

Trivia Night Fundraiser for SAF



On the 15th of October 2009 the *Macquarie Bank Foundation Graduate Volunteer Network* sponsored a Trivia Night Fundraiser for Stretch-A-Family. Over 200 people attended including two tables of ten made up of SAF Committee members, staff and other friends of SAF. The function was held at the NSW Leagues Club. The evening was full of fun, frivolity and trivia. We are extremely grateful to all participants who helped us to raise around \$7500 for SAF.

Nicky Johnson the Manager of the Stanmore Program worked very closely with Tim Colebatch, Sarah Hall, Claire Davis and other staff from the Macquarie graduate foundation to plan the event and coordinate the activities on the night. The funds raised will be spread across SAF's programs to improve the quality of life of young people in our care. The Managers of the Foster Care Program, the Stanmore Program and On Track are putting forward proposals for projects which will enhance the services provided by each program.



Nicky with Macquarie Bank Foundation Graduate volunteers

SAF Annual General Meeting

The 2009 AGM was held in the new SAF Head office on Monday 21 September 2009. Our special guest was Kerry Boland the NSW Children's Guardian. During the meeting the contribution made by Mark Lovell as Chairperson of SAF for the past seven years was acknowledged. Mark has steered the agency through a challenging period including the Accreditation, development of a four year Strategic Plan, the Expression of Interest and new funding agreement, and the acquisition and establishment of the new SAF Head Office. Mark decided not to re-nominate for the role but generously agreed to continue to support SAF as an ordinary committee member. We welcome Marie Mooney as the new Chairperson and Narelle Gurney as Assistant Chair. Nicola Stokes was re-elected as Secretary and Sarah Crawford as Treasurer. Other continuing committee members are Phillip Marler, Glenn Redmayne, Michael Alleyne, and Leissa Pitts. This left one casual vacancy on the Committee which has since been filled by a young person who was once a client of SAF.

At the end of the AGM, a DVD of the *2008-09 Year in Review* was shown, and this highlighted quite visually how much SAF has achieved over the past twelve months, including a new funding contract and the establishment of SAF's own head office. The DVD provided lots of inspiration to launch us into the year ahead with energy and enthusiasm.

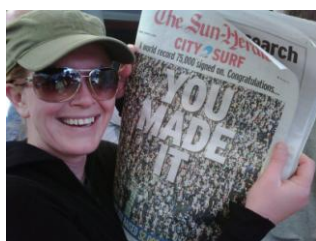
Staff News

SAF is currently enjoying a period where all staff positions are filled, and some members of staff have the opportunity to try their skills in alternative roles as secondments. This staffing stability is the ideal platform for the further development of SAF Programs in particularly a concentrated effort to increase the number of Intensive Foster Care Placements.



We welcomed **Angelique Otene** to our Casual Pool of staff. Angelique is originally from New Zealand and has also gained extensive experience working with vulnerable young people in Qld. She has a passion in wanting to make a difference through empowering others. Angelique was immediately seconded to a part-time position at On Track and has lost no time in demonstrating her skills and abilities in working with young people with varied support needs.

During August 2009, **Patricia Cachia** commenced duties in the Accounts/Payroll position, replacing Ann Nguyen who left following her recent wedding. Patricia has a wealth of relevant experience gained through working with another NGOs in the same area and has settled in well working closely with Ayoob Bhayat with whom the role is shared. Patricia's interests include swimming, walking and reading and she also has interests in conservation. We warmly welcome Patricia to our head office team.



Congratulations to **Kerri Richmond**, Manager Foster Care who organised a team of fundraisers in the 2009 *Sun Herald City to Surf* to raise money for SAF's 50,000 *Cappuccino Appeal*. Other staff who participated were Michelle Piotrowski, Aimey Dang, Ayoob Bhayat and Steve Keppel. All staff recorded very impressive times for completing the race. A total of \$1200 was raised by the team. Other friends of SAF raised a further \$1500 on the same event. A big thank you to all our supporters!

United Parcel Service (UPS) Educational Grant

On the 28 August 2009, *The UPS Foundation* which is supported primarily by grants from UPS made a contribution to Stretch-A-Family of \$10,620 USD. United Parcel Service (commonly referred to as **UPS**), is the world's largest package delivery company. The grant was to enable SAF to conduct a comprehensive *Educational Support Program* at On Track for a twelve month period. The cheque was presented to us during a ceremony held at the UPS Offices and Warehouse in Botany held to commemorate their *Founders Day*. We are honoured to be the recipient of this grant which is already being put to good use.



As a follow up to this generous donation, a team of Volunteers from UPS attended a working bee at Stanmore House on the 29th and 30th of October 2009. This was in keeping with their corporate volunteer month. The Volunteers worked very diligently and painted our young people's lounge-room. They also did some manual work in our garden. The end result is fabulous and we are very thankful for their hard work, courtesy and interest in the work that SAF does. We hope to coax them back next year!

Foster Care News.

