



# Newsletter

Winter 2022

## Broken Bay Central Council President - Michelle Chahine's Message

It has been a difficult winter for many. We have had to endure tough weather conditions and flooding, COVID and influenza. We have lost loved ones and fellow members and we continue to pray for those that are fighting their own battles and all our friends that we assist. But, each and every one of you has helped at least one person to have a reason to keep fighting, to keep enduring whatever hardships that come their way. Even though at times we find our own lives difficult and busy with work and family, we somehow find the strength to give a little more, and for that I say thank you for all that you do.

We have been blessed with a new State President, Paul Burton. Paul has been a member of the Society for over 35 years and has held a number of leadership roles. Paul is a respected leader whose integrity, honesty and character are reflected in everything he does. I hope that you all have an opportunity to meet with Paul as some stage.

NAIDOC Week, this year, was a chance for all Australians to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures, and to celebrate their achievements. The Society supports the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, which calls for the Constitutional recognition of First Nations people and an enshrined and protected National Voice to Parliament. This would be a huge step in righting the wrongs of the past and ensuring a bright future for all Australians.

The Vinnies Social Justice Statement, *Joining the Struggle for Recognition*, is a document created to help members of the

Vinnies network advocate for the Uluru Statement within their communities. The statement provides guidance on how to build support for the Uluru Statement and its goals within Conferences, parishes, and other groups. Please read more about it in the newsletter and on our website.

On Friday 19th August 2022, our members and volunteers across NSW will once again come together to join in a state-wide effort to do something about homelessness. Unfortunately, due to the spike in COVID cases, the difficult decision to move the Sleepout to a virtual space, was made once again.

Please register and join in the evening events to show your support for the team's mammoth effort to pull this event together, year after year.



Congratulations to all our members who are continuously being recognised for their amazing achievements within our communities. Each and every member deserves recognition for the fabulous work you continue to do every day, making huge differences in the lives of the people we assist.

May you all be blessed,

**Michelle Chahine,**  
**Broken Bay Central Council President**

## Regional Director Metropolitan - Kate Lee's Message

Over the last few months, it has been wonderful to get around and see Conferences and Support Centres being able to open up and resume work that is a little closer to what it was pre-COVID.

Although both staff and Members found ways to continue to meet the needs of our communities during COVID, I know the lack of connection has been very hard for all of us as well as the people we assist. Even our name speaks of the importance of connection.

Our name, the 'St Vincent De Paul Society' is an important one. The word Society has meaning, not just because we seek to serve those in our community in need of a hand up, but also each other, through our connection, our collective coming together and the sharing of our many and varied contributions.

It is with that in mind that I would invite you to share with us some

of your recent experiences, your favourite things that you have witnessed or experienced in your Society work via email to

[MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au](mailto:MetroMembers@vinnies.org.au).

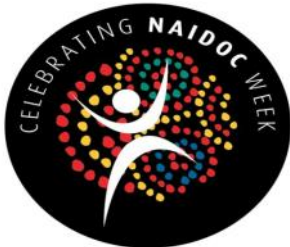


Whether it be small or large, we should share and celebrate all the things that the Society represents to us in our lives. I know I get enormous value out of seeing and hearing what the Society means to members, and I would like to share that experience further.

**Kate Lee, Regional Director Metro**



## GET UP! STAND UP! SHOW UP!



**GET UP!  
STAND UP!  
SHOW UP!**

**3-10 JULY 2022**

Vinnies joined the national celebrations for NAIDOC week in July. NAIDOC stands for the ‘National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee’. Over decades now, this week has celebrated the long history, deep culture and achievements of First Nations peoples.

“Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!” is this year’s theme. It recognises the strength and resilience of First Nations people in fighting for justice, equity and recognition since the earliest days of European colonisation.

The organisers said, “We have a proud history of getting up, standing up and showing up. From the frontier wars and our earliest resistance fighters to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities fighting for change today – we continue to show up.”

They say, “Now is our time. We cannot afford to lose momentum for change.”

And the momentum for change can be seen in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart*, where the First Nations Elders and leaders have invited us to walk together in “a

movement of the Australian people for a better future”.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul supports the call of the *Uluru Statement* for the Constitutional recognition of First Nations people and an enshrined and protected National Voice to Parliament.

And we are not alone. The Australian Catholic Bishops and the Religious Orders through Catholic Religious Australia are among many church and community groups joining the call.

We have this wonderful opportunity to walk with First Nations people – to foster the dignity of and ancient living culture. To give a Voice that addresses hardship and historical abuses. And to ensure respectful relationships and truth telling in Australia.

All Australians are invited to join the growing movement to promote the protection of the environmental and cultural heritage of the First Nations peoples. It is a time to foster truth-telling and establishing constitutional recognition.

Visit the [NAIDOC Week](#) website to find out more about awards, local events and resources. Review the [NAIDOC history](#) and spread the word.

### Joining the Struggle for Recognition

The Society of St Vincent de Paul NSW recently released a Social Justice Statement, *Joining the Struggle for Recognition - Uluru Statement from the Heart*. It explains why the Society has accepted the Uluru Statement’s invitation to walk with First Nations Peoples in “a movement of the Australian people for a better future”.

We are proud to support the Uluru Statement’s calls for Constitutional recognition of First Nations people and an enshrined and protected National Voice to Parliament.

We hope the Vinnies Social Justice Statement will be useful for members of our network who wish to build support for the Uluru Statement within their Conferences, parishes, and broader communities.

To find out more about the Uluru Statement from the Heart, [visit here](#). And To access to Vinnies Social Justice Statement, [visit here](#).

To access to Vinnies Social Justice Statement, [visit here](#).





