



TaskForce

Annual Report 2011/2012

Epiphany Art Exhibition, July 2012. Sam Myrick 'Scattered'.



A selection of works from the Epiphany Art Exhibition, July 2012.

A) Bradley Matthews 'Goanna'. B) Simon Gatt 'Apple tree'.
 C) Sam Myrick 'Reset kid 2 kid on the run'. D) Ian Beardsworth 'Full moon'.
 E) Louise Pemberton 'Duck'. F) Simon Forbes 'Mum's garden'.
 G) Simon Forbes 'Trial Warrior'. H) Ben Cram 'Evil coy fish'.
 I) Simon Forbes 'Flinders Street Station'. J) Ian Beardsworth 'Mushroom Hotel'.
 K) Damian Greganic 'Epiphany'. L) Bradel Matthews 'Outback'.

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Vision, Mission and Values



TaskForce
A force for lifelong change.....

Our Vision
Giving life changing opportunities for those most in need.

Our Mission
How do you get a second chance when society often doesn't care about you in the first place?

TaskForce is committed to creating positive outcomes for people disengaged

or living on the margins of the community. Whether they have been born into poverty and disadvantage, overwhelmed by a major crisis, trapped by addiction, mental health, circumstance or are simply seen by some as "too difficult to deal with", it is our goal to help provide them with the life changing opportunity to meet their full potential no matter how tough the circumstances. We never give up on giving people a chance to realise their true potential.

Our Values
Our Values are the cornerstone of the TaskForce culture. They reflect the behaviours that shape how we work with our clients, our partners and each other thereby creating a culture that maximises the organisation's effectiveness and relevance.

Client Centred
We strive to support our clients and their extended networks to change their circumstances. We will collaborate so that our full range of services and supports are wrapped around them enabling each to reach their full potential.

Innovation and Best Practice
We will be cutting edge in all that we do leading to evidence-based best practice within the sector. Our people will be passionate and motivated to make a difference.

Thought Leadership
We are committed to addressing the tough moral challenges faced and sensitivities that abound in our sector, leading consequent debate and adapting as broader positions held by society evolve.

Honesty and Integrity
We do our utmost to communicate openly, honestly and respectfully. We collaborate and share accountability with colleagues and clients alike. We acknowledge that as we learn, mistakes may be made but that this learning will make us stronger.

Trust, Respect and Self-care
We collaborate to create a work environment built on trust and respect where our people and consortium partners are supported and challenged to lead best practice. We recognise that responsibility for self-care is also a foundation to achieve excellence in the services we deliver.



President's Report

I am pleased to report that TaskForce has had a very successful FY2011/12. We continue to pursue our Vision to provide life changing opportunities for those most in need in ways that are aligned with our established values.

This year TaskForce met most of our objectives in a financially responsible way with the leadership team ensuring the Association did not incur a financial operating deficit. This was particularly fortuitous as, in line with the performance of global financial markets, our investment portfolio that provides TaskForce with a financial safety net, saw a decline in its value.

Increasingly, TaskForce operates with other like and complementary organisations in Consortiums, examples of which are cited in the following CEO Report. Government is actively promoting this trend believing it improves effectiveness and efficiency, lowers overall costs and enables services to be more widely available with greater consistent quality. We have consequently needed to adapt our organisation, systems and processes to this new operating environment. This is still a work-in-progress.

The Board (Committee of Management) continued to function utilising a sub-committee business model. This model enables greater focus, better skill utilisation of individual Board members whilst factoring in time constraints facing voluntary members with a variety of other responsibilities and commitments. I thank them all for their various contributions.


During the year Peter Thomas retired from the Board. His seven years of service has been exemplary. I would like to highlight his leadership in establishing a compliance framework at TaskForce and driving our successful QICSA accreditation. The latter gives recognition to the fact that we are operating to the highest standards expected of the not-for-profit sector and is increasingly an important pre-requisite for successfully winning tenders and grants.

Our CEO, Ray Blessing, has now completed his first full financial year leading our Association. I have highlighted above that FY2011/12 has been very

successful - much credit for this goes to Ray. I would like to give recognition to his leadership by example, clear focus and direction, enthusiasm and highly purposeful drive. However, success cannot be solely attributable to a CEO, the entire executive team and staff, who are all highly dedicated with the essential goodness of heart so necessary in a sector that assists those with major social issues, have very significantly contributed to meeting our goals and most importantly giving our clients another chance. I would like to put on record my sincere appreciation of their efforts.

Finally I wish to again thank our supporters and friends - their contributions come in many ways and play an important part in our being a community organisation.

Next year we will be celebrating TaskForce's forty years of incorporation, I look forward to another successful year with many more to come.


John Bower



Chief Executive Officer's Report

TaskForce is an organisation driven by improving the life experience for individuals and their families. This was recently reflected in a comment to me from the father of one of our clients. In his late 40s, the client was involved in TaskForce's Art Therapy Program. Speaking at the TaskForce Art Exhibition, the father said: "Thank you to TaskForce for bringing my son back to life. We haven't seen him smile like this since he was 12. (To see him like this) makes our whole family so happy." This story captures the very the essence of TaskForce - that of changing people's lives for the better.

