100 Volunteer STORIES

Volunteering ACT

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Celebrating the contribution of **Canberra's Volunteers**

Proudly sponsored by Beyond Bank Australia

Volunteering ACT

FOREWORD BY MAUREEN CANE

Chief Executive Officer of Volunteering ACT

Australia's capital has a proud record for volunteering since it was founded. Services to the swiftly growing population were often first provided by volunteers.

Volunteering is now in Canberra's DNA, with many of her citizens, young and old and from all walks of life, actively volunteering at any one time.

This book tells some of their stories — of care for others, of courage, of generosity and of application of skills and expertise.

The stories are a testimony to the excellent work of Canberra's community-based organisations and to the selfless contribution of individuals towards the general good.

One such story, of the generous application of expertise, is from Sarah Wilson, the volunteer who compiled this book for Volunteering ACT!

All the stories are a fitting legacy for Canberra's Centenary year and engender a sure and certain confidence that our future is in good hands.

Maureen Cane, Volunteering ACT CEO

> **AUSTRALIA'S CAPITAL** has a proud record for *volunteering* since it was founded. Services to the *swiftly growing population* were often first *provided* by *volunteers*.

FOREWORD BY MARY PORTER

Member of the ACT Legislative Assembly and Founder of Volunteering ACT

As we all know the ACT has one of the highest rates of volunteering in Australia. When I arrived in the ACT in 1977 I was introduced to the communities training program that was sponsored by the Mental Health arm of the, then, Health Commission and supported by ACTOSS & Lifeline ACT. I became one of its large army of trainers.

Volunteer Week was celebrated across Australia already every year and we took it upon ourselves to run a Volunteer Expo at the Old Monaro Mall. After the Expo at the post mortem with participating agencies people called for further support; recruitment, resources to manage volunteers and better insurance advice and cover, for instance. From that meeting a steering committee was formed, then an incorporated association which obtained Federal funding, thus establishing Volunteering ACT. I was appointed the first CEO and served in that role until my election to the ACT Legislative Assembly in 2004.

The Journey also included involvement with the International Association for Volunteer Effort and the establishment of Volunteering Australia through the network of volunteer centres around the country.

My own involvement in volunteering has always been richly rewarded, the projects I have worked on through the years have allowed me to see the very best in people and I am reminded of the value of the work volunteers are doing in our community every day. The personal stories in this book are just a snapshot of the rich history of volunteering in the ACT and hopefully they will inspire you along your own volunteering journey.

I am very grateful that I was given the opportunities that I have had and thank all those involved who worked so hard for many years to achieve what you see today.

Mary Porter ACT MLA and Founder of Volunteering ACT

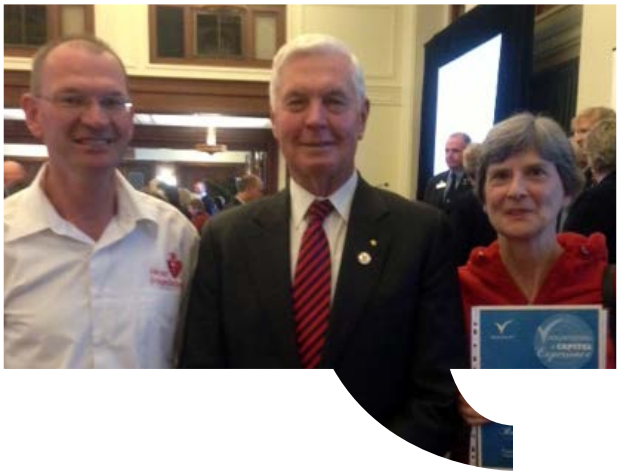
> As we all know the **ACT** has one of the **HIGHEST RATES** of *volunteering* in *Australia.*

MELANIE RENDALL

Heart Foundation

In 2011 my family situation changed dramatically leaving me to struggle financially and otherwise. I enrolled in a course to help get women back into the workforce with Canberra Institute of Technology. As part of the course I did four days work with the Heart Foundation and enjoyed it so much that I requested to continue volunteering when I had graduated from college. Every Friday morning you will find me in the Heart Foundation office completing all sorts of administrative tasks. I am very proud of my work on the Canwalk website and I fit in well at the Heart Foundation. I felt very humbled at the 2013 ACT Volunteer of the Year Awards where I was nominated for an award. My mum always taught me that helping others makes you feel good and this is how I feel when I am volunteering at the Heart Foundation. Both CIT and the Heart Foundation have turned my life around and I am a much better person as a result.

Melanie Rendall at the 2013 ACT Volunteer of the Year Awards



HEART FOUNDATION

Heart Foundation Walking

Physical inactivity costs Australia $13.8 billion per year and accounts for around 6% of the burden of disease in Australia. Heart Foundation Walking is an established low intensity physical activity program aiming to promote an active lifestyle. The Heart Foundation's team of 31 volunteer Walk Organisers are the reason Heart Foundation Walking has helped so many Australians stay active and take better care of their heart health — they are the glue that holds our walking groups together. Groups are tailored to meet the particular needs and abilities of participants and are a great way of promoting social inclusion.

CAMP QUALITY

30 years ago a doctor said to a lady named Vera Entwhistle, "We may not always be able to do something about the quantity of life for children living with cancer, but we can do something about the quality." With that, Camp Quality was born! In September 1983, 38 volunteers took 38 children to the first camp outside Sydney. Today, Camp Quality also offers family support programs, hospital programs and education programs. Through unrelenting optimism and the healing power of laughter Camp Quality provides an invaluable source of happiness to children and their families who are living with cancer.

> Through unrelenting **optimism** and the *healing power of laughter* Camp Quality provides an **INVALUABLE SOURCE OF HAPPINESS** to *children* and their *families* who are living with cancer.

BOSOM BUDDIES

Hospital and Visiting Support Team

The Hospital Visiting and Support Team is hospital-trained and works in conjunction with Specialist Breast Care Nurses to support those newly diagnosed with breast cancer and those undergoing surgery and treatment. All of the volunteers in the team have experienced breast cancer themselves, so their support is distinctly personal and unique. Volunteers can be called upon at any time of the day or night to make contact with someone in need of support. With some 350 people in the ACT region being diagnosed with breast cancer each year the need for this team of 16 volunteers is ongoing and it makes a vital contribution towards the health and wellbeing of so many.

> All of the **volunteers** in the team have experienced breast cancer themselves, *so their support is distinctly personal and unique.*

The Bosom Buddies Hospital and Visiting Support Team

SUSAN DRESSER

Paediatrics at The Canberra Hospital

I began volunteering with Paediatrics at the Canberra Hospital (PaTCH) in March 2011. I looked into volunteering after I retired because I wanted to do something worthwhile with my spare time. PaTCH helps give families who have children in hospital a break from the ward by staying with their child while they have a shower, get a tea or coffee or simply get some fresh air. We nurse the children, play with them, and help babies get to sleep when their families are absent. Sometimes just giving parents an ear to listen to or a shoulder to cry on is what is needed most. My most rewarding experience has been getting to know families who have frequented the hospital because of illness and then seeing them around Canberra leading normal lives again. Being thanked and made to feel you have made a difference is very gratifying.

THE CANBERRA HOSPITAL

Intensive Care Unit Volunteers

The Intensive Care Unit of a major hospital can be an unfamiliar and potentially frightening place for anyone to visit, particularly in the event of an unexpected traumatic event or a sudden medical emergency. Volunteers working in 3 hour shifts as part of the Canberra Hospital Intensive Care Unit's program, welcome visitors, orientate them to the waiting area, provide information about the means of access to the department after hours or when volunteers are off duty, and perform a liaison role between visitors and the professional staff within the unit. When present, they are thus able to relieve ward clerks and nursing staff of the responsibility of monitoring and managing access to the unit as well as performing practical tasks around the waiting room area. By virtue of their clearly defined, non-medical role, volunteers, in conjunction with other staff in the unit, make a significant contribution to enhancing the level of care and support offered to visitors during what can be an extremely stressful and difficult time.

> ...significant contribution to **ENHANCING** *the level of care* and support offered to visitors during what can be an extremely **stressful and difficult time.**

ACT STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE

250 active volunteer members of the ACT State Emergency Service provide an emergency response to the Canberra community 24/7. In any year they respond to some 2,500 requests for assistance, including dozens over the Christmas-New Year and other holiday periods. They are traffic marshals at fetes and fairs and at major events such as Skyfire and the Australia Day concert. They clean the gutters of some 150 Legatees. They provide community education. Above all, State Emergency Service volunteers risk their personal safety in hazardous circumstances — in storms, floods, searches and accidents. Highly trained and committed individuals, the State Emergency Service volunteers operate as a focussed team playing a unique role in assisting all ACT citizens in times of crisis and extreme weather.

An SES volunteer in action

250 ACTIVE VOLUNTEER MEMBERS of the ACT State Emergency Service provide an emergency response to the *Canberra community* 24/7.

DUCK TONGUE

ACT State Emergency Service

An SES volunteer in action

I originally joined the ACT State Emergency Service (SES) in 1968. Through my volunteer work with the SES I have gained many life skills which have helped me outside of the Service, as well as lifelong friends, some of whom have been great mates for nearly 40 years. It is hard to choose a memorable moment as my experiences have been so wide and varied from missing person searches, to storm operations, to assisting in bushfires, to door knocking, to evacuating people, to air searches as far away as Tasmania, and also involvement in many interstate task forces for floods, hail storms and fires. The reason I keep on volunteering for SES is mainly because of the wonderful feeling you get when you can help someone who is truly in need.

