

Jesuit Social

Winter Appeal 2005



Services

June Newsletter

Standing in solidarity with those in need, expressing a faith that promotes justice

BEING COMPANIONS TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD

– Julie Edwards, Executive Director



Julie Edwards, Executive Director

We can all recall someone who has made a positive difference in our lives – a parent, sister, brother, teacher, colleague, mentor.

For me, it's been first and foremost my family, but I've also been fortunate to have had many others help me along the way. I remember a teacher who inspired me, a work colleague who challenged me, a friend who believed in me, a mentor who listened to me.

Often it's been people who are on the margins of our community who have had the greatest impact. They have opened my eyes to a world beyond my own, shown me the kind of society we live in and taught me about myself.

All these people have invited, maybe challenged, me to become a better person.

Our Winter Newsletter reflects on this theme – that each of us can make a difference, each of us can do our bit to build a better world.

Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuits, invited people to become companions, to take up the holy task of accompanying another. This task is holy because when we undertake it we have the opportunity to enter the sacred ground of another's life. In doing this we may also deepen in an understanding of our own purpose.

Central to becoming a companion is the capacity to listen. It's only when we approach the other with a willingness to listen that our conversations will have the power to take us further into relationship – and relationship is central to everything we do at Jesuit Social Services. Without relationship, there can be no trust and therefore no growth or change.

This is where the task of building a better world starts.

'Building a better world' – it sounds huge, perhaps just a lofty principle best left to others to execute. But nothing could be further from the truth. As our own experience tells us, this task starts with each one of us making a commitment to act. Without this, the vision to build a better world remains simply that – a vision.

The following pages highlight just some of the ways that people involved with Jesuit Social Services – staff, volunteers, supporters – become companions and breathe life into that vision to build a better world: by listening, by entering relationship, by committing to action.

MEETING WITH THE FEDERAL MINISTER FOR CITIZENSHIP & MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS

The Federal Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs Peter McGauran met recently with Jesuit Social Services Executive Director, Julie Edwards, and Policy Director, Father Peter Norden, at one of our community development offices, on the North Richmond public housing estate.

In the Minister's capacity as Acting Federal Minister for Immigration, they discussed the Federal Government's expressed intention to deport approximately fifty East Timorese Australians, some of whom have been living in Australia now for more than 12 years.

Many of the East Timorese living in Australia live in Richmond and have strong connections with the local community and to Saint Ignatius Catholic Church, where Fr Norden is also the Parish Priest. Local East Timorese parishioners had approached Fr Norden expressing their distress at the notification sent to local families by the Minister for Immigration, Senator Amanda Vandstone, on 26 April, 2005.

Julie Edwards highlighted the special relationship that Australians have with the East Timorese, stemming in part from the crucial role they played in supporting our country during World War 2. A plea for greater compassion and a fair response to this group of people was made to the Minister.

The second issue discussed with the Hon. Peter McGauran, in his capacity as Federal Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, was the developing needs of the Horn of Africa communities in Australia.

Mr McGauran was briefed by Jesuit Social Services Somali refugee youth worker, Omar Bayahou, during the Minister's visit to our office. Omar explained the work he is involved with in helping to build the social networks in the Horn of Africa communities in the north western suburbs of Melbourne from his base in the Flemington housing estate.

Mr McGauran acknowledged the importance of this work and the need to ensure that community leaders are equipped to support their communities in the early years of their settlement in Australia.

BROSNAN CENTRE PATRON INSPIRES



Brosnan Centre Patron Garry Lyon receiving a fundraising cheque of \$1,000 from the students and teachers of Marhles House at Marcellin College, Bulleen on 6th May, 2005.

"Young people who have the benefit of a loving family and good mates, have a much better chance in life than those without that love and support - many young people at the Brosnan Centre are disadvantaged because they have missed out on these benefits."

