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No Place Like Home

United Way addressing homelessness with Housing First approach

Unusual Suspects get results for 70 Rough Sleepers

During National Homelessness Week, Pru Goward (NSW Minister for Community Services) announced that her government had agreed to fund the **Platform 70 Woolloomooloo Homeless Project** - an initiative to house 70 of the most vulnerable homeless people in Woolloomooloo, an inner city suburb of Sydney. This will be achieved using a Housing First model which focuses on providing immediate and long term housing and support and has been shown to have an **80% success rate** in the United States. United Way, along with our Homeless Coalition partners, (City of Sydney, UBS, Freehills Foundation, Colliers International, Neami and the Mercy Foundation) has campaigned to reduce the overall number of rough sleepers within inner Sydney.

If you would like to read more about the inside story on this great outcome, check out my blog at the Centre for Social Impact website - [Unusual Suspects creating unusual impact- the story of '90 Homes for](#)

Freehills shows support for Homelessness

Following on from the NSW government's announcement of 'Platform 70' (see above article for details) and National Homelessness Week (1 - 7 August 2011) awareness activities, our corporate partner, Freehills, recently held a cocktail event to show its support of the issue and engage its key stakeholders in United Way and the Homeless Coalition's progress in addressing it.

Attendees heard from a panel of speakers dedicated to reducing the overall number of rough sleepers within inner Sydney. The panel consisted of Annette Bain who represents Freehills and Philip Coleman who represents UBS on the Homeless Coalition, Doug Taylor from United Way and Hunter, a previous homeless person and now an outreach worker for community partner, Neami.

As well as Annette's contribution, we would also like to recognise Freehills lawyer, Angus Thompson, who helped pulled together the funding proposal presented to NSW Government to gain funding for Platform 70. As Philip Coleman highlighted, "this is just the beginning but a significant start."

We were very pleased to have Hunter attend as our special guest and share his insights. "When a homeless person is given housing and access to services to enable future self-support, it is like seeing a flower flowering."

United Way looks forward to continuing the Homelessness effort with Freehills and other partners and building on the success of Platform 70.

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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Collaborative efforts - the approach needed to successfully address Australia's Education issues

Imagine growing up without cuddles or someone to read or play with you.

This is unfortunately the experience of some of the pre-school children that we come across in the Campbelltown area and that go on to attend Blairmount Public School who United Way and our corporate partners help through Corporate Connect® team volunteering.

The most recent team event being supported by Commonwealth Bank Australia's legal team who carried out a garden renovation project for Blairmount Public School, creating a more inviting outdoor play area.



As part of our wider Education strategy, United Way works with some of the most disadvantaged communities in Australia. Claymore (Campbelltown), the neighbouring suburb to Blairmount, has a population where over half the households are defined as low

income. Many of these households are also deprived and cannot afford basic healthcare, let alone a family holiday. Yet Claymore is a good example of a community proactively trying to create their own change through their McREADie literacy program. McREADie is a mascot created and embraced to improve children's literacy in the area - an initiative that United Way and our Education Coalition community partner, Good Beginnings, has incorporated into our programs to support parents and children in reading and learning. Vital skills needed to prepare young people for their first weeks of school.

As part of the McREADie initiative, United Way was proud to attend a McREADie book launch event at Claymore playgroup (United Way funded playgroup) - a book written by Cath Taylor and illustrated by Daryl Peninton to help parents read to their children and develop their early sounds. At the launch, children were treated to a party and a back pack containing the new book and other McREADie tools. The book is also being distributed to the wider Claymore community to increase its positive social reach.

At the beginning of this year Jesse Garcia, a Good Beginnings community worker in Claymore funded by United Way and Good Beginnings, struggled to engage one family in the playgroup programs and is now touching 60 families - a feat achieved through building trust and confidence with the parents and their children.

As well as by volunteering, United Way's supporters can also support the Claymore community and others like it by contributing to our One Day Workplace Giving campaign (www.unitedway.org.au/oneday)

Blairmount School loved the work of the Commonwealth Bank Australia's volunteers and their engagement in addressing the needs of the community and the volunteers found it a great team building activity. This is just the start of United Way's early intervention Education strategy and we look forward to engaging more of our corporate partners in the future.