NOEL MCLAUGHLIN

ACT Volunteers in Policing Program

When I joined the Volunteers in Policing Program in December 2001, I did so with one objective in mind — to support ACT Policing in any way I could, to help free up police to better serve and protect the ACT community. Since then, I have undertaken a huge number of different roles to support ACT Policing. I have been privileged to work alongside like-minded Police Volunteers, forming lasting friendships. I remain humbled by the gratitude and appreciation for what I do, by ACT Policing members. After 12 years as a Police Volunteer, my enthusiasm and job satisfaction remains as high as the day I joined the Program.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

ACT Volunteers in Policing Program

The Volunteers in Policing (VIP) Program commenced in December 2001 and since that time has contributed over 142,000 hours of voluntary work. The VIP Program provides a unique opportunity for members of our community to make a positive contribution to the community by supporting the work of ACT Policing and the wider AFP. The Program provides a positive focus to the public perception of Police and fosters stronger links between the Police and the community. The Program currently has 53 Volunteers (25 female and 28 male) who come from a wide range of backgrounds. They range in age from 42 to 83 years. Some of the main roles the Volunteers assist with include front office and JP duties where their professionalism, empathy and maturity can be tested in each individual interaction, catering for Police during training exercises or search & rescues, plus role playing to help Police develop their interviewing techniques.

MAPPING AND PLANNING SUPPORT (MAPS)

During the 2003 Canberra Bushfires there was a shortage in the number of people available to operate the sophisticated mapping system that was integral to the emergency services response to the disaster. As a result of this, Mapping and Planning Support (MAPS) was formed in 2005 to provide mapping and other spatial services to emergency response agencies. MAPS provides a network of volunteers who can be contacted in times of emergency and who are familiar with geographic information systems. Over the past eight years of operation MAPS has grown and matured as a volunteer organisation and provides an invaluable resource to the community in times of need.

A MAPS volunteer hard at work during the 2010/2011 Queensland floods and cyclones

ANN ASHTON

The Australian War Memorial

When I retired from paid employment I began looking for something to do that contributed to the community, enabled me to meet new people, was interesting, and provided me with a challenge. With the Australian War Memorial I provide guided tours to visitors, attend ongoing training and undertake research so that I can better help people understand the Australian experience of war and its enduring impact on our society. Telling stories and showing relics to visitors that enable them to relate to the personal experiences of their family members is a particularly rewarding part of my volunteering experience because I get to see how much this means to them.

DON BARNBY

The Australian War Memorial

I served in Vietnam with the SAS and at the end of my term in the army I joined the ACT police in 1973. I then served in Cyprus from 1980-1984, Bougainville in 1998 and East Timor in 1999. A very dear friend of my mine, Al Koorey, who served throughout the Second World War in both the 6th Divison and the RAAF had a story that I believed should be in the Australian War Memorial collection so I volunteered to interview him. As a result of the interview I was asked if I would like to interview other veterans and get their stories. These people are 'walking history books' and I am very passionate about making sure their stories are recorded and made available for future generations.

...I ASSIST MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC in finding the military history of their *loved ones*.

DAVID NOTT

The Australian War Memorial

I began volunteering at the Australian War Memorial in 1998 and have continued my volunteering journey over the past 15 years. I have a keen interest in military history and believe that the War Memorial is an important part of Canberra, and of Australia's history. As part of my volunteering I assist members of the public in finding the military history of their loved ones. The most rewarding part of volunteering is being able to witness the great joy people have when seeing what their relatives have done, where they served and the details of what happened to them.

MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRACY, OLD PARLIAMENT HOUSE

The volunteer program at the Museum of Australian Democracy has operated continuously since 1992 when Old Parliament House was re-opened to the public by former Prime Ministers John Gorton and Gough Whitlam. Volunteers are a key part of the museum's engagement with the public and help to share the excitement of Old Parliament House and the ideas within it. Some of the volunteers worked at the museum as senior parliamentary officers when it was home to Parliament and as tour guides they provide an authentic and unique insight into 'how it was'. The interest, knowledge, and commitment shown by all of the volunteers is highly valued by the museum's management and staff.

KERIN COX

National Gallery of Australia Voluntary Guides Association

A couple of days a week for over thirty years Kerin has enhanced the experience of many of the thousands of visitors to the National Gallery of Australia. Based on private research into artists and their works, Kerin uses her excellent communication skills to engage with people to make their experience of the Gallery meaningful and enjoyable. Through her willingness to share her knowledge, Kerin opens up and expands the world of art which is a vital aspect of life in the ACT community.

> **...Kerin has *enhanced the experience* of many of the thousands of visitors to the *National Gallery of Australia*.**

QUESTACON

In 1980 Professor Mike Gore, a physics lecturer from the Australian National University, went to schools around Canberra to let them know that Questacon was likely to get off the ground. Questacon started as a community science centre and moved from a trial project held one morning a week, to only being closed one day a week for maintenance, to a full time operation. Since its inception Questacon has been run on the backs of volunteers. These volunteers have been used to run the interactive shows and find the experience rewarding because it makes them feel both confident and competent. The volunteers describe the hands-on exhibits as being the most important and say that the Volunteer Discovery Trolleys introduced in 2000 are magnets for people wanting to learn. Demonstrating science concepts using the trolleys is unique to the volunteer team. Today Questacon has 65 regular Volunteer Explainers who say, "It's what we enjoy doing!"

Stuart Kohlhagen with Prince Charles at Ainslie Questacon

First volunteer explainers at Ainslie Questacon

Volunteer Discovery Trolley

QUESTACON

Monday, Wednesday & Friday Volunteer Team

This team of four Volunteer Explainers work side by side with Questacon staff on three days of the week explaining the science behind the exhibits and their relevance to our everyday lives. Recently the team took on a new role, which has been very well received, that of providing free science demonstrations to residents in retirement establishments. Questacon highly values their Volunteer Explainer team, describing them as 'reliable, punctual and professional'. They put a smile on people's faces, enhancing their visit to the Centre. All members of the team are excellent ambassadors for Questacon.

MONIQUE MURPHY

St Vincent de Paul Society

It was a Friday afternoon; the children's energy still yet to show signs of exhaustion. The end of camp was finally upon us. Five long, busy, energetic, colorful and creative days spent entertaining and taking care of 30 children had come to a close. My friend's mother was on her way to collect our tired bodies and exhausted minds. As she pulled in and our bags were loaded into the boot, the wind was knocked out of me from behind as numerous little arms grabbed around my waist. "Don't go!" Two girls looked up at me with tears in their eyes. "We will miss you!" It was in this moment that the consequences of my actions became relevant. In the last week, I had had so much fun with these kids I hadn't realised the impact my presence had made — how my actions had helped these children forget any problems they may have and enjoy a week away from reality. It was in this moment I realised I wanted to spend my time making a difference for others.

JOY WHEATLEY

St Vincent de Paul Society

I joined St Vincent de Paul as "the sewing lady" in September 1990 at the Curtin Centre. Growing up during the Depression and WWII meant I was accustomed to thrift and self-help as wages were low and this was a necessity. Thus in volunteering I find satisfaction in contributing to the good work of Vinnies and also to my philosophy of recycling in order to lessen the impact humans are making in using up the earth's finite resources. The structure of the organisation has changed slightly over time, but the basic philosophy has not.

> I joined St Vincent de Paul as "*the sewing lady*" in September 1990…

ST JOE'S YOUTH PROGRAM

St Vincent de Paul Society

Over 60 volunteers aged 17–30 years make up the St Joe's Youth Team, offering free respite and recreation programs to around 250 children from 6–12 years of age per year. Known as 'oldies' by the children, these actually young volunteers — many of them still at school or university — organise and run kids camps and family camps throughout the year, with about 15 'oldies' at each camp supervising the children and making sure they are all happy and safe. Many of the children come from disadvantaged backgrounds and have behavioural difficulties or special needs. For some, it is their only holiday during the year. The St Joe's Youth Program is truly a service for young people, by young people.

WARWICK FULTON

St Vincent de Paul Society

The 52 conferences within St Vincent de Paul Canberra/Goulburn consist of 1,200 members and perform home visitations within the community. Here is one of 16,000 home visitation stories: One man with a wife and 3 children was a contractor in a road works business. He lost his contract and has been unable to get further work. He has been trying to sell his assets to pay his debts while on a waiting list for the New Start Allowance. We have been supporting him and his family for 12 months with food, clothing and assistance to manage bills.

JAMIE-LEE DOUGLAS

St Vincent de Paul Society

Since 2007 I have been volunteering with St Vincent de Paul for their annual doorknock appeal in the South Tuggeranong region. I originally became involved in the initiative through school but continued volunteering after graduation. St Vincent de Paul contributes so much to our community and by donating my time for one weekend a year I am able to raise funds that help them provide vital services to the less fortunate in our community.

St Vincent de Paul Society Conference Members

The St Joe's Youth Program

> …by donating my time for one weekend a year I am able to **RAISE FUNDS** that help them provide *vital services* to the *less fortunate in our community.*

EDNA O'DELL

Palliative Care ACT

Following the implosion of the Royal Canberra Hospital and Sylvia Curley House I returned to the ACT Hospice for my regular volunteering shift only to learn that the area had been cordoned off and the Hospice was preparing to evacuate the residents. We found out that there was a possibility that all of the explosive material in Sylvia Curley House had not been detonated. We assisted in packing up the patients' belongings ready for their evacuation to Calvary Hospital and helped put the bedridden patients in ambulances and help the ambulant ones into wheelchairs and waiting vehicles. We followed the patients to the hospital and helped to get them comfortable. Six weeks passed before we were able to take our patients back to Acton Peninsula, a very serene setting by the lake which we soon settled into again.