## GET UP! STAND UP! SHOW UP! (continued)



Dennis Brady, Wyong Regional President, welcomes participants to the Support Centre

President said, "This event is a great opportunity to meet some of our Aboriginal Elders in the community and a way to look at our next step of action with the Reconciliation Action Plan."

Leo Tucker, Executive Director of Mission and Spirituality added, "Reconciliation should be part of our DNA. It shouldn't just be something that we talk about a lot. It needs to be right in the very heart of most things we think about, *what* we do and *how* we do that."

It was a great way to renew connections and forge new ones with the aims on Reconciliation and promoting the cultural competency of Vinnies.

To read more on the RAP and find information on various items such as 'Guiding Principles', 'Cultural Protocols', 'Community Engagement Plans' and 'Gan Na Cultural Awareness eLearning Training', please have a look at our Reconciliation page on MAVS: <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/cultural-competency-framework/>

To view a short video of the event, [visit here](#).

### "Ngara" – Listen, Hear, Think

We are so proud to move forward with the second Metropolitan Sydney Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The RAP Committee has representation from all areas of the Society – First Nations peoples, Members, Retail and logistics, Services and Membership, Volunteer and Regional Operation Reps.

They were all present when Broken Bay Central Council launched the RAP in Wyong in May.

We started the day with morning tea and appreciated the beauty of a First Nations art work on display.

BJ Duncan, Aboriginal Access Worker with the Central Coast Community Legal Centre, led us in a smoking ceremony and an acknowledgement of Country.

Michelle Chahine, Broken Bay Central Council



BJ Duncan Acknowledges Country at the Wyong RAP launch





## Our New State President

The Society of St Vincent de Paul NSW welcomes its new State President, Mr Paul Burton.

Paul has been a member of the Society for over 35 years where he has held a number of leadership roles. In his professional career Paul specialised in road, rail, sea, and air logistics, providing transport, warehousing and distribution services to the food, agricultural and pharmaceutical sectors.

"I am honoured to have been elected as the new State Council president and look forward to serving with humility, respect and a true sense of Vincentian spirit," Mr Burton said.

Paul believes that the Society's future lies in an uncompromising commitment to the right balance between the spiritual and corporate excellence of the culture of our faith-based organisation.

"My other key areas of focus will be ensuring an effective recruitment strategy for membership; more decisive involvement by our Spirituality Committee in the work of the Society; and increased momentum with our Reconciliation Action Plan and Diversity and Inclusion initiatives," he said.



## Congratulations Annette and Denis

Recognised for service to the Gosford community through the St Vincent de Paul Society, Annette Johnstone and Denis O'Rourke were among seven people receiving Local Achievement Awards for their great contribution and commitment to serving others in need.

Liesl Tesch MP, NSW Member for Gosford presented the awards as part of the NSW Seniors' Festival which ran from 25 March – 3 April. This annual festival is about celebrating the positive impact of older people in our society.

Annette, Gosford Regional President said, "It is a great honour to be recognised in this way. But we don't need awards to do the work that we do – when it comes down to it, it's about the people we serve."

Denis is President of the Terrigal Our Lady Star of the Sea Conference and well as being the Social Justice representative and Spiritual Advisor for the Gosford region. He said, "I accepted this award, not for myself but for all the people that support social justice in our community."



Congratulations Annette and Denis!

From all of us, thank you for all that you do to assist people through difficult times and to build up your local community.



# COMMUNITY WINTER SLEEPOUT

## JOIN US AT THE CENTRAL COAST COMMUNITY SLEEPOUT!

Calling all Members and Friends – will you register today to help change lives?

The St Vincent de Paul Society annual Community Sleepout is being held on **Friday night August 19**, and we need you more than ever this year.

People are losing their rentals, their homes, surfing from couch to couch or sleeping out on the streets in a car or cardboard box... And because of the continued impact of COVID and rising costs of living, many are sleeping rough for the first time ever.

If you are over 18, will you take part in the 2022 Central Coast Vinnies Community Sleepout?

**NOTE:** Due to COVID restrictions this will be an on-line event where you can join with participants from across the greater Sydney area.

We'll be raising awareness about homelessness.

We'll be raising much-needed funds for people who are doing it tough.

We'll be raising hope that our political representatives and decision-makers are taking decisive action to address homelessness once and for all.

Join this great interactive event—with opportunities for all participants to take part in online auctions, a version of trivia, and have a chance for discussions in groups.

Although it's a virtual event, you may like to gather with a smaller group of people and take part in the sleepout together.

You are invited to sign up and attend online, then sleep in your yards, your couches or your cars.



[Click here to register now!](#)



Over 116,000 Australians experience homelessness each night across Australia.

That's 116,000 men, women and children who feel unsafe every single night of the year.

And yet, it just takes one night for you to help change lives.

One night – braving the cold, or the noise, or the lights – to support those in our community for which this is a frightening reality.

There could hardly be anything more important right now.



# WILL YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?

Join our Vinnies Community Sleepout or donate to help us rebuild lives for people experiencing homelessness.



