

ISSUE NO. 2

SPRING 2017

FLOURISH



8&9 SHARING INSPIRING STORIES FOR MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

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“It truly is an honour to work with you to realise our vision for a compassionate, respectful and just community in which all people participate and flourish.”

CEO LIBBY CRAFT, 2017



WELCOME

It's official - after several years of discussion, followed by months of hard work, our organisation is now going to be known as UnitingSA.

I couldn't be prouder of everyone who has worked so hard to roll out our fresh, new brand, which looks fantastic.

With our new signs, brochures, uniforms and website complete, we will officially introduce our new identity to South Australia with a public celebration at the Entertainment Centre on November 8.

It is a time to reflect on where we have come from – our humble beginnings as the Port Adelaide Central Mission in 1919 and transition to UnitingCare Wesley Port Adelaide in 2003 – through to where we stand today.

UnitingSA helps more than 10,000 people each year with housing, aged care and community services.

We will never forget our roots in Port Adelaide and will always have a substantial base there, but our organisation has grown significantly over the years.

We now support people from diverse backgrounds right across metropolitan and regional South Australia.

We work alongside individuals to help

them live meaningful lives, no matter their circumstance.

So thank you to everyone who has been part of our history and thank you to everyone who is part of our organisation today and into the future.

It truly is an honour to work with you to realise our vision for a compassionate, respectful and just community in which all people participate and flourish.

I hope you enjoy this edition of UnitingSA's quarterly magazine, which celebrates the people and programs that make our organisation the incredible place it is.

In recognition of Mental Health Week, we meet two people whose lives have been transformed through their involvement with our mental health services.

In a special interview about the National Disability Insurance Scheme, we hear from Jane Huscroft about how it is changing the way we operate across the state.

We also meet Steve, a participant in our Supported Residential Facilities program, who speaks about the special bond he has with his support worker.

Happy reading!

Ms Libby Craft
Chief Executive Officer

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UPCOMING DATES

October

8–14 Mental Health Week

13 Festival of Now

15–21 Anti-Poverty Week

November

11 Remembrance Day

25 Social Inclusion Week begins

28 Free BBQ at the Family Centre

December

3 International Day of People with Disability

10 Human Rights Day

25 Christmas Day

UNITING SA ANNUAL PROFILE



13,157

PEOPLE SUPPORTED



947

EMPLOYEES



124

VOLUNTEERS



3,165

PEOPLE CARED FOR ACROSS AGED CARE



5,952

OCCASIONS OF EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE



PETE IS FULL OF CONFIDENCE WITH DONNA BY HIS SIDE

Peter Van Der Myle – or Pete as his mates call him – has an infectious smile.

When you meet him, there's a good chance he'll give you a hug as if you are old friends.

He loves listening to music, reading books and watching sport, especially the Crows.

He is confident and values his independence, although this hasn't always been so.

Pete was born in Holland and moved to Australia with his parents when he was a baby.

In the years that followed he lost contact with his family and started moving between many Supported Residential Facilities (SRFs), which he says weren't always happy places.

Eight years ago, Pete was teamed up with a new Community Support Worker, Donna Delaney.

Donna is part of UnitingSA's SRF Support Program, which helps people with complex needs, such as mental illness and intellectual disability, live in the community.

"It's really fulfilling work," Donna says.

"The program makes a big, big difference in people's lives.

"We've had clients who wouldn't even leave the SRF but with the help of their support workers and building that rapport and that trust, many of them have started to thrive."

When Donna first came to work with Pete, he was cautious when venturing out in public.

"Pete was one of those people who, when you were walking down the street, he would need to be holding your hand or grabbing onto you," she explains.

"He has gone past that now and realises he doesn't have to cling on because you are there beside him.

"He is more confident about himself."

The pair spend time each week exploring the local community, with some of their favourite outings including a cuppa in Port Adelaide and a trip to the library, followed by a drive to see the ships in Outer Harbor.

They also visit the Alberton Hub each week where Pete enjoys getting involved in the art and craft activities,

as well as having a game of 8-ball.