> In 1997 I was part of a group of **VOLUNTEERS** who offered to sit with the *patients* and their families during the **implosion** of the ***Royal Canberra Hospital*** and the Sylvia Curley House…

ARTHUR BILLINGTON

Palliative Care ACT

In 1997 I was part of a group of volunteers who offered to sit with the patients and their families during the implosion of the Royal Canberra Hospital and the Sylvia Curley House, both of which were situated in close proximity to the ACT Hospice. We provided the patients with ear muffs and dust masks for their safety and waited for the explosions. It sounded like fireworks and we felt a shockwave pass through the building. After we were given the all clear we removed the ear muffs and dust masks from the patients, made sure they were comfortable and left their rooms. Another volunteer and I went outside to survey the damage. Sylvia Curley House had collapsed but not in the way we imagined, with large walls undamaged and piles of rubble surrounding the site. We then returned to the hospice and helped return paintings and ornaments that had been dislodged by the shockwave to their original positions.

MARJORIE BOYER & SHEILA TURNER

Palliative Care ACT

Marjorie Boyer and Sheila Turner have been volunteering continuously in palliative care for 28 and 26 years respectively, a total of 54 years of combined service. They develop close and meaningful relationships with individuals and families with whom they are matched, reflecting the goal of palliative care as holistic physical and psychosocial support for patient and family. They variously sit quietly in companionship, offer hand and foot massage, perhaps assist with eating, and generally encourage people to talk about their lives and how they would like to be remembered. These skilled, compassionate, respectful volunteers enhance the quality of life, at the end of life.

Marjorie Boyer and Sheila Turner with General Jeffery at the 2013 Act Volunteer of the Year Awards

BARB STEVENSON

Palliative Care ACT

It began in Canberra, continued overseas and then returned to Canberra again. A long journey with many twists and turns. An acquaintance and I were both teaching in Canada and we decided to meet up during our summer vacation. This was the beginning of a very strong friendship. On my return to Canberra, and with the unexpected breakup of my marriage she was a wonderful support for me in my many desperate hours of need. Our friendship continued to flourish, then I get a tearful phonecall from her telling me she has cancer. Now it was my turn to be supportive and be there for her. During her last 2 weeks at Clare Holland House I could see how much she and her family came to rely on the wonderful work undertaken by the volunteers. It was then that I had the "Ah yes" moment. And so here I am; loving the work that I do and hopefully making a very small contribution to the lives of the patients and the families, and helping out the very dedicated staff that work here.

> ...hopefully making a very *small contribution* to the lives of the **PATIENTS AND THE FAMILIES...**

ROBYN JEWELL

Various

Although my first experience was in my teens, volunteering really became a permanent feature of life in 1981 when, aged 36, I joined Melbourne Lifeline as a telephone counsellor. In retrospect, this decision was one of, if not the, most meaningful I have ever made. The universal nature of loss and grief, which, I learned, was a central theme in most of the calls, meant that everyone had their own experience from which to learn, and working in this environment often left me profoundly moved and in awe of the resilience of the human spirit. Since that time I have linked up with several programs where volunteers provide service and support to the Canberra community. These include Volunteering ACT, ACT Palliative Care and the Canberra Hospital. This work, with its constant reminders of the fragility and finiteness of life, enables me to feel very alive and to be thankful for every day. My life is enriched by the knowledge that I am contributing usefully to my community, that I continue to learn and that others are benefiting in some way from my efforts. But who gains the most? I don't know for sure — but I have a sneaking suspicion that it is me!

> *My life is enriched* by the knowledge that I am *contributing* usefully to my **COMMUNITY**...

LIFELINE CANBERRA

Over the last 50 years Lifeline has grown from one Centre in Sydney to 42 Centres across Australia answering more than 2,000 crisis support calls per day — every day of the year, every hour of the day. Lifeline has around 3,000 volunteer Telephone Crisis Supporters, and thousands more who volunteer in other Lifeline services, Lifeline shops and Lifeline fundraisers. Volunteers on the 24/7 crisis line 13 11 14 receive almost 60 hours of training before undertaking their first supervised telephone shift and then during their first year they must complete another 27 hours of training and spend 92 hours taking calls to become an accredited Lifeline Telephone Crisis Supporter. While this is an enormous voluntary commitment, it is also a life-changing experience which provides the volunteers with skills that positively impact their families and communities long after their time with Lifeline has ended.

Robyn Jewell

STUDENTS AT MARIST COLLEGE, CANBERRA

Students at Marist College Canberra volunteer in many ways. They participate in Service Activities which help young people with disabilities, financial hardship and reading difficulties. Our boys coordinate Service Groups such as Vinnies, Stewardship and Social Justice. They create clackers for kids overseas and go on immersions to Solomon Islands and Sri Lanka. Many visit the elderly, HOME in Queanbeyan, children in Hospital, participate in Clean Up Australia Day, Ben Donohoe Run and MS Swimathon. They also collect thousands of dollars for SIDS and Kids, Bandana Day, Marymead, Parkinson's ACT, Canberra Blind Society, Marist Asia Pacific Solidarity projects.

A student from Marist College volunteering

THE SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM ACT

The School Volunteer Program ACT was an initiative of the Weston Creek Rotary Club that began its early stages at Stromlo High School in 1997 and was formally launched in 2005. In the program volunteer mentors work with students on a one-on-one basis during school hours to help them with their studies. Currently there are 130 mentors who volunteer at 33 schools and two colleges throughout Canberra and in 2012 alone the program clocked up 6500 volunteer hours.

STUDENTS OF THE FUTURES PROGRAM @ CANBERRA COLLEGE

Students of the Futures Program @ Canberra College are studying their Certificate II in Active Volunteering and have been undertaking weeks of volunteering at different Aged Care facilities (Morshead Home, St Andrews Village and Mirinjani). Students are absolutely thrilled with their experiences from this volunteering role and have developed a broader appreciation of aged care and working with elderly residents. Residents have been most appreciative of the students' company and support in a range of activities. The Futures Program has had a long association with volunteering and Volunteering ACT, as this area is considered to be a very valuable pathway for students.

SUZANNE WILKINSON

Various

Over the past 35 years I have been involved in volunteering for numerous organisations such as Hartley Life Care, the Community Switchboard, Lifeline, O'Connor Christian School and the Red Cross. Volunteering was part of our family's tradition and this is what motivated me to become involved in the community. Over the course of my volunteering journey I have been engaged in activities such as sales, side walking, donating blood, library assistance, cataloguing computer entries, television and radio work and editing. I have loved all of my volunteering experiences and always found it difficult to leave each organisation I worked with.

NARIKA WICKS

Raising Hope Education Foundation

After seeing an ad for Raising Hope on Facebook, I contacted the organiser and became involved in the pilot mentoring program. Since it was the first time it was being run, there were lots of opportunities to contribute to developing the program. As a mentor, I spend an hour once a week with a local Canberra student, discussing their future aspirations, what's going on at school, and anything else they want to tell me. I've also become a team leader during the second half of the year, which involves liaising between the school, Raising Hope, and the mentors. It's always rewarding talking to the teachers and administrators at the school and hearing how one of the students has been working so much harder since the start of the program, or has been attending school much more regularly.

> ... hearing how one of the **students** has been *working so much harder* since the start of the ***program***...

RAISING HOPE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The Raising Hope Education Foundation was made possible thanks to the volunteering efforts of local university students, schools, businesses and community groups. This local charity was created in 2011 to help students in the Canberra region to believe in themselves, gain confidence and feel worthy. The idea for Raising Hope came from a local ANU student, Ben Duggan, who wanted to provide more opportunities for university and CIT students to volunteer in our local schools. He worked with principals, business leaders and a team of university students to create the organisation. With the support of patrons such as Gary Humphries, Mike Kelly and Raiders Captain Terry Campese, Raising Hope was able to launch quickly with strong backing from the community. Raising Hope now has over 140 active student volunteers and has trained 70 student mentors. Programs are run in partnership with local schools and Raising Hope has received strong support from the ACT Government and Bendigo Community Bank.

Centre: Founder and Managing Director of the Raising Hope Education Foundation Ben Duggan

GRAHAM HANNAFORD

Menslink

Graham joined Menslink as a volunteer mentor eight years ago, and the earlier years of this over-lapped with his 27 years of service with Scouts ACT where he held a wide range of volunteer positions. Graham has successfully mentored two young men, each for two years and continues to support the organization as a senior mentor. Graham's contribution to the smooth running of Menslink is enormous and his experience and knowledge gives new mentors and mentees a great deal of confidence that they are a part of something fun and positive. Graham's presence is certainly one that helps Menslink function as a community to the benefit of the whole of Canberra. Graham is also a volunteer with the Wallaroo Road volunteer bush fire brigade and has been a JP on the monthly roster at the Magistrates Court since its inception.

President's Volunteer Service Award awarded to Barry Williams for his work with the Lone Fathers Association

BARRY WILLIAMS

Lone Fathers Association ACT

In 1973, while raising three young boys and a girl on my own, I set up the Lone Fathers Association. At the time there was no government assistance given to single fathers and I lobbied to change this discrimination. After lobbying the government, Parliament introduced what is known today as the Supporting Parents Pension. The Lone Fathers Association has grown to become the longest and most successful family law reform organisation in the world, helping both men and women throughout Australia by providing advice, help and direction, and free legal support. The Association also plays a crucial role in suicide prevention and over the course of the last 40 years has helped to save many lives. In April this year the Lone Fathers Association received the President's Volunteer Service Award from US President Barack Obama for its contribution to family law reform and suicide prevention.

> In 1973, **WHILE RAISING THREE YOUNG BOYS AND A GIRL ON MY OWN,** I set up the Lone Fathers Association. At the time there was no government assistance given to *single fathers...*

Ian Goudie founder of Diversity ACT

IAN GOUDIE

Diversity ACT

Diversity ACT community services is Ian's vision and the first organisation of its kind in Australia, combining a community space and social hub, outreach and support services, to support lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer citizens of Canberra. Diversity ACT particularly assists those who suffer from exclusion, mental distress or social isolation as a result of their gender identity or sexual orientation, and assists other organisations on matters of inclusion and social equity. Ian feels proud to make a difference and hopes to improve opportunities so Canberrans are treated fairly, regardless of their sexual or gender identity.

