

enable.

Louisa

accessible
nature

THE HORROR SCHOOLGIRL
BY VIVIAN FUNG

Bloom
movement



achieve
australia

building extraordinary lives



Achieve My Dream

Achieve Australia is empowering people with disability to dream big and pursue their passions. The Achieve My Dream program is funded through the generous donations of our corporate sponsors, members of the community and funds raised through the Annual Achieve Australia Golf Tournament.

Applications are now open for existing Achieve Australia participants and close on 30 September 2019. There will also be an additional round this year, opening in December 2019.



1300 22 44 38 achieveaustralia.org.au Achieve Australia @AchieveAus



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WELCOME

JO-ANNE HEWITT CEO

As the new CEO of Achieve Australia, I'm delighted to welcome you to the spring edition of *Enable* magazine.

Since commencing in August, I have had the pleasure of touring our various sites across Sydney and in the Northern Rivers to meet clients, families, carers, and our staff working in the field. I am truly committed to listening to everyone's needs and in hearing your feedback to ensure we can focus on continuous improvement to better support people with disability.

At the recent Global Talks in Sydney and Casino, I heard from families about what matters most to you and where we need to improve. I'm pleased to see these forums are in place, providing a platform to meet with families face-to-face and work together. I look forward to further developing these forums in future.

Within the community, it's fantastic to see that people with disability are being included, recognised and valued more and more every day. New initiatives such as The Bloom Movement are creating meaningful connections in the area of mental health and wellbeing, and improved accessibility in our national parks is providing further opportunities for people with disability to enjoy outdoor activities.

In addition, at Achieve Australia we have recently launched the Achieve My Dream program. Achieve My Dream takes inspiration from what an individual has always dreamed to do or experience in their lifetime and aspires to make this possible. Applications for the first round close at the end of September with another round to follow in December. For more information and to apply, please visit our website. I would encourage all clients of Achieve to apply for this unique opportunity to have a dream realised.

Once again, in *Enable* we feature a story from *Seven Inspired Tales: A Collection of Short Stories*. This time you'll meet Ruby from The Horror School Girl, a zombie-inspired tale written by Vivian Fung. Following the Positive Partners Program earlier this year, the inspired tales were recently published into a fully illustrated book. Participants, families and friends from PwC attended a special launch at Araluen and were thrilled to receive their very own copy of the book.

I hope you enjoy the spring edition of our magazine and I look forward to meeting more clients, families and staff in the near future.



Jo-Anne Hewitt, CEO



We sat down with our new ceo, Jo-Anne Hewitt, to find out what inspires her and how she plans to lead Achieve Australia into the future.

Welcome, Jo-Anne. What do you hope to bring to the role as the new CEO of Achieve Australia?

I bring a shared passion for social inclusion for people with disability in our community that comes from my long history of working and leading service delivery in the disability sector. My experience in working with people with very complex needs and their families has also created a real passion for research and evidence-based practices. I believe it's vital that as a provider we are contemporary and innovative in the delivery of our services and responsive to the needs of our clients.

What are you most looking forward to in your new role?

I'm most looking forward to meeting the people we support because at the end of the day that's why we're all here. Unfortunately as CEO, I don't have the opportunity to work directly with people with disabilities every day but I really look forward to getting to know our dedicated staff on the frontline who are supporting our clients and families.

In recent times, the organisation has been through significant change and I know there's a lot of work to do. I'm very committed to Achieve being really successful and continuing to advocate for our passion of social inclusion for people with disability.

Do you have a preferred leadership style and what makes a good leader?

I'm a very collaborative leader and I love working with the people around me including

staff and clients to understand everyone's needs and aspirations. I do this by truly listening and being completely transparent.

I believe a good leader needs to listen to the people around them and be invested in ensuring the people we support are at the centre of everything we do. A good leader needs to have clarity and a broad focus to be able to see not only what's immediately in front, but also what lies ahead. Leadership is also about telling the story of the organisation so that everyone understands what we stand for, what to expect and where we're headed.

What do you think makes a positive workplace culture within an organisation?

CEO

Honesty and transparency are some of the crucial elements that help create a positive workplace culture. In addition, a culture where everyone is working towards a common goal, where we live and breathe our values and 'walk the talk'. We need to have respect for others and have confidence that the organisation is fully committed to living out its purpose for the people we support.