TaskForce is a charity that has, over its 40 year history, adapted its services to meet the ever-changing requirements of Governments, funding departments and shifting needs of consumers. However, within the regulatory changes that affect us, one aspect of our organisation has never changed - our focus on delivering quality outcomes for people and their families, who are the financially and socially disadvantaged in our society. TaskForce's success at supporting these individuals and at managing and responding to change is reinforced by our

unwavering commitment to innovation, partnerships and people development. We are truly fortunate to receive outstanding support from the Federal Government, through its Departments of Health and Ageing, Employment Education and Employment and Training (DEEWR). We have also had wonderful support from Victoria's Department of Health, Department of Justice, Skills Victoria and Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE).

During the past year, TaskForce has continued to develop and expand a broad range of new and innovative programs and services. A particular highlight was the growth of our 'Money4Jam' Program, which is run in collaboration with Corrections Victoria, and funded through the DEEWR Innovation Fund. The program is aimed at supporting women referred from Corrections Victoria and provides training in food services to increase their employment opportunities.

TaskForce's innovative 'Wrap Around Service' has also grown and now provides services to Job Services Australia, including MatchWorks and The Salvation Army Employment Plus. This service supports

"Thank you to TaskForce for bringing my son back to life. We haven't seen him smile like this since he was 12. (To see him like this) makes our whole family so happy."

job seekers with long-term mental health or addiction issues, providing counsellors to work both on a one-to-one and group basis with them as they prepare to transition back to employment.

Through TaskForce's dynamic team at Moorabbin, we established an exciting Art Therapy program, which culminated in an art exhibition held at the Kingston Art Gallery, which showcased a wonderful exhibition of clients' work. Thanks must go to Art Therapist, Juliette Goodall who has passionately led the program and delivered great outcomes.

I am pleased to report our existing consortium partnerships continue to thrive. The DEEWR funded Youth Connections programs, which operate across Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs, are successfully engaging young people disengaged or at risk of disengaging from education. The consortiums include Youth Xpress, South East Youth Connections and the Peninsula Youth Services - all operating to deliver positive outcomes for young people.

The 'Stepping Up' consortium (a partnership between TaskForce, Odyssey House, Interact Australia and

Youth Projects) continues to grow and recently received further funding from the Department of Health to expand its Therapeutic Alcohol and Other Drugs Program from its current bases in Werribee, Melton and Pakenham into the City of Casey. In announcing the expansion, the Victorian Minister for Mental Health, the Hon. Mary Wooldridge MP, said 'Stepping Up' was a leading example of how support services should be delivered: "Instead of having a system that looks at an issue at a wide level, we have to start looking at people as individuals." Mother-of-three, 'Amanda' was one to benefit from the service. The Pakenham-based service supported 'Amanda' to really get her life back on track following issues she had with drug and alcohol problems. The Therapeutic 4Cs service provided support and counselling and assisted with an immediate detox program. "It saved my life," said 'Amanda'. "Once you're clean, you can focus on the other things that are causing you problems."

TaskForce is also fortunate to enjoy great relationships with our stakeholders, particularly Federal and State government departments that fund the bulk of our

services and our Consortium partners. We are dedicated to relationships built on trust with agencies that share our values and commitment to holistic client services.

TaskForce is also fortunate to have a great team of staff working across our services, supported by an energetic and dedicated Executive Team, which includes Tracey Fenton, Danny Alcock, Denise Abadee, Sunder Madabushi, Salli Englander, Tracy Shoshan and Natalie Siegel. All decisions at TaskForce are made in a consultative framework with shared accountability and ownership and I appreciate the great support and leadership I enjoy daily from the Executive Team.

The long-term success of TaskForce is ensured by a highly competent, professional and dynamic Board, led by our President John Bower, from whom I receive great guidance and support. The TaskForce Board is passionate about our clients and committed to providing our staff with the education, tools and resources they need to deliver the best possible services. We are fortunate to have a Board that is governance-focused and allows the executive to deliver results in line with our annual budget and strategic plan.

We appreciate the ongoing support from the Friends of TaskForce and the Burnett Family, which provides scholarships for staff development. This year we were also fortunate to receive financial support from the Victorian Department of Justice to continue our 'Money4Jam' Program, a donation from ADDVIC (a peer support agency for families with attention deficit issues) for client support and funding from the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust to develop a youth-orientated arm of our 'Money4Jam' Program.

Finally, I look forward to the year ahead where we will celebrate 40 years of TaskForce and of continuing to develop strong relationships with our partners in both Government and community agencies. We will continue to work to support the change process and ensure our consumers are at the heart of every service we deliver and the programs we provide.

Ray Blessing





Chief Financial Officer's Report

FY2011/12 was particularly successful financially from an operating perspective. An Operating Surplus of \$53.4k was achieved, well ahead of the FY2010/11 result of \$8.8k. Total Gross Income was below prior year but the higher Operating Surplus was achieved due to significantly lower Operating Expenses.