JENNIFER HARKNESS

Benny Wills Foundation/ Benny Wills Brain Tumour Research Program

I met Imogen and Dave Wills years before this journey began. They were just an average couple who got married and had a baby boy named Benny. Benny was diagnosed with a brain tumour known as Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG) in 2008 and died in 2009 aged 4. I can do nothing to stop their pain or bring back Benny, but I can support their strength in fundraising towards the fight for a cure. For the past three years I have been involved in the organising and running of the Benny Wills Gala event held each September in honour of a brave little boy whose memory will live on.

Benny Wills

JUDITH MIDDLEBROOK

Melanoma Support Group

Three years ago Judith started a Melanoma Support Group in Canberra because there was no existing support group for sufferers. Dedicating at least a day per fortnight to the group and many more hours when fundraising, Judith facilitates the group's activities. She arranges group meetings with knowledgeable speakers so that patients and families receive the best advice for their treatment and prognosis. Group members benefit greatly from this information and support and having someone to talk to who knows what they are experiencing — because Judith has melanoma herself. Judith's commitment to the group continues to heighten awareness of melanoma and ensure support is there for many families in the Canberra region.

Christopher van Leeuwen

SIDS AND KIDS ACT

SIDS and Kids ACT provides support to families who have suffered the death of a child during pregnancy or following birth, as well as providing community education about safe sleeping practices. Each year SIDS and Kids ACT provides support to 200 families from the ACT and southern NSW districts. This support is given to families who have recently suffered the loss of a child, and to families who require ongoing support. Sids and Kids also raises money through annual events such as the Red Nose Day to provide funding for research aimed at reducing mortality rates in infants.

JOYCE VAN LEEUWEN

Christopher van Leeuwen Asthma Foundation /Asthma Foundation ACT

Joyce's son Christopher was eight years old when he suffered an asthma attack and died. Joyce has since established the Christopher van Leeuwen Asthma Foundation to prevent a similar tragedy from recurring. Her ongoing support on a personal level is invaluable to our organization. In partnership with the Asthma Foundation ACT the Christopher van Leeuwen Foundation is making a valuable contribution to our local schools and preschools by donating Asthma Emergency Kits to every school that participates in our training program. Joyce proudly and passionately volunteers to help pack and distribute the Asthma Emergency Kits, and knows that her work will directly benefit children with asthma within ACT schools.

CHARANI RANASINGHE

Belconnen Arts Centre

I have to say that in the whole world Canberra is the best city. I am a proud Canberran and I don't ever want to leave!" Charani spends many hours volunteering at the Belconnen Arts Centre and considers it her second home. She spends her time doing all sorts of tasks such as filing, running the kiosk, and helping out at exhibition openings. Charani is a self-confessed workaholic and is a Fellow and Group Leader at the John Curtin School of Medical Research at the Australian National University. Through volunteering she has been able to find a good work/life balance, has met many wonderful people and feels a part of the community. When asked about her volunteering Charani said, "Volunteering is not just me giving to them — they have given back to me a lot too. I feel that I belong there. It keeps me sane!

Volunteers at Belconnen Arts Centre on Canberra Day 2013

> *Volunteering* is not just me **GIVING** to them — they have given back to me a lot too. ***I feel that I belong there.***

BARB BAKER

Various

I have been a volunteer since about 2003. I started in Brownies, then Guides, St Johns Cadets, belonged to sports clubs, parents and citizens groups and then particpated in my sons' sporting clubs. My father was my role model. He volunteered as an ambulance driver for many years and then moved on to become a voluntary St Johns instructor and first aid officer. He also gave well over 100 donations of blood, all without any form of recognition.

CAROL TALONI

Various

Over the course of my life I have been involved in many different volunteering roles. For the past 15 years I have been a member of Better Hearing Australia (BHA) and I have been one of two co-coordinators for the Canberra Tinnitus Self-Help Group. As a volunteer for BHA I prepare and conduct hearing loss management sessions every week. I am also a Peer Support Volunteer for SIDs and Kids and a volunteer patient for the medical students at Canberra Hospital. Despite still working fulltime and spending time with my six children, their partners, and my twelve grandchildren I manage to reap the immense benefits of volunteering. It is so rewarding to contribute in a small way in order to help others and I have developed so many friendships through my volunteering experiences.

PAT EBELING

Centenary of Canberra

I heard a request on the radio for volunteers for Canberra's centenary celebrations and I decided to give it a go. Over the course of the year I have been involved in a huge variety of activities from building a cardboard replica of the city with kids, to Stellascope at Questacon, to the AIS Open Day, to the Kite Festival, and many more. The 10 Year Anniversary Canberra Bushfire Display (Past Present Future exhibition) was the most emotional, listening to peoples' experiences of that day ten years ago which is something no one will ever forget. We are now doing the Windows to the World which is a chance to experience the different cultures of the world through visiting different embassies and meeting some wonderful people. This is really a terrific year as we will never be able to experience it again in our lifetime and it has all been very rewarding.

PROJECT 6029

Railway Historical Society

Project 6029 has a team of some 25 local and interstate volunteers who are using their skills — such as in metalwork, timberwork, electrical, painting and cleaning — to rebuild and restore a heritage Locomotive 6029 to be fully operational on the Australian Rail Network. The Locomotive 6029 is part of the Canberra Railway Museum collection which plays an integral part to Canberra's heritage, tourism, education and transport networks. Project 6029's restoration encourages the mutual exchange of ideas and skills to the benefit of the volunteer team and there is a strong sense of camaraderie and belonging.

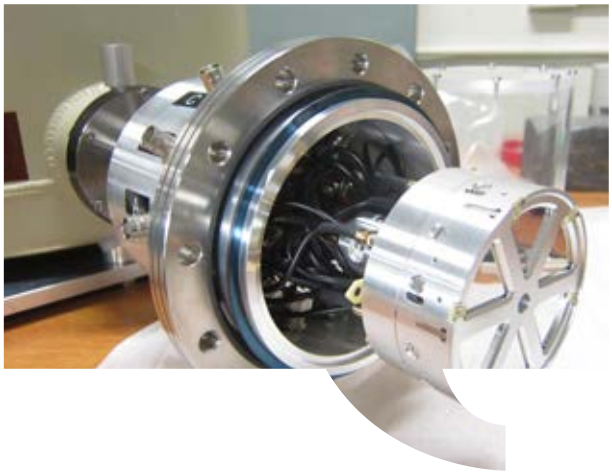
Volunteers at the Railway Historical Society working on Project 6029

ROBERT PITT

Australian National University Department of Nuclear Physics

I have always had a fascination with nuclear physics and after retiring I wanted to do something interesting with my time. I was offered a place in a Masters Degree in Nuclear Science at the Australian National University (ANU), but decided to take up a volunteer position as a hobby instead. I began volunteering with the ANU Department of Nuclear Physics in 2011 doing computer and electronics work. I thoroughly enjoyed assisting in the construction of particle detectors which involved mounting some delicate detectors and wiring them up, and then assisting the professor, and senior researcher run their experiments.

An example of Robert Pitt's fine and delicate work.



MEETING DIFFERENT PEOPLE, as well as the *pleasure* of *participating* in events, are the things that *make volunteering really worthwhile.*

AMANDA RUFFIN

Various

Over the last four years I have been involved in many different volunteer roles. I am constantly looking around for opportunities to volunteer and when something comes up I always put my hand up to help. I have done a lot of volunteering for various Canberra Centenary events, such as helping out with the Skywhale and the Open Embassies Day. I have also volunteered for various sporting events including the Canberra Special Olympics. All of my volunteering experiences have been very rewarding. The people and workers at community events are always pleasant and the early starts can be magical with the sun coming up through the fog and the trees. Meeting different people, as well as the pleasure of participating in events, are the things that make volunteering really worthwhile.

FERINA EKAWATI LOUYS

Canberra Multicultural Festival

Canberra Multicultural Festival 2012 was my first event since I moved to Australia in 2011. To find a job in Australia has been hard for me. Being a volunteer is my way of experiencing Australia. Practicing my English, trying to engage with strangers, helping people and understanding Australian's characteristics by volunteering is something that I won't be able to experience anywhere else. I feel I am part of the community. I want to make myself useful. I want to contribute to something worthwhile. As long as I am alive I will try to give up my time to help others.

AMANDA JOYCE NEILSON

Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services ACT

I became involved with the Migrant and Refugee Settlement Services because I wanted to give some time back to the community. I wanted to help young people like myself who may have had a less fortunate start in life, and give them as much assistance as possible in order to ensure they receive all the opportunities they deserve. As part of my volunteering I tutor tertiary level students in law and general English literacy. The most rewarding part of my volunteering is being able to instil confidence in students who are overwhelmed by their workload or impending exams. I am so proud when they come to me and tell me they've sat an exam or completed an assignment because it means they are making progress within the program.

> I wanted to **help young people** like myself who may have had a *less fortunate start in life*

CAROL KEIL

Canberra Multicultural Forum

I have been a volunteer for much of my adult life. Having a background with numbers, I have often worked as a treasurer, a role I am currently undertaking with the Canberra Multicultural Community Forum. In recent times I have been a home tutor with CIT, on the board of Companion House and a weekly volunteer with the Citizens Advice Bureau. Through these organisations I have come into contact with some very vulnerable people and I have a great sense of achievement when I am able to help them. Through my volunteering work I have gained an appreciation of all the difficulties these vulnerable people have to overcome, especially when they are newcomers to Canberra.

LUCY BATTAGLENE

Lamap Eco-Tourism Committee

In 2012 I left Canberra to volunteer with the AusAID-funded Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development Program for 12 months in Malekula, Vanuatu. As Tourism Development Officer with the Lamap Eco-Tourism Committee my role was to help facilitate community tourism projects such as organising a festival and several hospitality workshops so that local livelihoods can be supported by the tourism industry. I spent the year living with a family in a traditional 'natangura' hut, without running water or electricity. While it was hard at times the experience was unforgettable and has taught me so much about human kindness.