DATE: **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2022**

TIME: **6:00pm**

LOCATION: **Online – Virtual gathering**

TO JOIN OR MAKE A DONATION SEE:

<https://my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/central-coast-vinnies-community-sleepout-2022/>



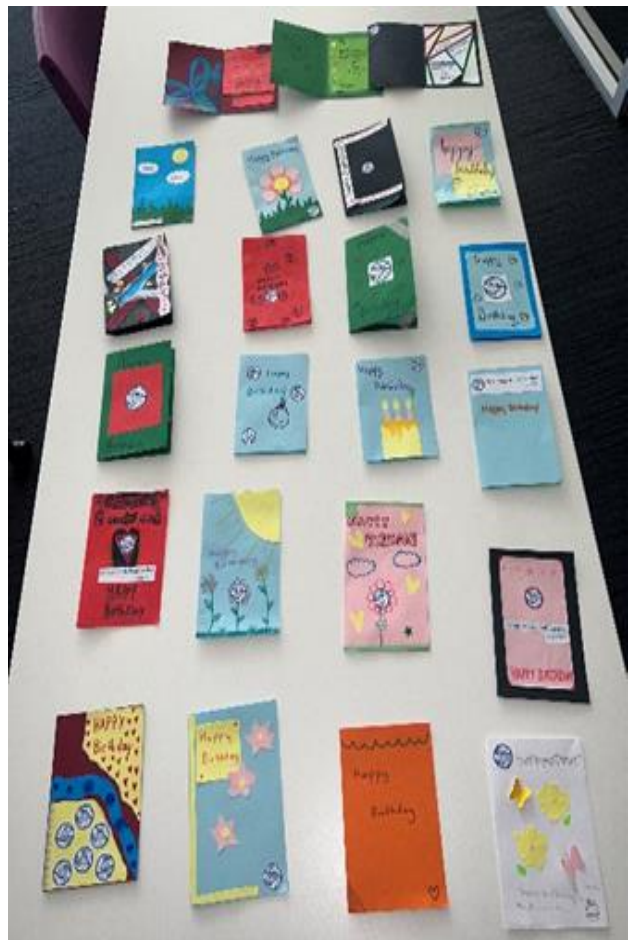
## Time to SHINE!

On Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the Vinnies Schools Engagement Team had the privilege of attending the 'SHINE Youth Ministry Conference' at St Peter's Catholic College in Tuggerah. SHINE is an event that invites students from secondary schools across Broken Bay to join in on a day of games, worship, prayer, faith formation and lots of singing and dancing!

On the day, students were invited to attend and participate in different workshops where they would reflect on their devotion to Jesus and the Catholic Church and practice putting their faith into action. In the workshop run by Vinnies, students learned more about the Society, the work that we do and the people we serve and also created an assortment of heartfelt and personalised Birthday Cards of Hope to be distributed by Conference Members to the people we assist.

Vinnies was also fortunate enough to hold our own stall at the event where students were invited to express interest in becoming a Vinnies Member or volunteer and to take some goodies away as a momentum from the day – Vinnies tattoos and 'Do Some Good' badges were particularly popular and were being sported around the campus throughout the day.

To top off the faith-filled day, students were fortunate enough to hear from Bishop Anthony Randazzo and members of Catholic Schools Youth Ministry International (CSYMA) and spent much of the day singing and dancing along to the live music performed by the extremely talented Alyssa Agius. The day then concluded with every attendee being presented with a jar of Holy Water, blessed by Bishop Anthony Randazzo. It truly was a spectacular day!





# Fresh Water Dives into Winter Appeal

Only one week into the Vinnies Winter Appeal and bags of donated items from parishioners were flowing back to Freshwater St John the Baptist Conference.

Conference President Mick O’Farrell said, “The community here is so generous. It’s such a great initial response and this is on top of any financial donations that they kindly support us with.”



The school children at St John the Baptist have also been collecting and donating goodies, including food items for the Brookvale office pantry, new socks and warm clothing.



“Some of the children did special jobs for money and then went out and purchased these items. The school’s staff, families and children always put their hand up to support Vinnies.

“They are legends!” says Mick.

# One Meal is all it takes

Conference members from the Chatswood Regional Council have been touring the Vinnies Youth Community Centre (VYCC) in Brookvale where ONE MEAL Co-Op works to provide healthy, nutritious food relief support for vulnerable, marginalised and at risk members of the community.

Conference members from Forestville, Willoughby, Chatswood and Davidson have seen first-hand the functional and operational side of the VYCC, which provides meals to anyone in need – school children, homeless people and those living in public housing. Food vans are organised on certain evenings in nearby parks.



**PROVIDING FOOD RELIEF FOR PEOPLE  
IN NEED IN OUR COMMUNITY**

Donated boxes of vegetables and fruits, canned food and drinks are stored in different parts of the VYCC. A number of large commercial freezers (all donated) store frozen meat and other products. A pantry room is stacked with donated canned foods – soups, spaghetis, fruits to household items and personal hygiene products including nappies, milk powder donated by organisations and individuals.

Kim Williams manages the ONE MEAL CO-OP at VYCC and coordinates all the activities with the help of many volunteers. They are on a roster for food collection or packing cooked meals or in distributing the meals to homes or various areas. They coordinate the distribution of over 4000 meals a week – including on Saturdays and Sundays.

They have over 70 volunteers and are always on the lookout for more.

To find out more, visit: <https://www.onemeal.org.au/northern-beaches/>



**ONE MEAL**  
IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE





# Feast for Freedom

We accept that behind every successful man there is a woman. Another truism is that behind every successful parish social event there is a team of women. This was amply borne out by the ladies of Our Lady of Dolours in Chatswood who hosted the inaugural Feast for Freedom on a balmy Saturday evening in March this year.



*El, Doris, Marte, Idrissa, Zach, Reg, Christian and Barry*

Simply put, they just accepted “the baton and took off with it”. Running the anchor leg was none other than Jo Karaolis, a kindly lady of enormous energy, persuasiveness, and organising capability. After two months of preparation, Jo and her team put on a veritable feast from many nations.

As Jo explained, “The Feast for Freedom is an Australia-wide fundraising vehicle for the Asylum Seekers and Refugees Council of Australia. Our parish’s Community Action Group took on the challenge of assisting refugees. Of course, for an undertaking of this size, we needed help from the Jesuit Refugee Society and we reciprocated by giving them the proceeds from our raffle.”