The lower Gross Income can largely be attributed to the conclusion of the Farm Force project at Collingwood Children's Farm. Without the corresponding expenses associated with this labour expense intensive project, the higher Operating Surplus was achieved. Additionally, improved cash and receivables management resulted in higher bank interest earnings which also contributed to this improved surplus.

Net investment results are awaiting final audit. However, in line with global stock market conditions, a Gross Investment decline is expected to be reported compared to the significant gains reported in FY2010/11. Consequently

a lower overall Net Surplus versus prior year will be reported.

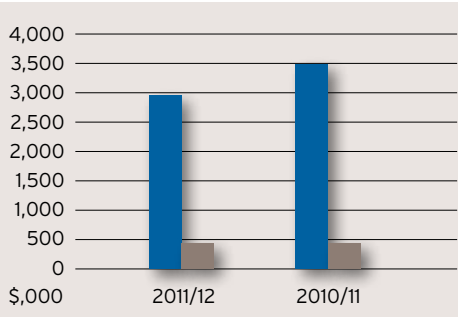
More effective financial management processes were implemented during the year. This has enabled better management and control and has in particular assisted Program Managers to better review their individual operations. TaskForce Information Technology and Communications platforms were reviewed and, partially through outsourcing, we have been able to access better/more modern systems at an attractive cost.

The Board has accepted the auditor's recommendation to revalue the land and buildings at Moorabbin to reflect its current market/replacement value of \$1.4 million.

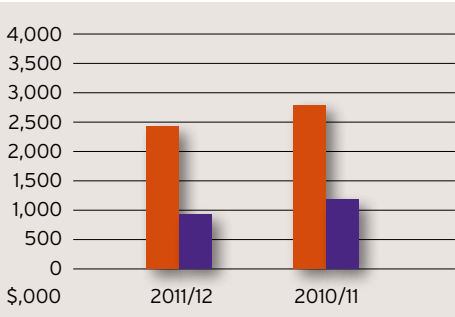
Sunder Madabushi

TaskForce Community Agency Inc. Summary of financial performance for the financial year 2011-12		
Item	2011/12	2010/11
	\$,000	\$,000
Government Grants	2,939	3,528
Other Income	487	481
Total Income	3,426	4,009
Staff Costs	2,447	2,817
Other Expenses	926	1,184
Total Expenses	3,373	4,000
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	53	9

Note 1. 2011/12 figures unaudited.



Government Grants Other Income



Staff Costs Other Expenses



From the Program Managers Transition to Work Services

The Transition to Work Program has responsibility for a number of programs which include; Youth Connections, TaskForce Training Services, Education and Project Development. Our past year has seen a positive consolidation of our partnerships in Youth Connections across the Southern Region with staff exceeding targets and providing disengaged youth fantastic support and programs to assist them in their return to education and employment.

TaskForce and their partner agencies' staff have worked with over 1500 young people and their families in 2011/2012 across our Youth Connections services. Our most significant service is the growth corridor region, in the City of Casey and Shire of Cardinia with over 400 young people being part of our Case Management service or Re-engagement activities. Our striving for best practice has resulted in recognition from our funding body requesting TaskForce to deliver Youth Connections systems training to a number of other providers across the State of Victoria.

The Youth Connections program, a DEEWR funded national program, was established to help young people who have disengaged from school, or are at risk of disengaging early from school, to continue with their education and ultimately gain a Year 12 (or equivalent) level education. Many of the young people

in this target group come with complex social and emotional problems, often exacerbated or caused by experience of or exposure to family violence. They come from families living with poverty, joblessness, high levels of stress, conflict and substance abuse issues. This all adds to the difficulty these young people have in participating and remaining in school and/or training, hence they are over represented in the cohort which Youth Connections programs service. Our staff provide a service that young people are happy to access and are successful in achieving a large percentage of clients into sustainable education or employment options.

Education - this area of TaskForce has doubled in staffing in the past 12 months with Pat Hamdorf promoted from our Farm Force program. Our service has increased with the delivery of a number of Mental Health First Aid courses to a

variety of services including Kangan Batman Indigenous Training program, Youth Services; ACSO in partnership with Alfred CAMHS to a number of community agencies that work with young people and a variety of alternative education programs.

TaskForce Training Services have also created programs that reflect the needs of organisations such as Job Mate - a mentoring program for those who employ young people, engaging difficult clients, Retention of Staff through Supervision. All these programs have a theme of well being and workforce support running through them. Our alcohol and other drug training programs have also increased in popularity and we have tripled the number conducted from last year.

As a Learn Local provider we have been recognised for our expertise in working with businesses with the successful Capacity and Innovation grant to develop a website for providers and business to access resources and support to increase workforce knowledge at a local level. We were also privileged to co-ordinate the Big Day Out, a training day for Learn Local teachers and co-ordinators that showcased a number of industries and

how local partnerships can be developed. Our thanks to the ACFE Board and especially our local Southern Metropolitan Region of ACFE for their continued support with funding and professional development opportunities over the past year and we look forward to working with them in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my staff, the TaskForce CEO and Executive Team and the TaskForce Board for their support and assistance in making our services successful and well respected throughout Victoria, especially in the Southern Region of Melbourne. It is through their hard work and innovation that TaskForce is a leader in youth service provision. Our programs would not work as efficiently and successfully without our partners and the ongoing support that they provide to our services. I look forward to working with them in the year ahead.

