



CN

Stakeholder Newsletter Winter 2011

President's Message

I am very pleased to announce that the Board now has a Queensland member, Ms. Julie Steel, the Acting Executive Director of the Supreme Court of Queensland, the District Court, and the Land Courts Service. I look forward to the knowledge, skill and insight Julie will bring to the Board. As reported in the Acting Executive Director's Report, Commonwealth funding for Court Network operations in Queensland has now been secured for the 2011-2012 year. I express my thanks to the Commonwealth Attorney-General, the Honourable Robert McClelland M.P., for the continuing support of government. This will materially assist in our provision of services in Queensland for persons involved in or affected by the court process.

The Court Network Strategic Plan for 2011-2013 has now been finalised and will be published and distributed this month. The Strategic Plan derives from extensive consultation with staff, volunteers, courts and court users and will be the framework for our work in the next three years. Coherent vision, consistent direction and strategic operations are needed to ensure that we fulfil and advance our core functions of information, support and referral. I commend the Strategic Plan 2011-2013 to you.

The Board of Court Network continues to attend to its work. The Victoria State Conference and Annual General Meeting will be held on 21 November 2011 at which I shall present a full review of the work of the Board over the preceding twelve months and of the substantial steps taken to secure and further the mission of Court Network.

I express my appreciation of the splendid work performed by the Acting Executive Director and staff and by our volunteers who continue to give unstintingly of their time and effort.



Court Network

In this issue...

- > Queensland Update
- > Project Update
- > Events Update
- > Training Update

The Hon. P.D. Cummins
President
July 2011

Acting Executive Director's Update

During the last six months of the 2010-11 financial year Court Network has been focusing on securing a more solid operating base for operations in North and Far North Queensland.

To assist us with securing a more solid foundation for Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns, Court Network President, the Honorable Philip Cummins, Queensland State Manager, Nicole Little and I met with the Federal Attorney General Robert McClelland. We discussed funding requirements for the Federal Magistrates and Family Court. Our meeting was a very positive one and we are very pleased to have received funding to support our operations in Queensland

Court Network made a decision to talk to their government funders about improving statistical collection and data systems. We are keen to align our data collection and reporting process with the Department of Human Services and Department of Justice. Having a more qualitative reporting system that is aligned with funders will ensure that we are on the "same page". We believe this will help us to continue to develop positive and supportive relationships with these agencies. Improving our statistical data collection will no doubt be difficult and challenging as we aim to maintain a balance that sustains our core business of Support, Information and Referral. Many of our stakeholders and supporters understand our service is delivered by an ever increasing group of Networkers (Volunteers).

We successfully completed our training intake rounds for this year. We are very proud of our Training Program. The latest groups to have graduated have all undertaken training and study in the following areas;

- The role of the Volunteer in the Court Network context
- Understanding the differences between Federal and State Law
- The Court User, Therapeutic Jurisprudence, and The Impact of Crime on Families
- Understanding life issues such as Mental Health, Substance misuse, Sexual Assault and Family Violence
- Communication skills and Resilience for Court Network volunteers including, confidence and awareness
- Cultural Diversity

Our new graduates are now required to undertake a further three month probation period closely monitored by experienced Networkers and Program Managers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our stakeholders for their support and the partnerships that have been developed.

Warm regards

Pauline McNeill
Acting Executive Director

QueensLand News

We could not have anticipated the way in which 2011 started. Our Staff and Volunteers across the State have directly affected by the floods and cyclonic weather caused by natural disasters. These have resulted in severe damage to homes, businesses, investments and a hefty clean up. Many others experienced upsetting times during these events, along with the New Zealand earthquakes, as they waited for news of their family and friends. But in true Queensland form we continue to move forward.

We are so very pleased at the announcement made at the May Board meeting, of the appointment of Julie Steel, Acting Director of Supreme, District and Land Courts Queensland to the Board of Directors. Julie will represent the voice of Queensland on the Board.

The intake of new Volunteers in Brisbane and Cairns is now complete for 2011 and Townsville training of new recruits is currently underway. We welcome the new Volunteers to the team and wish them all the very best as they venture into the court environment. There are now 130 Networkers and trainees in Queensland.

On Thursday, 14th July the new Brisbane Volunteers, surrounded by fellow Networkers, will graduate from Trainees to Networkers in a graduation ceremony being held at the Hotel Conrad. Court Network staff, representatives from the courts and community organisations. The ceremony this year will see the introduction of certificates being presented to Networkers who have committed 12 months of service and Networkers who have given two years of service will be presented with a 2 year pin.

