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United Way Melbourne

Give, Advocate, Volunteer

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The United Way Melbourne team



The United Way Melbourne team has been strengthened with the addition of a new General Manager. Penny van der Sluys has joined United Way in Melbourne with a brief to develop our Community Impact strategy and broaden our corporate partnership. Penny has joined United Way following a background in Human Resources and more recently extended service with goodcompany as their National Relationship Manager.

"We are excited to have Penny join United Way to provide leadership to our team in Melbourne. Penny has a tremendous array of skills and a track record of success in creating Corporate and Community

Partnerships." Doug Taylor, CEO, United Way Australia.

Penny will lead our team which includes Mo Elleissy, our Corporate Volunteering Manager and Geoff Sharp who has provided support to us in the establishment of new partnerships and the development of

Workplace Giving Campaigns. Penny has already hit the ground running and is looking forward to the work ahead.

"I'm looking forward to working closely with United Way's corporate and community partners to broaden the impact of corporate community partnerships in the Melbourne community." Penny van der Sluys.

We also wanted to thank and acknowledge Adam Smith who has unfortunately had to leave us for health reasons. We look forward to working with Adam again in the future.

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When would you give more?

Think about it for a moment... I suspect you would say that you would give more when you can afford to. However based on some new research it looks like our driver to give is not increased wealth but something altogether different.

A recent global survey by Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), which covered 95% of the world's population, measures three different types of charitable behaviour - giving money, volunteering time and helping a stranger. It might surprise you to know that Australia and New Zealand came out on top with the highest ranking. The survey showed Australians have the highest incidence of giving money (70% of the population), highest for volunteering time (38% of the population), and the second highest for helping a stranger (64% of the population).

Our ranking was followed by Ireland and Canada with the United States tied for fifth place with Switzerland.

These are all very interesting facts and figures but CAF have drawn from this research that giving is not necessarily the result of our wealth but more often our personal happiness. So for Australians we can deduce that a good number of us are happy and this is no doubt the result of a range of factors including general quality of life.

So, if we assume that happiness will lead to giving time, money or assistance, can we also assume the reverse; that giving will lead to happiness. At face value it sounds plausible and many of us will know from personal experience the happiness we get from helping others. So what about the rest of the population who don't give as outlined in the survey (65%)? We all want to be happy but perhaps they have not experienced it for themselves or had a bad experience?

Those of us who have experienced the great feeling from giving

should encourage others to do the same, not out of guilt but to experience more happiness. For those of you interested, I would recommend you read Peter Singer's book 'The life you can save.' It refers to the fact that the best way to increase giving as a society is for givers to talk about why they give. If we each did this we could change expectations and ultimately have a significant collective impact. Check out Singer's book and if you have any thoughts that you would like to share on this topic please email us at nsw@unitedway.com.au

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CEOs dine with Australian of the Year- Simon McKeon

A group of 20 CEOs and Executives recently dined at an event hosted by Brian Long (United Way Australia Board Chair) at which Simon McKeon (2011 Australian of the Year) spoke about the opportunity for corporations to explore a new paradigm focused on Shared Value. This event provided a great platform for United Way to brief corporate leaders on the opportunity for them with their organisations to create a Community Impact by strategically engaging their people in the community. A number of these corporate leaders shared their own experiences including Philip Coleman (UBS COO) who spoke about his work in leading the Homeless Coalition (outlined above) to a tangible outcome for homeless people.

We look forward to continuing these senior leadership discussions in the future.

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Introducing United Way Melbourne's Regional Council Chair...

Melbourne's volunteer leadership council is charged to develop and execute business development to support United Way's Community Impact strategies. It is also responsible for the development of local Community Impact strategies and overseeing local grant making.

Denise Brotherton is responsible for chairing the council in Melbourne and talked to us about why she got involved...

Tell me a little about yourself. What do you do when you are not

volunteering for United Way?

I am a Tax Partner with Ernst & Young currently on secondment from Melbourne working in Adelaide. Outside work I have a husband and 9 year old son. My weekends evolve around my sons' sports, gardening (my therapy), bike riding and catching up with friends. I love to cook especially for friends who love to eat!

How did you hear about United Way and why did you want to get involved in the regional council?

I have been involved with Ernst & Young's Foundation for 6 years and so became aware of United Way (UW) through eWay and the support United Way provides the EY Foundation with strategic partnering opportunities. United Way Australia's current chairman, Brian Long, asked me to be part of the UW Melbourne board when it was formed in 2008.

Where does your interest/passion in helping communities come from?