Tracey Fenton



Counselling and Community Services

During the year TaskForce Counselling and Community Services delivered with quality and compassion. The ongoing, outstanding performance of the drug and alcohol (4Cs) team has once again seen us reach our funded targets for Episodes of Care and receive positive acknowledgement from the Department of Health with additional AoD funding for youth services in the Cities of Casey and Cardinia. There have been some new additions to the team and an increased capacity to work collaboratively with the Forensic Services team. Benefits include increased outcomes for clients, development opportunities for team members and the production of excellent resources to be utilised across TaskForce Clinical Services.

The support from Department of Health and Ageing (DOHA) through Dual Diagnosis funding for Capacity Building and the Breaking the Barriers through NGOTGP (Non-Government Organisations Treatment Grants Program) is immensely appreciated.

Breaking the Barriers has once again been an outstanding program to complement TaskForce values in working holistically with clients and their families.

The foundations of the framework for research have been laid and we are looking forward to formally measuring the great outcomes this unique program consistently achieves. Breaking the Barriers has seen an increase in referrals from the indigenous community to 50% of families (at the time of this report) currently in assistance.

Money4Jam has seen its DEEWR innovation contract successfully complete. TaskForce is extremely grateful to DEEWR for its support and faith in funding this exciting and innovative program. Money4Jam has helped over 80 women referred from the criminal justice system achieve accredited training while completing Community Work hours and giving back to the community. TaskForce has continued this initiative as it has seen the benefits participants have gained from their involvement. Many women continue in the program voluntarily in order to mentor and support newer participants. The ongoing learning, peer support and confidence-building this program continues to provide validates the principals of patience, trust and community that TaskForce values so highly.

Overall in the past year TaskForce Clinical Services has improved the lives of thousands of individuals and their families. We have been extremely active in delivering the BottleWise program to local schools, providing important education to year 8 students about the risks associated with alcohol and binge drinking. The implementation of the 'skills building' group to assist clients to learn healthy coping strategies and skills to complement their individual therapy. The Art Therapy group has grown and developed and seen some amazing individual achievements including the TaskForce inaugural 'Epiphany' Art exhibition at the Kingston Art Gallery.

I would like to acknowledge the entire Clinical Services team for their ongoing dedication and commitment to the people they work with. Without these talented individuals who inspire us everyday we come to work, there would be a lot of less fortunate people in the community.

Thank you.

Danny Alcock



Forensic and Specialist Services

The past year has seen extraordinary growth and change within our incredibly skilled Forensic team. While impossible to express in words, I would like to recognise the fantastic and inspirational team members whose qualities and work are a joy to be associated with. Due to our highly professional, supportive and responsive work, we have witnessed three new positions being developed to facilitate the program supporting participants to achieve their goals. Increased funding has enabled the new structure to develop Senior Clinician, Youth Outreach and Forensic Clinician roles ensuring timely access and best practice to a broader consumer group, reducing offending and increasing community safety.

Over the past year, resulting from our enhanced community profile, we have witnessed considerably higher rates of referrals from the Courts, Corrections, COATS, Police and self referrals. Additionally during this time, we have focused on building capacity for Forensic referrals at the Prahran site, facilitating client access to treatment on a daily basis.

The TaskForce Forensic team has expanded on the number of placements offered to students from various Victorian tertiary institutions, such as Australian Catholic University, RMIT, Swinburne and

Chisholm Institute. Eight provisional psychologists and one student completing their Bachelor of Community Mental Health/Alcohol and Other Drugs have successfully completed their placements with the TaskForce Forensic Team in the last year. Currently, we have three students on placement and we look forward to building on the student placement opportunities at TaskForce. The student placement program provides a rich resource in offering a broader tapestry of client/clinician matching, along with the bonus in attracting quality staff upon completion of their placement.

With increased positive collaboration within the TaskForce Clinical team, the Forensic program has developed a pilot group integrating mindfulness practices, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT) interventions. Over eight weeks the Skills Building Group covers five modules including Relapse Prevention, Communication Skills, Distress Tolerance Skills, Emotional Regulation Skills, and Mindfulness. As it is a pilot group and with initial positive feedback, the evaluation of the program's effectiveness is much anticipated.

Without the support of our wide-ranging partners the success of the Forensic Program would not be sustainable. These include Court Support Services, COATS, Corrections, CREDIT, CISP, Jasper Family Medical Practice, Australian Catholic University, Employment Plus and the Magistrates Court of Victoria.

In conjunction with TaskForce Training Services we have also spent considerable effort in preparing and attaining accreditation to deliver Drink Drive programs, with an entirely new program being developed.

Wrap Around Services in the Southern Region is developing with increased stream four referrals. This program has referred clients to the Art Therapy program resulting in fostering ongoing collaboration and partnerships.

Our thanks and gratitude are extended to the TaskForce administrative team, along with our valued Executive team and Board of Management who make it easier to provide the valuable services to our ever growing programs.

