

FUTURE
DOCTORS
AT
ACHIEVE

KADE:
IN THE
FAST LANE

enable

SOCIAL
INCLUSION
WEEK

SPIDERMAN
AND HIS
FRIENDS
BY ALEX DAWE

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WELCOME

Welcome to the summer edition of *Enable* and to our final magazine for 2019. As we get ready to embark on a new decade in 2020, it is worthwhile reflecting on just how far we've come as an organisation and as a society. More and more we are witnessing instances of people with disability becoming more connected and included in all facets of community life.

Our support as Principal Sponsor of The Festival of Inclusion has provided a renewed passion for everyone at Achieve in our collaboration with the industry to keep innovating to benefit the people we support. The Festival was held in the lead up to Social Inclusion Week from 20 to 21 November at the University of Sydney and Sydney Olympic Park.

Local and international researchers shared their latest findings in the areas of employment, urban housing, supported living and decision making, and inclusive cities. A range of workshops were also held for participants, families and support workers to explore new inclusive activities, creative arts and a variety of accessible sports.

In addition to the Festival, I was thrilled to attend a book launch recently for *Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories* at Araluen. The book is also now available on our website for the community to access as an

electronic book. As part of the Positive Partners literacy program, this collection of stories written and illustrated by people with disability has brought together community, corporate business and the people we support in a celebration of storytelling and friendship.

Together with our community of supporters, we held our Annual Achieve Australia Golf Tournament on Friday, 1 November. I would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of our players, sponsors and supporters who were able to join us on what was an incredible day at Strathfield Golf Club. A big congratulations go to the winning team for the day 'Gonz's Hangers-on' and participants who were successful in the first round of the Achieve My Dream program.

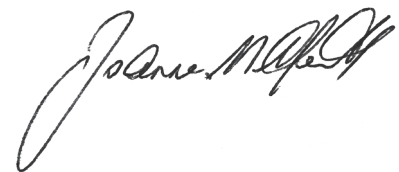
To all who supported the event, we are excited to announce that over \$36,000 was raised to go directly towards our new Achieve My Dream program to help make dreams a reality for the people we support in the near future.

Continuing with our celebration of Social Inclusion Week in 2019, we have revealed a new-look campaign: 'It's my extraordinary life'. The talents, stories and dreams of the people we support will be shared as part of the new campaign, which kicks off in this edition with one of our client's, Kade Gordan, on the cover. In this edition, Kade shares

his inspiration for creating an active lifestyle that involves competitive swimming, gardening, horse riding, and more.

As part of the campaign, we worked with our clients and their families to find out what makes an ordinary life, extraordinary for people with disability. Keep an eye out over the coming months as we share some of the incredible stories and give voice to the people we support as they go about their own life journey.

In closing, to our clients, families, carers and ongoing supporters, I would like to extend our best wishes to you and your family for an enjoyable, happy and safe holiday season. We look forward to working together with you in 2020 and beyond.



Jo-Anne Hewitt, CEO



CEO, Jo-Anne Hewitt, welcomes supporters at the Tournament luncheon.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS YEAR IN REVIEW

It has been a big year for Achieve Australia, and I am pleased to take the opportunity to reflect on the challenges and achievements of 2019.

I am particularly proud of the evolution of Achieve's quarterly magazine, *Enable*. Over the past 12 months it has been exciting to see many inspirational and encouraging stories. *Enable* provides not only an opportunity to deliver the latest news and updates from Achieve Australia but, more importantly, it provides a platform for the people we support to showcase their talents, ideas and inspirations, and to share their stories with the community. It goes to the very heart of what social inclusion means.

Among the many highlights of 2019, I am particularly proud of our involvement in the Positive Partners Program. It was wonderful to see *Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories* released as part of such an innovative and inclusive literacy program for people with disability.

To have these stories made available to the community as an eBook continues to see our passion for social inclusion made possible. I would like to extend our congratulations to all participants, PwC volunteers and staff involved in this project for such a fantastic achievement.

As an organisation the past year has also brought with it both challenges and opportunities. With the NDIS continuing its roll out across the country and the

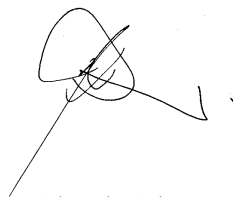
Royal Commission hearings soon to begin, there is a need for us to adopt an agile approach to move forward in a changing environment.

I have full confidence in the capabilities and skills of our CEO, Jo-Anne Hewitt, to take Achieve Australia to the next level and to continue delivering the highest standards of disability support services across New South Wales.

At Achieve, we remain committed to making even more supports available in the future for people with disability. We want to see more people with disability have a home and increased independence, maintain regular employment, improve health and wellbeing, and discover new skills and passions as valued and respected members of the community.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish all of our clients, families, carers, staff and supporters a wonderful and safe holiday season ahead. Thank you for your trust and belief in our work and we look forward to working together with you in the New Year.

Finally, I would also like to extend our sincere thanks to all our staff working to support our clients and families. Your passion, dedication and efforts to help people with disability live a full life in the community continues to inspire us all each and every day.



Richard Dinham,
Chairman Achieve Australia

REFLECTIONS

WE ASKED OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THEIR HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019 AND WHAT SOCIAL INCLUSION MEANS TO THEM.



At the very heart of social inclusion is acceptance of everyone in our society regardless of our differences. We need to see inclusion holistically, but at Achieve we also need to focus on our responsibility to assist people with disability to feel a part of their community. 2019 has been a year of change, and with renewed energy we are set to address the next decade and continue to fulfil our passion for social inclusion.