Donna will also help Pete get ready for the Opportunity Games later this year, in which he hopes to repeat last year's efforts when he took home several medals.

The games, which include physical activities such as netball, bike racing and tunnel ball, are run by Port Adelaide Enfield Council for people who live in Supported Residential Facilities.

Pete says many support workers have spent time with him over the years, but it is his connection with Donna which has had the greatest impact.

"I've had so many care workers it's not funny - some of them were good and some of them were bad," he says.

"Donna is my favourite because I trust her.

"I haven't got a mum and she is like my mum."

For more information on our SRF Support Program call 8440 2299.



Celebrating Indigenous culture and family connection through art

Two Aboriginal artists have poured their talents into creating a lasting tribute to the people who mean the most to them – their mothers.

Our Regency Green Aged Care home was privileged to be the site chosen for the amazing mural, painted by Thomas Readett, 24, and Shane Cook, 25.

Created for NAIDOC Week, the artists and their mums were guests of honour at the official mural unveiling on July 6.

About 80 people gathered for the event, with residents and community members alike relishing the opportunity to view the murals, as well as an exhibition of the artists' work.

For Readett, it was only the second mural he has painted, and a world away from his roots as an oil painter who specialises in classical realism.

"Because it was to do with NAIDOC Week, if I was going to paint someone with an Indigenous background who means something to me, I wanted to paint my mum," he says.

And his mother, Joanne Sumner, could not be prouder.

"The first time I saw it my heart dropped - I couldn't stop smiling," she says.

"I am so proud of my son and what he has achieved."

Fellow artist Cook says the Regency Green mural is his first foray into public portraiture.


"It was a humbling experience because my mum is the one who got me into art when I was a young kid," he says.

"Indigenous graffiti art is what I specialise in, so to create this, I taught Tom how to use the spray paint and he taught me how to paint a portrait."

Cook also created a second mural on one of the corridors at the aged care home.

"Aboriginal art is about storytelling, so within that painting there is a story about journey and cultural awareness," he says.

Activities Officer Margaret Renn says the murals will be treasured by the residents at Regency Green for years to come.



THE HEALING POWER OF PETS IN AGED CARE

A new partnership between one of our aged care sites and the Animal Welfare League is bringing a smile to residents' faces and the hope of a new home to dozens of cats and kittens.

The AWL Fly In Fly Out program sees cats brought to Regency Green Aged Care a couple of times a week to play in their enclosure and get cuddles from residents who live on site.

It is hoped the partnership may also lead to cat adoptions by families who get to meet the felines while they are visiting their relatives.

Regency Green Activities Officer Chloe Yao says the program provides a form of pet therapy.

"The cats bring huge change to residents," Chloe says.

"They can bring real calmness.

"When residents are watching them, you find they are more relaxed and they just smile."

Chloe says it also evokes memories for residents, who often tell staff or talk among themselves about their past pets.

Among these residents is Hans, who recalls his own cat "a very long time ago".

"I like them very, very much," Hans says, as he cuddles a visiting ginger cat named Mars.

"I like their behaviour and their figure.

"They make me feel happy."

Animal Welfare League spokesperson Sabine Kloss says there are multiple

benefits for the cats, including exposure to people "away from the stresses of shelter life where overstimulation can sometimes be detrimental to them".

"They are given extra care from the residents who provide them with attention, cuddles and 'chats' and also a chance to experience life in a social setting more attuned to a home setting," Sabine says.

"For animals that have grown up in a shelter, this is a very important part of their social skills growth and future adoption potential.

"This is the first partnership of this type we have undertaken and we feel that it is a resounding success."

Top design award for Wesley House

Wesley House Aged Care has been named joint winner of the ACS SA&NT Award for Excellence in Aged Living Design.

The awards were announced on Friday, June 23, at a dinner at the National Wine Centre, attended by hundreds of people from across the sector.

Wesley House was recently transformed

with a \$40 million redevelopment of the site on Military Rd, Semaphore Park.

Kennett Builders and Adelaide architects Walter Brooke & Associates are behind the stunning new-look Wesley House, which originally opened in 1951.

