New Zealand, I'm planning to export them to Denmark, which will create interesting competition with the current supplier of the Danish pads. Australia is another possible market."

"Judging by the success of the original Danish breast pads, I am very confident that my fine merino wool breast pads will be met very favourably. They really do help ease the discomfort and sometimes inconvenience of breast feeding - allowing

mothers to more fully enjoy the miracle of their baby rather than worrying about leaks or painful nipples," Lene says.

The merino, hypoallergenic wool breast pads will be available through Lene

Alexandersen on (03) 358-7619 or by e-mail [lene.alex@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lene.alex@xtra.co.nz)

For further information contact Lene or Paula de Roeper, phone/fax (03) 377-1177, mobile (025) 222-2282.



Lene Alexanderson....spotted a gap in the market.

## Job Club doing its job

By Jackie Katae  
of CDC Employment Services

Actionworks "Job Club" seminars are designed to motivate and encourage long-term young jobseekers that working is a more productive way to earn a living than receiving a benefit.

The seminars are built around:

- Why work?
- How to present yourself in the NZ business culture.
- What makes a good CV.
- Job specific CV.
- How to interview confidently.
- Searching the hidden job market.

The seminars are achieving good results in moving clients onto further training, employment and assisting clients to realise their potential.

Local employers and training providers speak at the seminars, which give the job seekers another perspective from that of the Actionworks staff.

The content also allows for the not so motivated to understand that "staying unemployed" is not acceptable as a long-term option.

The weekly seminars at Actionworks, 193 Cashel Street, start with an information session and sharing of goals and future aspirations.

Feedback from the young clients has been encouraging and positive. All is not serious, and the seminars have been known to create laughter and good fun.

If a client remains unemployed, a Friday "Job Club" is organised so the young person can job search and follow any leads from the previous week. This also creates a bit of friendly competition. As people move on the others do not want to become the last to secure a job or further training.

For further information on Actionworks contact (03) 379-5893.



Dean Hodson, Tim Ashwell and Jackie Katae.



The completed rowing shell before it was packed to be sent to England. From left are Andy Thomson, Gay Thompson, and Neil Campbell of Elder Boat-builders and Maurice Brogden from Canterbury Development Corporation Employment Promotions.

## First export order for local company

Elder Boat-builders, manufacturers of carbon fibre rowing skiffs, have recently completed their first export order to England. A single scull was sent to top British female rower Susan Brown, a world and British masters champion as well as past rower for both Cambridge and Oxford universities.

Further inquiries from England and Australia since have resulted in the company making expansion plans. Currently the company employs seven staff but plan to increase the number next year to meet demand.

Current owners Andy and Gay Thompson and Neil Campbell purchased Elder Boat-builders in April 2000. The company operates from premises on Cumnor Terrace where their main business is the manufacture of carbon fibre rowing skiffs, (rowing canoes) singles, doubles, fours and eights. The majority of the skiffs are destined for rowing clubs, high schools and colleges, throughout New Zealand. Baby canoes for children are another product line and the company is investigating manufacturing paddles.

Through its associated company Thompson Composite Technologies Elder Boat-builders has also been involved in making carbon fibre specialised hospital equipment for radiotherapy machines, both for New Zealand and Australia. Ongoing orders in this field look promising.

The owners bring considerable expertise and practical experience to the business. Managing partner, Andy Thompson, has been involved in the design and manufacture of rowing boats and canoes for more than 29 years. Neil Campbell, another partner, recently went Montreal to compete in the Masters Rowing Games, and achieved a second placing.

Elder Boat-builders have worked with the Canterbury Development Corporation Ltd to help grow their business. The CDC has supplied staff to the company through its Employment Promotions team and provided business training through various BIZ workshops.