Richard Dinham, Chairman



Ensuring that, regardless of any disability, every person has the opportunity to participate in community life and to be respected and appreciated as a valuable member of their community. A real highlight has been seeing the excitement and pride on participants' faces when they move into new abodes with all the mod cons and providing new experiences in their day-to-day lives - from developing tastes for new dining menus to creating and maintaining gardens.

Jennifer Gardiner, Director



Social inclusion to me is where we seek to break down stigmas and barriers to treat all citizens in the community with equal respect and opportunity. For me, a highlight has been the continued focus of the organisation to improve the lives of those with disability and the dedication showed by the whole team at Achieve to that single purpose."

Robert McKimm, Director



For me, social inclusion means that people with disability can experience everything that makes up a good life while being part of their community. In 2019, I really enjoyed seeing how happy our supported employees were in Newington and the opportunities they have to come to work in a supportive environment.

Colin Westman, Director



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Professor Patricia O'Brien, Director



Many of us take it for granted that we can join friends for a coffee in the local café, use a mobile phone to communicate with family members and catch up on the news, or jump on a train and go to a sporting event. Social inclusion means that everybody can take part in the social, cultural and recreational life of the community.

Doug Reid, Director



Social inclusion is a world where everyone can participate and contribute. A world where everyone feels that they belong. In 2019, Achieve has been leading the way in the disability sector in Australia. Providing exceptional personalised support and care for people with disabilities receiving short term respite accommodation at Summer Hill House is just one example of this."the dedication showed by the whole team at Achieve to that single purpose.

Dr Georgina Reynhout, Director



HIGHLIGHTS

2019 has been an incredible year for the people we support, families, staff and supporters at Achieve Australia. Here are some of the highlights that made 2019 a memorable year.



The short term accommodation centre, **Summer Hill House**, is presented at a special launch event for clients, families and guests.

The Sewing Basket opens a **pop-up shop** in Balmain.



Written and illustrated by the people we support, **Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories** is printed and released as an online eBook.

SIL services commence at state-of-the-art **SDA** apartments in Guildford.

HTS 2019

Achieve joins the national **NDIS SDA** Reference Group to improve outcomes & bring about change in this vital area.



In celebration of **Social Inclusion Week** in November, Achieve sponsors The Festival of Inclusion to help build a more inclusive society for the future.

Summer Hill House introduces a brand new **activity and events** calendar.



Jo-Anne Hewitt joins Achieve Australia as our **new CEO** bringing with her more than 35 years of experience.

Future doctors join Achieve

Learning skills in the community and addressing health inequality sees the next generation of doctors attend work placement at Achieve Australia.

On their journey to becoming a doctor, a new generation of medical students from Western Sydney University have joined Achieve to learn more about working with people with disability in the community. The community engagement program at the University began in 2005 and Achieve Australia's CEO, Jo-Anne Hewitt, was involved in the initial design and set up of the program.

"Having been a member of Western Sydney University Community Council during the establishment of its now renowned Medical School, I am delighted to witness the immersion of students in community settings as was envisaged so many years ago," says Jo-Anne.

"Working with organisations such as Achieve Australia throughout their medical studies gives emerging doctors a unique perspective on the challenges people with disability face in accessing mainstream health services, as well as an insight into the enormous potential of people with disabilities when given the right support," says Jo-Anne.

Rebecca Kong and James Buda, two young medical students in their third year at the University, commenced their five week community placement at Achieve Australia's Crowle Estate in Ryde in October. Rebecca says that it was an easy choice to pick Achieve for her placement.

"I chose Achieve Australia as my first choice for community placement because the organisation seemed to

be well-established and provides a holistic range of services for people with disability," says Rebecca. "We aren't really taught at University how to work with someone who has a disability and how best to support them, so it's a good opportunity to learn more in this area."

For James, it was previous work experience at a local day program in the disability sector which inspired him to return. "I didn't know much about people with disability and how they are supported in the community before doing my placement, but I knew I wanted to learn more," says James.

"Often doctors see people before, during and after their treatment, but we don't get to see how people live day-to-day and what their experience is like living in the community. This opportunity provides that," he says.

During their placement Rebecca and James worked side-by-side with Achieve's on site Social Educators at Crowle and Clinical Nurse Educator, Abha Phillips, for two days each week. "The students have their own project goals and research tasks to complete every week and we can then use this research to help improve our services for the people we support and their families in the future," explains Abha. "I also meet on a regular basis with Rebecca and James to review the project work and find out how the experience is for them so that we can help improve other student placements."

As part of her research project,

Rebecca has interviewed and surveyed local General Practitioners (GPs) to find out how to help doctors' access better documentation, how to facilitate better transfers with Support Coordinators, and to identify any gaps. While James' project is focused on looking at the wide range of disability services available in the local community, what the barriers might be for someone accessing those services, and finding out how GPs can help overcome these barriers.

At other times Rebecca and James have been observing and assisting the carers with their daily routines, helping clients with their cooking and cleaning, and doing fun activities with clients such as watching movies, talking or having manicures.

A highlight of the experience for both Rebecca and James has been getting to know the clients, finding out their likes and dislikes, and discovering new ways to engage with each person. "I found out that people with disability have a lot to say and have many stories to tell," says James. "I also had the chance to meet with some families who talked to me about how things have changed over the years and I was really inspired to hear their stories."

Now, armed with a new perspective and an increased knowledge of working with people with disability in the community, Rebecca and James are even better equipped for an exciting career ahead.



James and Rebecca at Crowle Estate.

Everyone's included

As part of Social Inclusion Week 2019, the Festival of Inclusion ran a two-day inclusive program in a celebration of community, innovation and creativity. Presented by the Centre for Disability Studies (CDS), the event was held in Sydney from 20 to 21 November.

