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Autumn Stakeholder Newsletter 2011

President's Message

Since my message in the Summer 2010 Newsletter the Board has been especially active. An Executive Committee has been formed to progress the work between monthly Board meetings and to provide appropriate support for the Acting Executive Director. The Strategic Plan 2011-2013 is now finalised and is being printed. It will then be distributed. The Court Network Rules were the subject of a General Meeting on 21 March 2011 which passed all the resolutions moved by the Board modernising and clarifying the Rules. The revised Rules also shall be distributed. I express my special thanks to Tony Symons, Lawyer, for his tireless work over a lengthy period on the Rules.

In early April Pauline and I shall travel to Queensland to meet with staff and networkers and also with senior members of the judiciary in Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns. I shall report on this trip in the next Newsletter.

As a consequence of the revision of the Rules, the position of Immediate Past President no longer continues. Thus Barbara Rozenes no longer is a member of the Board. The Board has resolved to appoint her as Ambassador for Court Network, with the function of promoting Court Network to the general community and to organisations within it. I express my thanks to Barbara for her preparedness to serve in this role. Barbara also is convenor of the Speakers' Group.

Planning for the balance of 2011 is well advanced, including for the State Conference and Annual General Meeting to be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre on Monday 14 November 2011.

I express my thanks to the Board, staff and Networkers for their continuing and generous commitment to the important work of Court Network.

The Hon. P.D. Cummins
President
April 2011



In this issue...

- > *Queensland Update*
- > *Staff Update*
- > *Events Update*



Court Network

Acting Executive Director's Report

The New Year has proven to be a very challenging time for Victoria and Queensland. The Victorian and Queensland floods demonstrate that when natural disasters occur the Australian community responds as it has with great effort and passion. Our Court Network volunteers and staff are no different.

Court Network Volunteers and staff were not immune to the damage done by the recent floods, storms and cyclones. We hope that those who were affected are managing to rebuild and are recovering well.

The Honorable Philip Cummins, President of Court Network and I flew to Brisbane a week after the terrible event to offer support and practical assistance where possible. It was evident that Networkers and the staff team had worked together to support each other during this time.

Court Network is working on finalising the Strategic Plan that was in the development phase much of the later part of 2010. We are confident that the plan recognises and accommodates both Queensland and Victoria and celebrates the unique needs of each state. During April and May the Queensland and Victorian State Managers will meet with me to develop a Business Plan for the next three years. We will be encouraging our staff and our Networkers to become involved during the Business Planning process.

During 2010 consultants SACON were engaged by Court Network to undertake an assessment of policies and procedures and to prepare a risk analysis of the operations for Court Network and provide recommendations.

Recommendations from the report include strategies to improve communication and a recommendation that Court Network undertake "Workplace Bullying and Harassment training". As a result Court Network has begun working to implement this training in mid to late April this year. The training program will be delivered in Melbourne, Metro Melbourne and Regional Victoria. The Training will also be delivered in Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns during the same period.

We are very encouraged by the recommendations and look forward to working with all our staff and volunteers to ensure that our work place remains a respectful and positive working environment.

Pauline McNeill
Acting Executive Director

Staff Update

Court Network Welcomes:

Tricia Cassetta, Northern Region Program Manager

Previously to being appointed Program Manager, I worked and continue to work at Jets Gymnastics as Customer Service Manager and a Level 1 WAG gymnastics coach. I have completed the Advanced Diploma of Business (Legal Practice) which I did off campus through Wodonga TAFE. I am currently waiting for recognition of prior learning for the business unit component of the course. I completed my training to become a Networker last year in July/August, undertook three months probation from September and graduated in December 2010. I am continuing as a Networker whilst I am Program Manager. I stepped in as interim Program Manager after Heather Kelly's departure in January. I decided it was a great opportunity for me so I applied for the Program Manager position and was lucky enough to be appointed. I am pleased to be part of such an invaluable service and look forward to working with everyone in the future.

Kerry Burns, Program Manager, Melbourne

My recent work history has been within the homelessness sector. I was lucky enough to work for a Melbourne City Mission Program, Melbourne Youth Support Service for seven years. In my role of Assistant Team Leader, I was afforded the opportunity of making vast networks within the homelessness, drug and alcohol and mental health and community sector, whilst managing a team of intensive support workers. It was during this period that I was introduced to the Court Network Service and was invited to speak at Dandenong and Sunshine Court Team Meetings. Through this experience I became aware of the wonderful work that this program allows Networkers to perform.

Queensland Update

New Court Network Volunteers in Brisbane

In February Court Network conducted the Information and Selection Sessions in Brisbane for the 2011 volunteer intake.