The three stage project was completed over three years, and features 168 private bedrooms with en-suites, large activity spaces, a hairdresser, café, secure memory unit and more.

Landscaped outdoor gardens and courtyards allow residents to spend quality time in the fresh air, with flower beds, veggie patches and colourful animal statues creating an element of fun.

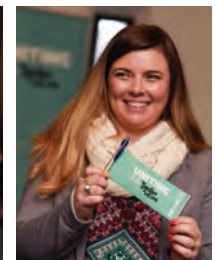
Residents moved in to the final stage of the redevelopment in October and the project was officially launched with a celebration in May.

UCWPA Executive Manager Aged Care Deborah Burton said the award was testament to the hard working team behind the project.

"We are so proud of Wesley House and the state-of-the-art facilities it provides for the residents who live there," Ms Burton said.

"This award is a fabulous recognition for the team who worked tirelessly for three years to bring this project to life.

"Thank you to everybody who helped create this stunning building, which will provide a modern, comfortable home for our residents for years to come."



Brand unveiled to our most important people

Our staff and volunteers from across South Australia were the first to get a glimpse of our new brand in July, when we hosted four information sessions at The Lakes Resort Hotel.

Our Chief Executive Officer Libby Craft and Board Member Karen Hunt were excited to unveil the fresh UnitingSA brand to almost 900 people from our metropolitan and regional sites across two days.

“We still have a strong base in Port Adelaide but as you are aware our footprint has grown significantly,” Ms Hunt told the gathering.

“In our early years we helped fewer than 100 people a year and today we are supporting more than 10,000.

“No matter where you work in South

Australia, UnitingSA is a name that represents you.”

Our new UnitingSA video was screened for the first time, featuring a variety of staff and volunteers from across the organisation.

Ms Craft explained the brand would take time to roll out, with it being in full use in October and the focus of a public celebration on November 8.

In the meantime, our traditional khaki and red colours would be phased out and replaced with the fresher, teal brand.

There were a few disgruntled Crows supporters but as Ms Craft pointed out – the new colour was not chosen for any allegiance to a football team, although it does give a nice nod to our Port Adelaide heritage!

For a full look at our new brand and all our organisation offers, visit www.unitingSA.com.au



Hiroko blossoms after her journey of hardship

Hiroko Tokunaga is using her Japanese culture to help people across Adelaide in their mental health recovery.

But not long ago, Hiroko's own struggles with depression and anxiety meant she could hardly leave her house.

"I was in such a dark tunnel for so many years and I didn't know how to get out from the mental health issues," Hiroko says.

"Depression was a painfully heavy weight on my chest and I just couldn't see anything straight."

At her lowest point, Hiroko overdosed and during her hospital stay a mental health nurse referred her to UnitingSA's Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) program.

She was paired with support worker Alison, who Hiroko says ultimately transformed her life.

Each week Alison would visit Hiroko and, over time, she encouraged her to leave her house and slowly build up confidence reconnecting with the community.

"Alison helped me not only build my confidence but I started to believe in myself and she helped me start to feel comfortable in my own skin," Hiroko says.

"I've never had the experience of having such a strong bond with someone and so much trust.

"Without her support I don't think I would be here today."

And it isn't just Hiroko who benefited from Alison's support.

Hiroko's son, Khajiho, was 15 during his mother's most difficult days.

"I was an absolute mess and I didn't want to give him too much burden but at the end he was really my carer," Hiroko says.

"It was too much for him to take responsibility for me so without Alison's help, I just don't want to think about what would have happened to us."

After four years of working with Alison, Hiroko 'graduated' from PHaMs last year and became a volunteer with our mental health services, including our Avalon program where she helped teach participants healthy cooking habits.

She also participated in our Peer Genesis Project, a six-week pilot program teaching the core components needed to become a mental health peer worker.

It is through this process Hiroko realised what she wants for her future,

and it has a firm foundation in her cultural background.

"When I moved to Australia I struggled to carry my culture so I tried to fit in with western culture – to be strong and perfect – but this led to my mental health issues," she says.

