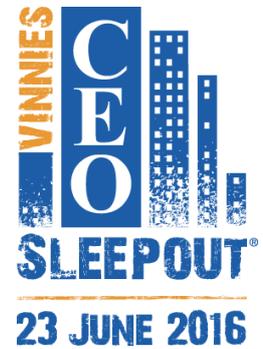


Media Release

Monday 6 June 2016



The countdown begins as top business leaders raise funds for homelessness

With less than three weeks to go until the 2016 Vinnies CEO Sleepout, CEOs across Australia have already raised \$1.7 million. So far there are over 1,400 CEOs participating in this year's event, of whom over 320 will be sleeping out in Sydney. The event will take place on Thursday 23 June at Carriageworks, Eveleigh.

According to Dianne Lucas, Acting CEO St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, almost one-third of the CEOs getting ready to sleep rough this year is female.

“There are considerably more women than last year – 45 women participated in 2015 and this year the figure could go above 110,” Ms Lucas said.

“Almost 60 per cent of clients who access homeless services are women and girls so it is encouraging to see more female CEOs involved. As leaders in the corporate sector and the community, they are able to drive change and hopefully make a long term difference to homelessness and the lack of affordable housing.

“Sadly, women and children are some of our most vulnerable clients. The number one reason why women and children seek support from Vinnies and other specialist homeless services is domestic and family violence. Last year, 25 per cent of those who received support were children and women fleeing domestic and family violence.

“We support older women and those with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Too many women seeking our services have lived experience with mental illness and disability.”

“We rely on donations to run our crisis accommodation and our early intervention and prevention services. So without the funds raised by the Vinnies CEO Sleepout we cannot help as many women and children living in poverty transition into stable accommodation and employment.”

Already signed up to participate in the Sydney event are major leaders including: Alistair Preston (AGL); Nick Baker (Red Balloon); Peter Tonagh (Foxtel); Vittoria Shortt (Commonwealth Bank of Australia); Matt Codrington (Lenovo); Michelle Guthrie (ABC); Julie Ward (Zigzag.tv); Glenn Andrew (Dyson); Kylie Rogers (Mamamia); David Matthews (GWS Giants); Jason Sargent (Red Bull Australia); Michelle Hespe (The *CEO Magazine*); Karl Sice (Staples); Charlie Wood (Dropbox); Alison Watkins (Coca-Cola Amatil Limited); Justin Pascoe (Wests Tigers); Mark Pollard (Naked Wines); David Freeman (H2Coco); Vanessa De Bono (Oroton Group); Matthieu Mercier (Lagardere Retail Travel).

CEOs can still register for this year's Vinnies CEO Sleepout. Head to www.ceosleepout.org.au find out more about how to register, nominate your CEO for the challenge, or make a donation.

The Sydney Vinnies CEO Sleepout will take place at Carriageworks, Eveleigh on 23 June.

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The 2016 Vinnies CEO Sleepout will take place on **Thursday 23 June** in Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle, Melbourne, Brisbane, Townsville, Gold Coast, Perth, Canberra, Launceston, Darwin and Alice Springs. Adelaide will host its CEO Sleepout on 16 June.