

NEW STEP FORWARD FOR CENTRE FOR PARTICIPATION

It's the beginning of a new era at the Centre for Participation, with the announcement of a new acting CEO to lead the local community organisation.

Long-time manager at the Centre for Participation, Robbie Millar, will take the helm in late June following the departure of current CEO Julie Pettett, who will be taking up a leadership position in Queensland.

Ms Pettett said she was proud to have been part of an organisation that has such an impact on the local community.

'It's been an honour to see the Centre for Participation grow into a nationally recognised community development organisation that's at the heart of our regional community,' she said.

'There have been so many highlights, with participation increasing through a whole range of initiatives. The Volunteering Recognition Awards, which started in 2013, have been really important in acknowledging the work of our region's incredible volunteers.

'We've also introduced the Good Governance program to help individuals and community organisations better understand governance, created new opportunities for migrant women, and seen people from all parts of our community get involved and participate through voluntary action.'

Ms Pettett said the Centre for Participation has good foundations, networks and wonderfully committed staff and volunteers – all the important ingredients for a strong future.

'I'm delighted to be moving on at a time when the Centre for Participation is ready to develop its next strategic direction and in a great position to keep making even more impact for our local community,' she said.

Centre for Participation Board Chair, Ray Kingston, agreed that the new appointment was an opportunity to build on the organisation's achievements, especially during challenging times.

'We know that in the wake of COVID-19 there's a lot going on for every organisation at the moment and the Board has every confidence in Robbie providing the stability and leadership we need,' Mr Kingston said.



Julie and Robbie, ready for a new era. Photo courtesy of The Horsham Times

'He has a wealth of experience and skills in this space, and has contributed to the success of the Centre of Participation for many years.

'Combined with his recent completion of a Diploma in Governance, involvement at last year's World Social Enterprise Forum and experience in collaborations that are so key to working in this region, Robbie has the expertise to take the Centre for Participation forward.'

Mr Millar said he was excited by the opportunity to keep contributing to the Wimmera region.

'It's obviously a complicated time, but I'm looking forward to continuing to work with and support my local community,' he said.

'Although the recent health crisis might have affected the way we go about doing things, our focus as an organisation hasn't changed. We'll keep exploring new ways to open up local opportunities to participate, to help build a thriving, connected and resilient community.'

PROFILE — ROBBIE MILLAR

Robbie has lived in Horsham most of his life and has held senior management roles delivering community and learning programs across the Wimmera Southern Mallee for over 17 years.

Prior to commencing with the Centre for Participation in 2011, Robbie held positions with Uniting Wimmera as coordinator of their Residential Care & Foster Care programs and managing their Out of Home Care programs.

His work was supported through his commitment to personal development through a Diploma in Business Governance, Diploma in Business Management, Diploma of Vocational Education & Training plus a Diploma in Training Design and Development. In addition, Robbie is a Member of the Institute of Community Directors. In 2013, he gained the VET Practitioner Fellowship and in 2019, a Higher Education and Skills Fellowship through the International Specialised Skills Institution.

Robbie's community leadership has extended to many years of service as a member of the Festival Committee "Art Is... festival" (including the previous 4 years as Festival Chair) and committee member for the Stawell Neighbourhood House. He was also a key driver in establishing the Wimmera Southern Mallee Community Learning Alliance.

In his most recent role as Manager, Programs & Community Development he has played a crucial role in bringing together Volunteering Western Victoria and the Wimmera HUB. Further, he has demonstrated his skills in leadership, social enterprise, coaching, conflict resolution, program management, public speaking and partnership facilitation supporting organisational growth to strengthen existing and new services.

In 2018, Robbie's qualifications, experience and commitment to social services were recognised by the Victorian government. He was awarded the Higher Education and Skills Fellowship and in 2019, travelled to the United Kingdom and the World Social Enterprise Forum in Ethiopia.

Robbie represented the Centre for Participation at the World Social Enterprise Forum held Addis Ababa and delivered a presentation on "Community-based social enterprises – purpose-driven, transforming places and sharing prosperity."

Along with this international recognition, Programs Robbie has led have received national awards. In 2011 the "Deadly's" Award for Outstanding Achievement in Education, in 2012 the "Learn Local" Koorie Achievement Award and in 2016 "Wurreker" Adult Community Education Award.

Robbie is passionate about improving the life choices and outcomes through education for disadvantaged people living across the Wimmera Southern Mallee. Always looking for opportunities to make a difference, he is dedicated to making our region a better place to live, work, study and raise a family.

VOLUNTEERING WITH CFP — TAKING PART AND CREATING CHANGE

Volunteering is part of our core at the Centre for Participation. We help recruit, train and support quality volunteers, and develop volunteer management systems for organisations that make the process simple. Notably, a very important part of our work is to training and support volunteer managers and coordinators.