As refugees and asylum seekers are from other than first-world countries, the food on offer for the Feast for Freedom necessitated their origin to be representative of those counties. This requirement was easily met by the various cooks of the Community Action Group who contributed food from

Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Peru, Indonesia and Ukraine. Some of these cooks dressed in their traditional costumes.

Lending authenticity to the evening were two guest speakers, Nishadh Rego and Idrissa Dumbuya, asylum seekers from Afghanistan and Nigeria respectively. In the comfort of our familiar surroundings, we find the hardship experienced by these asylum seekers hard to swallow. For example, Idrissa has been kept on a temporary visa for five years. “I can’t reunite with my family. I can’t even locate them. How painful is that?”

The evening was attended by 105 people. Among supporters of the event were St Vincent de Paul Forestville Conference members, members of the Rotary Club of Wahroonga, and generous parishioners who made up the rest.

“The Feast for Freedom brought in a surplus of \$6000 plus \$2400 from online donations,” Jo said. She added, “Parishioners commented enthusiastically about the pleasure of being back together for dinner in the Harrington Hall after the COVID lockdown.”

Will we have another Feast for Freedom next year? Judging by the feedback from dinner guests as well as the cooks, this is a distinct possibility. With the experience learnt from the first Feast for Freedom, it will be half the effort and twice the pleasure to arrange another one. Stay tuned!

**- Huang Zhi-Wei aka Reg Wong**



## Come and join in the celebration of Chatswood Conference

From across the region, members, volunteers and staff came together with the Chatswood parish community on 15 May for a Mass celebrating the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chatswood Our Lady of Dolours Conference.

Celebrating the Mass, Parish Priest Fr David Ranson spoke of the long history of the St Vincent de Paul Society having a presence in the local community and reaching out to help individuals and families in need in both the best and worst of times. He urged parish members to continue to support Vinnies and to consider joining up as members.

We are most grateful to Fr David for his kind support.



Speaking after Holy Communion, Chatswood

Regional President Barry Finch spoke of some of the key moments in the life of the Conference. He spoke of how the Conference members have been there to assist vulnerable people through the current COVID-19 pandemic and noted how this is not all that different from the days the Chatswood Conference was established when the community was enduring the impact of the Spanish Flu.

A wonderful morning tea and sausage sizzle were provided by members and volunteers after Mass.

A devoted band of Vincentians ran a recruitment drive at Parish Masses early in July and an information day was held on 16 July for people who are interested in becoming members. If you are interested in becoming a Member and contributing to the next chapter of this impressive Chatswood history, please contact your Member and Community Engagement Coordinator at:

[John.Ferguson@vinnies.org.au](mailto:John.Ferguson@vinnies.org.au)





# Happy Birthday St Joseph's Workshop

On Tuesday the 26th of July, The St Joseph's Workshop in West Gosford held a gathering to celebrate becoming Broken Bay's newest Conference.

The Workshop has had a substantial impact in the community over the years through the manufacture of furniture that is given out to the people that Sydney Metro Conferences assist.

The volunteers, many of whom have worked tirelessly for more than a decade making supports for clients, were thrilled to be officially recognised for all their work.

Gosford Regional President, Annette Johnstone, was on hand to oversee the morning's proceedings and welcome the new members to the Gosford Regional Council.

There was a great turn out with a number of the leadership team from the NSW State Support Office, Sam Crosby, Joy Kyriacou and Kate Lee who were also part of the celebrations.



*Kate Lee, Annette Johnstone, Michael Tabone*

David Murphy, who supports the members and volunteers at the workshop, said, "This is a fantastic opportunity for the men and women who have given so much of their time to assist the needy to be even more involved with the Society".

He also spoke about the forward-thinking nature of the Central Coast members – recognising how there are many ways that members and volunteers can contribute to the good works of the Society in addition to the traditional home visitation model.

We at the newsletter team would like to extend a huge welcome to Michael Tabone (President of the Workshop), Wayne Gibb (Treasurer) and Kevin O'Donnell (Secretary).

You can find out more about the incredible work being done by the members of the St Joseph's workshop by visiting [https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find Help/NSW/Health and wellbeing/St Joseph s Workshop/](https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Find%20Help/NSW/Health%20and%20wellbeing/St%20Joseph's%20Workshop/)





## Open House at Gosford VSC

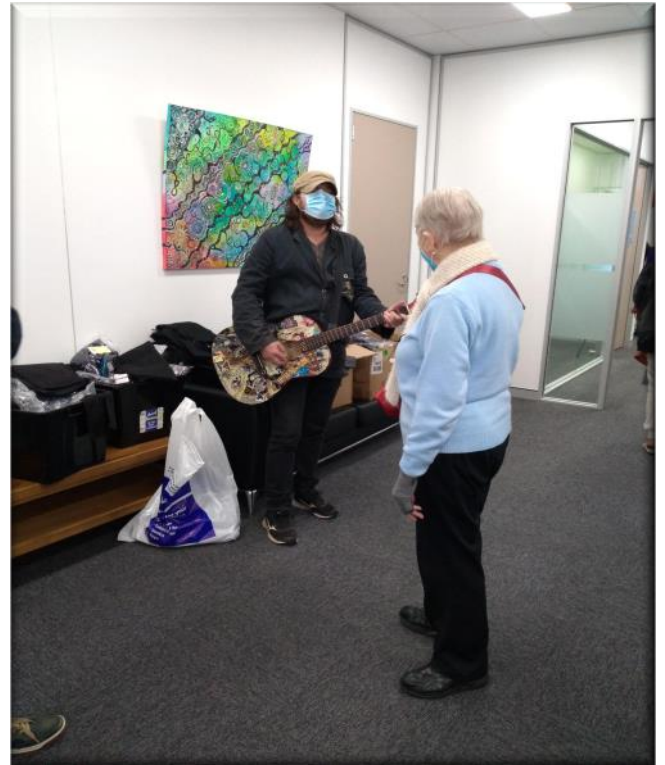
On Wednesday 15 June 2022, the Gosford Vinnies Support Centre (VSC) held an Open House so that the community and other agencies could attend our centre to see what we do. The Open House event went for two hours. In that time we had 57 people come through our doors with 12 people registering their interest in our programs.