Achieve Australia got on board to champion this event as a Principal Sponsor to continue our passion of achieving social inclusion for people with disability. During the market place exhibition, which ran alongside the festival, providers like Achieve offered inclusive services and options for people with disabilities, families, carers and supporters.

Across the two-day program the latest in academic research was presented

by local and international experts in the field. In addition, a panel of Paralympian athletes and World Café discussions opened up conversations on a range of topics from inclusive employment and education to the arts and supported living.

As part of the CDS Inclusive Research Network Dr Phillippa Carnemolla from University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and Lucy Strevett, who is a client of Achieve, presented a case study on Crowle Estate's Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) setting for people with disability.

A range of community workshops were also held with inclusive arts, dance, sports, drama and virtual reality sessions all part of the fun.

Achieve Australia's Chairman, Richard Dinham, expressed the importance of cross-sector collaboration during his address at the event.

"To achieve social inclusion we need to collaborate across all sectors, including disability service providers, government, tertiary, business and community," said Richard.

"By working together, we can break down the barriers and challenges that limit people with disability reaching their full potential by encouraging their inclusion in mainstream activities, and through having access to the full provision of services available in the community."

"To achieve social inclusion we need to collaborate across all sectors, including disability service providers, government, tertiary, business and community."





Lucy Strevett and Dr Phillipa Carnemolla presenting at the Festival of Inclusion.

SPOTLIGHT



“There is a perception out there that you need to be a certain body type or very flexible to practice yoga, but absolutely anyone can.”

With a rich history dating back more than 5,000 years, yoga is known as exercise for both the body and mind. It incorporates a series of breathing exercises, meditation and poses aimed at improving overall health and wellbeing.

While there are many different types of yoga, the practice of adaptive yoga is just kicking off in Australia. Adaptive yoga uses traditional yoga poses, which are then adapted to match the needs of each individual, and anyone can take part.

In adaptive yoga, the essence of a yoga pose is used to find a variation that fits with an individual's body and their ability. Instructors also use items found in any traditional yoga studio such as props, bolsters, straps and chairs to assist during the class.

Currently studying the impacts of yoga on people with spinal cord injuries at the University of Sydney, Lisa Bidgood is a trained occupational therapist and adaptive yoga instructor. “Adaptive yoga is big in the U.S. and the U.K. but relatively new here in Australia,” she explains. “We want to change this and offer more opportunities for people with all abilities to experience the benefits of yoga and meditation.”

Lisa's ambition to blend her passion for occupational therapy (OT) and yoga with working with people of different abilities, made adaptive

yoga a perfect fit. After conducting extensive research, she travelled to the U.S. to work with Matthew Sandford.

A specialist adaptive yoga mentor and teacher, Matthew experienced a spinal cord injury at a young age and later started Mind Body Solutions to teach yoga to people of all abilities. “Matthew is well-known as the pioneer of adaptive yoga,” says Lisa. “In my training I learnt how to teach anybody yoga, no matter their injury, trauma or ability.”

BENEFITS OF YOGA AND MEDITATION

1. Stress relief
2. Improved sleep
3. Chronic pain relief
4. Muscle strength and toning
5. Reduces weight
6. Balance and flexibility
7. Mind-body connection

When she returned from the U.S. Lisa started up Yogavana in Sydney and now runs NDIS funded adaptive yoga sessions at Royal Rehab twice a week. “I work with many different people with a range of disabilities or injuries,” she says. “There is a perception out there that you need to be a certain body type or very flexible to practice yoga, but absolutely anyone can.”

At Yogavana Lisa works with people who have spinal cord injuries, multiple sclerosis (MS), mental illness and other disabilities as well as people who have had a stroke. She says that by listening to the messages in your own body, people can have incredible results and see real benefits.

“I work with a young man who comes regularly to the classes and has a spinal cord injury,” explains Lisa. “At the end of one of our meditation sessions, he was astounded that for the first time in seven years he felt sensation in his feet! It just shows that it is possible to find feeling again in the body through meditation, but it just might be on a different level than you had before.”

In addition to adaptive yoga classes, Lisa hosts teacher training sessions in Sydney each year. Current students attend the training sessions and share their stories on the day, providing valuable insights and the opportunity for new instructors to get first-hand experience in their new practice.

Soon Lisa will publish her academic research and hopes to create more awareness in the community on the benefits of yoga and meditation practice for people with disabilities. To get involved or to find out more about adaptive yoga, visit yogavana.com.au

WELLNESS YOGA



Lisa Bidgood is an occupational therapist and adaptive yoga instructor at Yogavana.



Improved posture and alignment can assist with chronic pain.



Lisa and one of her participant's enjoy practicing yoga outdoors.

INSPIRED TALES RELEASED

A collection of short stories written and inspired by people with disability with the help of corporate mentors creates a new take on socially inclusive projects.

Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories has now been released as an online eBook following an official launch at Achieve Australia's Araluen hub. The book is the result of Positive Partners, a program which helps to build on the literacy skills of people with disability.

"The Positive Partners Program encapsulates social inclusion, life skill development, creativity and exercising choice and control," said program developer and My Life Coordinator at Achieve Australia, Rachael Ross at the recent book launch.

The official book launch, held in September, was a celebration for all participants, families, staff, and corporate volunteers from PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) involved in the program. At the event, Alex Dawe presented a reading of

her story, *Spiderman and His Friends*, participants signed copies of the book for guests, enjoyed a special lunch, and took photos with friends and family.

When asked what she enjoyed most about the Positive Partners Program, Alex says it was going to the city to take part in the sessions at PwC. "It was fun going to the city and I wanted to write about happy things," she says.