Lucy Battaglene volunteering in Vanuatu

> I spent the *year* living with a family in a *traditional* 'natangura' hut, **WITHOUT RUNNING WATER** *or electricity.*

BEYOND BANK

Supporting the Community

In December 2011, Beyond Bank Australia announced the launch of their national 'Community Volunteers program' in partnership with Volunteering SA&NT, Volunteering WA, Volunteering ACT and the Hunter Volunteer Centre.

The program acted as a central point for all potential volunteers including Beyond Bank staff, their members and the wider community, matching them with volunteering vacancies available, and assisting with that crucial first step to finding a cause close to their hearts and becoming involved.

Volunteers are the backbone of the Australian community, helping to make the world a better place everyday. The program offers a platform to share vacancies and also access a pool of potential volunteers.

The Beyond Bank Australia website lists a variety of volunteering vacancies, and potential volunteers can search these for suitable opportunities. Potential volunteers can also register online as a Community Volunteer and they will be contacted when new vacancies arise.

Research shows that many Australians would like to volunteer but don't know where to start. This program, the first of its kind in the country, brings volunteers and volunteering opportunities together in one central spot, making it easy for everyone to get involved.

Since the programs inception, we have seen the number of people register on our website increase by a staggering 300%. Our aim is to continue to support communities while providing a variety of roles with something that suits everyone.

***For more information on joining the Community Volunteers program, visit our website* www.beyondbank.com.au.**

> This program, *the first of its kind in the country*, brings **VOLUNTEERS** and volunteering opportunities together in one central spot, making it **easy for everyone to get involved.**

Beyond Bank staff volunteering.

CEREBRAL PALSY ALLIANCE

Beyond Bank Australia recognises the positive role not-for-profit organisations such as local sporting clubs, schools, community service groups and charities play in the local communities in which we operate, and supporting these organisations is at the heart of who we are.

The Community Reward Account is yet another way of giving back to the community, providing a direct link between our members' investment in our 100% customer-owned bank and the nominated organisation's investment in the community.

This account was developed to support local charities, community groups and not-for-profit organisations by donating a percentage of its average annual balance to organisations participating in the Community Reward Account.

At the end of each financial year, we adds up the average balance held in all Community Reward Accounts linked to each registered organisation and donates up to 1.5% of that balance to the organisation—supporting charity has never been easier.

Beyond Bank Australia has a long association with the Cerebral Palsy Alliance proactively organising fundraising activity to support and recently provided $20,000 to help fund their Wicked Winter and Summer Adventure Camps for children, young adults and their families affected by cerebral palsy.

The camps provide people living with cerebral palsy an opportunity to travel with friends, learn new skills and identify goals and perspectives for their future.

Many young people with cerebral palsy feel somewhat isolated and disconnected from the rest of the community, so this camp is all about forming relationships, settling goals, building confidence and having some fun on skies.

Kasey Alchin, who is a Member Relationship Consultant in the ACT, is one of the many Beyond Bank Australia staff members who regularly volunteer in the community. Kasey utilised community leave days offered by our organisation to volunteer at the Wicked Winter Adventure Camp.

Kasey said 'One of my cousins has a mild form of cerebral palsy, so I feel really connected to the cause and having the opportunity to spend time with the group, on and off the slopes is a bonus'.

For more information on the Beyond Bank Australia 'Community Reward Account' can be found at our website **www.beyondbank.com.au.**

ABV Volunteer Lindsay Cheers on assignment at the Majapahit Medical Centre in East Java, Indonesia

CATHY STARLING

Australian Business Volunteers

Australian Business Volunteers began in 1981 when the Australian Government sought to use the business skills and experience of newly retired Australian executives to provide practical business advice and guidance to small and medium sized businesses in neighbouring developing countries. Our volunteers are drawn from a database of qualified business experts who are usually newly retired or have at least ten years' experience. The underpinning principle for all our work is that locally developed business provides an effective model for sustained community development, alleviating poverty by contributing to economic growth, job creation, and people's livelihoods and incomes. In keeping with our mission, "To strengthen businesses and, through them, communities", we have a suite of programs designed to build the capacity of businesses across South East Asia and Pacific region.

> ... alleviating poverty by **CONTRIBUTING** to economic growth, job creation, and people's livelihoods and incomes.

JUDY TIER

Australian Business Volunteers

In 1991 I sold my business after 20 years of operation and a friend suggested I could pass on my business skills by joining Australian Business Volunteers. That same year I worked with a small clothing manufacturer in Suva, Fiji and six months later I returned to assist in setting up their first retail store. As part of my volunteer service I engage in developing and delivering workshops, implementing improved business and manufacturing systems and training business owners and their staff. My most rewarding volunteer experience has been my work with the Vanuatu Women in Sustainable Development Association (VWSDA), a local NGO with a mission to support local women in business. The committee considered I had made a difference and left VWSDA with a clear and sustainable direction and the tools to ensure their success.

LANYON YOUTH AND COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

YWCA of Canberra Mura Lanyon Youth and Community Centre

This team of 20 volunteers support their community through bus transportation of young people across the ACT, working at the Lanyon Food Hub Emergency Relief Centre, working in the Lanyon Ladle community soup kitchen and through assisting with child care. They also actively participate in forums exploring key issues for their community, such as people's public spaces, homelessness strategies, a strategic plan for crime prevention in the Lanyon region and the bus interchange development at Conder. These volunteers contribute significantly to the sense of social connectedness and collective ownership and to the social cohesion of the Lanyon community.

Some of the Lanyon Youth and Community Volunteers

> These *volunteers* **CONTRIBUTE** significantly to the sense of *social connectedness* and collective ownership…

THERESE REILLY

Yellow Van Food Rescue, Communities@Work

Therese is a huge part of the Yellow Van Food Rescue family and she is much loved and respected. As part of her volunteer work she performs duties in the food vans, works at events and helps out with office duties as required. Quite often Therese is called upon to take on the role of coordinator in the office, which can be very intense and quite stressful. Therese performs these duties with admirable professionalism and empathy. Therese has been a Communities@Work volunteer for over five years and at all times has gone above and beyond what her volunteer role requires. Her caring nature and high levels of emotional intelligence make her one of our most valued volunteers.

LES POWELL

Greening Australia

My volunteering journey began in various areas but I decided that I needed to become involved in more active, physical activities. I used to walk my dog by the Greening Australia headquarters in Aranda in the early mornings and was directed to volunteering with the organisation by friends. Through my volunteering I provide services that help to improve the environment by propagating and planting appropriate trees, shrubs and grasses in local degraded areas of the ACT and surrounding regions. Over the six years that I have been volunteering with Greening Australia it has become apparent to me that it is a well-respected organisation that provides valuable services to both the government and to private interests.

> Through my **volunteering** I provide services that help to *improve* the **ENVIRONMENT**...

Greening Australia volunteers David and Meredith

HARTLEY HALL MARKETS VOLUNTEER TEAM

The Hartley Hall Markets Volunteer Team perform each and every duty as needed including car parking, gold coin donation collection, office duties, cooking, setting up markets at the Hall showground, packing down at the end of the day, engaging in stallholder relations, cleaning and stock control. The team has been volunteering since the inception of the Hall markets 25 years ago, and has been instrumental in the growth and development of the markets over the years. Each market day volunteers arrive at 6am, frost, rain or shine with smiles on their faces and stay until the job is done. They are the backbone of the markets and it is through their consistent hard work and effort that the markets have been able to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars to make a difference for people living with a disability in the community.

MICHAEL SIM

Isaacs Ridge Mount Mugga Mugga ParkCare Group

Michael is a hardworking and enthusiastic Parkcare volunteer and coordinator. Through removal of weeds, weed mapping, planting of native seedlings, encouragement of habitat for native species and development of management plans — just a sample of his activities — Michael's serious and invaluable commitment and leadership assists relevant agencies to manage and conserve the natural heritage assets of the ACT — its hills, ridges and buffers — for the enjoyment of all its citizens.

PATRICIA FRITH

Radio 1RPH

From childhood one of my heart's desires was to open the world through reading to those who couldn't see. For seven years, under the capable leadership of Alan Williams, I have been a volunteer reader for 1RPH, Canberra's radio station for the print-handicapped. My paid job took me into the home of a visually impaired lady. I shared about 1RPH. She already listened to some of their programs. I asked if she had ever heard a reader say, "Hello listeners. I'm Patricia Frith." Her face transformed as she exclaimed "That's you!" Her huge smile brought me great delight.

> From *childhood* one of my **heart's desires** was to open the **world** through ***reading to those who couldn't see.***

PETER ELLIS

Radio 1RPH

I first began volunteering in community radio over 30 years ago. I helped engineer a station from scratch, in essence building its studio and transmitting facilities by hand. Following this I discovered Radio 1RPH and turned up on their doorstep. I was shown into the studio and learned all of the technical capabilities and was then the presenter of a live-to-tape audition session with several readers. I was accepted as a presenter and I have been a regular volunteer with the station for around 12 years. As the years have progressed and technology has evolved the station has gone from being tape-based with volunteer presenters required to play tapes manually, to computer operated with much of the effort now automatic.

JANE SHELLING

Various

I originally became involved with the women's service group Soroptimist International to make new friends. As part of my involvement with SI I help out with sausage sizzles, stalls, dinner events and other fundraising endeavours. I also volunteer with Radio 1RPH reading newspaper articles for the print-handicapped and help out witnessing documents and performing other duties as a Justice of the Peace. Every time I read on the radio I sing all the way home in the car and find my volunteering experiences rewarding when I am able to help people out with their legal issues.

