

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

A newsletter for supporters of
St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland

AUTUMN 2018

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St Vincent de Paul Society
QUEENSLAND

good works



FROM THE STATE PRESIDENT



Welcome to the Autumn 2018 edition of *Making a Difference*, a special publication designed to celebrate our supporters, volunteers and members.

Because of your generous support we were able to provide Doug with clothes, food and accommodation after he lost everything in a house fire. You have

also helped people like Brian (page 7) obtain qualifications as part of our education program. Doug has turned his life around to become a motivational speaker and Brian is set to graduate in 2018 with a Certificate in Liberal Studies.

Doug and Brian's battles to overcome disadvantage inspire us to continue the good work we do and remind us not to take anything for granted.

In recognition of our amazing volunteers, and in lieu of National Volunteer Week coming up in May 2018, pages 4 & 5 feature Daniel and Anne, two volunteers who dedicate their time in very different ways. Daniel is a member of our Brisbane Helpline team, a team responsible for answering over 92,000 calls for help in 2017 alone; and Anne, whose 20 years' experience in the electricity industry is put to good use by providing vital support to struggling families in the Inala community. The stories of Daniel and Anne show the breadth and diversity of the Vinnies Queensland volunteer network.

I extend my grateful thanks, not only to Daniel and Anne, but to all the 9,297 dedicated members and volunteers across Queensland who give of their time, energy and compassion to offer a hand up to those in need. These are the faces of Vinnies and we salute you.

Thank you for taking the time to read the following pages. I hope you will be inspired, and in closing I thank you in anticipation for your continued support.

God bless,

John Forrest

John Forrest
State President,
St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland

WHY WE HELP



1 in 8



Queenslanders live below the POVERTY LINE

1 in 5



experience MENTAL ILLNESS

HOW WE HELP

Centres of Charity (Vinnies shops)	Family support centres	Food distribution	Aged and disability services
Mental health services	Child and family support services	Drug and alcohol support	Youth services
Disaster relief	Overseas services	Special works	Housing and homelessness support
Social justice	Financial wellbeing services	Migrant and refugee services	Education services

Making a Difference is produced by
St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland.

All correspondence can be sent to:
St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland
PO Box 3351 South Brisbane QLD 4101
Email: dosomething@svdpqld.org.au



TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

To donate call 13 18 12 or visit www.vinnies.org.au/donate

Follow us on Social Media





THE INSPIRING STORY OF DOUG HERRINGTON

Doug is a battler who draws strength from the challenges he has overcome in his life. Having faced mental illness, homelessness, substance addiction - and won - Doug's biggest test came in October 2011 when the house he was living in burnt down - with him inside.

Doug was pulled from the flames of the fire that almost claimed his life, but was left with third degree burns to over 50 per cent of his body. After a long hospital battle and more than 200 operations, Doug became a recluse.

Vinnies Queensland volunteers, who had already been helping Doug on and off for more than 30 years, stepped in to give him a hand up once again. When Doug was offered a home at Brisbane social housing centre 'Common Ground', he was given a hospital bed so he could elevate his feet to overcome severe swelling. Volunteers also helped bring meals up to his room as Doug felt his burns would make other residents uncomfortable. Doug was also provided with clothing vouchers.

Years later, Doug, now 50, is confident, outgoing, and encourages others to overcome their fears. In fact, Doug is on the way to becoming a sought-after motivational speaker who cites Vinnies Queensland as a supportive and stabilising influence throughout his recovery.

"Vinnies have been the organisation that has helped me the most, they are always there for me, especially Lizzy and her colleagues in the Brisbane Helpline team," he says.

"I can't thank the organisation and its volunteers enough. It's not just financial, or emotional, it's everything, they have been there as an organisation I can count on."

Doug says Vinnies Queensland provides people with hope, something he also does when he gives speeches or speaks with other burn victims.

"It's all about hope, hope is one thing but also seeing hope transformed into something else," he says. "It's really, really important to use my experiences in life to convey that message.

I don't carry anyone in life, and I don't expect anyone to carry me but I'll certainly throw an arm around them and give them a hand and that's what I believe Vinnies does and what they did for me, they threw an arm around me."

Doug's new enterprise, as well as his motivational speaking efforts, is as an Uber driver. Vinnies Queensland helped him back onto his feet toward financial independence by helping out with vehicle expenses including registration and a license.

"They do it out of the goodness of their hearts," Doug says. "But they also see me trying to do something positive, and I think that also helps Vinnies as an organisation say 'we are not just giving people handouts, we are actually making a difference here'."



THANK YOU DOUG FOR SHARING YOUR STORY.



