

PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE NEWSLETTER

Welcome to our July Newsletter!

As the start of a new financial year we have been busy at PCLS with preparing for EOFY audit, Accreditation renewal and applying for Tenders. There have been changes to the staff so we would like to start off by saying farewell and thank you to the following staff members:

- South Hedland Administration Officer Angela Ratto
- South Hedland DV Outreach Worker Micah Tablac
- South Hedland Tenancy Advocate Gretchen Ncube
- South Hedland Housing Support Worker Yasser Al Assadi
- Newman Financial Counsellor Fran Manuela
- Newman STEP/Housing Support Worker Ettie Te Miha

We would like to welcome our new staff and changes:

- South Hedland Principal Solicitor— Selena McCrickard
- South Hedland Housing Support Worker- Kelly Cook
- South Hedland STEP worker- Glenda Dawson
- South Hedland Keeping Women Safe DV worker- Jessica Rankin
- South Hedland DV Outreach Worker— Sonia Dopierala
- Karratha Housing Support Worker— Sophia Davis
- Newman Financial Counsellor— Merlin Gepte

We would also like to introduce and thank Karis Drummond and Sarah Dodd who are relieving for administrator Rachel whilst she is on extended leave.

Just a short newsletter this month whilst we are busying preparing for the new financial year. Please see our Housing Support Worker— Sophia Davis' article on the NAIDOC conference held in Sydney and the event held in Roebourne for NAIDOC week that PCLS was involved in.

PCLS has four office locations, Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland and Newman, however our services are delivered throughout the Pilbara region to isolated communities.

We assist in the areas of:

Financial counselling— provide financial service information, budgeting, advocacy and support services for the purposes of assisting individuals who are in financial difficulty due to circumstances such as debt, over-commitment, unemployment, sickness or family breakdown.

Tenancy Support— provide tenancy advocacy, education and support services to tenants facing difficulties maintaining their tenancy. We assist and support people who are experiencing homelessness and ensure they are linked with mainstream services.

Legal— provide free education to the community as well as legal advice, primarily in the areas of Family Law, Criminal Injuries Compensation, Wills and Deceased Estates (we do not provide criminal law advice).

Domestic Violence— Provide support and advocacy for victims of domestic violence/ at risk clients, promoting safety planning to help ensure client wellbeing whilst helping to resolve crisis. DV assists with access to other related services such as legal advice, accommodation, health, income support and financial counselling.

Migrant Settlement Services— provide one on one casework, support, information and linkages to other mainstream services to assist migrants. community development activities are undertaken which include the implementation of projects that aim to support and empower newly emerging community groups.

To find out more about our service:

- Visit our website: www.pcls.net.au
- Open 8.00am – 4.00pm weekdays
- Karratha—9185 5899; South Hedland—9140 1613; Roebourne—9182 1169; Newman—9175 0148





BECAUSE OF HER, WE CAN!

8-15 JULY 2018

BY Sophia Davis– Housing Support Worker

From Indigenous women’s perspective, resilience is the inner strength that helps individuals women bounce back and carry on in the face of adversity. Although there was no conflict, between indigenous women the view in this regard, there seems to be a common link between Aboriginal identity, land, history, and resilience, pointing towards collective dimensions of Aboriginal culture, strength, and wellbeing with in the conference.

Resilience in Aboriginal communities, such as, spirituality, family values, teachings from Elders, ceremonial rituals, oral traditions, identity, and support networks, were showing in the theme **“Because of her we can” conference**, Building on these common resources seems to have a positive impact on both individuals and communities in where we travel from .

When the ‘National NAIDOC’ Committee announced the 2018 Theme: Because of Her, We Can in November 2017 there was a huge round of applause around Australia particularly from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women.

“NAIDOC Week 2018 “and this historic Conference will celebrate the invaluable contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have made – and continue to make – to our communities, our families, our rich history and to our nation. As pillars of our society, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have played – and continue to play – active and significant roles at the community, local, state and national levels.

All of the Speakers and Workshop Presenters are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander woman who are leaders, trailblazers, politicians, activists and social change advocates. These women fought and continue to fight, for justice, equal rights, our rights to country, for law and justice, access to education, employment and to maintain and celebrate our culture, language, music and art. They are our mothers, our elders, our grandmothers, our aunties, our sisters and our daughters which was displayed on the day, through the performing art our indigenous dancers,



For me to be able to attend a ‘NATIONAL women’s’ conference in Sydney, along with seven hundred indigenous women, all connect through past struggles, brought on by the past governments, policies and proceeds that have affected our indigenous women of today.