FLORIADE

Each year in April we put the call out to the wider Canberra community for those interested in volunteering at Floriade. The response is overwhelming with hundreds of people willing to offer up their time and we have many returning volunteers, some of which have been with Floriade for 10 years. All volunteers attend a mandatory training session and are provided information booklets which outline roles, key dates, recognition and benefits. We also supply uniforms, sun protection, and other items ensuring they are hydrated and healthy. We could not run Floriade without the help and dedication of our 200 volunteers and we recognise their commitment, passion and hard work.Our volunteers really enjoy being part of Floriade, and this is evidenced through the volunteer survey which includes gauging volunteer satisfaction levels and feedback. From the survey in 2012 volunteers were most satisfied with training (95% satisfied), uniforms (90% satisfied), with both the application process (100% satisfied) and duties (100% satisfied).

Floriade Volunteers

TREVOR GILBERT

Floriade

I have been volunteering for fourteen years as something extra to do after retiring. At Floriade I undertake activities such as manning entry gates, guarding displays and answering tourist questions as much as possible about the garden displays. The most rewarding part about my volunteering experience has been meeting people.

> The most **REWARDING** part about my *volunteering experience* has been *meeting people.*

VICKI PRIESTLEY

Various

My volunteering experiences have been within Canberra events such as Enlighten, Canberra 100 (Centenary events) and Floriade. I became involved in volunteering through studying an Event Management course at CIT where volunteering came to my attention, in addition while I was working as an ACT public servant we would receive bulletins advising of opportunities. Throughout the three years I have been volunteering I have undertaken a number of activities helping people with directing and answering questions about the events. The most rewarding part of my volunteer experience has been ensuring that the community was provided with the most up to date information and assisting with locating lost people.

EDITH WONG (WONG KWOK MEI)

Floriade 2013

I was fortunate to come from Hong Kong to Australia for a one year working holiday. Experiencing the local Australian life was one of the main purposes on my trip. I decided that getting involved in volunteer work would be the best way for me to understand more about Australian life and would allowed me to meet people from different countries. I luckily, got the opportunity to be a volunteer at Floriade in Canberra. My role was to welcome visitors on the gates and answer visitors' queries.

I felt most moved by the people simply saying "Thank you" and when they truly appreciate the work you have done. To me this was the biggest reward, which can't be replaced by anything. Being a volunteer in Floriade made me feel like a local citizen. It is so much fun to work with different people from all over, who shared their experiences with me and we exchange the culture from our country.

> *I felt most moved* by the people simply saying **"Thank you"** and when they *truly appreciate* the work you have done.

JOHN WRIGHT

Various

I have been involved in various volunteering endeavours in ACT and NSW over the course of my life. For the last 35 years I have been a foster parent and I am currently awaiting the arrival of two small children whom I hope to provide with a brighter future. I am a regular volunteer newsreader at Radio 1RPH, I am a volunteer dog walker at the RSPCA, I am a voluntary Justice of the Peace at the Magistrates Court and I regularly get involved in community activities. I became involved in the bulk of my volunteering work after retiring from my job as a counselor in Queanbeyan and moving to the ACT. Every year I work as Santa Claus and I'm always on the hunt for more volunteering opportunities.

BARBARA COURT

Various

I have been volunteering for 20 years for the Monaro Fold Society, Floriade and the Cancer Council. I became interested in volunteering as I wanted to promote Australian music and dance in the ACT and our wonderful city, as well as helping to raise money for cancer research. I have done many things during my years as a volunteer including sitting on committees to run bush dances, selling merchandise and assisting with events. The most rewarding moment was when I was helping to run and organise an Australiana night with the Bush Capital Band for the International Mint Conference in 2010 at EPIC for over 500 international delegates.

MARILYN NEWHAM

Various

Over the last 20 years, I have volunteered at a number of community organisations throughout Canberra, such as: Floriade, Snowy Hydro Southcare, The Smith Family (VIEW Clubs of Australia) and Bonython Primary School. I first became involved in volunteering when I noticed a need in the community and decided to help by volunteering. I also wanted to help by using skills that I have gained though employment and work being a parent and a grandparent. The key tasks which I undertook throughout my volunteering roles were planning events, fundraising, account keeping and recording, arranging and chairing meetings, leadership and mentoring. My largest roles were working with the public and being part of a team.

The largest reward I have received form volunteering was knowing that in some small way I have helped make a difference and in doing so, promoted the organisation that I am representing at the time, either at a community level or nationally.

Volunteers at Floriade

FAYE ARGENTO

Various

I have been volunteering for various organisations since 1972 when I helped out with Meals on Wheels and worked as a tour guide for Old Parliament House. I have also been volunteering for Floriade for the last 13 years which I love because it shows off how beautiful Canberra is. My most rewarding experiences have been my involvement with the 2000 Sydney Olympics where I met my best friend with whom I do much of my volunteer work today, and for Snowy Hydro Southcare because it is such a wonderful charity. Giving back to the community is the best reward.

JURDAN DEGHENGHI

Various

I asked my Local Area Coordinator to find me a volunteering role during the Centenary year. I told her I wanted to give something back to the community and to be included in the celebrations. We met with Rob at Volunteering ACT and I was given a role helping out on Canberra Day. I then volunteered at Youth Week and at the Wind Air and Water event at Belconnen. I am now volunteering at the Canberra Museum and Art Gallery for the rest of the year. I am very proud and happy with my achievements. My family are too!

Jurdan Deghenghi

> ... I wanted to *give something back* to the **community** and to be **included** in the *celebrations.*

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CANBERRA VOLUNTEERS

A 95-person strong team of volunteers keeps the doors of Ronald McDonald house open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year! Their duties cover housekeeping, maintenance, administration, cooking, respite, overnight supervision and fundraising. But their most important role is ensuring that families, enduring the heartache of a seriously ill baby or child, do not suffer alone. Ronald McDonald House says 'The relentless effort our volunteers go to each and every day to support our mission is astonishing. Our volunteers overcome personal, physical, emotional, geographical and financial obstacles to support our families.'

Ronald McDonald House Canberra Gala Ball

APRIL ROSE HANSON

Various

I became involved in volunteering while completing my Canberra Award at the University of Canberra and through work. As part of my volunteer service I helped out with handing out water bottles for the Walk to Cure Diabetes and selling merchandise for the Cancer Council. I found my volunteering experience rewarding because it enabled me to meet other wonderful volunteers who all want to help make our community a better place.

ELIZABETH TRACEY

Ronald McDonald House Canberra

I have volunteered in Canberra across several organisations for over 26 years and have found it to be extremely rewarding, my time, however, with Ronald McDonald House has actually been life changing. Having spent long periods of time staying in hospital based accommodation with an ill family member and experiencing the stress and trauma that goes along with having them airlifted interstate in an emergency, I will forever be grateful to the people I met along the way, complete strangers who assisted and supported me in those situations. Coming up to the first year anniversary for RMH in Canberra and welcoming the 200th family to the House, it continues to be an absolute privilege to help and support the families of critically ill children, which RMH do 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year and to be able to give something back along the way. "Volunteers are the Heart of the House" — I couldn't be more proud than to say that I am one of them.

> … "**VOLUNTEERS** are the *Heart of the House*" — I couldn't be more **proud** than to say that *I am one of them.*

SAMANTHA NING

Ronald McDonald House

I volunteer at the Ronald McDonald House Canberra, which provides a home away from home for families of seriously ill babies & children. The staff, other volunteers and families who stay in the house are a pleasure to be with and make turning up for each shift a delight. I am constantly amazed and inspired by the strength of the families in the house. Knowing that I can help in some small way makes volunteering a rewarding and joyful experience. I am also amazed by the generosity of the community and businesses of Canberra for their support of the house.

COLIN SEANIGER

The Salvation Army

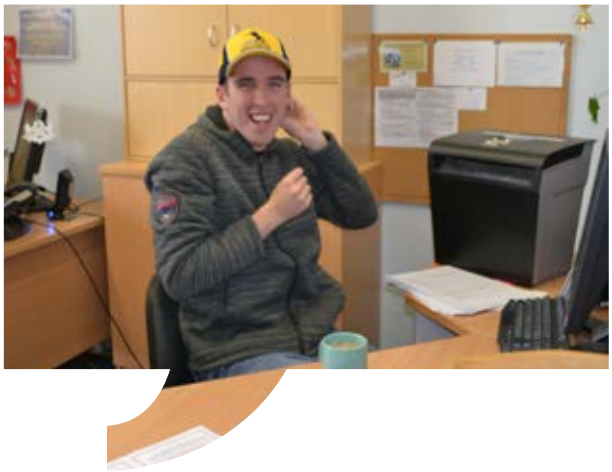
Since October 2008 Dr Colin Seaniger has collaborated with the ACT Health Directorate and The Salvation Army in an innovative program providing access to affordable and timely dental care to homeless and low income people in the ACT. Volunteering his services as a dentist free of charge for half a day per week, Colin has assisted over 90 people to experience healthy, functioning and aesthetically pleasing teeth. Known for his courteous and considerate approach, Colin's commitment to public oral health has contributed positively to the social ,economic and employment prospects of many vulnerable ACT residents and their families.

DECLAN WHITE

Various

After leaving school in 2010 Declan became involved in volunteering with Meals on Wheels with the Australian Red Cross, which is a role he still maintains today.
In addition Declan also began volunteering with Kippax Uniting Church last year and has recently undertaken a volunteering position with the Ambulance Depot in Symonston. All of these activities help Declan keep busy and become engaged with the community.
The community links he has forged throughout his volunteering journey make him feel welcomed and appreciated. Declan has quite complex support needs which reinforces that volunteering really is for everyone. Volunteering has enabled Declan to find balance in his life through activities that are both stimulating and worthwhile. He loves volunteering at Kippax because of the constant interaction with people and is always really happy to donate his time.