If you, as young people are at a party and you find one of your mates is 'playing up', going over the top, what do you do? Do you leave him be, after all it's his misbehaviour, not yours, or do you act as a real mate and take him aside, and tell him to 'pull his head in'? That's what real mates do, because anyone can start to go down the wrong track. It doesn't take much, and they can finish up being in trouble with the law, locked away and ending up needing the help of the Brosnan Centre. During these years, you will find that peer pressure is strong – this is when you need to stand up, to show some leadership."
Garry Lyon



Jesuit Social Services, Somali refugee youth worker, Omar Bayahou, explains to Peter McGauran, the Federal Minister for Multicultural Affairs how his program helps the Horn of Africa communities

CONGRATULATIONS Bernie Geary

Bernie Geary, former Executive Director of Jesuit Social Services, is Victoria's first Child Safety Commissioner, the Minister for Children, Sherryl Garbutt, announced on 10th May 2005.

"He has an outstanding record in serving the community and protecting the interests of vulnerable children over the past 30 years," Ms Garbutt said.

"As the Commissioner, he will be a powerful children's advocate, a watchdog for child safety and will oversee the delivery of children's services."

"Mr Geary was the first youth outreach worker in Victoria and has worked tirelessly with young families and disadvantaged youth over many years," Ms Garbutt said.

"He will bring a wealth of experience to the role and a genuine understanding of issues confronting modern families and teenagers."

The Commissioner's responsibilities will be outlined in legislation, and will report to Parliament through the Minister for Children. The Commissioner will have the authority to investigate complaints on child safety issues as directed by the Minister.

INSIDE

Staying straight at the Brosnan Centre – a letter from the heart

Support after suicide – how we help and how you can help

Towards 'A Fairer Victoria' – a social policy response

Being a mentor means being there – no matter what

Connexions – a place of nourishment

Your thoughts – tell us what you think please

THE ROAD TO 'A FAIRER VICTORIA'

Jesuit Social Services welcomed the release of 'A Fairer Victoria', the State Government's long-term social policy strategy for reducing social disadvantage, released on April 28th of this year.

For the first time in a decade, the State Government has offered recognition that we are not living in an entirely fair or just society, but one in which inequality of opportunity and pockets of disadvantage exist.

The Bracks Government's remedy – 'A Fairer Victoria' – outlines \$788 million worth of additional funding to be spent over four years on a range of community services and 'bricks and mortar' projects. The biggest beneficiaries of this strategy are the aged, the mentally ill, the disabled and low-income families struggling to get their children into childcare.

'A Fairer Victoria' provides much needed assistance to some of Victoria's most disadvantaged groups. However it stops short of tackling some of the very problems that create concentrations of social disadvantage: lack of local employment opportunities, matched by low levels of labour market skills.

By examining the co-existence of factors of disadvantage in geographic communities, Jesuit Social Services – through *Unequal in Life* (1999) and *Community Adversity and Resilience* (2004) – determined that our most disadvantaged communities are characterised by a combination of factors including high rates of early school leaving, low labour market skills and high rates of unemployment. Our research highlights that the only way

to break this cycle of disadvantage is to develop targeted, prevention-focussed local strategies – a direction taken up by 'A fairer Victoria'.

The \$5.9 million over four years provided by the State Government to tackle truancy and early school leaving is a much-needed initiative. However its impact will be limited because this initiative fails to concentrate on those schools in greatest need. The \$1.5 million provided each year is to be divided up among 261 recipient schools, and thereby provide for 220,271 secondary students – coming to as little as \$7 per student.

Another promising initiative is the \$115 million to be provided to disadvantaged non-government schools, to assist their students to better meet educational targets around literacy, numeracy and school retention.

The principal concern of State social policy however, should be the 150,000 Victorian children growing up in jobless households during a period of the healthiest job market in decades.

Greater leadership needs to be shown by all levels of Government in generating employment outcomes in disadvantaged communities, if the devastating cycle of early school leaving, low labour market skills and low employment participation is to be overcome there.

Tackling entrenched disadvantage will require a long-term commitment from the Victorian Government. This social policy strategy is welcome, and represents an important first step on the long road to 'A Fairer Victoria.'

Tim Martyn, Researcher,
Ignatius Centre for Social Policy & Research.