As part of the two-phase program, which began in 2018, corporate volunteers from PwC were matched with a participant from Achieve Australia whose skills, hobbies and interests matched their own. This helped to establish a connection and form a working relationship over the course of the literacy program.

Commencing in February this year, the second phase of the program focused on developing creative writing and storytelling skills. Seven participants worked closely with their partners to develop memorable characters and plots, and to edit their

final stories ready for publication.

"It's really wonderful to see literacy programs like Positive Partners making a difference to the lives of the people we support and to see this happen in collaboration with the business community," says Achieve Australia CEO, Jo-Anne Hewitt.

Vivian who wrote a zombie-inspired tale says that it was the people who made an impact on her. "I enjoyed writing about zombies and working with the friendly people that helped out," says Vivian.

It's not only the participants who enjoyed the experience but also the team of corporate volunteers involved in the project from PwC. "Every PwC volunteer that has had the opportunity to get involved with the Positive Partners Program has been touched deeply by the experience," says Senior Accountant at PwC, Deanna Blanchette.

To download a copy of *Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories* visit achieveaustralia.org.au



Alex Dawe is supported by Lillian Patterson at the launch of Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories.



The Sherwood family with PwC's Deanna Blanchette.



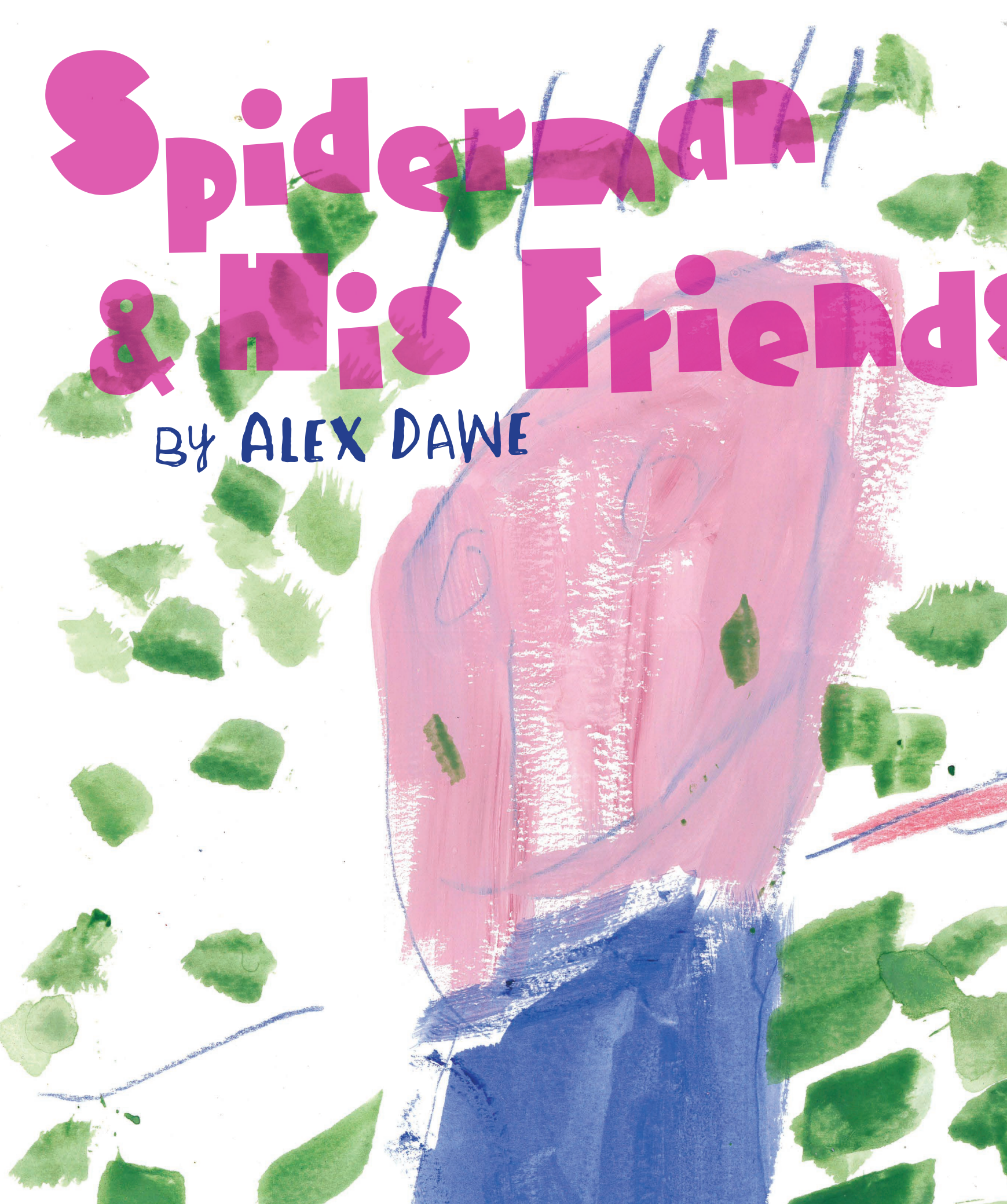
Felix Wong and David Wetzler at the book launch.



Signing books to keep mementos for the future.

Spiderman & His Friends

BY ALEX DAWE



Once upon a time, in the beautiful town of Hornsby, lived the one and only Spiderman. Spiderman loved living in Hornsby as he was close to his two great friends, Kate and Julia. The three of them would frequently make plans to meet and hangout with each other as they were the best of friends.