The Open House had Colin and Mel from the Outreach Team for the Ozanam Learning Centre talking to people about programs that they are starting. And our Financial Counsellor, Adele, from Community SOS, who also does outreach from our office was onsite to speak to people.

We also had the wonderful volunteers from St Joseph's Workshop, bring along some of their terrific furniture to display. Food hampers were distributed as well as clothing and blankets on the day. There was even an impromptu performance by one of the public!

A big thank you to all of the members and volunteers who helped not only on the day but in the lead up. I would also like to thank our Wyong VSC for their donation of clothing and shoes for the day.

**- Lisa Dalton, VSC Coordinator**





## Operation 'Reconnect'

Woy Woy VSC held their inaugural Reconnection with the Community Day on 8 June. This Event was an initiative of Members, Volunteers, and Staff. The event was held to reconnect and re-engage with the local community, following the limited services we were able to provide during the COVID pandemic.

The day provided a great opportunity to reaffirm the services and assistance available through the Woy Woy VSC. The support we provide has become even more necessary due to the current cost of living pressures.

We had brilliant sunshine and from the start and it was evident that everyone involved was in for a great day. This was all made possible through the collaboration of our local community supporter, the Woy Woy Good Start Early Learning Centre, who kindly hosted the event and with generous donations from Woy Woy public school, Brookvale VSC, Vinnies Woy Woy retail store, Ozanam outreach, and people from the local community.



Also in attendance were Department of Community and Justice financial counsellors from Narara Neighbourhood centre.

In total 258 people were assisted during the day, all appearing extremely happy and satisfied with the food and toiletries hampers, and the warm clothing they received.

Overall, this great day had a wonderful atmosphere and provided the community with a much-needed opportunity to access myriad services available to them in their local community. The day has also provided a successful template for future events.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my heartfelt thanks to the team, being the Members, Volunteers and Staff at the Woy Woy VSC for making the day the incredible success that it was.

**- Nikki Willmette, VSC Coordinator**





# Students visit Hornsby VSC for Skills Passport

On 25<sup>th</sup> March, 15 students from Hornsby Kuringai College's Skills Passport program came across to see how we work at Vinnies and how we help people in need.

These young people are not very interested in school and the Skills Passport shows them different work places to try to interest them in looking forward and to gain self-esteem. When the program ran last year we saw half of the participating young people later take up apprenticeships. Others went back to school and others learnt different skills to help them find work.

During the visit, Broken Bay President Michelle Chahine gave a talk about how Vinnies started and some of the things we do. The students packed small bags for the homeless. That was quite an experience for the students, as they did not know how people on the streets wash or carry their back packs with small items only. They did a role play around how to assist a person who lives on the street. And they helped to sort clothing for the shop downstairs.

We had a pizza lunch with them, which they really loved. We gave them Easter eggs and little cards with motivational comments for them to take and read.

Each student was given a clothing voucher. They really loved looking through the clothing and made some sensible choices of clothes. They were amazed at the great brands of clothing we had and said they would be back to purchase clothes.

We had some amazing comments from the students. I will share with you what they wrote to us about their experience at Vinnies:

*"Learning, fun, great amazing awesome good cool spectacular."*

*"It was a great experience and I'm thinking of volunteering, I thought they were all very organised, very friendly, very engaging, fun and amazing."*

*"I think what you guys do here is awesome, you guys put everyone first."*

*"I think it's amazing how all you guys volunteer and help people in need thank you so much for having us."*

*"Today gives a good experience learning Vinnies."*

*"It was a very good experience all the people here are really kind people."*

*"Friendly staff, organised set up, some good brands. Reasonable prices and products from variety of places."*

The day was about teamwork for us as well. Pryanka and her staff in the store helped us make the day for the students and their teachers. They felt very welcome. Jodie, Michelle, Volunteers and I worked with the students upstairs.

The day was a great success and the teachers were very grateful for the opportunity to bring their students across. The teachers would like to work closely with us again.

It was a wonderful way to really showcase Vinnies.

**- Shirley Kelynack, Regional President Hornsby**



# Vinnies Recycle Range – Selling Fast

Every item has an impact. With the current fast pace of fashion consumption, nearly 6000 kilograms of clothing and textile waste goes to Australian landfills every 10 minutes.

re/CYCLE is our new eco-friendly range. Made from recycled textiles and materials, our new circular approach means some of our pre-loved items along with many other diverted textiles are being used to create a range of classic yet colourful styles with minimal impact on the environment.

The re/CYCLE range has just been refilled across 16 locations in metro Sydney. The range includes woven rugs, Turkish towels –

and bathmats are a much welcome addition to our donations in store.

Selling fast in all locations. This is another great initiative in becoming more eco-friendly in our approach to revenue building!

Much like all items sold in our shops, profits from re/CYCLE sales will support people experiencing poverty, homelessness and hardship throughout the state.

To find out more, visit: [https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Shops/NSW/Vinnies\\_re\\_CYCLE\\_Range/](https://www.vinnies.org.au/page/Shops/NSW/Vinnies_re_CYCLE_Range/)



## Who's who at Vinnies!

Got questions and don't know who to ask? Ever wondered who's who at Vinnies? There are 2 structures within Members, Assoc Members and Volunteers (MAVS) where you can ask questions or get information following the next direct reporting structure. Please speak to the next person above you should you need more information or answers to your inquiry.