The experience was true humbling, in which I stand in ore of the indigenous women who told their stories of their past history of grandmother, mothers, and to future generations, to where we are heading as a Nation.

I would like to thank my CEO of the Pilbara Community Legal Service who supported and allowed for me to attend the ‘NAIDOC women’s’ conference, for this I am truly thankful. This has enables me to bring back the stories into this community the inspiration, resilience in walking together in the struggles that all women face today.

In this conference there were twenty Aboriginal guest speakers, all these women were inspiring to listen to, and there were seven hundred indigenous women who attended the two day NAIDOC women's conference in Sydney. I chose three Aboriginal women speakers, whom inspired me, they showed just how resilient Aboriginal women strength were, the strength that has been passed down from their Grandmothers, their mothers aunts and our, sisters.

Speakers

Dr Jackie Huggins Is a Bidjara (central Queensland) and Birri-Gubba Juru (North Queensland) lady who has labored in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs for over 30 years. **(Quote) "AND I CRIED, TOO, ONCE I HEARD IT AS A RESULT OF I BELIEVED, IN THE END, THESE LADIES ARE GOING TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED IN OUR LIFE."**

Linda Jean Burney is an Australian politician, who was a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly representing Canterbury for the Australian Labor Party from 2003 to 2016, when she resigned to contest the federal seat of Barton; **(Quote) I support marriage equality as someone who has and has had loved ones who identify as LGBTI" To them, she said, "Marriage equality would mean so much."**

Bunuba woman, **Dr June Oscar** is the recipient of *the Person of The Year* Award at the 2018 National NAIDOC Awards. The award recognises June's work as fearless champion for the rights of the Bunuba people and as a courageous Aboriginal leader. June is Currently the first woman to hold the position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission, June has lead a life of dedication and fearlessness, with an endless list of achievements that have made her a household name across Australia. Wendy McCarthy AO said, "She is a role model of integrity and determination to all Australians and indeed to many in the world": **(Quote) "I want to be that pathfinder and set the path, set the trail, for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women," she told "Because if it is about us, you have to do it with us. "We have a right to be part of the discussion and the decision-making around matters that affect us." In terms of advice for young Aboriginal women, June offered up 3 gems: "Be respectful. Speak Your Truth. Don't compromise who you are."**



Conclusion

Throughout the two days conferences, it showed Strength ,resilience and wellbeing, this has come from listening to each other's stories, carrying their voices to our ,family, friends and community. The conference represented Aboriginal Women's Circle of Life, unifying one another through stories that has been passed down through generations, of aboriginal women, who have paved the way for many.

The 'NAIDOC theme, "**Because of her we can**" has empowered the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional benefits of Aboriginal women's practices, and examined how culture and social support networks, are key determinants of Aboriginal women's health and wellbeing.

As we celebrate the invaluable contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have made and continue to make to our communities, our families, our history and to our nation.

This years' National NAIDOC theme, "**Because of Her, We Can**" is not only a touching sentiment, but incredibly timely some would say, long overdue that Australia recognise the essential role that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have played, and continue to play, at the community, local, state and national levels.

REFERENCE:

<https://www.ngiyani.com/because-of-her-we-can/>

<http://akneahr.ciet.org/publications/resilience/>



NAIDOC Roebourne 2018

Because of her, we can

The City of Karratha hosted a NAIDOC event to celebrate the history, culture, identity, resilience and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the Roebourne oval on Sunday the 15th July.

It's was a great opportunity to be a part of one of the events with the local community coming together to share and celebrate all of the Aboriginal cultures whilst respecting and recognising of the world's oldest continuous living cultures.

PCLS joined the Roebourne community and other local organisations to participate in the event that included live local music from Jokeria on stage and other performers, food and a festive atmosphere.

We were there having a yarn with the locals, chatting about all the services that we offer and how we could assist them as well as offering a chill out zone where they could engage in some art therapy while listening to the music as we offered painting. Young and old enjoyed the painting opportunity and meant

It was an afternoon of live music, filled with good vibes and really was an overall wonderful opportunity to positively spread the word about PCLS, celebrate the Aboriginal culture and meet with current and new clients in a friendly, relaxed environment.