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Community Adversity and Resilience
the distribution of social disadvantage in Victoria and New South Wales and the mediating role of social cohesion

Tony Vinson
The Ignatius Centre for social policy and research
March 2004

Local Government Areas (LGA) and Population (2002):
 Greenfield 2142
 Frankston 2911
 Maitland 2320
 Bayside 3206
 Blackburn 2149
 Traralgon 3844
 Parramatta 2190
 Dandenong 3175
 Tamworth 2340
 Mildura 3500
 Werribee 3030
 Warrackbeee 2025
 Box Hill 3108
 Shepparton 3611
 Wangaratta 3676
 Chatswood 2007
 Harbours 3400
 Bathurst 2795
 Frankston 3199
 Parkes 3870

'Community Adversity & Resilience' is available from Jesuit Social Services for \$30 including postage and handling. Order form on www.jss.org.au or call (03) 9427 7388.

MENTORING MEANS BEING THERE

The **XLR8 Mentoring Program** connects young people involved with the juvenile justice system with a trained adult role model from their local community, with the goal of providing support, friendship and pathways to education, training and employment opportunities.

The mentoring program is underpinned by restorative justice principles that aim to reduce the potential for re-offending by reintegrating young people back into the community.

“When I first met the young man with whom I might be matched as a mentor, I was both excited and nervous. Would the young person like me? Would he want to see me again? I just had to be myself and go with the flow.

But straight away I felt relieved, as we seemed to get along quite well.

“Jack”* and I have been matched now for four months. At the beginning things could not have been better for him, as he had a secured a job that he really enjoyed; his drug use had decreased and things at home seemed to be going well; so in fact, I wasn't sure exactly what I should be doing for this young person. But we kept meeting once a week after work, going for a drink at the local shop and we just chatted about general things. However, after a few more weeks, I discovered why I was there to help him....

“ ..this sums up what it is to be a mentor ... to let them know that someone is there.”

One day, I went to meet Jack after work to spend our usual time together, but to my great surprise, I discovered that he had not been to work for over a week. In fact, Jack had not been home or in touch with anyone for a week. For days, I kept trying to ring him on his mobile phone to make sure that he was okay. Finally I got through to him and we spoke briefly. I really just wanted to know how he was and to let him know that I was genuinely concerned for his wellbeing. I also wanted him to know that he could ring me if he needed anything. I did not hassle him about what was going on, but he told me that he was living in a squat with other young people and I suspected that he was using drugs again. I continued to ring him on a daily basis just to say hello and to make sure he knew I was there for him.

Finally we met up after a couple of weeks, and when I saw Jack I was saddened to see how much weight he had lost. We just caught up briefly, and after he left I found myself very upset and feeling like there was not much that I could do. I kept wondering if there was anything more that I should be doing to help him.

Jack and I have continued to talk on the phone every couple of days and see each other once a week or so. Things are still not great for him, but at least he is okay and keeping in touch.

I think this sums up what it is to be a mentor: to support and reassure young people when they are going through hard times, and not try and tell them how to lead their lives, but to give them advice if they ask and just let them know that someone is there.”

I've always wanted to work with teenagers as they are our future, and I hope that I can continue to make a difference in even one young person's life.

Kate, a 25 year old student.

* Jack is not his real name

STAYING STRAIGHT AT THE BROSNAN CENTRE

“My name is Jason. I've been coming to the Brosnan Centre for about three years now and I've made some good connections with my case workers, and they have supported me through some tough times. Without their help I'd be a lot worse off.

I've been making use of the services the Brosnan Centre's supplies to stay straight. I go to the gym every day. The Centre has a membership at the gym next door. I'm hoping to get back into football and the Brosnan Centre will help me to do that. Also, the Brosnan Centre has a courtyard development they are working on and they have employed me to help with the work. It has been a good transition from gaol back into the community, because I've had all these things to keep me busy – being active and staying straight, working and being around the Centre.

I think this has rubbed off onto other clients and I think it has given hope to people. When I see my mates on the drugs, I try and talk to them and rev them up and tell them that they can do it and just offer some encouragement; which I think they like because they know I've been there and I can relate to the problems they are going through. I'm planning on continuing my gym and work until I'm ready to go out on my own.”

Jason



Justice Minister Tim Holding with Peter Coghlan, Manger of the Brosnan Centre at the opening of the new Beechworth Correctional Centre 5th April 2005.