Denise Abadee



North West Wrap Around Services

The past year has been a period of growth and discovery for Wrap Around Services (WAS) in the North West (NW). We end the year having grown our team to three counsellors and one manager/counsellor, increased our representation at MatchWorks Employment Services from five to ten sites, and lifted our monthly new-referral rate by 50%. The WAS NW team has expanded its range of services to include development and delivery of therapeutic group programs for clients focusing on life skills, assertiveness and anger management, and alcohol and other drugs training for employment consultants. Our team is particularly proud of the collaborative client/consultant/counsellor triads we have nurtured.

An integral aspect of our holistic approach to improving clients' mental health involves enhancing client capacities to negotiate basic needs such as shelter, safety, food, medical attention and personal care. To this end, we commenced building a dynamic resource of information, services and referrals for

clients in the North West. We have been particularly active in linking clients into Government mental health, dental and allied health programs, as well as into specialist services addressing Hepatitis C, refugee trauma, childhood sexual assault, motor vehicle accidents and victims of crime compensation. We have also sought to enhance therapeutic outcomes by undertaking evidence-based training and learning in addition to regular professional and peer supervision. The team feels privileged to participate in our clients' life journeys.

Over the following year, we hope to extend our enquiry in order to develop effective new partnerships and innovative, sustainable programs that reflect and address the experience of those living in the North West.

Salli Englander



Stepping Up Consortium – ‘Take the First Step’

Stepping Up is a community based, not-for-profit Consortium funded primarily by the Victorian Department of Health. The organisation is governed by the Executive Group, comprising of senior management from the Consortium’s partners: TaskForce, Odyssey House, Interact and Youth Projects. Day-to-day operations are carried out by the General Manager and staff. Currently we operate two contracts: Therapeutic Alcohol and Other Drugs and Link Out program for pre and post release prisoners in Loddon Mallee based in Castlemaine.

General Manager of Therapeutic Alcohol and Other Drugs Program

In 2011/12 we have continued to focus on delivering quality programs and services that align with our strategic objectives, including: providing evidence-based best practice, increasing access for families and the community, and building solid community relationships. Stepping Up has been meeting and exceeding targets at our sites in Melton, Werribee and Pakenham and increasing our presence within the high growth areas of Melbourne. We are implementing a focused and co-ordinated approach to meet rapidly expanding community needs.

We were awarded a new contract for the City of Casey based in Cranbourne, opened in September 2012. This has established Stepping Up as leaders in

Enhanced Therapeutic Alcohol and Other Drug counselling and brings new and exciting challenges as we apply our population health approach to a new community audience.

Our Services

Stepping Up has served over 4000 individuals and family groups. This year, our team has continued to deliver high quality treatment and intervention as well as providing community education, training and health promotion activities right across Melbourne. In mid-2012 Stepping Up was invited to participate in service delivery for Forensic clients. Regularly exceeding outcomes for this service further demonstrates that Stepping Up is a leader in delivering effective counselling services.

Our Approach

Our objectives could not be achieved if we worked in isolation. We are fortunate to have strong partnerships within the Consortium and to be working with a wide range of organisations who often service clients with substance misuse concerns. We are committed to continue our shared knowledge/learning approach. We thank all the individuals and organisations that have worked in partnership with us during the course of this year. Demonstratively, in March we hosted the ‘Pathways to Recovery’ Symposium in which 15 keynote speakers, from wide cross sections of the community, shared insights and clinical knowledge. Participants included: Police Department/Law Enforcement, the Department of Health, Employment Services, internationally recognised academics, and service users.

Our People

Stepping Up is extremely fortunate to have a talented and committed team of staff. They continue to strengthen this exciting and rewarding organisation, showing leadership within the sector

and I thank them all. During the year we have had minimal staffing changes. We continue to grow and strengthen our teams and partnerships. Finally, thank you to all of the CEOs and other members of the NGOs who generously give their time to this consortium.