What do your first 100 days at Achieve look like?

My main priority is to engage with people and hear what everyone has to say including the people we support, families and staff. In order to build on our existing good work and develop a plan for the

future, I need to understand where the gaps are to ensure we deliver on promises made. A major priority for the organisation at this point is our accreditation so I will be staying close to this work over my first 100 days.

What will your top three priorities be over the next 12 months?

My first priority is to ensure an authentic culture for the organisation and that we're fulfilling our promises to the people we support and their families. Secondly, I'll be building on the great work that has already been done to ensure Achieve is sustainable into the future. And next, I want to make sure we're looking at contemporary evidence-based practices to deliver the best disability services across Sydney and the

Q&A

Northern Rivers of NSW.

Can you think back to what inspired you to work in the disability sector?

Growing up, my mum had a disability but it wasn't something any of us really focused on. Our family was incredibly inclusive and my mum was a very socially gifted woman who surrounded herself with people. I think growing up in an environment where everyone was welcome, included and valued set me up for a career in human services.

When I was 19, I worked as a Social Educator when I was at university and then worked my way up. It's because of this early work on the frontline that I still feel very connected to people with disability and

staff who work in the field.

What do you think makes an organisation succeed in today's NDIS environment?

There is no doubt that the NDIS is the most fundamental social policy change since the introduction of Medicare. It has the potential to really shift the lives of individuals and how our society treats and thinks of people with disability. There's no doubt that there have been implementation problems with the NDIS that are affecting individuals and their families as well as service providers, and this is something we are committed to working through with the NDIA to ensure the best outcomes for our clients.

To succeed in the disability sector today, an organisation must remain client-focused and ensure that the people the organisation supports are getting the right plans and services in place to meet their needs. An organisation must also understand what it takes to be sustainable in this new environment and plan accordingly.

Finally, how will you lead Achieve Australia into the future Jo-Anne?

I have a deep commitment to the work of Achieve and to the people we support. I understand there has been a period of significant change and growth, however my commitment to our clients, families and staff is that I am here to stay. I plan to lead with authenticity, a vision for the future and a really clear sense of purpose about who we are, the work we do and where we're headed as an organisation.



There's a new way to look after your mental health, take time out and get back to nature – it's called The Bloom Movement.

The Bloom Movement is a social enterprise that has been spreading joy and happiness in the community by creating beautiful flower bouquets and then handing them out to strangers to raise awareness about mental health.

Founder and company director of The Bloom Movement, Monique Wardley, explains that the idea came to her when she was going through a difficult time with her own mental health.

"I thought that a random act of kindness like giving a stranger on the street a bouquet of flowers would make me happy and make someone else happy too, while opening up the conversation about mental health," says Monique.

"Initially people were shocked and asked me: why? When I explained what I had been going through, many people went on to tell me about their own struggles with mental health which either they themselves or someone they knew had experienced," she went on to say.

Previously a wedding and event stylist, Monique also runs floristry workshops as part of The Bloom Movement. It was on a regular trip to the Sydney Markets where she noticed that many boxes of blooms were being thrown out after market day, even though they were still fresh, and potentially could be

used for community workshops.

Monique set about creating a variety of new wellness workshops and professional development sessions where people could come together to learn the art of floral arranging and take time out for themselves.

Recently at Summer Hill House, The Bloom Movement ran one of their inclusive workshops as part of the centre's ongoing events calendar. The main purpose of these workshops is to provide an opportunity for people of all abilities to experience the healing properties of flowers, be immersed in nature and to support personal wellbeing.

"I wanted to create a space at Summer Hill House to evoke a feeling that was calming and nurturing, a place of happiness," recalls Monique. "Some participants could not express their joy in words but I could tell it was a very special experience for them."

During the sensory workshop, participants had the chance to select flowers for their own bouquets and make a handmade card for Mother's Day, as well as experience an essential oil hand massage, the aromas of a lavender and rose scented bowl, and a shower of petals.

"Everyone really enjoyed the floral workshop by The Bloom Movement," says Summer Hill House Manager, Naomi Fraser. "It was something that we haven't done before and participants loved the opportunity to create something special for their mum to give them on the day."