Declan White



> Volunteering has *enabled* Declan to find balance in his life through *activities* that are both *stimulating* and **WORTHWHILE.**

DAVID JENKINS

AIDS Action Council

I arrived at the Aids Action Council in 2011 without much knowledge of what was involved, but with an appreciation of the bigotry faced by people suffering from HIV related illness. The one defining reflection about volunteering with the Council has been the people that I have met. They have been kind, inclusive, non-judgmental and extremely thoughtful. To me, with my own significant mental health history, this is a memory of humanity at its best and something I will always cherish. Helping those members of the community who might otherwise be isolated or reluctant is humbling and rewarding. It really seems from the Council's corner in Canberra that life is beautiful; mainly, and almost exclusively, because they actually care and that, I think, is all it takes.

> **HELPING** those members of the *community* who might otherwise be isolated or reluctant is **humbling** and *rewarding*.

MORGYN BOSTOCK

Various

After finishing year 12 I had a keen interest in social justice issues and was interested in getting some volunteer experience before commencing university studies. I looked up volunteering opportunities in Canberra and came across Amnesty International ACT who invited me into their office to help out. Currently I run the Schools Network and complete research tasks for Amnesty. I also volunteer at the Red Cross' food service 'The Roadhouse' on Saturday afternoons. I find working with kids in any capacity and teaching them new things has been the most consistently rewarding volunteering experience, though all experiences have been rewarding in their own way.

PARENTLINE ACT INC

Parentline ACT is an organisation with a strong volunteer component for the 35 years of its existence. The service began as Parent Support Service, with its aim being to prevent child abuse and reduce parental isolation. Volunteer telephone counsellors were available to connect Canberra parents to the community. Now, Parentline continues with its goal as an early intervention service, and relies more than ever on its well-trained and dedicated volunteers. Parentline runs an annual 9–week volunteer telephone support training course, and volunteer supervisors ensure a safe service for callers. The volunteer management committee is the backbone of the service.

> *Parentline* continues with its *goal* as an *early intervention service,* and relies more than ever on its **well-trained** and **DEDICATED** *volunteers.*

PARENTLINE ACT INC

Paint and Play

Parentline ACT began operating Paint and Play five years ago, as part of its involvement in the Communities for Children program. Our visionary coordinator, Judy, passionately initiated and ensured its on-going existence. Paint and Play is an outdoor, outreach style, prevention and early intervention facilitated playgroup, aiming to connect families with children 0–5 to their community. Over 200 attend each week. Judy is supported by a band of equally passionate and dedicated volunteers, who every week get the paint and activities ready for a frenetic 1.5 hours of activity, before packing up — knowing it will all happen again next week!

> Judy is *supported* by a band of equally **passionate** and *dedicated* volunteers…

KACEY LAM

Various

> **VOLUNTEERING** has been a *positive* way to **give back** to and *connect* with the *Canberra community.*

I joined the Australian Red Cross in 2006 after moving from Melbourne for university. In February 2013, I was deployed to Queensland after Tropical Cyclone Oswald to assist in the Red Cross Emergency Services command centre. In my role, I was a logistics officer where I was responsible for ensuring that our volunteers on the ground had the right equipment to care for those affected by the floods. I also volunteer for the ACT Red Cross Youth Crew where I participate in a variety of activities including the Save-A-Mate program which promotes the health and well-being of young people, the Red Cross ANZAC Day dawn service stand, and the Pal-Up program which provides mentoring to young refugees and asylum seekers. Volunteering has been a positive way to give back to and connect with the Canberra community.

JOAN ROBSON

The Australian Red Cross

Joan volunteers for a full day every week in the Garran office of the Red Cross, undertaking multiple and varied office tasks with leadership, intelligence and enthusiasm. Joan is also active in Red Cross Emergency Services and has been deployed to activations during Cyclone Larry, the Queensland Floods, the Victorian bushfires and in the ACT and South East NSW regions. The hours Joan commits to Emergency Services are incalculable, since crises are never regular, predictable or short. Joan is currently training to be an Emergency Services Community Speaker so she can hold workshops for vulnerable community members to develop resilience during emergencies and disasters.

MENTAL ILLNESS EDUCATION ACT

Volunteers Educators are the gold of Mental Illness Education ACT (MIEACT). They are people who live with mental illness or look after someone with mental illness, and they feel passionately about changing stigma and discrimination. MIEACT provides training and support, and Volunteer Educators tell their personal stories in schools, to police, to bus drivers, to anyone who interacts with people living with mental illness. Volunteer Educators have been telling stories in Canberra since 1993. Many have been recognized with awards, but the biggest reward is that after twenty years, social attitudes are slowly changing for the better.

> They are people who live with **mental illness** or look after someone with mental illness, and they *feel passionately* about *changing* stigma and discrimination.

THE CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

Volunteering ACT

The Connections Program has been in operation for 18 years and provides social support to people living with a mild to moderate mental illness through supportive one-to-one structured friendships. Over the past couple of years the Connections staff implemented various initiatives to ensure the program continues to provide an environment that fosters growth, new meaning and purpose within the community for mental health consumers (participants) and volunteers. The social activities which our volunteers and participants engage in provide opportunities to re-establish connections with family, friends and community support networks such as mental health and specialist services. The positive outcomes achieved would not happen without the commitment and enthusiasm of the dedicated volunteers who give their time to the program.

The Connections Program at the National Zoo and Aquarium for Mental Health Week

UNITINGCARE CANBERRA CITY

Early Morning Centre Team

The UnitingCare Canberra City — Early Morning Centre team provides a safe and welcoming space for people to come together and interact. A big part of the work done by the centre is to provide social inclusion and give people the opportunity to take part in community life. Most of the volunteers donate a few hours of time each week and come from all walks of life. The work can be challenging as many of the visitors to the centre have very complex needs. All of the volunteers at the centre treat everyone with dignity whilst maintaining a respectful approach to each individual.

KATE MCCARTHY

Various

I initially became involved in volunteering when my daughter's hockey team was in need of a coach and manager, and I have not stopped assisting people from all walks of life since then. I have volunteered for a variety of organisations including the Centenary of Canberra volunteer team, Hockey Clubs, Sydney Olympics Professional Association, Masters Games and many social clubs and community organisations. I mostly undertake administrative tasks and provide verbal advice and assistance to participants for these various organisations. My most rewarding volunteering experience was during the 2000 Sydney Olympics when I assisted with the registration of all of the hockey teams from around the world.

RICARDO ALBERTO

Gungahlin United Football Club

In 2013 the Gungahlin United Football Club gained a new President, Ricardo Alberto. As the President, Ricardo oversees the soccer season for over 1000 kids in the Gungahlin region. Along with a small band of other dedicated volunteers Ricardo makes sure the kids get to play soccer week in, week out. Details like making sure everyone is in a team, shirts and balls are organized, fields are allocated, goals and nets are set up, referees are organised, coaches are allocated, managers are found, team photos are taken, the canteen is well stocked with sausages, drinks and red frogs, training pitches are organised and paid for, down to the trophies for the end of the season being bought and engraved — all these issues come past the President at some stage. Oh and he coaches a team as well in his spare time! Thanks for a great first season Ricardo — here's to the next!

Prosperous Mountain Lion Dance volunteers performing in Canberra

DAVID WONG

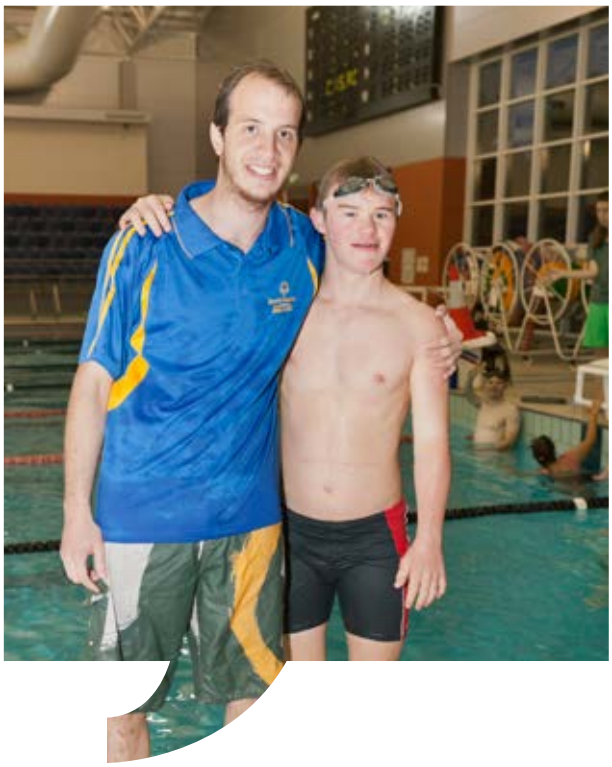
Prosperous Mountain Lion Dance

I've had a passion for traditional Chinese lion (AKA dragon) dancing ever since I could remember when I grew up in Malaysia, and I practiced it on a voluntary basis in my schooling years in Perth with a local troupe up until I moved to Canberra in 2006. Once in Canberra I managed to gather a handful of local youths and using some donated lion dance equipment we began training weekly on a voluntary basis. As we obtained grants and start up loans from community leaders, we purchased new equipment and uniforms in preparation for our launch. In November 2007, we launched Prosperous Mountain Lion Dance at the Dickson Tradies with strong support from the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the ACT Chinese Australia Association. Canberra can now be proud to have its own locally-based lion dance troupe bring colour, tradition, energy, noise, happiness and participation throughout the year and during key events to celebrate Canberra.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS ACT

Special Olympics Australia officially came into operation in 1976 and currently offers 14 sports across 250 clubs to over 4000 athletes throughout Australia. Special Olympics ACT provides athletes with the opportunity to develop their physical fitness, participate in the sharing of skills, make friends and develop social skills that will benefit them for the rest of their lives. Our volunteer pool is diverse with some offering time at annual events and others working year round in various roles such as coaches, administrators, photographers, medical personnel and drivers. Special Olympics would not exist today without the commitment and enthusiasm of the dedicated volunteers who give their time to the organisation.