One lovely summer's day, the three friends met up for lunch with Kate suggesting to Spiderman and Julia, "Let's organise to meet at the park tomorrow as it is meant to be a nice day!" Happy to see his friends again, Spiderman replied, "That sounds like a great plan Kate!" Julia also agreed, "Yes Kate, that's a great idea."

That following day, Spiderman looked out the window and noticed that it was very hot and sunny. Thinking that they would all get too hot at the park, Spiderman suggested to Kate and Julia, "Maybe we can go to the beach to swim instead?" Kate and Julia thought that was a good idea but were also worried that there would be no shade at the beach and they would get burnt. Thinking about where else they could go, Spiderman said, "Let's go to the beach when it is less hot and go to the swimming pool instead as there will be shade there." Happily, both Kate and Julia responded at the same time, "What a great idea! Let's go to the pool and have a fun day in the water together."

After lunch, the friends arrived at the swimming pool very excited to go for a swim. They each showed off their swimming costumes to each other; Kate was wearing her pink swimming costume, Julia's swimming costume was bright

yellow while Spiderman was wearing his blue and red swimming costume.

Although the pool was very busy with lots of people and kids, that didn't stop the friends from enjoying their time together.

After finding an area to put their things down, Kate, Julia and Spiderman decide to play a game of water polo since it is their favourite sport. Searching for an area in the pool to play, they realise that the pool is very busy and that the shallow end is full of parents with their kids. Although Kate can't stand in the deep end, as she is shorter than Julia and Spiderman, the three of them decide to play water polo in the deep end as it is the only free area within the whole pool!

For the next 20 minutes, the three friends played water polo with Spiderman playing the goal keeper and Kate and Julia playing the attackers. Playing a game of water polo for 20 minutes was very tiring for Kate because she could not stand in the deep end and so she had to keep paddling to stay afloat, which made her even more tired!

Feeling more and more exhausted from all the paddling, Kate began to struggle to stay afloat. Seeing this, Julia shouts to Spiderman to tell him to help Kate. "Help!" Julia screams to Spiderman. "Kate is drowning and is struggling in the deep end, we need your help!"

Being the one and only Spiderman, who is very strong and fast, he quickly swims to the side of the pool to grab a board for Kate to hold onto while Julia finds the lifeguard. Kate manages to hang onto the board until the lifeguard jumps

into the pool and pulls Kate, who is holding onto the board for safety. Frightened and upset after nearly drowning, Kate thanks Spiderman and Julia for their quick thinking and says an extra big thank you to the lifeguard for saving her life!

To calm their nerves, the three friends have some ice cream on the side of the pool. Lucky for them, the ice cream man had all of their favourite ice cream flavours - chocolate ice cream for Kate, strawberry ice cream for Julia and vanilla ice cream for Spiderman.

While enjoying their ice creams, Spiderman, Kate and Julia decide that it is enough swimming for one day and spend the rest of the afternoon lying in the sun while telling jokes and being grateful of the amazing friendship that they have.

The end.



SUPPORT COORDINATION: A HELPING HAND

Providing more than 6,000 hours of service and supporting 175 clients in 2018-19, Achieve Australia's Support Coordination team help people with disability and their families find tailored solutions to meet individual needs. Our specialised team also offer services in fluent Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese.

We provide:

- Independent advice
- Free initial consultation
- One-on-one support
- Financial guidance
- Negotiations with providers

BILLY

In early 2019, after experiencing a decline in health and hospitalisation, William (Billy) Bence and his family were seeking alternative supported accommodation. Billy had applied for Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) due to his intellectual disability, medical conditions and mobility needs as he could no longer walk on his own.

After receiving the NDIS funding he needed, Billy's Support Coordinator at Achieve Australia, Billie Le, arranged his transition from hospital to a new purpose-built home. Billy's home is now in one of Achieve Australia's newest SDA properties in Western Sydney, which is in a quiet

neighbourhood and close to local amenities and parks. With 24/7 live-in support from qualified Registered Nurses, the home has been designed specifically for people who require high levels of physical support through care, equipment and home modifications.

"Once Billy was settled in, we helped to engage a variety of specialist services including Occupational Therapy, Assistive Technology and Physiotherapy to assist in improving Billy's mobility and health," said Support Coordinator, Billie. "Billy can now walk on his own and is making new friends through his participation in local community programs during the week."

Cheryl Knight, Billy's sister, has seen firsthand the improvements to his quality of life and overall wellbeing. "Billy is a lot happier and is now able to walk," said Cheryl. "He enjoys the company of his housemates and carers and loves the bright atmosphere in the home."

"Billy also loves attending the Day Program in Seven Hills as he gets to be involved in socialising with his friends and doing gym activities," said Cheryl. "He loves the facilities and the attention."

KAREN

For more than 30 years, Karen Murray has been a valued client of Achieve Australia.

Today, Karen lives independently in the community with the help of Achieve's Support Coordination services. Louise Colnan is a Support Coordinator at Achieve Australia who has worked with Karen for many years. She knows just how important maintaining Karen's independence is to her.

"Karen loves living on her own and it's important for her to have her own space," said Louise.

"I've seen really positive changes for Karen since she has moved into her own home and out of previous group settings; she is much happier and can still access the right supports for her needs," she said.

To help with shopping, meal preparation, medical appointments and social activities, Karen receives drop-in support every week as well as assistance in attending physical therapies and exercise programs.

Through exercise therapy and the use of a walker, Karen maintains an active and social lifestyle. "Louise helps me go to the gym, to get around and see my friends," said Karen. In her spare time, Karen enjoys being creative. "I like painting, beading and music too," said Karen.