Volunteering is activism and though you may not see yourself as a Greta Thunberg or part of Extinction Rebellion, if you are volunteering you are an activist. The word "activism" means to be involved, engaged and doing good. The same as making a difference; giving back to the community, self-development and meeting new people are just some of the reasons why people say they want to volunteer.

Volunteers make a difference! It could be making an extra batch of biscuits that is dropped off, with a list of ingredients, to be presented to palliative care patients and their families, or to support your child's school fundraising drive. Or supporting through time and effort a conference to bring Indigenous women together so they can connect and tell their stories of the work they do in the remote far north.

What about answering a phone call from a young or not so young person who thinks there is nothing worth living for.



Maryann preparing food at Laneway Cafe



Make a difference! Erica delivering another meal

and you help keep them alive? Or planting native trees to encourage the native birds, animals and insects to continue to survive? Or serving on a board or committee, perhaps delivering a meal to an isolated elderly person, or supporting sports events by helping with first aid.

The actions you take as a volunteer, whether large or small, is activism that makes a positive difference to the resilience of our community. So how do you get involved? What skills might be useful?

Relevant skills could include: administrative skills; computing; business skills (e.g. accounting); marketing; social media; and other technological skills. Remember, too, that personal interests or hobbies are also important in helping you decide which volunteering role would suit you best.

After undertaking our Introduction to Volunteering workshop, staff at CFP will make a time to meet with you and discuss volunteer positions available, noting your skills, interests and hobbies in order to match you to the best volunteering position.

So many of our programs are supported by volunteers. In essence, such as our training café with a scheduled roster matching work experience students with core staff members. With trainees combining classes at CFP with valuable 'on the job' skills at the café, the aim is to provide a pathway to paid hospitality work.

Volunteers support many other programs: a meal delivery program and skills training. The former has students involved in food prep and getting out and about in the community, which is particularly valuable for English skills, while the

latter has a small business component – counting money, prep and packing.

One of the students, Maryann, has come a long way – literally. Originally from the Philippines, her husband passed away and she needed to support her three children. With little English and no work experience to speak of, she enrolled in the CFP's hospitality course. It has been a fruitful exercise.

She has found happiness in building friendships and connections. "I feel connected with people," Maryann said. "I feel useful, growing, happy to find work."

Not only has Maryann's language capability improved, being connected to the Centre has enabled her to work on achieving her Australian driving licence. "I could drive on highway!" she happily said. "I will be able to do things on my own, support myself and be with more people."

Her hard work and diligence has paid off. Maryann sometimes helps out with meal deliveries but her dream is to cook more. Either way, she loves the people and is quietly very proud of what she has achieved.

More information on Volunteering can be found via our website or call the Centre on (03) 5382-5607 and ask to speak with Marieke Dam.

MEAL DELIVERIES TO YOUR DOOR!

The meal delivery program is proving popular, with meals prepared Monday to Friday (weekend deliveries are prepared each Friday). At present there are 45 unique customers and there's capacity for more. All meals are prepared fresh in the kitchen daily, with the help of the hospitality students, then delivered directly to the door.

The program is growing and its service is helping keep older people independent in their own homes for longer. Work experience students accompany staff on delivery rounds – excellent opportunities to practice English and customer service skills – while clients can understand and see the social enterprise concept as a genuine and valuable entity. This service is also a lovely 'dinner at home' alternative for busy families.

More information on Meals Deliveries to your Door call the Centre on (03) 5382 2320, we can send you a weekly menu or view on our website at centreforparticipation.org.au/laneway-cafe

LYN MARGETTS – ENJOYING A HOT MEAL

Lyn Margetts moved from Haven into the Wimmera Lodge Retirement Village some 5 years ago. She has enjoyed her time at the Village with 'time passing very quickly'. She takes a drive on a weekly basis however the cooking of meals is becoming a bit of a chore.

Lyn orders meals delivered to her door a couple of times each week. She "loves the soups and sweets (with) pumpkin soup one of her favourites". Lyn used to make this a lot, however now the lifting of heavy saucepans is too much for her.

"The volunteers knock on my door and the meals are placed on my walker for easy access. I love having a hot meal prepared for me, especially the roasts and veggies as I don't cook roasts for myself anymore".

YOUNG G (GENERATION): POSTCARDS

The Young G youth group have recently sent messages of hope to isolated members of the community as part of a new initiative.

The Purpose of Young G is to create a unique 'happy place' where young people of all backgrounds come together on a regular basis to participate in social and recreational activities, to learn new skills, establish social connections and build a sense of belonging.

With public gatherings off limits, the group has turned their attention to creating postcards for those in the neighbourhood who might need cheering up.

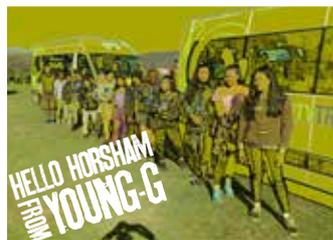
Eddie Nsanzimana moved from Rwanda to Australia in 2006 and is one of the group leaders.