Special Olympics



> We are *moulding* the **NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS** and *decision makers* in our world and we do it all by *having FUN!* What more could one want from *volunteering*.

LOUISE GALEN-MULES

Southwell Scout Group

The more I learn about Scouts the more I love it. A recent recruit to the position of Group Leader, ("it's only 2 hours a week of your time!") I get to see the internal workings of a wonderful team of people, section leaders, family volunteers, branch and national staff all educating young people to develop incredible skills and knowledge that they can take with them into adulthood. We are moulding the next generation of leaders and decision makers in our world and we do it all by having FUN! What more could one want from volunteering.

Southwell Scout Group

FIONA MCKINNON

ACT Scouts

As a single parent of three children I became involved in ACT Scouts as a female leader when my daughter turned eight years old and joined Cub Scouts. I volunteered to become a uniformed member of ACT Scouts and over the course of my volunteering journey I have been a line leader, a group leader, a region commissioner and a section commissioner. ACT Scouts provides a sequential developmentally appropriate program for young people to help them build their best characters, and helps adults as well! Volunteering for ACT Scouts is great fun and I'm still there today.

> The *Citizens Advice Bureau ACT (CAB) volunteer team* takes on the front line role in the CAB's ACT Info Shop, **PROVIDING INFORMATION** and referral servicing to the whole of the *Canberra Community.*

CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU ACT

The Citizens Advice Bureau ACT (CAB) volunteer team takes on the front line role in the CAB's ACT Info Shop, providing information and referral servicing to the whole of the Canberra Community. It is the person-to-person support that fills an ever increasing unmet need in our community, as equitable access to information is a real issue for many Canberrans. Most of the volunteers have overcome difficulties in their own lives but are able to apply the strengths gained from their own experiences to their unique roles at CAB. Our volunteers believe it is a privilege to welcome diverse visitors and clients, hear their stories, and enable them to find access to services. They give a lot of time and effort but they humbly feel as if they are gaining more.

KATRINA TITHERADGE

Various

I started as a young person in the Scout movement as an assistant Cub Leader and then became a Scout Leader. Helping with my children's activities such as coaching, and managing a youth orchestra was a good way to get involved in their other activities. As part of my volunteering I have instructed scouts in various activities, in which I learned a great deal about myself. I also helped with paint and play and engaged with other parents as well. The most rewarding part of volunteering is being able to participate in the activities and watch how the children progress and learn.

> The most rewarding part of *volunteering* is being able to **PARTICIPATE** in the activities and **watch** how the children *progress and learn.*

TESS COOK

The Smith Family

My volunteering journey began in 2005 when I took up a position with The Smith Family's Volunteer Operations Centre and I have stayed with the organisation ever since. I currently volunteer two days a week in the administration department helping out with clerical tasks and with a Homework Club after school. I have now been volunteering with The Smith Family for eight years and I love my work. It helps me to grow and meet people, and I feel like I learn new things every day. Everyone at The Smith Family is very supportive and generous and I feel fortunate that I am able to work alongside them. Volunteering gives me greater self-confidence and this enables me to better relate to family, friends and work.

BARBARA EDWARD

View Club

Barbara spends most of her time helping other people. She runs the trading table at the VIEW Club's Learning for Life monthly meetings, with money raised going to sponsor disadvantaged children. She visits several people at Morshead Home and Ross Walker Lodge, bringing flowers and food treats. She and a friend donate over 70 jumpers for children every year to the Gungahlin Community Centre and crochet rugs for a local women's refuge. She keeps an eye on a woman with a disability across the street, visiting twice daily with food and companionship. She is on call for any person who needs her and will go out of her way to help.

YMCA CANBERRA

Founded in 1941, the YMCA of Canberra was built by volunteers. The dedicated pioneers of the organisation physically built Camp Sturt, the YMCA Sailing Club and most of the city YMCA building. Originally the YMCA created programs that were aimed at supporting service men and women stationed in Canberra and at the troubled youth of the city. Over time and as community needs and expectations have changed so too has the organisation. Throughout the organisation's journey its Mission to "provide opportunities for people to grow in body, mind and spirit" has remained constant throughout the years. Today all of the clubs are managed and run by volunteers and the Auxilary volunteers continue to run 2 Y's Buys shops that play an integral part in raising the funds that many programs rely on.

Peter Russell the 2013 ACT Volunteer of the Year

PETER RUSSELL

YMCA Canberra

Peter is Volunteering ACT's "Volunteer of the Year" for 2013. He won this prestigious award for his ten years of ongoing and unstinting dedication to disabled sailors competing with the YMCA of Canberra Sailing Club. His volunteering reaches across all aspects of enabling disabled sailors to compete on an equal footing with able bodied sailors, from adapting, repairing and rigging boats, lifting boats and sailors in and out of the water and accompanying disabled sailors interstate and overseas for coaching and competition. His commitment, perseverence, patience and selflessness embodies all what is best about contributing as a volunteer to our community and making Canberra such a wonderful place to live.

Peter is Volunteering ACT's "**VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR**" for 2013. He won this *prestigious award* for his *ten years* of ongoing and unstinting **DEDICATION** to disabled sailors competing with the *YMCA of Canberra Sailing Club.*

NELLIE DRENT

YMCA

Nellie, now aged 84, has been a volunteer with the YMCA of Canberra since 1997 and has since that time, given two days a week of tireless work "behind the scenes" to raise money to enable disadvantaged people and families in our community to improve their health and wellness through attendance at YMCA community programs. Her efforts have, over the years, raised hundreds of thousands of dollars by sorting, cleaning and repairing goods for sale at the two YMCA Y's Buys fundraising op shops. Her energy, generosity of spirit and dedication was recognised in 2001 when she won the ACT Volunteering "Long-term Commitment to Community Service" Award. She is a living example of all that is good in our community.

Nellie Drent

A GENDER AGENDA

A Gender Agenda (AGA) works with the intersex and gender diverse community, which includes transsexuals, transgender people, intersex people, cross-dressers and other gender non-conforming people. We are a grass roots, truly community orientated organisation that was completely reliant on the work of volunteers for the first nine years of operation. In 2012 we received a small amount of government funding, but the majority of our services are still run by volunteers. Our volunteers run community dinners, information sessions, skill share workshops and stalls at community events. Volunteers also represent us at local, national and international events, and provide specialist advice on particular topics. We have a weekly drop-in, and peer support and shopping buddy program that are completely reliant on volunteers. AGA is continuing its history of attracting a diverse, highly skilled and very motivated team of volunteers. We see volunteering as an opportunity for genuine partnerships and pride ourselves in facilitating opportunities that provide volunteers not only with a way to contribute to the community, but also with ways to increase their own confidence, skills set, and sense of belonging and being valued. In order to achieve this, we work with volunteers to develop projects that draw on or develop personal skills, meet existing community needs and are achievable and meaningful.

ROB REGENT

Various

I became involved in volunteering while seeking adventure during my travels in Canada. This led me to work in communities in Sierra Leone and Palestine. Upon returning to Canberra I wanted to put something back into my local community and volunteered for various organisations including Menslink, Special Olympics ACT, the White Ribbon Foundation, Barnardos, Camp Quality and YMCA Canberra. In my current roles I work as a youth mentor and help implement sporting programs for people with intellectual disabilities. My most rewarding volunteer experiences have been working with refugees in Sierra Leone and Palestine and using the experience of sport to enrich peoples' lives.

> My most **REWARDING** volunteer *experiences* have been working with **refugees** in Sierra Leone and Palestine

HAYA AWNI

Cancer Council

Cancer is a cause close to my heart, having had a family member diagnosed. Recently I volunteered to sell merchandise for Cancer Council ACT for Daffodil Day. An older couple were the first to buy something. As they were leaving, the woman stopped and pointed to her beanie and it was then that I realised. "As you could probably tell, I'm a cancer victim… well not victim," she laughed, "but survivor. And on behalf of all of us, truly, thank you so much." It was so humbling; I was at a loss for words. It's moments like these that give meaning to the word priceless.

SARAH WILSON

Volunteering ACT

Early in 2013 I took on the role of the 100 Volunteer Stories Campaign Coordinator. My job was to contact volunteers and volunteer organisations in the Canberra community and ask them to share their stories of volunteering. Over the seven months of the campaign, I had the privilege of speaking to many of the truly wonderful volunteers who work tirelessly to make Canberra a better place.

As I compiled the stories that make up this publication, the sentiment that resonated the most with me was how each and every volunteer who shared their story truly believed that they themselves stood to gain the most from their volunteering experience. The selflessness, generosity and kind spirit of Canberra's volunteering community never ceased to amaze me.

When I began working on this campaign I was looking for a way to give back to the community and I was continually inspired by the commitment and passion of the volunteers I have worked with. Above all, I am so humbled by all of the dedicated and kind-hearted people who I was lucky enough to engage with throughout this process. Working to put together the 100 stories made me realise that human kindness knows no bounds. I hope that in reading all of these stories, others will be inspired to get involved in volunteering because it is unequivocally a vocation that reaps its own rewards.

> **...the sentiment that *resonated* the most with me was how each and every VOLUNTEER who *shared their story* truly believed that they themselves stood to GAIN the most from their volunteering experience.**

Sarah Wilson and Emilie Van Os Schmitt at the launch of the 100 Volunteer Stories Campaign

“THANK YOU to all the volunteers for the *commitment to help others* in the *Canberra community* and for sharing your volunteering stories.

These stories are a *fitting legacy* for CANBERRA’S CENTENARY year and engender a sure and certain confidence that *our future* is in GOOD HANDS.”

www.volunteeringact.org.au