The response was overwhelming with 97 people registered to attend and with such a tremendous response the Sessions were again separated into two groups over two days just as we did in 2010.

At the Information Sessions four of our Networkers generously gave up their time to speak to the potential volunteers and provided them with a glimpse into a day in the life of a Court Networker. They were also given a glimpse into the relationship Court Network has built and continues to build with the Courts when guest speaker Tony Roser, Registrar of Courts from the Brisbane Magistrates Court spoke at the Information Session.

For the 44 people selected, training commenced on the 9th March and continues for two days a week over four weeks. Upon completion of training the trainees will then commence their Probation period and join the roster accompanied by a 'Mentor' Networker. During this time the trainees will develop their own individual skills and understanding with the generous support and assistance from our current Networkers.

The 2011 trainee volunteers will join the teams at the Brisbane Magistrates Court, Supreme and District Courts, Information Kiosk located at the Supreme Court, Commonwealth Law Courts and QCAT.

The intake of new volunteers in Cairns will commence with the Information and Selection Session on the 7th April and in Townsville on the 9th June.



Events

2011 March Graduation

Court Network held a graduation ceremony on Friday 4th March for the 2010 trainees. Congratulations to the following trainees for completing the 2010 Court Network Training Program: Hassan Abdilah, Laith Egab, Nyanchiew Lul, Najat Shamoon, Farzana Shariffie, Angela Chambers, Joan Dorr, Rina Etherington, Anne Maree Frost, Stewart Hollingworth, Celia Holmes, Gabrielle Nott, Faye Pargetter, Pamela Smith, Heidi Zerno.

Thank you also to the Mentors, without their time and dedication given to the trainees the program would not be successful.

2011 Training Update

Victoria Regional and Metropolitan Volunteer Training

Regional training was held at the Court Network Head office from Monday March 21st to Friday March 25th. Ten participants came from Geelong, Ballarat and Mildura and stayed the week in Melbourne. It was a fun and very interesting week, with the trainees leaving with more knowledge and understanding of the role of a volunteer, court users and the Justice system in general. Good luck to the trainees for their mentor program!

Melbourne Metropolitan Information and Selection sessions have commenced and training will begin in May for approximately 28 prospective volunteers.

Emma Stevens
Training Manager

Court Network Website

In October last year the Court Network Board and staff agreed that our website required a makeover. It needed to be more user friendly, easier to navigate and have an interactive on-line referral process. To complete the task we liaised with a website consultant company to find out how this could best be achieved.

The advantages that Court Network will obtain from the new up to date website will be endless. The website will have added features which will enable the Court User to fill out an on-line referral form that is then sent to the appropriate Program Manager and then passed onto Networkers at Court following the usual procedures. As a Networker, if you do not already receive the monthly newsletter by email and would like to there is a sign-up button on the website. It has a language feature where the entire website can be changed into any language. There is also an interactive calendar of events that displays everything Court Network is involved in throughout Victoria and Queensland. The website has the ability to display photos of our wonderful volunteers and staff as we feel it is important for people using our service to know who will be supporting them.

Court Network is pleased with the new look as we hope you will be when visiting www.courtnetwork.com.au in the near future.

Court Network Board and Staff

Members

Board

The Hon. Philip Cummins -President
Brian Barrow - Vice President
David Spiegel – Treasurer
Rosemary Syme - Secretary

Members:

Patricia Lo Cascio
Evi Kadar
Vi Branagh
Denise O'Shannassy
Win Swanton
Garry Roach

Staff

Pauline McNeill –Acting Executive Director
Andrew McMillan – Acting Victorian State Manager
Nicole Little – Queensland State Manager
Ming Zhou – Finance and Payroll Manager
Emma Stevens – VIC Program & Training Manager
Liz Teese – VIC Program Manager & Continuing
Education Coordinator
Kerry Burns – VIC Program Manager
Margaret Irvin – Ballarat Program Manager
Patricia Mullens – Bendigo Program Manager
Pauline Stewart – Geelong Program Manager
Deb Brown – Gippsland Program Manager
Jan Kennedy – Mildura Program Manager
Tricia Cassetta – Shepparton Program Manager
Lyn Wilson - Warrnambol Program Manager
Tui Anderson – QLD Program Manager
Teresa Snow – QLD Program Manager
Sarah Parker – Townsville Program Manager
Tanya Brooks-Cooper – Cairns Program Manager
Pip Hubbard – Administration & Events Manager (Melbourne
Office)
Lisa Davies – Marketing & Communications
Manager (Brisbane Office)
Susan Watson – Office Administrator (Melbourne Office)



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Pip Hubbard - pip@courtnetwork.com.au

We look forward to updating you on our news and progress
in our upcoming Winter edition.