The Bloom Movement is helping to create more open conversations in the community around mental health, breaking down the stigma associated with mental illness and helping people to reconnect and take time for themselves. It's also a wonderful way to add a little spark of joy to those around you.

For more information about The Bloom Movement, visit thebloommovement.com.au

Blooms Spark Joy



NEW SERVICES AT STATE-OF-THE-ART SDA APARTMENTS IN GUILDFORD

Achieve Australia is now providing Supported Independent Living (SIL) services for 11 participants with high physical support needs at new state-of-the-art Specialist Disability Accommodation (SDA) apartments in Guildford.

The new homes offer life-changing benefits for the people we support, some of who have been living in aged care facilities or who have been living alone and isolated in community housing without suitable supports and adequate funding for their needs.

Likewise, other individuals with significant physical disabilities have been struggling to maintain their emotional wellbeing and were also experiencing a decline in their health and mobility prior to moving into their new custom-built home.

“It’s a transformative experience for many of the individuals moving into Guildford who now have the opportunity to live more independently in the community, improve their standard of living and have access to round-the-clock support,” says Service Manager at Achieve Australia, Vanessa Colusso. “We understand that moving home is a very big adjustment for many of our clients and their families, but it truly is amazing to see these positive outcomes for the people we support.”

The apartments have been designed by Ability SDA with full accessibility in mind featuring the latest in assistive technology, open plan living, natural lighting, wheelchair-accessible kitchens, an outdoor terrace, and purpose-built bathrooms.

In addition, an accessible rooftop terrace



Above: The team at Achieve Australia are now providing SIL services at new state-of-the-art SDA apartments in Guildford.

includes barbeque and communal areas for entertaining with views over the local area. The location of the apartments also provides easy access to public transport, community services, the Guildford shopping precinct as well as the Parramatta CBD, which is 5km north of the apartments.

With many of the apartments offering two or more bedrooms, individuals have the opportunity to spend more quality time with their families and children while still receiving the high care and support they need.

“It’s the little things that many of us take for granted such as the opportunity to have our family and friends over for a meal or for an overnight stay, which can make a huge difference in someone’s life,” says Vanessa.

As everyone settles into their new homes at Guildford, Achieve is committed to working closely with our clients, their families and carers, Ability SDA, and our staff on site to support each individual to live more independently in the community.

SUMMER HILL HOUSE LIGHTS UP YOUNG LIVES

Achieve Australia’s Summer Hill House garden and courtyard came alive in June with interactive lighting displays and sensory activities set in an enchanting ‘mythical rainforest’ theme.

Inspired by the spectacular light shows of Vivid Sydney, which attracted two million visitors this year, the displays at Summer Hill House included a large glowing mural, garden lights and sculptural displays, an interactive kaleidoscope tunnel, and a scented fog machine.

During the week, families and participants of Summer Hill House were invited to attend a special glow party to come together and enjoy the light show and entertainment. There was also glow in the dark face painting and glowing accessories to add to the fun on the night.

“Our families and participants really enjoyed the interactive displays and the chance to experience something different from the everyday,” says Summer Hill House Manager, Naomi Fraser.



The lighting displays at Summer Hill House were inspired by Vivid Sydney.

“Some families weren’t able to attend Vivid Sydney this year and they loved that we brought a touch of the festivities to them,” says Naomi. “It was also an opportunity for families to socialise with other participants and their families.”

The light up event at Summer Hill House has topped off an exciting few months at the short term accommodation and respite centre, which now hosts an ongoing calendar of activities and events for the people we support.

Last season we celebrated NAIDOC Week and National Tree Day, held a special dress-up party as well as hosted movie nights, workshops and created a vibrant wall mural inside the centre with local Sydney artist Mulga. Known for his inventive and original style, Mulga transformed a white space at Summer Hill House into a beautiful flamingo display for everyone to enjoy.

For more information about Summer Hill House services, activities or to apply, visit achieveaustralia.org.au/my-home/summer-hill-house



Families came together at a special glow party at Summer Hill House in June.



Enjoying activities at the Summer Hill House glow party.