"Wabi-sabi is a traditional Japanese philosophy. We believe imperfection is beauty, so it's totally opposite to western culture.

"We believe that without a hard winter, cherry blossoms will not flower.

"I use this philosophy for mental health recovery."

Hiroko used wabi-sabi as the basis for a workshop, which she trialled this year with success with one of our mental health support groups.

She has since delivered workshops to several other not-for-profit organisations across Adelaide, including the Zahra Foundation Australia, which supports women and children experiencing domestic violence.

"When I did this at the Zahra Foundation, I didn't know what to expect from the audience," Hiroko says.

"A lot of the time if people go through a mental health issue, they feel they

Two people who have been supported by UnitingSA share their stories as part of Mental Health Week (October 8 to 14). The week raises community awareness about mental health issues and promotes social and emotional wellbeing.

are not good enough, they are not perfect enough.

"This philosophy from Japan makes them realise they are beautiful just as they are.

"Lots of the ladies started crying – I've never seen such beautiful tears in my life."

Hiroko now has bookings several months in advance and has developed two new workshops, which each run for two hours.

She also plans to develop a weekend wellness workshop incorporating mindfulness, meditation, tea ceremonies and yoga.

"I never dreamed I would be able to start working again," she says.

"Part of me believed I would be struggling for the rest of my life.

"I feel like I can blossom my own way now because I went through the hardship.

"I will always remember how I recovered with the help I received through UnitingSA."

For information about Hiroko's workshops email hiroko_tokunaga@hotmail.com or for further details on UnitingSA's Mental Health Services phone 8440 2260.

Andrew's free to be himself - minus the labels

Schizophrenia. Anxiety. Asperger Syndrome.

These are all labels Andrew Chambers has been given over the years.

But they are not words you will hear when he visits our Mental Health Services in Goodwood each week.

You are more likely to hear the terms Mental Elf, Anxie-tyrannosaurus, Schizo-Phoenix or Bipolar Bear.

These are characters Andrew has created as part of his artistic expression around mental health, which often crop up in his drawings or digital storytelling.

Some of his creations have featured in our Conexoz magazine, while another was turned into a banner for last year's Festival of Now, during Mental Health Week.

"This organisation isn't just about making you healthier - it's about having fun while making you healthier," Andrew says.

"When I first started coming here I was very withdrawn from the world."

Andrew was 20 when his psychiatrist referred him to our GP Access program, where he was teamed up with community support worker Bill.

"Having Bill come around each week was really helpful to me," Andrew, now 26, says.

"He helped me catch buses, he helped me connect with other things in the world and then he brought me to the art group here.

"I felt drawn to it. I thought, 'These people are pretty cool. Maybe I can hang with them?'"

After spending some time in art group, Andrew became involved in Squid Group – a monthly session where peer workers, volunteers and clients come together to talk about life, share experiences and have a laugh.

Their roles are not acknowledged in the group, they come together as individuals who have each been touched by mental health in their own way.

The group's success saw members invited to the Social Work Futures conference at the University of South Australia in June, where Andrew was among the presenters.

"I had butterflies and all sorts of things going on but when it was my turn to talk, I got the message across and I think it went really well."

Andrew is no longer a client of GP Access but he remains a firm part of the furniture at Goodwood.

"When it came time for me to exit the service, I still wanted to be around so I signed on as a volunteer and it is one of the best decisions I've ever made," he says.

Every Tuesday Andrew volunteers his time to lead a two-hour gaming group, where young people experiencing mental health issues use video games as a way to connect and have fun, without any pressure.

"A lot of the people who come might not often bond with other people," Andrew says.

"Here, they can play a game, enjoy their time and also bond with other human beings."

Andrew doesn't know what his life would look like today if he hadn't been referred to GP Access.

"In the dark times, I just wouldn't talk to any strangers. Even my own teachers at high school I would be afraid to speak to," he says.

"Now I'm very comfortable catching public transport, I finally got my Ps, my imagination has increased in potential.

"Whatever my future may be, I know that I will always try to maintain my connection here."