Shelley Cross



The Board



John Bower
President



Ron Barnacle
Immediate Past President



Sue Bradshaw
Vice-President



Rosetta Isma
Vice-President



Kathy Soros
Treasurer



Andrew Davenport
Board Member



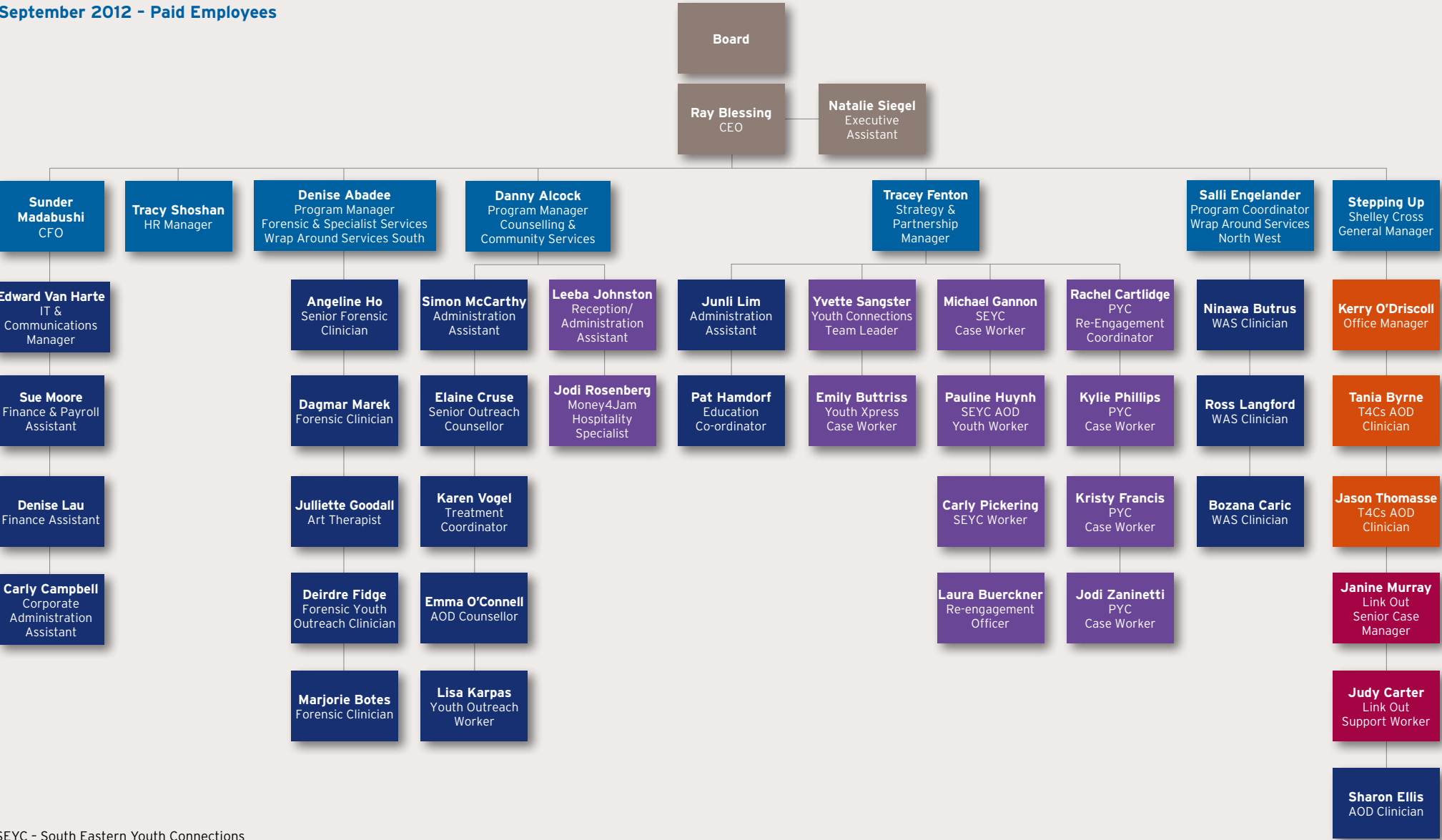
Eddie McFall
Board Member



Debbie Dobbie
Board Member

The Organisation

September 2012 - Paid Employees



SEYC - South Eastern Youth Connections
PYC - Peninsular Youth Connections
WAS - Wrap Around Services
4Cs - Counselling, Consultancy & Continuous Care

TaskForce Over the Years



Good News Stories



Joanne

Joanne is a single mother of three children who are 16, 6 and 3. The two youngest children live with Joanne but she has had irregular contact with her eldest daughter, who resides in a Youth Care program.

An earlier victim of domestic violence, Joanne has suffered depression and ongoing substance abuse and has spent several years in unstable, transient housing. She often shoplifted to feed her family.

Joanne was referred to the TaskForce, 'Money4Jam' program in December 2011 by Community Corrections after being placed on a Community Based Order for multiple offences, (shoplifting and unpaid fines).

During her assessment, TaskForce assisted Joanne to clearly identify the areas in her life she wanted to improve. These included learning new abilities to enhance her

employment opportunities and improving her life skills, including understanding positive parenting of teenagers.

Joanne is now an enthusiastic member of the program, has been courageous in confronting her life challenges and says group therapy is a positive and supportive means to address these very emotional issues, including her substance abuse, because she now realises she's not alone in her challenges.

After committing herself to the program here at TaskForce, Joanne is now working with The Department of Human Services (DHS) toward reunification with her eldest daughter. TaskForce has concurrently been able to extend help to Joanne's daughter and she is now an active member of our 'Youth Xpress' program. This program is directed toward helping her, and other teenagers, address a range of issues which interfere with reaching their full potential, move towards stable education and take advantage of new opportunities in their lives.

Through her involvement in the 'Youth Xpress' program, Joanne's daughter now has a case manager, advocacy and positive role modelling from her youth worker. She is currently enrolled in the Learn to Drive Program (L2P) and talks with her mum regularly. Joanne tells us how much her daughter enjoys engaging with everyone on her support team.

During the short four months Joanne has been participating in 'Money4Jam' she has remained abstinent from alcohol and drugs and has grown significantly. She shows initiative, enthusiasm and leadership skills - even mentoring new members of the group already. Most importantly, she is actively implementing the skills she has learned in the program into her daily life.