Living life to the fullest in Llandilo

In 2017, Achieve Australia led the winning tender submission for the transfer of services from Families & Community Services (FACS) for 28 community homes, which saw approximately 130 people with disability and 300 staff transferred to the organisation. In this time our team has not only been focused on the provision of core support services, but also on ensuring the people we support are living full and active lives in the community.

The Llandilo site has four homes with five individuals living in each house, and more than 50 staff from healthcare and nursing professionals to a team of social educators. Challenging or complex behaviours means that many participants at Llandilo are unable to attend local community and lifestyle services and so a dedicated team is on hand to help.

Nikki Jones leads the team of social educators at Llandilo and is working closely with staff and participants to find the best programs to suit different interests, meet individual needs and encourage inclusion in the local community.

“The monthly programs provide the chance for participants to do something different each day, learn new skills and help to build their confidence,” says Nikki.

“We do gardening, art, cooking and go out to various locations around the community. Everyone has different interests and things they like to do, so we always ensure that we can include lots of variety in the daily programs,” she went on to say.

The team provides both individual supported activities such as therapy sessions and family visits as well as group activities to encourage socialising, including visits to Bushbred Horse Assisted

Learning Program. The assisted program helps people with disability to connect and get close to a variety of animals from horses to guinea pigs, many of who have been rescued and given a second chance at life as part of the program.

“There are both physical and mental benefits of animal therapy and the interactions can be calming for many individuals,” explains Nikki. “One individual we work with had a fear of animals and to see the transformation in him after taking part in the program was remarkable,” she says. “By the end of the session he was brushing the animals, being very gentle and getting really close to them.”

Over the coming months, the team at Llandilo are also excited to embark on a project to create a new centralised vegetable garden on the property for everyone to benefit from. The project will be made possible thanks to a grant from Sydney Water to help establish and construct new garden beds.

“The Garden to Table project is a great opportunity for everyone to come together at Llandilo to look after and tend to the garden, share the produce among the homes and learn more about cooking healthy meals,” says Nikki.

The new activities and projects out at Llandilo are offering the people we support a different experience every day and the chance to live a full life in the community. We look forward to sharing more updates and stories from the region in the near future.



Clockwise from the top: Homes at Llandilo are surrounded by peaceful surrounds and greenery. Helping to care for gardens at Llandilo. Cooking healthy meals with fresh produce. Animal therapy provides both physical and mental benefits.



VACANCY

My Home Vacancies

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

Current listings

Asquith - 1 room
 Eastwood - 1 room
 Greystanes - 1 room
 Guildford West - 1 room
 Kellyville - 2 rooms
 Kellyville Ridge - 1 room
 North Ryde - 1 room
 Parramatta - 2 rooms
 Rydalmere - 1 room
 Ryde - 4 rooms
 Waitara - 1 room

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

☎ 1300 44 22 38 and ask for My Pathway

✉ MyPathway@achieveaustralia.org.au

🌐 achieveaustralia.org.au/my-home/my-home-vacancies

ACHIEVE IN ACTION: DAVID RAFFERTY

David Rafferty has just begun an exciting new chapter at Achieve Australia. Recently appointed as Manager at The Sewing Basket, he now heads up the team to oversee operations, logistics and staff and volunteer management at the shops. The popular social enterprise, which was started more than 20 years ago by Don and Jo McKerrell at Crowle Estate, has recently grown into three bustling retail hubs across Sydney.

"The Sewing Basket has been growing in popularity as more and more people find out about us and as we move to a more sustainable society," says David. "We still operate 100% from community donations that may otherwise be transferred into waste."

As for his new role, David is looking forward to what comes next. "I'm very excited to take on this role and I have many years' of experience that I can contribute to seeing The Sewing Basket through its next growth phase," he says.

Having worked at Achieve Australia since 2005, then known as Hornsby Challenge, David has more than 25 years of experience in the disability sector.

"I started working in the disability sector by chance when I landed a role working for Wesley Mission as manager of their Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE)," he explains. "It was this early experience that fired up my passion for people with disability exercising choice in their lives and becoming more independent, especially through employment."

At the very centre of what makes The Sewing Basket unique is its ability to transform the lives of people with disability by providing regular employment, training, support and community.