As our interview draws to a close, one of the peer workers Andrew has known for almost seven years chimes in that until now, she never even knew his diagnoses. It's just not that important.

What is important to the team at Goodwood is that everyone who walks in the door feels supported, welcomed and free to be themselves – minus the labels.



Len 'just lucky' to reach incredible milestone

When Len Allen celebrated his 100th birthday, he made history.

The World War II veteran became the first South Australian survivor of the Siege of Tobruk to become a Centenarian.

With more than 3000 casualties during the siege and hundreds more people captured, Len says "good luck" must have been on his side to help him not only survive war, but reach his milestone birthday.

"I didn't think I'd live to be 90, let alone 100," he says. I'm just lucky I supposed – that's about the best thing I can think of."

Len has an incredible memory and from the moment he enlisted as a 21 year old, through his time serving in the Middle East, North Africa and later New Guinea, his ability to recall dates is remarkable.

He remembers minute details, such as the table cloths aboard the troopship Mauretania as he travelled from Melbourne to Colombo, the moment he dodged his first bullet in Tobruk, and the feeling of driving the rations truck to "give the boys on the frontline their tucker" in the middle of the night.

But of all the memories, Len says his favourite life moment was the day he married the love of his life, Sally.

"We got married in Trinity Church and when I stood up and faced her, I said to my best man 'have a look at all the sticky beaks'," he grins.

"The church was absolutely packed. It was standing room only. Sally said, 'that's nothing... there's just as many outside that couldn't get in.'"

The couple went on to have two children, Grant and Christine, and six grandchildren and four great grandchildren followed.

Len celebrated his birthday on June 6 with a family lunch at his beloved Port Adelaide Football Club, with the likes of footy legend Russell Ebert and club captain Travis Boak stopping by for a chat.

He also had a special celebration at Westminster Village Aged Care, where he lives, when residents and staff threw him a surprise party.

"They all gathered and had a birthday cake for me," Len says.

"I got the shock of my life – it was so lovely."

Mental Health training earns silver badge

We are proud to say we have been reaccredited as a Mental Health First Aid Skilled Workplace for our efforts providing mental health first aid courses to our employees.

Our organisation has been awarded a silver badge by Mental Health First Aid Australia, which means at least 5 per cent of our 900-plus staff across metropolitan and regional South Australia have a current Mental Health First Aid Certificate.

This training ensures staff are appropriately equipped to help somebody who is developing or experiencing a mental health issue, or in a mental health crisis, until professional help is received.

"By our staff having a better knowledge and understanding of mental illness it enables us to offer appropriate support quickly and effectively," UnitingSA Employment Services manager Cherie Jolly says.

"This can, and has, led to a happier and more productive workforce.

"By staff keeping themselves well, they are able to provide effective and prompt support to client needs."

Portway building a strong future

Portway Housing has started refurbishing eight rundown townhouses on Torrens Rd, Pennington.

Thorne Constructions began work in July and the development is expected to be complete early in the New Year, with tenants likely to move in by March.

The townhouses will have new kitchens, bathrooms, laundries, floor coverings, appliances, landscaping and more.

"It's going to be an amazing transformation," Portway Housing Operations Manager Con Hadjicostantis says.

"Watch this space."

Meantime, work is underway to build six new townhouses on Sydney Ave, Kidman Park.

The work will be carried out by Cook Building & Development Pty Ltd.

The latest developments will bring the number of properties managed by Portway to 374.



EMMA'S MOMENT TO SHINE

When Peter Wilkes heard about the SA Adult Learners' Week Awards, one person immediately came to mind.

"I was asked if I had any clients who fit the bill and it was quite easy to think of Emma after what she had been through," the Building Family Opportunities Case Management Coordinator says.

"She had started her Certificate II in Kitchen Operations two times but anxiety got the better of her both times.

"Then, without me knowing, she went back and re-enrolled and finished it off.

"I thought, 'Wow - that takes guts to do that after the knockbacks she has had'."

Peter nominated Emma for the State Government-run awards and she was named one of nine finalists across South Australia.

Her success was highlighted with a special awards dinner at the Hilton Adelaide in August – an occasion Emma says she could never have imagined being a part of.

