

News from Western Sydney Community Forum

Forum Flash

Date: 16 August 2010

Exciting New Projects for Western Sydney Community Forum

WSCF is about to start recruiting for a number of new staff

- SWS Housing Facilitator to support collaboration of SAAP and other services in South West Sydney (4 days per week for 2 years maximum)
- Aboriginal Organisations Capacity Building worker (Full-time for 3 years)
- HACC Development Officer - Food Services - replacement of Noel Hiffernan
- We also have Cecily Michaels, TRI's Volunteer Support Service (VSS) for Cumberland/Prospect based at WSCF

Details will be on our website once recruitment starts for both the SWS Housing Facilitator and the Aboriginal Organisations Capacity Building projects. Contact us if you would like to have a package.

The Legislative Council, NSW Parliament and NCOSS

Invite you to participate in a workshop on Tuesday 24th August 12.00 to 4.45pm :

Parliamentary Inquiries: How to have your say and maximise your influence

The workshop is aimed at people working in policy or management in the community sector, whose work potentially involves taking part in parliamentary inquiries.

The emphasis will be on practical tips for effective participation, including:

- What inquiries can achieve
- How inquiries are initiated
- The steps of an inquiry
- Maximising the impact of a submission
- Giving effective evidence at a hearing.

Facilitation will be by parliamentary committee staff and representatives of NCOSS. [Click here for full details and flier.](#)

Greater Western Sydney Community Service Sector Awards

(an activity of Stronger Voice for Western Sydney strategy).

We have decided to establish an annual community service sector awards event to recognise and honour non-government organisations (ngos) that have made an outstanding contribution which impacted positively on the image of Western Sydney. The Working Group has been working to get these awards up on the community agenda and we want to share with you what we have achieved so far.

Firstly, it was recommended that since *Greater Western Sydney Community Services Sector Awards* is very long and does not really roll off the tongue, we needed to come up with a 'catchy

name'. We brainstormed with a few colleagues and came up with some ideas but they did not feel quite right so we went back to the drawing board and this is the result of our creative ideas.

The ZEST Awards = Zest / Enthusiasm / Strength / Tenacity.

We tested this out with the SVWS group and others and the consensus is - *I like it*.

There will be a function to present these awards and the date to mark in your diary for this special community event is:

Thursday 10 March 2011 (two weeks before the State Election on 26th).

The plan is to have the awards function at the Sebel Parramatta from around 4.00pm onwards where successful nominees will be presented with their award. Refreshments (a 'high tea') will be served. Watch this space for Launch announcements and further developments.

NB: We need more people on our working group so if you are interested please contact me at WSCF. Nancy: 02 96879695 Email: nancyn@wscf.org.au

Workforce Development Interview

with Renée Koonin, General Manager, The Housing Connection (Interviewed by Miguel Ferreo)

Q. What has been your career path to your current job?

I have not consciously thought about a 'career path'. Instead the guiding force during my career has been about where I can best serve the interests of social justice. I have found that I have the most freedom to seek these goals in the non-government community sector. In addition, I worked in management positions from very early in my career because I observed that it is up to management to create an environment in which workers can thrive and be creative.

Q. What in your opinion are the key workforce issues faced by the community sector?

There are a number of workforce issues that require urgent attention. These include:

- Valuing the work of the sector and having parity in wages with government sector employees doing similar work.
- Education and skilling of the workforce.
- The ageing of the workforce. We need to present the sector to young people as a vibrant and exciting context in which to work and one which provides a great sense of fulfillment.

Q. What strategies the sector could develop to address these issues?

There are a number of strategies needed including:

- The proposed NCOSS/FONGA Industry Plan
- Establishment of minimum qualifications for the sector with a phasing in period - I believe that values are the most important determinant for the capacity of people to work in our sector so do not wish to exclude anyone with the right values. We could give them a two year period in which to gain vocational qualifications after they enter the sector if they demonstrate the qualities we need.

- Success in the current wage claim being conducted by the ASU
- Effective marketing of the sector such as the campaign undertaken in Victoria by VCOSS.
- More effective relationships between Government and the sector

Q. What is your advice to the Community Sector that could be helpful to face these issues?

As a sector, we need to take responsibility in addressing these issues. We need to ensure we work in and develop organizations of the highest quality with respect to governance, management and human resources development. We need to be professional and articulate in how we present our organizations.

It is an enormous joy and privilege to work in the sector and we need to communicate this.

Renée Koonin

Joke Spot

In democracy your vote counts. In feudalism you count votes.

For a full copy of the WSCF HACC Flash

[Click link to HACC Flash in Flash file](#)

A Stronger Voice for Western Sydney Facebook Page: <http://www.ngo.net.au/strongervoice>