"The very best thing about working in the sector is having the opportunity to positively impact the lives of people with disability, but it's also about the responsibility to ensure that through our work we always have the

individual at the forefront of our minds," says David.

His experience in discovering the theory of Social Role Valorisation (SRV), developed in 1983 by German-American academic Wolf Wolfensberger, Ph.D, helped shape David's values and offered insights into understanding the rights of people with disability.

According to the International Social Role Valorization Association: "SRV is a dynamic set of ideas useful for making positive change in the lives of people disadvantaged because of their status in society."

While SRV has been a source of inspiration for David, he now looks forward to finding the next location for The Sewing Basket to further grow the enterprise and help support more people with disability.

For further information about The Sewing Basket, including locations and opening hours, visit thesewingbasket.com.au



David serving customers at the Sydney Craft and Quilt Fair in June.



The fabric shop supporting people with disability

AN EXCERPT FROM SEVEN INSPIRED TALES:
A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES

THE HORROR SCHOOL GIRL

BY VIVIAN FUNG

One day, there was a little zombie girl called Ruby, who lived in a spooky hotel in the mountains. Her favourite thing to do was eat brains, arms, legs and any other ugly human bodies, which was usually cooked by her friend Victor the Vampire Chef.

On a cold winter's day, Ruby got very hungry as she hadn't eaten yet, and so called on Victor the Vampire Chef to cook her some juicy, mouth watering brain and toe soup. Victor was excited to cook this for Ruby as he also hadn't eaten that day and wanted to eat some brain and toe soup too.

Victor the chef started writing a list of ingredients he needed to make the brain and toe soup. Ingredients:

- 2 fat adult lazy brains
- 6 smelly toes
- 1 litre of frog broth
- 10 cockroach eyes
- 3 cups of sewerage water
- A handsome man's arms

As Victor gathered his ingredients, he realised that some of those ingredients were missing from his list. Victor managed to gather nearly all of the ingredients, except for two fat adult lazy brains, six toes and a handsome man's arms.

"Where am I going to get the rest of these ingredients?" Victor the Vampire Chef thought out loud.

"Why don't you go to the Dead Zombie Butcher shop? It is only 3pm and the store closes at midnight," suggested Ruby.

"Alright then, I'll grab my shopping bags and go to the Dead Zombie Butcher shop - thanks Ruby," Victor the Vampire Chef said.

"I can't wait for your return, so you can start cooking! I'm very hungry," Ruby said.

Ruby called a snake taxi service to pick Victor the Vampire Chef, "You'll get there in no time, slithering through the forest, up the hills and down the mountain to the Dead Zombie Butcher shop," Ruby yelled.

"Wooooohooooooooooooooooo!!!!" And off went Victor in the snake taxi service.

Soon enough, Victor arrived at the Dead Zombie Butcher shop. "We are finally here!" Victor said excitedly to the snake taxi service. "Can you wait here while I go and buy what I need, I shouldn't be too long!" Victor said. "No problem," replied the snake.

As Victor entered the Dead Zombie Butcher shop, he was greeted by a strange looking witch. "What are you after, my dear? We have everything and anything strange here at the Dead Zombie Butcher Shop," said the witch. "Oh yes, I can see you do have everything! May I have two fat adult lazy brains, six toes and a handsome man's arms?" asked Victor the Vampire Chef.

The strange looking witch got all the ingredients ready for Victor to take back to Ruby, who was waiting in the spooky hotel. "There you go Sir, all ready for you!" said the witch. "Thank you so much," replied Victor, and off he went home with the snake taxi service. Up the mountain, down the hills and through the forest to Ruby's spooky hotel.

Ding! Dong! Sounded the doorbell. Victor could hear little footsteps running down a long set of stairs, "You're here!!" yelled Ruby with delight! "Great! I'm very hungry," Ruby said while her tummy rumbled loudly. "I'll start getting the soup ready now," Victor responded.

Victor got straight to it, adding all the ingredients to his large black cooking pot.

"Dinner is served!" Victor the Vampire Chef yelled.

Tip-toe! Tip-toe! Ruby's footsteps sounded as she quickly walked past the corridor to the kitchen and sat at the dining table. "I'm ready to eat! It looks and smells delicious Victor, well done! Come and join me," Ruby said. "Thank you," replied Victor the Vampire Chef.