I was fortunate to have parents who valued the importance of education and the opportunities it brings you in life. I went through the public school system and so I saw kids who got support from their parents when they struggled at school such that they stayed connected and those who didn't and eventually dropped out. My husband is a police officer with Victoria Police and so I also get a real insight into the social impact of young people who are not educated, don't understand social responsibility and don't have a 'safe' home. For me it's about how we can make a difference and give as many young people the opportunity to be happy and be the best that they can be.

What do you enjoy most about the role and what is the biggest opportunity for United Way in the future ?

I am really excited about our new Education vision "There is One Day that has more impact on the rest of Australian children's lives than any other. One Day which decides what they will be One Day...their first day of school". I am looking forward to being part of a great network of UW people working together to develop this vision into strategies that will deliver tangible and sustainable benefits in the communities in which we live and work.

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Corporate Connect® team volunteering events

A selection of Corporate Connect® team volunteering events that we ran are featured here. Read on to learn about the incredible programs and initiatives that some of our community partners run to benefit our community and the fantastic work that our volunteers carry out to support them.



Branding brushes to bring diverse cultures together

Infoxchange Australia works to create social equality and opportunity by empowering people through access to information technology and enabling the exchange of information and ideas. One of their innovative programs is Wired Community @ Collingwood, located in the Collingwood public housing estate. This particular public housing estate consists of approximately 1600 households with residents from diverse backgrounds where they speak over 30 languages. The Wired Community @ Collingwood program is varied and includes the provision of a computer and technology space for residents. This area needed painting so United Way partnered with Infoxchange and organised for a team of volunteers from Commonwealth Bank Australia to spend a day in May refreshing it and making the space more inviting for the community. The volunteers powered through the tasks and transformed the space - they did a fantastic job. Well done Commonwealth Bank Australia!



The Scope: From biotechnical industry to supported employment facility

Scope is a not-for-profit organisation providing disability services throughout Victoria to thousands of children and adults with disabilities. Scope High Point Industries offers a supported employment facility for people with disabilities. This particular enterprise caters to local industry, specialises in all types of packaging and light assembly and employs over 80 people. In June, staff from Amgen spent a day supporting staff at the facility by assisting with packing and assembly tasks, enabling the volunteers to gain an understanding of the daily lives of the people they were helping. Their engagement also provided recognition that people with disabilities do not often receive, which boosted their self esteem. One Amgen employee reflected later, "It was a wonderful experience. I feel I gained more than I gave." The opportunity connected the volunteers with the community and they have indicated that they would like to volunteer again in the future and have a larger impact in the community. A great outcome.



BankWest lightens the load for the Lighthouse Foundation

The Lighthouse Foundation provides homeless young people who come from backgrounds of long term neglect and abuse with a home, a sense of family and around the clock therapeutic care. Through their Lighthouse experience, the young people heal, re-learn how to relate to others and rebuild their lives. Lighthouse called on United Way to help them to revive the backyard of the house where they run their Adult Community Transition program (ACT). A team of 18 BankWest employees worked tirelessly for a day in July to the point that a third skip had to be brought in! The unique opportunity to work as a team on a one-off vital task for a community organisation proved to be a popular engagement opportunity for the volunteers. One volunteer later reflected that through collective action, the day offered "something extra to help the community that I could not provide on my own."



From Cohuna to the zoo thanks to Colliers International

In August, Doxa Youth Foundation partnered with Colliers International and United Way to create a day at Melbourne Zoo for 29 disadvantaged children from Cohuna in regional Victoria. Doxa Youth Foundation, an organisation that runs programs that give disadvantaged young people a better chance in life and the opportunity to reach their potential, had recently scaled back their zoo program due to funding cuts. They welcomed the opportunity to partner with Colliers International and United Way to create a day in the city to enrich the lives of a group of country school children. Doxa commented on the day saying, "without the support from United Way and Colliers International, we just wouldn't be able to take our kids out on interactive fun days like this."

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United Way Sydney has moved!

As some of you may be aware, United Way moved Sydney offices in June. We have been very fortunate to reside at Zurich's North Sydney office for the past 4 years which we would like to say a huge thank you to Zurich for. Due to their customer service expansion however, we needed to find a new home - one which has been generously offered by Rodgers Reidy.

Rodgers Reidy specialises in turnaround and recovery strategies, corporate and personal insolvency, forensic accounting and litigation support services, operating in Australia and New Zealand. Rodgers Reidy enjoys giving back to the community and as part of their

Corporate Social Responsibility program, is acting as caretaker of United Way Australia and supporting our work in addressing the key social issues in Australia - Education, Income and Health.

We would like to say a very big thank you to Rodgers Reidy for taking us under their wing and we look forward to working and residing with them.

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