## Join the *Build Homes, Build Hope* Letter-writing Campaign

Responding to the NSW State Budget released in June, the NSW Society's CEO Jack de Groot welcomed measures that will lead to positive impacts for women, children, First Nations Peoples, and people struggling to afford homes. But he noted that much more needs to be done in the funding of social housing.

"The lion's share of funding for social housing in this budget is going towards upgrading existing residences. This is both good and necessary and we also need significantly more new social housing dwellings.

"The number of new residences funded by this budget is in the hundreds when there are 50,000 applicants on the social housing waiting list in NSW. This represents over 100,000 people, many of whom wait 10 years or longer for a home.

"The social housing waiting list could be reduced by three quarters if 5,000 new social housing residences were built each year for the next decade," Mr de Groot said.

We, as Members of the Society, see the stress of homelessness and those with rental stress in the people we encounter when they ask for our assistance. The waiting list for social housing in every Conference area is growing. The risk of homelessness for young families, women fleeing domestic violence and elderly women has been well documented in the media.

The Society has an obligation to address the needs of these people. Amelie Housing cannot build all the homes that are needed. Nor can the other social housing providers. Funds are needed from the State government to be released so that they can begin to construct 5,000 units of social housing per year.

You can get an idea of the lived reality of the need in this short [Build Homes, Build Hope video](#) prepared by the Social Justice Team.

Can you contribute to our *Build Homes, Build Hope* letter writing campaign?

We aim to send the NSW Premier a letter a day in the 300 days leading up to the March 2023 election. Each letter would be a personal handwritten letter calling for 5,000 new social housing homes to be built every year for the next ten years

You can find the letter writing guide [here](#). We ask that letters are addressed to the NSW Premier but sent to the Social Justice Team at 2C West St, LEWISHAM NSW 2049. They will then forward these letters on to the Premier.

I have drafted a letter. It is not a template but it may help you to write your personal letter:

*The Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP*

*GPO Box 5341*

*SYDNEY NSW 2001*

*Dear Dominic,*

*This letter is important to the people I try to support through my activities with the St Vincent de Paul Society.*

*We visit people in their homes and talk to them on the phone and from this we can assess their desperation in seeking social or affordable housing.*

*On the Central Coast at the last Census (2016) there was an increase in homelessness of 266 or 34.8% on the previous Census. Of this number 17.2% were Aboriginal.*

*There are 3,004 people on the waiting list for social housing. This is exacerbated by a 77% drop in private rental vacancies.*

*Recently, a single mother with 4 dependent children called on the Terrigal Conference of the Society for assistance. She works 20 hours per week in a local hotel and her income is \$1,888 per fortnight. 50% of this was going to pay their rent. This is well above the rental stress level of 30% of income. However, her landlord suddenly increased her rent to \$1,460 or 77% of her income.*

*There are no other affordable houses to which she can relocate in the local area. Are more low-income earners going to be forced out of the area? Where will local businesses find their workers? Will this cause a social upheaval in our society?*

*From 1945 to 1971 Australia built 265,000 public housing dwellings. That is 10,000 per year when the need was not as great as today. We would like to see your government begin to repair the loss of public housing, that has occurred in recent decades, by building at least 5,000 dwellings per year.*

*This is inadequate for the current need but we must begin the process.*

*I look forward to your response to this letter.*

**- Denis O'Rourke, Broken Bay Central Council Vice President - Social Justice**





## Society State President Paul Burton launches 2021 Modern Slavery Statement

Modern Slavery is an issue that should concern us all.

Over 40 million people are enslaved in the world today. In Australia, it is estimated that around 15,000 people are enslaved, with the additional risk that procurement through international supply chains exposed to slavery adds to the global suffering.

Under the *Modern Slavery Act 2018*, the Society of St Vincent de Paul NSW has obligations to assess and prevent the risk of modern slavery in our operations and supply chains. Our latest Modern Slavery Statement has just been submitted to the Commonwealth and can be accessed [here](#).

The Social Justice Team ran an online Modern Slavery Workshop on 26 July during which NSW Society State President Paul Burton delivered the following address to launch the 2021 Modern Slavery Statement:

*It is no coincidence that we are launching this Statement in the lead up to the United Nations World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, this coming Saturday.*

*As we have heard, in Australia around 15,000 people are enslaved, with the additional risk that procurement through international supply chains, exposed to slavery, adds to the global suffering of over 40 million people.*

*I ask this, concerning men, women and children persevering in substandard and completely unacceptable conditions, having no recourse to*

*any medium which could potentially serve to improve their lot, and having no option, in return for their labour, but to accept the continual dismal handouts which do not even remotely apologise for anything more than the foundations for a subsistence existence and a constant link to a life of poverty and inequity. Can such circumstances be identified as other than slavery?*

*Under the Modern Slavery Act 2018, we are required to assess and prevent the risk of modern slavery in our operations and supply chains. So, this Modern Slavery Statement is part of those obligations.*

*But this endeavour is not just about meeting legislated obligations. It goes much deeper!*

*The Society of St Vincent de Paul is a values-based organisation. Our underlying concern for the women, children and men trapped in slavery is generated by our commitment to protect the sacredness of life, to defend the God-given dignity of each person and to show a unique concern for the most vulnerable.*

*This special concern – or ‘preferential option for the poor’ – is foundational to the Society of St Vincent de Paul and all our*

*good works.*

*As we know, The Rule states that no work of charity is foreign to the Society. We are called to seek out and find those in need.*

*This includes being vigilant for emerging injustices and forms of hardship throughout society.*