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ING Direct reaching vulnerable people in Ashfield

A team of 14 ING DIRECT volunteers recently participated in a Corporate Connect® volunteering day for Mary MacKillop Outreach (MMO) at Ashfield Bowling Club.

Mary MacKillop Outreach (MMO) supports vulnerable people living with mental illness and disability residing in boarding houses and group homes within the inner west of Sydney. Many of them have been isolated from their friends and loved ones so the day was about fun and companionship, showing affected people that the larger community cares about them. The day started with everyone getting to know each other over a coffee and then led into the planned activities which included bowling, disco dancing, a beauty table and bingo.

ING DIRECT volunteers offered a range of skills from patient coaching to enthusiastic leadership. About a third of the employees were volunteering for the first time. Overall the volunteers shared their experiences with us:

"I wanted to try and see whether I would be a good volunteer and I believe after this, I will volunteer more often."

"I enjoy the satisfaction of giving back to someone who needs it. It raises awareness and helps build relationships with peers and communities."

"I love helping others - an eye opener and very rewarding to bring a smile to the face of someone in need."

Shannon Carruth, ING DIRECT Community Impact Manager, participated on the day and challenged the group to tell colleagues, family and friends about their day and spread the word about volunteering.

The fantastic feedback from MMO affirmed it was a positive day that everyone involved will remember for a long time to come.

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

Sydney'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.

Philip Hoser is responsible for chairing the council in Sydney and talked to us about why he got involved...

Tell me a little about yourself. What do you do when you are not volunteering for United Way?

Working full time as a partner in a global law firm means long hours and a lot of travelling. Trying to spend time with my three wonderful sons - now all young men one of whom lives in New York, makes the time at home much more precious - although, of course, they don't necessarily want to spend their time with dad! At weekends my wife and I try to get away to our bolthole in the country where we mend fences, keep the bush in check and chase our 5 cattle around in a beaten-up old ute before collapsing in front of an open fire with a good book (paper - not electronic) and a glass of red.

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

At my old firm, Freehills, I came along to a morning tea attended by the then United Way CEO, Bill Downing and a couple of people from community organisations that United Way and Freehills had helped. I'd not heard of United Way before and I thought the idea of being able to help local organisations by giving a little something every week through payroll was so ridiculously easy that I signed up there and then. Over the years at Freehills I got to know UW well and came to understand how valuable the role of intermediary played by United Way is - making it as easy as possible for individuals or organisations to give whatever they can - time, money, resources - to community partners where they can have the most impact. And at a level where that impact can be seen and understood and in ways which are best-tailored to suit all concerned. Why wouldn't you want to be part of an organisation that helps people who want to give and helps communities access help most effectively? Done well, it strikes me as the ultimate win-win.

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

An abiding appreciation of how lucky I have been to have had the opportunities, experiences and support that I have had and continue to have in my life - and a concern to try to do something to even out the random inequalities that affect our lives - whether they're caused by accidents of birth, environment, illness or whatever.

Added to this has come the realisation that men and women in the corporate world can bring something to the table when it comes to helping communities - their experience, perhaps, or their contacts - and therefore help the cause even if they can't devote loads of time to being on the frontline and doing some of the really tough stuff

that some of our selfless colleagues do.

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

There is enormous appetite among ordinary people to do something to help their community. United Way's biggest challenge and most exciting opportunity is to find better ways of satisfying that appetite. That involves making it easy for people and corporates to give and convincing them that the value which United Way can add - ensuring that every bit of help has maximum impact in the community on a long-term, sustainable basis - means that working with United Way, or with community partners, through United Way, is a good way to help. Is it the only way people can do something? No, of course not. But I do believe that United Way's collaborative approach makes for a result greater than the sum of impacts which you could otherwise expect - and that makes sense.

What do I enjoy? Well, just being part of it - and that's something we can all enjoy in different ways.

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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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