SUPPORT AFTER SUICIDE

Our family was shattered and our world was turned upside down in September, 2004 when our beautiful son and brother, aged 19, took his own life. The overwhelming grief and shock of his death has been all-consuming and life-changing. Our family was blessed to encounter Jesuit Social Services. By encouraging, and supporting us the counsellor was able to capture our feelings and validate our deepest thoughts on life and death. Her pragmatic, caring and professional approach truly reflects the Jesuit philosophy of 'standing in solidarity with those in need'.

Anne

Bereavement after a suicide can be a particularly distressing, complex and lengthy experience.

The **Support After Suicide** project has been running for almost a year. In that time the service has provided counselling and support to individuals and families who have experienced the death by suicide of someone close.

After a suicide some people feel strongly that their lives will never be the same again. It has been described this way by one person: "You will never be the same again, you will never get over it, but you will have a life again, you will wake up in the morning and feel good. You will start to make plans for the future. At some point life will feel normal again; not the old normal, the new normal."

The stigma that still surrounds suicide can have a profound effect on the bereaved. They may feel isolated from family and friends. A support group can be particularly important in breaking down this isolation.

Support After Suicide has recently begun a support group that will run for 8 weeks. For more information about Support After Suicide please phone 9427 9899 or visit the web page at <http://www.jss.org.au/programmes/SupportAfterSuicide.html>.

HOW CAN I SUPPORT SOMEONE BEREAVED BY SUICIDE?

We sometimes feel unable to provide adequate support to those bereaved by suicide. We may struggle to know what to say or do. We may feel awkward or stay away, leaving the bereaved feeling isolated.

Any grief can be difficult to respond to, but the stigma still attached to suicide can make this even harder.

Everyone expresses grief differently. Some people benefit from talking about their experience with others. Things that can help are:

- a safe and supportive environment
- non judgemental support
- to be listened to and heard
- an opportunity to tell the story, sometimes over and over again



The Support After Suicide Team, Linda Espie, Louise Flynn and Nicole Rotaru.



"My face after dad died. I was feeling sad. My daddy was 42 when he died." Luke 6.

CONNEXIONS — A PLACE OF NOURISHMENT

An old Cherokee is teaching his Grandson about life:

"A fight is going on inside me," he said to the boy. "It's a terrible fight and it's between two wolves. One is evil – angry, envious, full of sorrow, regret, greed and arrogance, self pitying, resentful, full of lies, pride and ego. The other wolf is good – full of joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, empathy, generosity, compassion & faith.

"The same fight is going on inside you and every person," the Cherokee said to the Grandson.

The Grandson looked at the old man wide eyed and full of amazement "Which wolf will win Grandfather?"

The Grandfather, with wisdom and understanding, replied "The one you feed, son."

At Connexions we offer a feeding program for young people – not so much material food, although we do that too, but more emotional and inner nourishment.

Connexions is a service of Jesuit Social Services offering intensive outreach support and counselling for

young people with complex problems associated with concurrent drug and mental health problems.

How do we 'feed' the inner woman and man of some of these incredibly abused and broken young people? We offer them a menu of 3 L's – not lobster, lettuce and lime, but **love, life and laughter**.

- Offering a young person love, acceptance and unconditional understanding is vital. We listen and hear their experiences and life story.
- Life or a purpose for living is essential. We help provide hope and direction in moving forward. This is achieved by stabilising their current chaotic life and providing assistance in practical areas such as counselling, housing, medical & psychiatric treatment, schooling and employment, and family work.
- An atmosphere of support, laughter and acceptance is fertile soil for growth in a young person. Young people also want to laugh and feel positive about themselves and others in their often dark and difficult world.

Sam's story

When Sam first came to our service he was violent, psychotic and abusing every drug he could find. The referring service couldn't handle him. His street despised him, his friends abandoned him, and his mother was afraid of him.

Sam worked with his outreach worker and counsellor, and his mother with our family counsellor. He has been able to abstain from drug use, treat his mental illness, address his medical concerns, find meaningful activities to undertake and deal with his abuse through counselling.

At present he is employed in the hospitality field and paying his way at home. He has been able to meet new friends and has been getting along with his mother.