"I have been totally overwhelmed by it but not in a bad way," the 27-year-old says.

"I just didn't think anything like this could happen to me."

Emma has Bell's palsy, which causes partial paralysis down one side of

her face, and she has experienced depression and anxiety since childhood.

She says being put in contact with Peter through Building Family Opportunities late in 2015 was a pivotal moment for her.

The program helps long-term unemployed families to secure work and connect with education through personalised case management.

"Just being able to talk to someone about how I found it difficult to study or get a job because of my anxiety and my depression was amazing," she says.

"This shows that anyone who suffers from anxiety or depression has something inside themselves that can push them forward and they can achieve any goal that they have."

EMMA

"It felt so good to have someone who understood, rather than just forcing me out there to get work straight away.

"It was great to be able to get there step by step."

As well as finishing her hospitality course, with Peter's support Emma has completed a work experience placement at Caffè Acqua – the first

time she has worked in 10 years.

She is now starting as a volunteer at another local café to build on her skills, with the hope of one day securing paid employment in hospitality.

And through it all, she says her family's support has been unwavering, with her biggest cheerleader taking the shape of a 5-year-old girl called Cayley.

"My daughter is my world, my absolute world. I wouldn't be able to get through life if I didn't have her there."

"If I feel down or anything, I think about her and how I have to be there for her and it really picks me up.

Emma's confidence has also increased dramatically through her experience with our program over the past two years.

"I'm really proud of myself because I didn't let anxiety get in my way... I just pushed through it and did what I had to do," she says.

"This shows that anyone who suffers from anxiety or depression has something inside themselves that can push them forward and they can achieve any goal that they have."

We now offer Building Family Opportunities in northern and western Adelaide, as well as Murray Bridge and surrounds. For metropolitan enquiries call 8259 2900 or for Murray Bridge call 0459 873 694.



A CUPPA WITH JANE HUSCROFT

Jane Huscroft has taken on the new role of National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Program Manager with UnitingSA. She is helping guide our services and the people we support through the complexities of the changing disability support system.

Q. Can you briefly tell us what the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is?

A. The NDIS provides people with a disability, their families and carers the ability to manage their supports and choose what services they receive and who provides them. It's a new way of providing support so that people with disabilities can live the life they choose.

Q. What is your role?

A. My role is to lead the development and coordination of NDIS services within UnitingSA, which will include:

- Coordinating the allocation of NDIS cases; if the participant chooses to work with their existing support worker, the case will be allocated to that person;
- Ensuring that all workers understand the process and requirements for support provision under the NDIS;
- Advising and supporting staff and their clients on the NDIS application process;
- Ensuring that all UnitingSA NDIS participants have a clearly defined Service Agreement before we commence providing support; and
- Providing workshops and support groups to inform and assist people to apply.

Q. What inspired you to take on this new position?

A. I have worked in the sector for more than two decades and have seen families struggling to gain the right services and supports. The NDIS will provide people with disabilities and their families with more choice and control over the services they will receive. As a result, people with disabilities will have an improved quality of life. I want to be a part of that.

Q. What services will we offer under the NDIS?

A. We will support people with their daily living to enable them to be involved in their community and also help them to build their life skills.

Q. In which locations will we provide support?

A. At the moment we are providing support in northern Adelaide and from October we will provide support in the South East. Other areas will roll out in 2018.

Q. What are the strengths of the NDIS?

A. It provides people with more choice and control and really gives an individualised approach to care. It will improve people's economic and social participation and, by focusing on an early intervention approach, it

FUN FACTS

Favourite colour?

Green

Favourite animal?

Dog

Favourite food?

Vietnamese

Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party?

My late grandfather and immediate family

What three items would you want if you were stranded on a desert island?

A spear, box of matches and a satellite phone

maximises opportunities for people to become more independent, participate in their community and achieve their goals and aspirations.

Q. What are its challenges?

A. There are still questions around some people's eligibility and if they are not eligible, how they will receive support. It is also difficult to know what the demand for our services will be and how many hours of support people will require, which will affect staffing. At this stage, there are still so many unknowns, which is the biggest challenge.