*The extent of Modern Slavery in Australia and around the world is one such area warranting growing awareness and appropriate action.*

*We are committed not only to alleviating the need of victims and survivors of Modern Slavery but also to identify the unjust structures that are the cause of it.*

*And so, I am honoured to launch our Vinnies NSW Modern Slavery Statement and I do so, humbly, in the words of our founder Blessed Frédéric Ozanam, when he said,*

*Charity is the Samaritan who pours oil on the wounds of the traveler who has been attacked. But, it is justice’s role to prevent the attacks.*

*In charity and in justice, let us continue to raise awareness of the scourge of modern slavery in Australia and around the world.*

*Let us be mindful of all the circumstances where we may encounter people who are enslaved or at risk and be prepared to report our concerns.*

*And please, spread the word about this Modern Slavery Statement among your colleagues and teams.*

*Thank you, and God Bless.*



**Vinnies**  
*good works*

**SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
**NETWORK**



St Vincent de Paul Society NSW

# ROSALIE RENDU FORUM 2022



## *Climate justice: working together for a more equitable and sustainable future*

**Thursday 20 October  
6:00 pm – 7:30 pm AEDT**

Over the last few years, our communities have seen our climate change dramatically, with more frequent and severe weather events including devastating floods, droughts, bushfires, and heatwaves.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW members, volunteers and employees have been on hand to help people in our communities during major emergencies, and through this, we have seen how it is marginalised people and communities who are often affected the most.

Join us for our annual Rosalie Rendu Forum on Thursday the 20th of October 2022 to hear from academic experts and those who've lived through recent disasters to discuss what's needed to avoid the worst injustices of climate change, and better protect those most likely to feel its impact.

In honour of Rosalie Rendu's legacy, we are excited to announce our female led panel;

- Professor Anne Poelina – Nyikina Warrwa Traditional Custodian, Chair of Indigenous Studies and Senior Research Fellow Nulungu Institute, University of Notre Dame
- Dr Kim Loo – NSW Chair, Doctors for the Environment
- Suzanne Nichols – St Vincent de Paul Society NSW Conference President, Lismore
- Kellie Caught – Program Director of Climate and Energy, Australian Council of Social Services (ACOSS)

Speakers will explore ways in which disasters disproportionately affect communities who are already facing multiple complex barriers, discuss ways to build resilience and reduce risk as well as demonstrate the urgent need to address climate change.

Bookings are essential and early RSVP is recommended. Register [here](#).

**Register by Tuesday 18 October.** For more information email [social.justice@vinnies.org.au](mailto:social.justice@vinnies.org.au) or call (02) 4032 3545.

Please note that the 2022 Rosalie Rendu Forum will be held online. Where appropriate, we encourage you to come together within your own communities in COVID-safe spaces to hold satellite events across New South Wales.



# Please ASSIST A STUDENT

The **Assist A Student** program gives you the opportunity to provide funding to support the education of a student in one of our partner countries for one year.

In many Asia Pacific countries, poverty excludes individuals from reaching their full potential by being a barrier to opportunities, including accessing education.

Your donation of \$100 or more will make all the difference for a primary, secondary or tertiary student in one of our partner countries.

Think of the great opportunities that you or you Conference can make in bringing education into the reach of young people around the world.



**Naw\*** is 22 years old and lives with her Aunt while attending West Yangon University in Myanmar.

She is studying Translation and Interpretation, as well as Burmese, Short Stories, Poetry and Drama, English and Communication Skills.

Naw knows that an education will help her "earn money and I, too, will support others".



**Andre\*** is in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and lives in Indonesia with his family.

He likes playing football and wants to become a policeman one day. He likes helping his parents and goes to Sunday School.

Andre says "thank you and God Bless all the people who have helped me."

**Nur\*** is in Year 12 and studies at a Vocational High School in Bandung, Indonesia. She lives with her mother who has recently lost her job.

Nur says that the support "helps her mother to worry less about fees". Nur wants to be a Tour Director and travel around the world. She thanks all donors to the *Assist A Student* program who help young people to achieve their goals.



*\*all names have been changed*

- I am an individual assisting a **student**; OR
- I am assisting a student on behalf of a group

NAME (group or individual): \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT NAME (for group): \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

SUBURB: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to donate (Donations over \$2 are tax deductible):**

\$100    \$200    \$300   OR  \$\_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive a certificate for this donation.

Thank you for your support.

**Payment method:**

- Debit my credit card (details below)

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- Mastercard    Visa   Card Expiry: \_\_ / \_\_

NAME ON CARD: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

- Cheque, payable to 'St Vincent de Paul Society'

Please complete your details and send to:  
Assist A Student Program,  
St Vincent de Paul Sate Council Office  
PO Box 5  
PETERSHAM, NSW 2049



## Member Support for Compliance

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW is a committed registered child-safe organisation. So that we can meet this commitment, we have developed support for Members. So, the following compliances are required for all Members, volunteers, and employees:

- NSW Working With Children’s Check (renewed every 5 years)
- Police Check (renewed every 3 years)
- Vinnies NSW Child Safe Familiarisation Training (renewed every 2 years).

### Need assistance applying for your online Police Check?

Membership and Community Engagement staff across Metro Region, attend some Vinnies Support Centres (VSCs) to assist Members apply for their online Police Checks. Thank you to the VSC Coordinators for opening their doors for this offer which is open to all Members and many have taken up the offer so far.

Other dates will be allocated at other VSCs and be communicated to President for their Members.

Members then simply RSVP to John Ferguson (Metro Member and Community Engagement Coordinator) with name, time preferences, Conference. He then confirms directions and details including the ID documents required to bring

Vinnies Support Centre Coordinators are also able to assist - contact your local person.

Co-Members in Conferences who have acquired their Police Check online are a great resource and can assist.