How did this happen? A lot of blood, sweat and tears from a lot of people, but also a lot of feeding the 'good wolf'.

Nick Garofalo, Coordinator, Connexions.

LAUNCHING CONFIDENCE, SKILLS AND A VOICE

Gateway is about practically helping young people with complex needs to build confidence, participation and skills. Gateway participant, Aaralyn Dale has been busy writing, recording and producing her debut album "Calls from the Inside", at Gateway's fully equipped music studio in Collingwood.

"Hi, I'm Aaralyn Dale. Over the past 22 months, Gateway gave me the opportunity to participate in their music program. They worked with me, allowing me to develop my own songs with talented musicians, helping me create a demo CD – which I have just completed. It wasn't an easy process but it was one I really enjoyed.

Rob Kirk from Living Music helped me learn that men can be safe and lovely to be around, even when you're on your own with them, and that an older man can appreciate a young woman's thoughts and musical contributions. I really appreciated, among other things, the thoughts he shared on the world and some deep topics, because he is older than me so has more experience of the world, plus he is a thoughtful man who cares about people and the world.

I had the chance to use the digital art program to learn how to create art on the computer and used this knowledge to produce my own cover and label design for the demo CD.

I liaised with a printing company and learned their formatting requirements so that I could transform what I had created into the correct format for them, then took it to the printers once I had enough pre-orders to manufacture the first fifty CD's. I didn't realise quite how much there was to formatting files for printers.

If you want to buy my CD it costs \$15 per copy – you can contact me via my email address aaralyn@yaho.com.au to order, or send a cash cheque/money order attention Vicky Guglielmo, Gateway Arts and Culture Coordinator, PO Box 1141, Collingwood, 3066 Victoria."

Aaralyn is now working towards a traineeship with Living Music where she will be employed as a Studio Technical Assistant and enrol into a Certificate III in Music through Ausmusic.

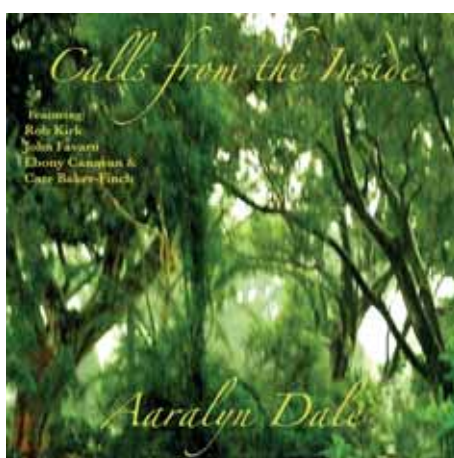


Gateway's Arts and Culture Coordinator, Vicky Guglielmo, in the Artful Dodger's studio, Collingwood.

Photo courtesy of Peter Weaving, The Melbourne Times.

"Vicky offered to allow me to talk to her informally about a large issue that was troubling me. She kept it secret and treated me well with it, made me feel understood and helped me realise how to work with the issue a bit."

Aaralyn



A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS – THANK YOU BOB

After nearly six years as Volunteer Coordinator, Bob O'Halloran has resigned from Jesuit Social Services.

Bob joined us in September 1999. Since then he has worked three days a week and has been an integral member of our Central Office team.

Over these six years of voluntary service, he has willingly taken up a variety of roles, including Secretary of the Corporate Development Group (CDG), convenor of the CDG Implementation Taskforce and Minute Secretary to the Jesuit Social Services Board.

Bob's main role has been as Volunteer Coordinator. In this capacity he has drawn many skilled and committed volunteers to Jesuit Social Services, enhancing our capacity to serve the most disadvantaged people in our community. Bob always demonstrated a totally professional attitude to his volunteer work. His commitment to the organisation and the people we serve was never less than our best or most highly paid employee.

He was punctual and reliable – he turned up every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday without fail, arriving on time and never leaving before the day's work was done. Bob demonstrated a willingness to do any job asked of him – from providing expert advice on human resources, to washing the dishes or delivering the mail.

Bob's personal qualities include his capacity to engage with people from all walks of life, his commitment to those most in need and his willingness to support and encourage those around him. Bob's most outstanding quality is his deep humility – he daily serves those he comes in contact with, but seeks neither reward nor recognition.