Joanne's support workers, and others in her community, acknowledge the changes they see in Joanne. They say she communicates much more effectively in her personal life and is embracing 'positive

parenting'; she is practising putting boundaries into place with her children, which she says proves challenging but enormously rewarding; she has improved her self-care significantly, which she attributes to her increase in self-esteem and self confidence; and she regularly cooks healthy meals for herself and her children.

TaskForce was thrilled that through the 'Money4Jam' program, in just four months, Joanne has recently attained her "Safe Food Handling" Certificate and is now undertaking further education as a medical administrator. She has also re-entered the workforce in a part-time capacity, working as a receptionist at an auto repairs centre.

Joanne works with her 'Money4Jam' pathways worker to manage all her new endeavours. They co-ordinate on a weekly basis to ensure she has educational and emotional support and have secured child care for Joanne's younger children while she studies.

Josh

During Year 10, Josh was asked to leave the private school he attended for "upskirting" (hiding a camera in his shoes and looking up girls' school dresses).

After moving to his local high school, Josh's behaviour towards teachers and other students became highly erratic. He was regularly in detentions and suspended for unruly behaviour in class - not concentrating, swearing and even throwing furniture.

Over the course of the year, the school organised several meetings between Josh, his parents, the Assistant Principal, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).

Eventually, Josh was required to complete his schoolwork in a classroom alone with a teacher or to work at home. In October he was also referred to South East Youth Connections (SEYC), TaskForce's youth services in the Casey Cardinia region, by his school's Assistant Principal and was assigned an SEYC case manager.

At his initial assessment, which he attended with his mother, Karen, Josh was asked about his education, home life, interests and long-term goals. His mother said he was a keen athlete, played local football and cricket and that he wanted to go to The Hallam Sports Academy. To do this though he needed to pass Year 10 with an outstanding recommendation from his school.

After his case manager asked Josh if he felt he could achieve this, he expressed his despondency, saying he didn't believe he could pass Year 10 because he "hated school", every time he went there he "got in to trouble" and was adamant that there was "no way" he was going back there.

Over the following weeks, Josh and his case manager met regularly to discuss his progress. Though Josh's case manager encouraged him to continue his schoolwork and work toward passing Year 10 to pursue his dream, Josh was determined that he didn't want to do this and together they began to explore other options available to him.

Josh said that he would like to try bricklaying, as one of his friends was currently doing the pre-apprenticeship at Berwick Technical Education Centre (TEC) and his employer had offered Josh some work experience.

Josh's case manager helped him apply to Berwick TEC and, to his excitement, he was accepted into the bricklaying pre-apprenticeship. He started his pre-apprenticeship in February 2012 and completed it ahead of time, going on to organise an apprenticeship with a local bricklayer.

After starting his apprenticeship, Josh's self-esteem had improved so much that he no longer needed continuing support from his case manager. He said he felt great about himself for what he had achieved and saw that his Youth Connections case manager's support through TaskForce and assistance had played a large part in helping him realise what he was capable of.



Good News Stories

Jones

'Jones' grew up in an abusive environment where he and his mother were regularly beaten by his violent father. As a teenager he cut off contact with both his parents and moved away from Melbourne.

As a young adult, 'Jones' witnessed the death of his partner in a horrific collision with a truck. Trying to deal with the subsequent trauma and grief, he slid into 20 years of drug and alcohol abuse. During this period he moved back to Melbourne and reunited with his mother.

Four years ago, just as 'Jones' was getting his life back on track, his father violently murdered his mother. Falling into deep depression, he 'self-medicated' his pain with cannabis and heroin and became reclusive.

Eighteen months ago, 'Jones' was referred to TaskForce's 'Wrap Around Services' for counselling. Recognising that he was exhibiting symptoms of Post-Traumatic Syndrome and Agoraphobia, TaskForce referred 'Jones' to a psychologist who specialised in helping people suffering trauma-related disorders.

While continuing to provide counselling and support, TaskForce helped 'Jones' access a myriad of other assistance programs. He was given full access to the Medicare Dental and Allied Health plans and TaskForce assisted with his application to Victims of Crime (VoC) compensation. The TaskForce team also provided 'Jones' with emotional support throughout the duration of his father's criminal trial.



'Jones' recently received news that VoC has approved \$10,000 compensation and funding for 200 further counselling sessions to assist him with his trauma related and substance abuse challenges. He says the outcome and the court's finding of his father's guilt have provided much needed validation and are helping him come to terms with his traumatic experiences.

TaskForce continues to work closely with 'Jones' as he focuses on recovery and re-building his life. This week 'Jones' organised an appointment to gain medical assistance for his chronic depressive symptoms - a small, but significant indicator of his increased capacity and motivation to effect change in his life.



Kelly

Kelly is 23 years old and was diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder at age 18. Two years ago, Kelly left Melbourne for Western Australia with her drug dealer boyfriend. Her lifestyle there was amphetamine-fuelled and chaotic, coming to an abrupt end when she was injured and her boyfriend disabled in a police car chase. Without any other connections in Western Australia, Kelly returned to her family home in Melbourne eight months ago.