To learn more about Doug, visit: www.doug-phoenixrising.wixsite.com/phoenix-rises



MAKING A DIFFERENCE ONE CALL AT A TIME

Vinnies Brisbane Helpline, staffed by hard working and caring volunteers, receives hundreds of calls a day connecting people in need with help and support.

Calls for assistance are taken by volunteers with calls varying widely, based on the situations and needs of the callers.

Inspired by his sense of social justice and a desire to help others, volunteer Daniel has manned the Helpline phones for the past two years.

“I enjoy giving back to the community and helping people who are doing it tough in their time of need,” he says.

Daniel said one particular call he took in 2017 is a good example of the different ways the volunteers at the Helpline can make a difference.

“Last year I took a call from a woman who was experiencing domestic violence. Her story struck a chord with me as her background in life was that of an everyday woman who had ebbed and flowed through the trials and tribulations of life,” he says.

“I was able to arm her with lots of information regarding services available to women like herself going through similar situations.

“We spent a good hour on the phone talking about life and helping her with a home visit and as much possible assistance to get her out of her current situation.

“Her story has always stuck with me and I hope that after our phone call, this lady felt a renewed sense of hope and possibility through the good works and efforts of our Brisbane Helpline.”



IN 2017, VINNIES BRISBANE HELPLINE RECEIVED 92,161 CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE.

IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE CONTACT THE BRISBANE HELPLINE ON:

 **Phone:** 1800 846 643 (VINNIES)

 **Email:** helpline.bne@svdpqld.org.au

 **www.vinnies.org.au**

In 2016-17 we helped



306,831

Queenslanders



Raised more than **\$3.7M**



Assisted more than **594** young people



Provided **1,040** bed nights



Held **6** Community & Vinnies CEO sleepouts in QLD



VINNIES VOLUNTEER

ANNE ARMANSIN LITERALLY HELPS PEOPLE KEEP THE LIGHTS ON

Clients come to volunteer Anne because they're either about to have their electricity disconnected, or their energy bills are overwhelming them.

She in turn helps them by working hard to develop a solution that meets their needs by using her extensive energy industry experience. She does this by carefully analysing their overdue bills, calculating the average household usage, negotiating with energy providers to set up affordable payments, and making sure each family or individual can keep their lights on.

Based at the Inala Family Support Centre, Anne's good work over the past two years as a volunteer embodies the Vinnies Queensland vision of offering a hand-up to families in need in the local community.

"In some cases people have had essential things that cost a lot of money that have prevented them from paying their electricity bill, like health problems, purchasing a large appliance, car repairs or tyres needing replacing," she says.

"Knowing the industry intimately allows me to do the very best that we can for people who are marginalised and in trouble."

Anne says she finds volunteering her skills and knowledge is highly rewarding. "To come here and volunteer and to be able to use the skills that I have developed over many years, to help even one person, I find it extremely satisfying."

As well as helping access hardship programs offered by energy providers, Anne also gives budgeting and energy efficiency advice.

"I've had people come in for help who owe a couple of thousand dollars to an energy company and they've left with their power on, and an arrangement of regular bill payments of \$20 per fortnight," she says.

"I think the savings that we offer the customer, the charity, the energy company and the government in keeping people housed and helping them to get out of the poverty trap that so many are caught in is such a positive thing, and worthy of funding from both governments and energy companies."



WE CAN HELP:

- EXPLAIN TARIFF CHARGES, SEASONAL USAGE PATTERNS AND BILLING HISTORY
- ADVOCATE ON BEHALF OF THE ACCOUNT HOLDER WITH THE ENERGY PROVIDER
- AVOID DISCONNECTION AND DEBT RECOVERY ACTION.

A GIFT IN YOUR WILL CAN RESTORE LIVES.

Request your FREE Will Booklet by calling 3010 1076.



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THANK YOU

A huge thank you to all of our generous corporate partners for their involvement in the Vinnies Christmas Appeal. Vinnies Queensland is truly humbled by the tremendous out pouring of support from our corporate partners last Christmas.

All of the amazing gifts donated or staff time given through volunteering meant that Vinnies Queensland was able to provide much needed services to the most vulnerable in our community.

- CHEMPRO • COS • EML PAYMENTS • LADY CILENTO CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL • NEXT HOTELS BRISBANE
- PARMALAT • RAY WHITE TINGALPA • TRIUMPH • QLD GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF DEBT MANAGEMENT
- IGA QUEENSLAND • SHARE THE DIGNITY • HEAR AND SAY • THE CHERMSIDE CHARITY COMMITTEE



WALK A MILE WITH AMANDA

“You probably wouldn’t consider a mum with two kids homeless.

But without Vinnies help, that’s what we would have been. Having fled with my children due to domestic violence, when Centrelink told me I needed ID that I had left behind when I fled, I was lost.

