



Leading with compassion



MEDIA RELEASE

www.ceosleepout.org.au

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

17 April 2019

LEADING WITH COMPASSION: VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT MARKS 10 YEARS

The St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria (Vinnies) has today launched a campaign to support recruitment for the 2019 [Vinnies CEO Sleepout](#) in Melbourne on **Thursday 20 June** which this year marks its special 10-year anniversary.

For the past decade, some of Victoria's most influential business, community and government leaders have slept out on one of the longest and coldest nights of the year to help change the lives of Australians experiencing poverty and homelessness.

This year, we are aiming to raise \$1.1 million, which will allow Vinnies to continue to help provide shelter, put food on tables, ensure lights stay on in the households of Victorians doing it tough – and more.

Our 2019 theme – “Leading with compassion” – builds upon the idea that the Vinnies CEO Sleepout has moved beyond a fundraiser; it's a meeting of minds where CEOs are well positioned to help address some of the issues that the people we assist face.

This year we are also excited to announce a new inner-city venue for Melbourne – the [South Melbourne Market, Rooftop Carpark](#) – one of our oldest and most popular institutions.

“We are so excited about having the event at The South Melbourne Market this year and look forward to providing another night of eye-opening discomfort for the city's business and community leaders – a key part of our goal to raise awareness of the lived experiences of more than 774,000 Victorians living below the poverty line,” said St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria CEO, Ms Sue Cattermole.

Vinnies is calling on business, community and political leaders to register now by visiting ceosleepout.org.au. Each participant is challenged to help us meet a collective target of \$1.1 million in Victoria, and to sleep outside for one night – on 20 June in Melbourne or 27 June in Geelong.

“This year, in Victoria, the event is raising money to support Vinnies' ongoing services helping alleviate poverty and supporting people to keep a roof over their heads.

“Our volunteers are called on to provide compassionate support to people facing the issues of poverty and often with complexities of mental illness, insecure citizenship status, relationship breakdowns or family violence. Vinnies volunteers aim to offer friendship and financial support providing access to the basics like food, petrol, education, utility bills, medical needs and more.”

Ms Cattermole said one of the main goals of the Vinnies CEO Sleepout is to encourage open and constructive conversation about the issue of poverty and to enhance the community's understanding of homelessness.

“On the night, participants get to hear from speakers who know what it really means to live on the fringes in a wealthy country such as Australia, and our soup van volunteers -- who are onsite to provide a simple meal of soup and sandwiches – are more than happy to talk about their experiences.”



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“But equally inspiring are the ways in which the Vinnies CEO Sleepout has helped change the business and philanthropic landscape in our city, and we have had a number of participants who have gone on to create practical business solutions, such as transitional housing, pop-up shelters and free financial planning workshops for vulnerable women,” said Ms Cattermole.

“With the narrative of vulnerable Australians missing from the current election debate, this year’s Vinnies CEO Sleepout arrives with a deep sense of urgency.

“#Leadingwithcompassion isn’t just our theme for this – our 10th year – it’s a challenge for the ages. And it’s a challenge we’re issuing to business and community leaders throughout Victoria the year. Join us for one night to learn how you can personally make a difference.”

CEOs, business and community leaders are invited to sign up for the 2019 Vinnies CEO Sleepout on 20 June 2019 (Melbourne) or 27 June 2019 (Geelong), either individually or as part of a senior management team. Visit www.ceosleepout.org.au to register now.

– ENDS –

MEDIA: For further information or resources to assist with your story, please contact:

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VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT 2019 AMBASSADORS (MELBOURNE):

See [HERE](#) for a group shot of our Vinnies CEO Sleepout Melbourne ambassadors who have generously donated their time to lead recruitment, fundraising and advocacy for the campaign, and are available for media interviews upon request [L to R]:

CEO & Founder Reventon, Chris Christofi; Gandel Philanthropy CEO, Vedran Drakulic OAM; Deputy Mayor City of Port Phillip, Louise Crawford; Founder & CEO Thalia Stanley, Marion Mays; St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria CEO, Sue Cattermole; General Manger City of Port Phillip, Tony Keenan; and Woodards CEO, John Piccolo

ABOUT THE VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT:

The Vinnies CEO Sleepout was initiated in 2006 by a St Vincent de Paul Society volunteer in Sydney and has now grown into a successful national event, hosted annually during winter in every state and territory around Australia.

It collectively raises around \$6.5m across the country every year, which is used to support vital services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty, including crisis accommodation, food vouchers, soup vans, rent assistance, referral services and more.



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The event is experiential, allowing participants to reflect on the experiences of people living below the poverty line or without secure accommodation, by sleeping outside for one night on a piece of cardboard. To find out more visit ceosleepout.org.au.

ABOUT THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY VICTORIA:

The St Vincent de Paul Society and its wide network of members and volunteers provide practical frontline support, advocacy and friendship for the most vulnerable members of our community.

Key services include home visitation; Vinnies Shops; youth programs; soup vans; assistance for asylum seekers and refugees; education and tutoring; and accommodation and support services through VincentCare.

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria has 12,000 members and volunteers. Nationally, the Society has more than 60,000 members and globally operates in 149 countries. To find out more visit vinnies.org.au.