While her family still lives together, her father is an alcoholic, her mother is addicted to benzodiazepines and painkillers, her three brothers are unemployed and have drug and alcohol problems, and her 16 year old sister "knows and respects no boundaries". Since her return, Kelly has assumed a 'Cinderella' role; shouldering the burden of cooking, cleaning and generally caring for her parents and siblings, while also contributing a large portion of any income she received towards her father's alcohol supply.

The enormous challenges in Kelly's life were reflected in her behaviour. For eight

months Kelly applied for a number of jobs but was not successful in securing work. However, she was also referred to 'TaskForce Wrap Around Services (WAS)' for counselling by 'Matchworks Employment Services'. Individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder often find it hard to manage their chaotic lives, however Kelly attended all her counselling appointments with TaskForce. Kelly talked with her counsellor about her enjoyment of cooking at home. Together they explored her home-cooking experiences at each subsequent appointment. Kelly's 'WAS' counsellor provided cook books to inspire her passion and helped her recognise ways in which she might use her personal interest in cooking to secure work, which calmed and inspired her and brought her true talents to the fore.

Kelly has been a baker's apprentice for two months now. She is also P-plate ready and has saved almost \$2,000 towards buying a car and moving out of home. She continues to work with the TaskForce 'WAS' counselling team to address her personal challenges and is moving from strength to strength.

Simon

Simon said alcohol had always been a part of family life even when he was a child. "When I had my first drink at 15, I knew I liked it".

Later, Simon worked for several years as a chef both in Australia and overseas. He told us many people in the hospitality industry drink heavily both for social reasons and to reduce work stress. This only exacerbated his problem with alcohol.

As a result of his alcohol abuse, Simon eventually had to give up working as a chef and was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease six years ago. He said his family have been loving and supportive but they and his marriage have suffered enormously because of his heavy drinking.

Simon attempted to stop drinking twice, some years ago, with the help of another Melbourne support service. The first attempt was 10 years ago and,

with the help of counselling, he remained abstinent from alcohol for almost a year. He started drinking again with a few light ales, which descended into heavy drinking within a few weeks. The second time Simon was only able to remain abstinent for a month.

Simon says he has made "hundreds of daily attempts to give up alcohol" relying on willpower, but just couldn't sustain it.

By the time Simon was referred to TaskForce by his doctor, alcohol was severely affecting his life. Driving was a big worry for his family, with his wife persuading him to install an interlock device in to their car which monitors the presence of alcohol in the driver's breath. If alcohol is detected, Simon cannot start the car. Also, Simon told his doctor that when he drank, he felt like eating salty food. This was increasing his weight and exacerbating the symptoms of his Parkinson's disease - both affecting his mobility.

Simon tells us that since becoming involved with TaskForce he feels he has been given a "pressure release valve". Talking with and relating to others in a similar position to his helps with developing positive self-esteem. He feels counselling has helped him deal with his life issues and he sees ongoing work on his alcohol use as essential. Simon believes counselling and the TaskForce 'Art Therapy' program have enabled him to reduce his alcohol use significantly.

Simon told us "Art can be an epiphany". He said the art exhibition he participated in "has given me a beginner's eye-opener. I often do art at home in my small studio, and I now take a greater interest in art exhibitions in the city. I walk out the door of TaskForce with a far healthier outlook on life".



Friends of TaskForce



Friends demonstrate their commitment as supporters of TaskForce by making financial contributions to support our ongoing work for the community. Friends are invaluable contributors to our success.

Through the support of Friends this year TaskForce has been able to:

- 1. Increase the number of programs that we deliver and the number of clients we have been able to support.
- 2. Fund the Burnett Family Scholarship, developing the skill base of TaskForce staff.
- 3. Support the delivery of alcohol and drug prevention programs such as Love Bites and BottleWise.

We gratefully acknowledge the support we receive from Federal, State and Local government, trusts and grant-making organisations, the corporate sector, community organisations and individuals, whose support is both financial and in-kind, pro-bono support.

Government and Community Agencies
ACFE – Learn Local; ACSO COATS; Department of Education Early Childhood Development; Department of Health Science and Training; Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations; Department of Justice & Corrections Victoria; Department of Health & Ageing; Department of Human Services; Interact Australia; Odyssey House Victoria; Youth Projects; The Salvation Army Employment Plus; Mission Australia; Brotherhood of St. Laurence; Southern Health; Skills Plus; Wesley Uniting Care; Skills Victoria; Australian Catholic University; Moorabbin Magistrates Court; Melbourne Magistrates Court; MOIRA Youth Services; BGK LLEN; Collingwood Children’s Farm; Prahran Community Learning Centre; MatchWorks; Mary Woodridge MP (Minister for Mental Health; Women’s Affairs & Community Services); David Davis MP (Minister for Health); Elizabeth Miller MP; David Southwick MP; Clem Newton Brown MP; Bayside Medicare Local; MatchWorks; Campbell Page and Prahran Mission.

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We are extremely grateful for the generous support our Friends of TaskForce, volunteers, students, businesses, community organisations and government departments who continue to support our work and assist us to save lives!

Our Services

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