



mini MICAH – March 2009

monthly update for members and friends of Catholic Social Services Victoria

Contents

■ Recent CSSV News & Developments

- ✚ Commissioning Mass and Annual General Meeting
- ✚ Bushfire response
- ✚ Melbourne seminars on Catholic Identity
- ✚ Pastoral services in Aged Care
- ✚ White Paper on Homelessness – the contribution of Day Centres
- ✚ Youth in out-of-home care
- ✚ CSSV Planning
- ✚ Farewell to Chris Wade
- ✚ Position available for Office Administrator at CSSV

■ Around the Sector

- ✚ Exodus Community, Wendouree, partnered by Centacare Ballarat
- ✚ Employment Vulnerability Index
- ✚ Commonwealth Stimulus Spending – community sector funds
- ✚ PILCHConnect 2009 not-for-profit seminar series

■ For your diary

- ✚ Thurs 30 April, forum on **pastoral services in aged care** – details to be announced
- ✚ Fri 28 August, 2009 **CSSV Annual Dinner** at San Remo Ballroom

■ Who am I?

- ✚ Terry O'Shannassy, CSSV

Recent CSSV News & Developments

🔗 2009 Commissioning Mass and Annual General Meeting

Thanks to all CSSV members and friends who were able to join us to make our Commissioning Mass and Annual General Meeting on 12 March such a positive evening - it was good to gather as a community to celebrate our work, to pray together in solidarity with those we serve, and to reflect on the issues that we face in building a more just and compassionate society.

Our **annual report** is now on the website - <http://www.css.org.au/annualreports.html> - as is our **Constitution**, updated to reflect changes agreed at the AGM - <http://www.css.org.au/mission.html>

Council elections: Congratulations, and thanks, to Peter Bearsley, reelected for another 12 month term as Chair of the CSSV Council, and to Carol Vale and Johanna Snelleman, who were reelected to a further two year term. Congratulations and welcome to Janis Klavins, Deputy CEO of Villa Maria, who was elected to a two year term, and thanks and best wishes to Helen McPhee, who finished up after a much appreciated contribution as a member of Council over recent years.

Our AGM guest speaker was Teresa Wilson, Director, Office of Youth in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, and National Youth Representative, St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia. Teresa spoke on the topic: *“Engaging young people in service and justice agencies”*. Teresa challenged all of us to ensure that our organisations are well positioned to engage effectively with people of all ages, which usually requires that we change in some ways. A copy of her paper will be available soon.

🔗 Helping those affected by Victorian bushfires

Catholic social service agencies continue their support for affected bushfire communities, as part of an integrated, long term effort, in consultation with local parishes and communities.

Among those offering services in a number of locations, the St Vincent de Paul Society is playing a key role in material, financial and personal support. Centacare Catholic Family Services and Centacare Gippsland and Centacare Bendigo are active in a range of counselling services, providing assistance to professionals and volunteers who are themselves affected, as well as to community members. [Click here](#) for a map of bushfire affected areas, showing boundaries of parishes and dioceses, is attached.

A number of CSSV member agencies are auspicing an assessment of areas where their expertise can be drawn on by local communities to make a difference in the short term and the longer term - terms of reference are available - [click here](#). Our aim is to work with parishes and communities over the long term, to help build stronger communities that are even stronger than they were before the fires.

🔗 Melbourne Seminars on Catholic identity in health, education and welfare delivery

The first of a series of three seminars was well attended on 3 March, and a report is available via our website - <http://www.css.org.au/news.html>. Around 60 leaders from the Archdiocese of Melbourne and key personnel from our health, welfare and education agencies participated, and considered the theoretical foundations of Catholic identity. As part of the broader dialogue that is already underway in these areas about the Catholic identity of agencies working in these fields, the next seminar focuses on current issues in carrying out our mission.

🔗 Pastoral services in Aged Care.

A number of members, particularly in the aged care sector, have raised questions about the pastoral care of both residents and staff. A discussion forum for interested members is being planned to reflect on the issues facing agencies, and consider models and training resources that are available. Current planning is for a forum on 30 April. Terry O'Shannassy would be happy to discuss any aspect of this, and will be in further contact with relevant members soon.

🔗 White Paper on Homelessness.

With many others CSSV agencies now await the State Government responses to the Homelessness White Paper – they are well aware of our interest, and of the importance to the clients served by our members of a Victorian Government response commensurate with the needs to be met and with the level of Commonwealth involvement.

Sacred Heart Mission, Ozanam Community Centre and St. Mary's House of Welcome together form a significant proportion of the Day Centres in Melbourne, and collectively provide an important service to homeless people – they are an integral part of the community in which these clients seek to live their lives. This is one of the many areas of service that need adequate Government support to ensure amenities for their clients over the long term.

🔗 Youth in Out of Home care.

Our media of recent weeks have highlighted the growing tension between government service provision and the welfare agencies caring for children not living at home. Among other things, the paucity of options available for emergency housing has seen children placed in some quite inappropriate living situations. Some of our members are in the front line of service delivery and advocacy for change - CSSV is working to add momentum to this advocacy.

One recent positive development was a photographic exhibition staged by the Child Safety Commissioner. 90 young people in care were provided with a camera and asked to record significant images and events that touched their lives. The pictures were displayed with brief written observations many of which highlight the thoughtful and reflective note of many of the young residents. Congratulations to former Council member Bernie Geary OAM, for this initiative.