Louise is also helping Karen to plan a holiday to the South Coast of New South Wales in the near future so that she can continue to enjoy new experiences and places



ROBERT

Robert Stearn lived in a Family and Community Services (FACS) facility in Newcastle, which was closing down, when Achieve Australia's Support Coordination team were engaged to find him a new home. Robert has an intellectual disability, epilepsy and requires a customised wheelchair and so finding a home better suited to his needs was vital to improving his quality of life.



"Robert lived far from his family, who are based in Sydney, and the facility was more of a hospital setting than a home," said Billie Le, Support Coordinator at Achieve Australia. "All up it took about six months to get the correct NDIS funding in place, have all the necessary documentation finalised and to find a home that was the right for Robert."

Billie researched several providers to find a home where Robert also had access to adequately trained staff to meet his individual needs. He now lives in one of Achieve Australia's group homes in Sydney with three other people who have similar interests to his own. "The home is more lively and warm and Robert now also attends a local community day program, which he really loves," said Billie.

It has also been easier for Robert's family to visit him more frequently. "Since engaging with Support Coordination services and moving into his new home in Sydney, Robert has become more alert and able to recognise his family members," said Robert's mother, Lynette Stearn. "He has become more interactive with the people around him and it has also been noticed that he has had an increase in appetite."

FEATURE



Swimming in the fast lane

Kade Gordan's smile beams proudly down the camera lens.

He has every reason to feel proud sporting medals won at the recent 2019 Special Olympics Inter-Club Swim Meet.

Kade says it's the success of winning and the enjoyment of the sport that drives him. "I swim because I'm good at it and it's fun," he says. "If you do your best, you can come first."

At the Swim Meet, held at the Kurri Kurri Aquatic Centre, Kade brought home three gold medals, one silver and one bronze. A natural ability and a love for the sport combined with regular training has seen Kade take home many medals over the past six years.

"This is a significant accomplishment for Kade and we are proud to support such talented and capable individuals," says Regional Operations Manager at Achieve Australia, Ann Houston.

With a regular training schedule, Kade finds that swimming is also a good way to keep fit. Among other benefits like keeping fit, swimming provides a low impact alternative to other types of exercise. It also

builds endurance, tones muscles and helps maintain a healthy weight, heart and lungs.

When he's not swimming, Kade has many other interests and is an avid gardener. He has created a flourishing vegetable garden at home where he lives in supported

"I swim because I'm good at it and it's fun. If you do your best, you can come first."

accommodation at Achieve. Tending his garden every day by watering, weeding and harvesting, Kade has many types of plants and vegetables in the garden.

"I grow vegetables that my housemates and I can eat and cook with," he says as he points out the various plants. "We have cauliflower, tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage and rosemary in the garden."

In his spare time, Kade enjoys lunch with his family every Saturday and likes trying out new sports. A recent discovery over the past year for Kade has been finding a new passion for horse riding with Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA). RDA is a volunteer-based organisation providing coaching and support for people with disabilities who want to develop and improve their riding skills.

Kade also likes to volunteer himself at Sydney's Maritime Museum, helping and guiding visitors through the exhibitions to enhance their experience. Volunteers undertake initial and ongoing training at the museum and are a part of a dedicated community where everyone is welcome.

With such a busy schedule it's hard to imagine how Kade fits everything in, but he says he does get some downtime. "My favourite show on TV is Love Island so I watch that," smiles Kade.

Achieve Australia would like to extend a big congratulations to Kade for his recent medal wins at the Special Olympics and we look forward to hearing more about his ventures in future.

Meet Liza: Fabric enthusiast



The shop sign flips to 'open' at The Sewing Basket in Newington and a steady stream of customers flow in. Liza Hanna has spent the morning getting ready for a busy day ahead, organising the fabrics on display and sorting through the donations.

If you ask Liza what she likes most about working at The Sewing Basket, she will tell you without hesitation it's the people who come from far and wide to shop. "I like helping the customers and getting to know them," says Liza.

"Customers come from everywhere, even as far as the country, and last week someone came from New Zealand!"

Previously, Liza worked in a florist and she says the experience helped to develop her love of colours, textures and patterns. Now Liza enjoys working with the diverse range of donated fabrics, ribbons, buttons and patterns in store at The Sewing Basket. She cuts and measures the fabrics and sorts and prices donations that come in from the community every day.

"I enjoy working with the vintage fabrics the most because I can help customers mix and match them with other fabrics that we have in the shop," explains Liza.

Achieve Australia's My Career Operations Maturity, Leanne Larche, says that Liza is a delight to work with and is always a friendly face in the shop. "Liza is great at what she does and really loves

helping the customers, measuring up and pricing the fabrics," says Leanne.

"Since working at The Sewing Basket, Liza has come a really long way in how she interacts with the customers and in getting to know all the different items in the shop."

As an avid fabric enthusiast, Liza has offered up her top tips for the summer and what to look out for when shopping at The Sewing Basket this season.





Tips for summer fabrics and styles

- **Floral and tropical prints:** Stylish botanical and floral prints in bold or muted colours. Take your pick from a wide range for timeless inspiration.
- **Light fabrics:** Linen, cotton, chambray, rayon and blended fabrics are perfect for warmer weather. Natural fibres allow for maximum breathability.
- **Vintage fabrics:** Popular among fashion and sewing enthusiasts,

iconic vintage fabrics from by-gone eras never go out of style. High waisted pants and playsuits make a bold statement.

- **Vivid colours:** Embrace colour this season with cerulean blues, neo-mint, sage green, turmeric yellow and earthy tones.
- **Comfort fashion:** Look for simple, elegant styles and patterns that are comfortable enough to wear all day long.