He said the idea was to put a smile on people's faces.

"The postcards were handwritten, not typed up or emailed, and they are all personal messages," Mr Nsanzimana said.

"We had six families (with multiple siblings) involved and they all worked from home to produce about eight postcards each".

"They were delivered on or around Anzac Day so it was a nice time for people to get something in their letterbox," he said.



DID YOU KNOW?

**THE CENTRE FOR
PARTICIPATION 2019–2020
SOCIAL INDICATORS
INCLUDES:**

169,170 KM'S

travelled in 2019–2020

3,867.5 HOURS

donated by volunteers for social participation in 2019–2020

1636 MEALS

prepared since covid: 1 April to 14 June 2020

521 CLIENTS

received meals: 1 April to 14 June 2020

FROM THE LANEWAY COOKS

SPECIAL RECIPES

FOR THE FUDGE BROWNIE BASE (YUM)

Ingredients

- > 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted and HOT
- > 1 tablespoon cooking oil, (olive oil or coconut oil are fine)
- > 1 1/8 cup superfine sugar, (caster sugar or white granulated sugar)*
- > 2 large eggs
- > 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- > 1/2 cup all purpose (or plain) flour
- > 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- > 1/4 teaspoon salt

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).

1. Lightly grease an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking oil spray. Line with parchment paper (or baking paper); set aside.
2. Combine hot melted butter, oil and sugar together in a medium-sized bowl. Whisk well for about a minute. Add the eggs and vanilla; beat until lighter in colour (another minute).
3. Sift in flour, cocoa powder and salt. Gently fold the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients until JUST combined (do NOT over beat as doing so will affect the texture of your brownies).
4. Pour batter into prepared pan, smoothing the top out evenly. (OPTIONAL: Top with chocolate chunks or chocolate chips.)
5. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the centre of the brownies in the pan no longer jiggles and is just set to the touch (the brownies will keep baking in the hot pan out of the oven). If testing with a toothpick, the toothpick should come out dirty for fudge-textured brownies.
6. Remove and allow to cool to room temperature before slicing into 16 brownies.

OPTIONAL ADD INS:

1. Crushed walnuts, peanuts, almonds, pecans, chocolate chips, peanut butter chips, chocolate chunks, dried fruit (cranberries, raisins, etc)

Notes

*Regular white, granulated, sugar can be used if you can't find caster sugar. For even fudgier brownies, use half white and half light brown sugar!

TIPS AND TRICKS:

1. Whisk your butter and sugar really well.
2. Beat in your eggs for a good minute. This step is crucial for that crackly top
3. Do NOT over beat your batter once the flour and cocoa powder are added. THAT creates air pockets in the batter which will give you cake-like textured brownies.
4. Try NOT over bake them. Check them at around the 15 minute mark and keep your eye on them. As some ovens run hotter than others, timing is a guide only. Our oven bakes them at exactly 21:30 minutes. Another oven we tested them in baked them at 18:40 minutes. You can go a little bit over if you like them set a bit more, but I don't recommend it if you're looking for the fudgiest brownies in this lifetime.
5. I bake my brownies on the top shelf in the oven. I find the middle shelf cooks them a lot faster and dries them out. If your oven runs hotter at the top half, move them to the middle shelf.

FOR THE ROCKY ROAD TOP

Ingredients

- > 100g/4oz butter
- > 500g milk chocolate, roughly chopped
- > 3 tbsp golden syrup
- > 20 marshmallows, halved with scissors
- > 85g Raspberry lollies
- > 85g glazed cherries

Instructions

1. Melt chocolate until silky and smooth.
2. Mix chocolate through all dry ingredients in large bowl.
3. Place mix on top and chill in the refrigerator.
4. Cut using hot sharp knife.

Enjoy.





YES! I WISH TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE CENTRE FOR PARTICIPATION BECAUSE I KNOW TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

You can make your donation online via <https://centreforparticipation.org.au/donate/>

OR

I will make through a donation now:

(Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss)

First Name

Surname:

Position:

Organisation:

Address:

State

Postcode

Telephone:

Mobile:

Email:

My cheque is enclosed (please make payable to: Centre for Participation Inc

OR

Please debit my credit card Visa Mastercard

\$50 \$150 \$250 My choice \$ _____

Cardholder's Name:

Card No:

Expiry Date:

Security Code:

Signature:

OR

I would like to make a monthly donation to the Centre for Participation

Please debit my bank account on _____ commencing the month of July 2020

Day of each month

My account details are: BSB Number:

Account Number:

Account Name:

Thank you.

Your gift is tax deductible and a receipt will be sent to you via email. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible. ABN: 17857841823

Please send to me information about naming the Centre for Participation in my Will

PRIVACY STATEMENT: Details you supply us are entered into the Centre for Participation database. We adhere to the Privacy Act. We do not disclose your information to third parties.

PLEASE RETURN TO:

Centre for Participation, PO Box 267 HORSHAM VIC 3402