After a successful career in human resources management in Federal, local and semi-government bodies and his six years with Jesuit Social Services,

Bob will continue to serve his local community and remain a Board member of St Mary's House of Welcome.

This very proud father of three and grandfather of two, will also continue to go to the gym, grow tomatoes, play golf, baby-sit his grandchildren and travel with his beloved wife Jennifer.

We will miss Bob greatly. His spirit of service and humility will continue to inspire all of us at Jesuit Social Services. Thanks Bob.



Bob O'Halloran, Volunteer Coordinator for six years.

FROM ORIENTATION TO INSPIRATION

As a new employee of Jesuit Social Services I was invited to the Orientation Day. Based on past experiences of other company orientations, I didn't want to go; in fact I was contemplating how I could get out of it!

The day ended up being a complete surprise to me. So much so that I went home and told friends about it. I felt really proud of where I work and came away inspired because the people I work with sincerely believe in what they do. We didn't just talk, we explored, embraced, understood.

One thing really sticks out in my mind. As part of the orientation, each program gave a short presentation. I remember Nick Garafolo, Coordinator of our Connexions Program, rushing in, looking a little stressed and concerned. He told us that he had to be quick because he had to dash back to the office to meet the Police and CAT Team who were going to assess one of the young people he was working with. His intention was quite clear: "I have to be there for her". Connexions works with young people with highly complex needs associated with their dual diagnosis of substance misuse and mental illness. Nick acknowledged that this young person was a priority for him. He mightn't have stayed long at Orientation, but Nick made the biggest impact: he made it real.

Jane Sabato
Administration Manager



STANDING IN SOLIDARITY – YOUR SUPPORT IS INVALUABLE

We were delighted with the response to our 2005 Annual Dinner on 21st May, our first official fundraising dinner. Victoria Police's Assistant Commissioner for Crime, Simon Overland, delivered a thought-provoking address. The array of works auctioned by our Gateway program participants and team was extremely well received.

It was encouraging to see several tables of new supporters among the hundreds of guests who attended the dinner. Once again, so many of our regular and loyal supporters also attended or sent donations. It is that loyalty that we rely on to help us build a more just society.

Frankly, the very people and communities we work with often do not attract the support, sympathy or

resources necessary to begin the journey towards a healthier and more meaningful way of life.

There is a real sense of achievement when young people we work with reconnect with family, find stable accommodation, receive their first pay cheque, or even celebrate another birthday.

We have been quietly 'there' since 1977 – so have many of you.

Without you we do not have the resources to help these young people achieve such milestones. So once again I ask you to continue to support the work of Jesuit Social Services.

From all of us – staff, young people, families and communities – thank you.

Julie Edwards
Executive Director

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT FROM US?

Our newsletters play a very important role – they are our primary way of keeping you informed about the work of Jesuit Social Services and they are our main source of fundraising. We would like to hear from you about what you would like to see in our newsletters.

Would you like to see less or more:

- program information
- social policy views
- stories in the first person from our program participants and staff
- photographs
- opinion pieces
- other items?

Please let us know by emailing julie.fewster@jss.org.au, dropping us a line with your donation or calling our office on (03) 9427 7388.

Yes! I would like to support the Jesuit Social Services Winter Appeal 2005.

Please tick donation amount

- \$50
- \$100
- \$250
- \$500
- \$1,000
- My choice

\$.....

Please make your donation payable to:

The Jesuit Social Services Winter Appeal The Father Brosnan Appeal Fund

Cheque enclosed OR Bankcard VISA MasterCard

No:

Expiry Date:.....Signature:.....

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms.....
FIRST NAME (S) SURNAME

Address:.....

.....Postcode:.....

Telephone: Home.....Work.....

Donations to the Father Brosnan Appeal are received by the Jesuit Social Services Foundation to be used for the works of the Brosnan Centre as well as Jesuit Social Services Limited: standing in solidarity with those in need.

Please send me details on:

- remembering Jesuit Social Services in my Will
- joining the Jesuit Volunteer program
- please send me information about the Workplace Giving Program established by the Australian Taxation Office



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