### Applying for Background Checks

- Instruction documents are available – just ask your Conference President or your Membership and Community Engagement Coordinator.

#### Online Police Check

- Go to: <https://svdpmetroregion.nationalcrimecheck.com.au/>
- You’ll be asked to enter a Site Code which is ‘Broken Bay’
- Results go to Vinnies.
- Once applied, advise your Membership and Community Engagement Coordinator

- We will track your application and advise you when it is processed along with the expiry date.
- Your clearance number and expiry date will be added to your Society records.

#### Working With Children’s Check (WWCC)

Go to <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/>

Once a new or renewed WWC is received:

- Results go to you.
- Once received, advise your President and John Ferguson - WWCC number, expiry date and confirm your date of birth.
- We then use these details to verify and register you with The Office of Children’s Guardian as Vinnies NSW volunteer. Any other organisation for which someone volunteers needs to do the same.
- Your WWCC clearance number, expiry date and verification date will be added to your Society records.

### Vinnies NSW Child Safe Familiarisation Training

Online- Vinnies Learning Centre: Instructions are available. Log in to your account: <https://vinnieslearningcentre.litmos.com.au/account/Login>

### Extra Support for Members:

Available for Members only has been Face-to-face training

- these have been offered to Regional Councils and most have held sessions, some still to come and some yet to be set- Presidents are kept updated and offered opportunities for Members. These will conclude soon. Session are COVID-appropriate in terms of numbers, seating and on entry, and attendees are requested to have a RAT test in 24 hours prior.

#### Zoom sessions

- As used previously during COVID, these will be scheduled to continue to support Member **compliance**.

**NEED HELP WITH POLICE CHECK OR WWCC? CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STAFF WHO CAN SUPPORT YOU AT YOUR LOCAL VSC!**

Contact John Ferguson - Member & Community Engagement Coordinator

Email: [john.ferguson@vinnies.org.au](mailto:john.ferguson@vinnies.org.au)

# COMPANIONSHIP



## WOULD YOU LIKE THE HELP OF A MENTOR?

Vinnies Connect will introduce you to a volunteer, who will guide you and keep you on track to achieve your goals.

Your goal or goals might be related to:

- **Developing a new skill**
- **Improving health/fitness**
- **Making new friends**
- **Joining a community group**
- **Gaining employment**
- **Learning more about technology**

Your mentor will meet with you regularly (weekly or fortnightly) for a year.

Your mentor will encourage you and help you to make choices. They may be just the support you need on the next step of your life journey.

To find out more:

- Visit our website <https://connect.vinnies.org.au>
- Call 0402 834 367, or
- Email [connect@vinnies.org.au](mailto:connect@vinnies.org.au).





# CUSTOMISED VINNIES FUNDRAISING PAGES FOR CONFERENCES

When using our Community  
Fundraising Portal, you can:

- Update and personalise your page at any time
- Share your personalised URL or QR code for quick and easy online donations
- No cash handling required by your conference and all donors will receive a receipt automatically via email
- Saves you time and paperwork

**Please see here for other conference pages:**

**[fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au](https://fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au)**

If your Conference is interested in having a customised page or just want to have a chat about fundraising, please don't hesitate to reach out to Caroline on [caroline.casse@vinnies.org.au](mailto:caroline.casse@vinnies.org.au).



## HAVE ANY OF YOUR DETAILS CHANGED RECENTLY?

It's vital we keep updated data on all of members, so if you have changed any of the following, please let us know:



**Address**



**Phone number**



**Email address**



**Conference**



**Membership status**



**Changes to name**

### Reminder to Members

We are constantly updating our records in the Society People system. It is important that

Vinnies has your most recent and current

details, so that we can advise you of any Society news, changes, etc.

Have you changed any of the following recently?

- phone number and email address
- membership status and Conference
- address
- changes to first/last name

Have you left the Society and are still receiving information?

Please let us know by contacting your Member and Community Engagement Coordinator at:

[John.Ferguson@vinnies.org.au](mailto:John.Ferguson@vinnies.org.au)

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

### MATTHEW TALBOT HOSTEL OZANAM LEARNING CENTRE

Calling all Members and Volunteers. The Matthew Talbot Hostel and Ozanam Learning Centre are seeking your support in their good works assisting the homeless and vulnerable people of Sydney.

The three types of roles available are:

#### Community Support Volunteer—Ozanam Learning Centre (weekdays 10am-4pm)

- Greeting and assisting all who visit the Centre
- Handling phone enquiries and providing administrative support

#### Dining Room Attendant—Matthew Talbot Hostel (weekends only)

- Capacity to lift e.g. chairs onto tables, trays of cutlery
- Helping to set, clear and clean tables

#### Kitchen Support Attendant—Matthew Talbot Hostel (weekends only)

- Assisting in preparing, serving and clearing tea service
- Assisting with vegetable preparations

If you are interested in lending a hand and would like to find out more, please contact the Volunteer Engagement Coordinator—Metro, Christopher Stevens at

[Christopher.Stevens@vinnies.org.au](mailto:Christopher.Stevens@vinnies.org.au)

## THANK YOU

### MAVS Platform

Have you visited the Member and Volunteer Support website?

This site exists to share resources, news, contacts, and events with our members and volunteers. We want to provide members and volunteers with the tools, information and resources that will assist you in your service.

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/home/>

We really want to know what you like and want in the Member and Volunteer online resources platform. Broken Bay Central Council has its own page:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/conferences/broken-bay-central-council/>

For requested updates, please email [john.ferguson@vinnies.org.au](mailto:john.ferguson@vinnies.org.au)

There are also lots of other updates happening on MAVS which you can check in on anytime here:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/mavs-latest-updates/>