I felt like the world was collapsing around me.

I had anxiety due to the violence and my circumstances. I was then referred to Vinnies.

Vinnies were a light at the end of the tunnel. They helped with ID and Centrelink, with medication and counselling.

We are now in a better place. My kids are doing well at school and I am confident of finding a job.

Without Vinnies we would have been homeless.”
- Amanda

Vinnies counts on events like the CEO Sleepout to continue to help people like Amanda.

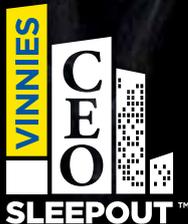
VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT - 21 JUNE 2018

BRISBANE POWERHOUSE

119 LAMINGTON STREET, NEW FARM

GOLD COAST CBUS SUPER STADIUM

CENTRELINE PLACE, ROBINA



DONATE NOW > ceosleepout.org.au

2018 VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT®
WE'VE SAVED A PLACE
FOR YOU



Vinnies Queensland Education Services client Brian is a genuinely happy man - a miracle considering the health problems he has dealt with for many years.

Brian was born with lumbar spinal stenosis, though it's not curable, he recently underwent major surgery to keep him walking. He also lives with progressive polycystic kidney and liver disease, experiencing chronic pain on a daily basis. Despite his health challenges Brian keeps remarkably positive and says "there is always people out there worse than I am."

In late 2017, Brian completed his fourth and final semester at the Clemente program. Vinnies Queensland Clemente program provides the resources and opportunity to support people like Brian in making changes in their lives through university-level education.

Now Brian is set to graduate with a Certificate in Liberal Studies from Australian Catholic University (ACU). After two years of hard work and persistence, Brian now aims to study business management and Indigenous studies at ACU in 2018 and has applied for an Indigenous student scholarship - a feat made more remarkable by the fact he barely finished year 10 some 30 years ago.

Brian enjoyed all aspects of Clemente and all his subjects equally, he reflected upon the program saying it has provided him the opportunity to "access a better education, enhance my skills and knowledge and make lots of friends."



Brian was able to access the Clemente program through Education Services at Vinnies Queensland, which aims to support disadvantaged people with a hand up through education. Education Services offer a variety of education pathways to those who have faced barriers to learning. Education responses such as Clemente and Skilling Queenslanders for Work help people who are marginalised, disadvantaged or isolated with the opportunity to re-engage in education and gain a qualification.

Key to the success of Education Services are volunteers who mentor and support students on their learning journey.

TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT LEARNERS LIKE BRIAN THROUGH DONATING OR VOLUNTEERING, CONTACT EDUCATION SERVICES ON:

-  **Phone:** 3010 1083
-  **Email:** education@svdpqld.org.au
-  **www.vinnies.org.au**



THANK YOU!

VINNIES QUEENSLAND WOULD LIKE TO THANK IGA QUEENSLAND FOR ALL THE SUPPORT THAT THEY EXTENDED TO US OVER THE YEAR.

The sale of Christmas baubles and ongoing support has meant that we are able to offer a hand up to the most vulnerable in our community.

BECOME SOMEONE'S HELPING HANDS

RENEWING LIVES
THROUGH GOOD WORKS

- ✓ Our Helping Hands are our regular givers – people who want to help us with a recurring donation
- ✓ Regular giving helps us provide continual support to people in need and makes a big difference to the lives of Queenslanders
- ✓ You will only need to complete the donation form below once and your credit card will be charged automatically
- ✓ You can change or cancel your regular donation anytime by calling Vinnies Queensland on 13 18 12

YOUR DONATION WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Name _____

Address _____

Email address _____

Please debit my card:

A18MAD

Visa Amex Diners MasterCard

□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
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Name on card _____

Signature _____ Expiry _____ / _____

Option 1 I'd like to join Helping Hands by making a monthly donation of

\$ _____ (minimum of \$10)

Please debit my credit card every month until I advise otherwise

Option 2 I'd like to make a single gift to support the work of Vinnies

\$50 \$75 \$150 \$250 \$500

Other \$ _____

Option 3 I'd like to donate online: vinnies.org.au/donate

Option 4 I'd like to donate over the phone: 13 18 12

Please email my receipt to save on administration costs

Please send me information to help me consider including Vinnies in my Will

I have already remembered Vinnies in my Will

Please tick here if you do not wish to receive future fundraising communications

The Society collects your personal information to process your kind donation and to provide you with direct marketing materials. We may not be able to process your donation or provide you with direct marketing materials without this information. We are strongly committed to protecting your personal information. We can provide you with details of the privacy policy if you would like further information. Our privacy policy is available at www.vinnies.org.au