Kerri Richmond

During Foster Care Week, the Foster Care team showed our appreciation to our SAF specialist Foster Carers at a support evening by presenting them each with a beautiful hamper as a small gesture to show our recognition for the crucial role they hold in making a difference to the lives of the young people in their care. On the night we welcomed the carers to our new Head Office for dinner and a special guest presentation by Paula Hayden on “Contact and connections”. Thank you to Paula for sharing your valuable experience with the team and for your ongoing support for SAF and of course thank you to the carers who are such a vital part of our team. The gourmet hampers were generously donated by Brad at Sweet Baskets (www.sweetbaskets.com.au).



We are excited to report that one young person has smoothly transitioned into a long term foster placement in the Inner West from Stanmore House. We'd like to welcome the young persons' new specialist carer to our Foster Care Team. As the carer lives locally, the young person has had minimal disruption to his routines and been able to remain in his school and community.

Residential Care News

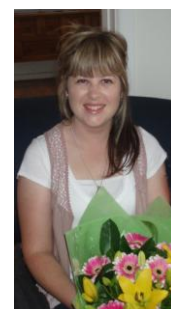
Macquarie Foundation Sports Day. *Nicky Johnson*

On the 2nd of October 2009, the Macquarie Foundation held a sports day for the residential programs at SAF. Brendan and his team including an up and coming Australian Rugby player and Netball player attended and all of our participants had a great day playing sport and interacting positively with the Macquarie foundation Staff. The event was held at Sydney Park and was followed by a BBQ. Each of our young people who participated received a netball or rugby ball, drink bottle and bag. The SAF staff who attended on the day put in a sterling effort in terms of joining in the sports and role modelling to our young people. This was a successful event that we are hoping can be held again in the future.



On Track Educational Support. *Virginia Texeira*

Throughout the 2009 school year, On Track residents had the opportunity to gain individually tailored one-on-one educational support from a qualified secondary school teacher *Coralie Mildwater*. For the 2009-10 Year, the *On Track Educational Support Program* is being funded through a grant received from UPS. Every Monday night the tuition focused on homework support, development of research skills, examination preparation and general academic tasks. In addition, the tutoring program provided residents with the opportunity to gain direction and clarification on assessments set out by their school whilst carrying out their short-term and long-term suspensions. As part of the *Educational Support Program*, Coralie and On Track also successfully delivered employment support strategies to our residents. Coralie is a patient, kind and a respectful person. Her positive attitude towards all our young people made a significant impact on SAF's commitment to meeting the educational needs of young people in out-of-home care. She has been instrumental in providing On Track with the tools to make 2009 a year that provided 52 individually tailored sessions to all our young people. We finished the year with a lovely afternoon tea to say thank you to Coralie and to wish her all the very best for 2010. Unfortunately we are sad to say good-bye, due to her move further north, and a new tutor will now be engaged for the 2010 year. Congratulations to our young people for their commitment to see this school calendar year through. I would like to acknowledge their efforts and achievements. We are proud of you all!



United Way team up with Staff of QBE to support SAF

Virginia Teixeira

On Track Residential Program has had the fortunate experience of welcoming *United Way Australia* back into our premises. *Ross Liddle*, Corporate Volunteer Manager (*Back yard Blitz*), from *United Way* successfully coordinated a huge project for our upstairs residence and the front garden and rear herb plant box

United Way Australia is a volunteer led non-profit, non-denominational organisation that leads, supports and participates in collective, inclusive community efforts that build capacity and mobilise resources to improve lives and create positive, long term social change in local communities.

This particular back yard blitz project was focusing on improving the presentation of the front and back yard, residential and common area

The night before the work was to be done, our residents were reluctant to get ready for this massive over haul. They were sceptical that everything we were promising was finally going to happen. To be honest, I was also doubtful that everything would be done in a day. On the contrary, *United Way Australia* and *QBE* staff achieved the goal of painting the walls of every resident's bedroom. Each room received a vibrant feature wall, and the common area now looks like a lounge room belonging to a family home. The front yard and the back yard herb garden were also treated to a facelift.



On Wednesday 4 November 2009 the On Track team welcomed a group of 90 volunteer staff from *QBE*. We met staff from their Human Resource department and welcomed *QBE* employees from Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. There were two volunteer group sessions. The morning team had the chance to see the 'before' stage and worked so diligently that the morning schedule was completed well in advanced of time.

The afternoon team did get to see the final product, and were in high spirits right to the very end. *QBE* Management team was a great motivator and support for the entire team of volunteers. Within a six hour timeframe, the change to the house was immediate. I was so touched by every person's generosity and kind regard. It looked like we had been visited by angels. The impact of this overhaul is not just a financial savings but it also reminds our residents that the community does respect them and do know that they are deserving of living in a home-like environment.

I would to take this opportunity to thank *United Way Australia* and their corporate sponsors including *QBE* who allowed their staff the time to work on this project and *Murobond Superior Paints* who donated all the paint used in this venture. SAF is appreciative of your contribution. This project has the capacity to keep on giving to many young people in out-of home care who are supported by SAF, now and in the future.