Q. There are tonnes of providers under the NDIS. Why should people choose us?

A. Because we are person-centred. We don't just say it - everything we do puts the person first and tailors support to suit their needs. Where appropriate, this may mean we collaborate with other agencies to ensure the person we are supporting gets the right service for them. Organisations need to work together to deliver the best support to people in the community. We also have a long and proud history of providing mental health services, which is emerging as one of the most complex areas of the NDIS. Our expertise in this area will help us support people with mental health issues to navigate the complexities of the system.

Q. How do people access our support?

A. Anyone requiring support or more information about how we can help them with the NDIS should call 1800 531 880.



SPOTLIGHT ON HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT

The community united on August 8 to mark Homelessness Week at a free event hosted by our Western Adelaide Homelessness Services and Youth and Family Services teams.

We collaborated with representatives from a variety of organisations including Mission Australia, Headspace, Port Adelaide Enfield Council and Partners in Recovery to host dozens of stalls at our 58 Dale St site.

As well as sharing valuable community services information with the public, the event included a free barbecue, clothing giveaways and entertainment.

Special guest Humphrey B. Bear, provided by Educational Incursions, was a popular addition, with people lining up to get their photo taken with the children's entertainer.

"The community really came together in

a short amount of time to stage this event, which was such a success," Kaylene Justice, of Western Adelaide Homelessness Services, says.

"This shows us there is a real need for these types of events to shine the spotlight on homelessness and all of the amazing community supports available to people in need.

"Not only does an event like this raise awareness about homelessness, but it gives the community a chance to see what services are available in a non-intrusive environment and gives agencies a fantastic chance to network and to source new referral points.

"We look forward to collaborating with more organisations next year to bring an even bigger Homelessness Week event to the Port."

Our Western Adelaide Homelessness Service supports about 1800 people experiencing homelessness or requiring housing support each year.

Reconciliation in the West

We loved partnering with Tauondi College, Anglicare SA and Life Without Barriers in June to stage another successful Reconciliation in the West event.

The annual event at Tauondi College is a wonderful way to celebrate Reconciliation Week in our diverse and vibrant community.

Staff from our Youth and Family Services and Western Adelaide Homelessness Services hosted stalls with giveaways, activities and information about our programs.

This year's theme was 'Let's Take the Next Steps' and our Executive Manager Community Services Meredith Perry was among the guest speakers.

Footy program kicks a goal for inclusion

Our Urban Youth city football program was awarded the City of Adelaide Inclusive Sports SA award in July.

The program uses the World Game to help young people from diverse cultural backgrounds to forge friendships and community connections.

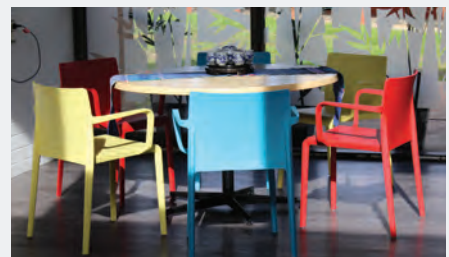
We are proud to host participants representing over 30 countries and more than 40 different languages and dialects.

Youth and Family Services Team Leader Jasmin Kollias says sport is a wonderful way to break down barriers and reduce social isolation as it acts as a universal language.

"This program has helped so many young people who are new to Adelaide feel connected to their community," Ms Kollias says.

"We are so excited to win this award and look forward to developing more innovative programs for young people."

For more information email urbanyouth@unitingsa.com.au



TAKING TIME TO REFLECT ON LIFE

A new room at Regency Green Aged Care is encouraging people from all religious and spiritual backgrounds to take some time to reflect.

Aptly titled the Reflection Centre, each item chosen for the room serves a purpose.

There is a water fountain just outside its doors which provides a tranquil soundtrack, scenic images on the walls remind us of the world's beauty, an ornate tea set signifies gatherings with loved ones, and a historic honour roll salutes those who have come before us.