With the Queensland service commencing in 2006, the first intake of Volunteers will receive their 5 year pins in 2012. Very exciting!

Now that the financial year has come to a close and we collate our statistics, it is clear that the service is a growing success with over 40,000 court users assisted in Queensland.



Project Update

The Children's Court Shoulder Bag project has been completed. The purpose and aim of this project, is to provide the court user, with a non legal step-by-step guide to using the Children's Court in Melbourne, Latrobe Valley, Mildura and Shepparton.

It will give an informative illustrated process from the moment the court user arrives at the front doors of the court. This bag is targeted at parents with accompanying young children and young people aged 13-17 years. The aim is to arm the court user with resources to make their day less intimidating and more informative. This is done by providing useful written material for the day along with useable resources. The court user will also receive information about after court options that will assist them to access services within their own community.

This project has been generously funded by The Legal Services Board and was developed in partnership by Court Network with assistance from the Children's Court.

The first Launch was held in Mildura on Monday 27th June. It was well attended and interest and feedback has been positive. Jan Kennedy, Mildura Program Manager, invited all the networkers as well as court staff and specialist court staff. Jan also invited staff from local community support services.

The bag will be launched in Shepparton on 7th July, Latrobe Valley on the 19th July and Melbourne 22nd July 2011.



Court Network Announces New Board Member



Julie Steel has joined the Board of Directors of Court Network, following appointment at the 2nd May 2011 Board Meeting.

Ms Steel is the Acting Executive Director of the Supreme, District and Land Courts Service. Ms Steel brings significant experience with a diverse perspective from being a solicitor in private practice, to a parole officer with probation and parole, to a variety of roles within

the courts and was the Director of Operations in the implementation of the access Courts service. Queensland State Manager Nicole Little said that Ms Steel's background and skills would be of great value to the Board and would complement the existing Board members.

Events Update

Courts Open Day - Court Network in conjunction with the Victoria Law Foundation and Melbourne's major courts organised a Courts Open Day as part of Law Week. On Saturday 21st May from 10am to 4pm Melbourne's major courts opened their doors to the public. Courts Open Day included VCAT, Coroners Court, Supreme, County, Magistrates, Children's Courts and the Office of the Juries Commissioner with a free program of tours and talks. Thank you so much to the Networkers who helped on Court Open Day, it was much appreciated.

Annual Conference and AGM - The Court Network Annual Conference will be held on Monday 21st November. The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre have kindly once again donated a Conference Room to Court Network. The Networker recognition will also be celebrated at the Conference this year. The Annual General Meeting will be held at the conclusion of the Conference. More information regarding speakers and official invitations will be sent out later in the year.

Victoria Training

Over the past three months Court Network has held Information and Selection Sessions for prospective volunteers. Approximately 70 people were invited to attend the sessions, of which 27 people were chosen to participate in the Melbourne Metropolitan Training Program for 2011. The theoretical program ran each Wednesday and Thursday over 7 weeks, from May 25th to 1st July.

From the middle of July trainees will begin their three month Mentor Program at their allocated courts. Mentors have been chosen for their wealth of experience and knowledge, to guide trainees through the day to day learning's of the volunteer role.

I expect that Trainees will graduate by the end of October 2011 and will be placed in the following courts to fill vacancies: Melbourne Magistrates' Court, Supreme, County, VCAT, Collingwood NJC, Frankston Magistrates', Heidelberg Magistrates' Court, Sunshine Magistrates' Court, Coroners and Children's Court.

Thanks to all the Court Network staff for their help throughout the training program.

Victoria Regional Training

A graduation ceremony was held on July 4th for 8 Victorian Regional trainees at the Court Network Head Office. Thank you to the graduates for taking the time to come to Melbourne. You are such a wonderful group and we wish you all the best in your networking.



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

Denise O'Shannassy

Evi Kadar

Vi Branagh

Win Swanton

Garry Roach

Julie Steel

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 – Warrnambool 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)

Lisa Davies – Marketing & Communications Manager (Brisbane)

Susan Watson – Office Administrator (Melbourne)



Court Network

Court Network Inc
565 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

www.courtnetwork.com.au

VICTORIA

T 1800 681 614

T 03 9603 7433

F 03 9670 8804

E admin@courtnetwork.com.au

Would you like this newsletter [emailed](#)? If you would prefer to receive your Court Network Newsletter via email next time, please send a request to admin@courtnetwork.com.au