🔗 CSSV Planning Day

The CSSV Council meets for a planning day on Thursday, 26th March 2009. Any input re priorities, gaps to be met etc would be welcomed as input to that day – please feel free to email or call Denis Fitzgerald.

🔗 Farewell to Chris Wade

Chris Wade will be leaving us on 24th April, for shorter working hours, closer proximity to home, and still working within our agency network - Chris will be taking up a position at Bethlehem Community, so still continuing to support Catholic social services. We will miss Chris, and wish her well. You are invited to join us in farewelling Chris on Friday 24 April at 4.00pm in the staff room, Cardinal Knox Centre.

📎 **Position vacancy for Office Administrator at CSSV**

Chris' departure creates a vacancy for Office Administrator, Catholic Social Services Victoria. In short, we are looking for someone to work as part of our team, to contribute to the work of Catholic social services by running a small office, working closely with member agencies and enquirers, and organising meetings and events. Please alert anyone you think might be a good fit for this role. The position description is available on our website - <http://www.css.org.au/secretariat.html>

Around the Sector

📎 **Exodus Community, Wendouree, partnered by Centacare Ballarat**

Mentoring of smaller organisations by larger ones can be an effective way of extending the capacity of the sector as a whole to reach out to the marginalised and disadvantaged. Follow this link for details of a welcome initiative in Ballarat, where Centacare and the parish-based Exodus community have recently signed a memorandum of understanding:

<http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/uploads/enews/march11exodus.pdf>

📎 **Employment Vulnerability Index**

The Centre of Full Employment and Equity in conjunction with the Urban Research Program (Griffith University) have developed the Employment Vulnerability Index (EVI) for suburbs across Australia. The Employment Vulnerability Index is an indicator that identifies those suburbs that have higher proportions of the types of jobs thought to be most at risk in the current economic climate. The EVI is computed for Capital Cities and non-Metropolitan regional centres with more than 20,000 residents. For more information, and for maps, visit: http://e1.newcastle.edu.au/coffee/indicators/job_loss_index/index.cfm

📎 **Commonwealth Stimulus Spending – community sector funds**

Here is a link to a briefing on that part of the Government's recent \$42bn National Building and Jobs Plan that relates to the community sector - pp. 6-8 is most relevant. Please contact CSSV if you wish to obtain further information on any aspect of this.

<http://www.ursulastephens.com/Editor/assets/Social%20Inclusion%20presentation.pdf>

📎 **PILCHConnect 2009 not-for-profit seminar series**

PilchConnect is hosting [monthly seminars](#) on legal issues that affect not-for-profit community organisations. Full details for each of the seminars will be published on the [website](#) as they are available.

Date Title

2 April IT for community organisations: tips on legal issues

7 May What tax concessions can your community organisation get?

2 June Raising money for your community organisation: tips for complying with fundraising and tax law

14 July Your organisation's responsibility for injuries to, and acts of, employees and volunteers: workcover and insurance

11 Aug Making decisions: running meetings, AGMs and changing your constitution

8 Sept Protecting your name, ideas and materials

10 Nov Handling employee & volunteer complaints: discrimination, bullying & harassment

For your diary

📎 Thurs 30 April, **forum on pastoral services in aged care**. See paragraph above on this project - details to be announced

📎 **2009 CSSV Dinner**

Friday, 28 August 2009, San Remo Ballroom. All welcome. This event is aimed at organisational leaders, including Board members, and other friends of the sector. Please start thinking now about putting together a table from your organisation.

Who am I?

Each issue, we profile someone in the CSSV community. In this issue, we hear from Terry O'Shannassy,

Who am I?

Each issue, we profile someone in the CSSV community. In this issue, we hear from Mr Terry O'Shannassy, Member Support and Projects Coordinator at CSSV

Q: Tell us about where you work and your role

I joined the CSSV team in November 2008 after 5 years with the Centacare Personal Support Program, working with the long term unemployed. I had previously worked with MacKillop Family Services, again with the unemployed, in The Cedarworks furniture Restoration project in Dandenong. My current role of Member Support and Project Officer is an interesting change. I have found the process of meeting the members to be most stimulating, learning about their wide range of services and client issues. *[Editors note: Terry was awarded an OAM for his work with youth, and particularly the Cedarworks program.]*

Q: Have you a piece of advice or an encouragement that has helped you in life or work?

I have been lucky enough to have some good formation opportunities and count my introduction to basic cognitive therapy to be most helpful in developing a very positive approach to life.

Q: What do you do to wind down or relax?

Each evening, or afternoon in the case of weekends, I sit on my deck and read, enjoying the oasis of greenery that I have so close to the city. I also like to have meals there as often as possible.

Q: Have you a particular role model?

My reading, particularly of historical material, has bought to life the stories of many people. I have taken inspiration from Gandhi, James Cook, and most recently, the life of Ben Chifley.

Q: Have you a particular hobby or interest you could tell us about??

In the last three years I have begun to play lawn bowls. The Albert Park Bowls club is a really welcoming place and have made some new friends. Recently we have won the grand final in our section and been promoted to division 6. I also restore furniture.

Contact us

mini MICAH thrives on news! Send your news, updates, and any items of interest to office@css.org.au.

Please also let us know of any events, celebrations etc in your agency or program – we are keen to keep in touch with developments, and to assist with publicity etc where that is appropriate.

Catholic Social Services Victoria

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To nominate new subscribers or to unsubscribe to mini MICAH, email cwade@css.org.au.