"The purpose of the Reflection Centre is to encourage all cultures and religions to work together and support each other and our residents here at Regency Green," Executive Manager Aged Care Deborah Burton says.

"It will be used as a multi-faith centre and support different groups.

"Our residents may use it for reflection or solitude ... and it may also be used for family grieving and reflecting around the time of end of life of a relative."

People from across the community gathered to witness the official opening of the room on May 11, with speeches by Ms Burton, Activities Officers Margaret Renn and Chloe Gao, UnitingSA Minister Rev. Les Underwood and Pastoral Practitioner Barbara Messner.

Among the guests was Judy Bynoe, whose family once owned the land Regency Green is now built on.

When the former Days Rd Gospel Mission, which was built on another part of the land, was demolished a few years ago, the land and the honour roll which once graced its walls were gifted to our organisation.

Now, it finally has a new home.

Mrs Bynoe says seeing the honour roll in the Reflection Centre was a

particularly emotional moment for her, as each name on it is someone she knew – many of them family members.

"This provides a sort of continuance of the people and the families that were involved in the church," she says.

"It's recognition too. There were a lot of people involved in the church and a lot of work and a lot of fun and a lot of everything.

"My heart is full up seeing it here."

Work is now underway creating a memorial garden to further enhance the experience of visitors to the centre.

In the words of our Pastoral Practitioner Barbara Messner: "We hope this Reflection Centre develops from this beginning into a valued place of reflection at the centre of this facility, a place where people are able to find and make meaning together, in their work and in their lives."



MAGIC MOMENT FOR THIS MAGPIE

It's going to take a lot to top July 23 for Charrissa Pritchard.

The day of her 24th birthday was also the day she and her Port Adelaide teammates defeated West Adelaide by three points, with the winning goal kicked just 25 seconds before the final siren.

"To be able to win football on my birthday and to be privileged to be wearing a Port Magpies guernsey with my favourite number 20 on the back - I just can't put into words how amazing it was," Charrissa says.

"To top it off I got third best on ground and my name made it into the paper.

"I was stoked."

Charrissa started playing for Port Adelaide Women's Football Club last year, around the same time she joined Wesley Social Enterprises (WSE) as a supported employee.

She works with our cleaning team, visiting commercial and domestic properties in the western and northern suburbs.

She has also started cleaning vandalism off train stations as part of our graffiti removal program and gets great satisfaction from her work.

Charrissa says she experienced

bullying at a previous workplace and is relishing being in such a supportive environment.

"Everyone here has made me feel welcome and my boss is very friendly and nice as well," she says.

"I like the friends I have made and the jobs that I do."

Between her work at WSE three days a week, footy training two days and weekend matches, Charrissa says any downtime she spends catching up with friends and family.

And on a good day, all of those things come together – just as they did on her birthday.

Throughout the game, Charrissa's dad Doug – who she inherited her footy talent from – was on the sidelines cheering her on.

"I feel like he's my superhero and he's always there for me," Charrissa says.

"After the game I went out for dinner at Port Adelaide Football Club with some of the girls.

"It really was the best day of my life."

For more information about Wesley Social Enterprises and our supported employment options visit www.wse.org.au or call 8440 4243.



Celebrating Ukraine's Independence

Residents at our Seaton Aged Care home were delighted to take part in Ukrainian Independence Day celebrations in August.

Good food, music and laughter were the order of the day, as they gathered for the annual event to mark the 1991 Declaration of Independence.

Residents were entertained with an a cappella performance from the Berehenya Choir.

At the conclusion, residents helped cut a special cake made by Seaton Activities Officer Tonia Tyczenko's daughter, Belinda.

Pastoral Practitioner Libby Wynter, who opened proceedings, says Independence Day celebrations are an important recognition of residents' cultural backgrounds.

"For the residents, this is part of their history, where they've come from, part of who they are," she says.

"Everything from our past comes into the present.

"It is important we, as an organisation, honour and celebrate the lives of each of our residents in whatever shape or form that may take."

Seaton Aged Care offers specialist residential living for people from Croatian and Ukrainian backgrounds.

For more information contact our Aged Care Admissions team on 8200 9207.



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