Liza lives in Ermington with her family and works at The Sewing Basket in Newington on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week. If you are in

store and need any help with your current projects, just ask Liza who will guide you in the right direction. You might even discover something new for your collection.

Pictured opposite page: A range of buttons and haberdashery at The Sewing Basket can add the finishing touch.

Above: Liza loves working with the vintage fabrics at The Sewing Basket and enjoys helping customers mix and match for different projects.

Left: Florals and colours are a great way to celebrate the new season and warmer weather.

A vibrant, abstract painting featuring a central tree with a thick, dark trunk and a canopy of yellow and blue. The background is a dense, colorful mosaic of brushstrokes in various colors including red, green, blue, yellow, and pink. The overall style is expressive and textured.

FEATURE

“It’s wonderful when everybody likes my work. It helps me feel more confident and makes me feel proud.”



Bringing art to life

Paintings inspired by celebrities, movie characters and superheros adorn the walls in Chris Wilkinson's home in Casino. But these aren't collector items. Instead the artworks are painted by Chris himself who is an avid painter and science fiction enthusiast.

Chris' creative talents have also been exhibited in several local art galleries in the past, including the Lismore and Kyogle Art Galleries. "Chris has had his very own section in a couple of the local art galleries and has sold a number of works over the years," says Achieve Australia Support Worker, Shawn Gill, who helps Chris maintain his independence at home and pursue his passion for painting.

Living in a group home in Casino, Chris receives daily living supports to help with household chores, shopping and cooking as well as support to help maintain an active lifestyle. Chris says he likes to see the local community enjoying and appreciating his much-loved paintings.

"It's wonderful when everybody likes my work," says Chris. "It helps me feel more confident and makes me feel proud."

Chris' interest in painting began more than 10 years ago through the local art program SeaSpace. At SeaSpace, Chris works closely with his art teacher and mentor to refine

his skills and develop new artworks. Working with acrylic paints on canvas, Chris sketches out his painting and uses small squares to bring the finished pieces together.

"I paint the pictures from my memory," explains Chris. "I've painted Indiana Jones, Superman, Dr Who and I'm working on The Flash now."

When searching for new inspiration for a painting, Chris looks to his favourite characters, movies and television shows. Once he has completed a piece, he writes a letter to the featured celebrities and includes an image of the finished portrait. In appreciation of his artwork, Chris often receives reply letters, memorabilia and images back from celebrities and movie makers.

"Chris was really excited to receive a Dr Who shirt and handwritten letter recently from the director of the show," says Shawn. "It's really great to see this recognition of his hard work, time and efforts. Chris even has signed pictures from Harrison Ford and Sean Connery."

Every year, Chris enters into the Bentley Art Prize community event where more than 700 artworks are accepted from towns as far away as Bathurst and Toowoomba. Since he began painting, Chris has won several prizes for his portrait

paintings at the event and regularly sells his works to the community.

Among other interests, Chris also enjoys collecting posters from movie magazines and going to Surfability for adapted and inclusive surfing sessions.

For his next project Chris is inspired to paint women's tennis champion and current World No. 1, Ash Barty. We look forward to seeing Chris continue to find new inspiration to express his creative talents and fulfil his passion for painting.



Pictured top of page: Chris with his painting of a whale and her calf.

Bottom right: Chris gets inspiration from his love of superheros and movies in this monster-inspired artwork.

Opposite page: Chris's Dr Who inspired painting.

ACHIEVE IN ACTION: RICHARD TABAN

When Richard Taban was young and his friends went out, he stayed at home to help care for his elderly grandma who was unable to walk. It was through this experience as a young man in Southern Sudan where Richard developed a passion for helping others and would later find himself drawn to working in the community sector.

“When I had to look after my grandma and see what she was going through, I understood just how hard it was to go through something like that,” remembers Richard.

After moving with his family to Australia in 2009, Richard completed an English course to begin his academic studies. He went on to study accounting and management, but soon after followed another path towards studying and working in the disability sector.

Now, since working at Achieve Australia for two years as a Support Worker in a group home, Richard’s

natural leadership qualities and skills have seen him step into an Acting Team Leader role.

“I’ve always felt that I’m supported at work, so I want to give that back to my own team now,” says Richard. “I enjoy listening to the staff and working together to come up with solutions when something is not working.”

In the home environment, Richard oversees a team of up to 10 staff providing round-the-clock support for people with disability who have complex behaviours. Supporting people with complex behaviours has now become a passion for Richard. He says that when supporting people with high support needs the most important skill to have is to be able to change your approach as needed.

“We always need to be flexible and adapt our practices when things change with our clients because every day is different,” says Richard. “It’s also really important to make sure everyone is on the same page

so we can always put our client and their needs first.”

Richard says individuals with complex behaviours are often misunderstood as they are unable to communicate their needs adequately and can become isolated. “I worked with a client who couldn’t leave the house and take part in daily activities,” explains Richard.

“After six months of adapting his routine and working closely with his family, specialists and staff, the client was able to attend his first ever dental appointment. He now goes out shopping and into the community on a regular basis and we’ve developed a close bond.”

To further his interest in behavioural science, Richard hopes to undertake additional training and studies in mental health and psychology in the future. For now, he says that working in the disability sector provides a rewarding career where you can see the direct impact you have each and every day.

“I’ve always felt that I’m supported at work, so I want to give that back to my own team now.”

“When you wake up in the morning, it’s a good feeling knowing that you can put a smile on someone’s face today and make a difference in their life.”



Annual Achieve Australia Golf Tournament



Teams played 18 holes on Strathfield Golf Club's brand-new course.



A special performance by Ben Howard at the luncheon.

Supporters and players turned out on Friday, 1 November in support of the Annual Achieve Australia Golf Tournament at Strathfield Golf Club. It was a fun-filled day for all with a challenging round of golf followed by an entertaining fundraising luncheon with auctions, prizes and live music.

A big congratulations go to Gonz's Hangers-on, our winning team for the day. Thanks to our generous supporters and players, more than \$36,000 was raised for our new Achieve My Dream program.

On the day, our very first round of successful recipients of Achieve My Dream were announced:

★ **Brent Nebel's dream is to go whale watching.**

★ **Christopher Morris' dream is to go to a live Sydney Roosters football game.**

★ **Patricia Williams' dream is to attend an Elvis Presley impersonator event.**

★ **Ben Howard's dream is to receive singing lessons and to one day perform at the Enmore Theatre in Newtown.**

We look forward to our recipients making their dreams a reality in the near future. A special thanks go to all of our players, sponsors and donors who supported the event this year and to our Golf Committee Mike Crook, Jeff Dawe, Robert England, and their families for your ongoing commitment for almost 20 years.



Natalie Crook and Alex Dawe enjoying the Tournament.



A beautiful day out on the green.



Gonz's Hangers-on celebrate as the Tournament's winning team.



Teeing off on the day.



Friends and family get together at the luncheon.



Michael Ungerboeck from Adamatic

OUT&ABOUT



Seniors Disability Expo

More than 3,000 people attended the Sydney Seniors & Disability Expo at Sydney Olympic Park in August. At the event, Achieve Australia was among 100 exhibitors showcasing the latest services, supports, products, technology and equipment available for people with disability, their families and carers.

A celebration of African cultures at Seven Hills

Participants and staff at the My Life Seven Hills hub have been exploring the cultures of the world through their hospitality program. Recently, they showed culinary appreciation to African cultures by cooking up traditional chicken biryani and baklava dishes.

Everyone got involved in gathering and measuring the ingredients to make the new recipes, enjoying the new style of food and a memorable experience. On the day, staff wore their traditional dress and played music from all over Africa in celebration. The team at Seven Hills look forward to exploring new cultures from around the world again.



Spooktacular times at Araluen

Zombies, monsters, witches and spooky creatures all showed up for Halloween at Araluen this year. Participants enjoyed face painting, arts and crafts, baking, zombie disco dancing and a sausage sizzle at the annual party.



Spring splendour delights

Summer Hill House celebrated spring in full splendour at our Spring Family Social event. The courtyard was transformed into a picturesque garden setting with hanging flowers, giant handcrafted floral installations, and a tasty picnic table for all to enjoy.

A colourful stilt walker created unique balloon creations and participants embraced the party spirit with face painting and dancing.



City of Ryde Art Society 59th Annual Art Exhibition

In October, participants from My Life Community and Lifestyle art programs had the opportunity to display their latest works at the City of Ryde Art Society's 59th Annual Art Exhibition. As part of the inclusive exhibition, participants were invited to exhibit alongside other local artists at the public art show.

This year, artists had the chance to meet with the local Mayor, Clr Jerome Laxale, at a special launch event and received a certificate of participation for their contribution to the exhibition.





TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE LATEST NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS FEATURING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY.

The Age, 29 September

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE IS A POWERFUL THING

“Greta Thunberg is what happens when the world is ready for change. I am autistic, and her presence on the world stage is so exciting and refreshing. She’s a reminder of the fact autistic people were put on this planet to be different and to wake everybody up.”

Disability Support Guide, 4 November

YOUNGER PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY NEED TO BE REMOVED FROM AGED CARE

The Interim Report from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has recommended the removal of all younger people with disability from aged care and to stem the flow of younger people into a system that cannot provide appropriate care.

The Guardian, 9 November

DISABILITY INQUIRY BEGINS WITH HARROWING STORIES, BUT ADVOCATES FEAR IT ISN'T EQUIPPED TO SUCCEED

Some in the disability community have been waiting years for this week to come, yet it still arrived too soon. As the disability royal commission landed in Townsville for its first public hearings, it was trailed by some advocates who argue the process is, if not set up to fail, at least not exactly equipped to succeed.

ABC News, 11 November

VINCENT FANTAUZZO: DRAWING A LIFE IN PICTURES

Behind the celebrated career of one of Australia’s most sought-after portrait painters is a visual language “superpower” that lifted him out of poverty, one brush stroke at a time.



ABC News, 13 October

WHEELCHAIR DANCING BRINGS JOY, CHALLENGES PERCEPTIONS ABOUT DISABILITY

As the curtain rises on the stage, the lights illuminate seven dancers and an appreciative gasp rings out through the sell-out crowd in the theatre. In the 73-year history of this eisteddfod, it’s the first time a group of wheelchair dancers has competed.

The West Australian, 31 October

FILMMAKER CREATES DISABILITY DOCO

A local theatre program that celebrates the talents of people with disability will be made into a short film by Albany filmmaker, Bayden Redshaw. Having battled with autism, a heart condition and throat conditions, Redshaw wants to give hope to others about not letting a disability diagnosis constrain them.





My Home Vacancies

Achieve Australia's accommodation and support services offers you a range of options to best suit your individual needs.

Asquith _____	1 room
Eastwood _____	1 room
Greystanes _____	1 room
Guildford West _____	2 rooms
Kellyville _____	2 rooms
Kellyville Ridge _____	1 room
North Ryde _____	1 room
Parramatta _____	2 rooms
Rydalmere _____	1 room
Ryde _____	3 rooms
Waitara _____	1 room

To view more details on these vacancies, visit our website or contact the team at Achieve Australia.

My journey has
just begun