Ruby and Victor enjoyed their delicious toe and brain soup with delight! Ruby's tummy was finally satisfied.

The End

It's time for tea



Social Educators help participants to improve fine motor skills..

Participants and staff at Achieve Australia's My Life Community and Lifestyle Services hub at Seven Hills know how to bake a good scone. Every week they get together to choose a homemade recipe to make for a special high tea event, held each Wednesday at the hub. Cinnamon scrolls, slices, muffins or cakes are just some of the treats that have been on the menu in the past.

The high tea became a regular tradition when staff decided to purchase new crockery, tea pots and cake stands to make the occasion extra special for participants. "It was heart-warming to see the reactions of everyone when we set up the first high tea, we all knew it was something special," says Heather Pearse, Team Leader at My Life Seven Hills.

Since then, the high tea has become a regular feature at Seven Hills and something everyone looks forward to. Participants get involved in finding and choosing recipes, shopping for ingredients, baking, setting and packing up of the high tea, and of course, taste testing.

The team also invites participants from the Araluen hub to join them for the high tea each week. "It's a great social activity for everyone to get together each week for

the high tea, the participants love it," says Heather.

Along with building social connections, the activity helps to further develop fine motor skills for people with disability through using a cup and saucer and serving the tea and cake.

Other programs that are run at Seven Hills include aqua golf, indoor sports, art, cooking, and cultural activities. The team also supports participants for day outings, public transport trips and runs a local coffee club.

"We do a variety of activities alongside the high tea and enjoy getting out into the community with participants," explains Heather. "We work with a local artist and go out to their studio for classes too so that participants can experience something a bit different."

The Seven Hills hub is gratefully accepting community donations for items to use at their high tea event including cake stands, tablecloths or doilies. Items can be delivered to Achieve's Seven Hills My Life hub from 8am to 4pm weekdays.

In the meantime, participants and staff at Seven Hills will continue baking up a storm at high tea every week.



Participants and staff hold a special high tea event every Wednesday at Seven Hills.



Everyone gets involved in baking and setting up.



Participants travel from Araluen to meet with friends.

ACCESSIBLE NATURE



Raised viewing platforms provide access to stunning scenery at Dorrigo National Park. Photo credit: DPIE.

Modern technology, design and engineering is helping to create national parks and outdoor spaces that are more accessible than ever before for people with disability and their families. From accessible campsites and facilities to raised boardwalks, viewing platforms and all-terrain wheelchairs.

Beaches in the U.S. state of Connecticut have also taken this one step further and are now providing floating beach wheelchairs for its citizens, which look like beach chair recliners that float in the water. As part of the unique design, the wheelchairs have large shock-absorbing wheels to make moving over the sand easy.

Back home, accessible design is also advancing. The Murray Valley Regional Park now allows visitors to enjoy kayaking or canoeing using a wheelchair-accessible launch. The new deck and launch helps individuals get in and out of their kayak or canoe safely and easily.

A spokesperson from NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) says that it's important for everyone in the community to have access to green spaces. "NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service wants to ensure all members of the community have an opportunity to visit, explore and enjoy our national parks to connect with nature."

Sam Clenton from Achieve Australia's My Life Community and Lifestyle services explains that the key to planning an accessible trip is to do your research. "There are many great resources online, even reading reviews from Google Maps is helpful," says Sam. "We have many experienced staff on site, so we always have discussions about where the best places are to go."

Sam says it's also vital to consider the individual needs of each person. "We take into account an individual's interests, their likes and dislikes and their needs, as well as any limitations in terms of things like the

terrain or noisy and crowded places," he says. "Having accessible walkways and accessible bathrooms is also very important for the people we support."

With many accessible areas already available in our national parks, NPWS says that there are even more upgrades and improvements to come in the near future. "The NSW Government has invested \$149.6 million over the next four years to improve access to national parks in NSW, with \$140 million of this dedicated to improving park visitor infrastructure and facilities.

As part of this commitment, NPWS will be upgrading a range of walking tracks; providing all-weather, elevated surfaces to reduce obstacles and impacts from wear and tear. In suitable locations, ramps will be installed to replace steps, accessible parking increased and access to iconic lookout points increased to a mobility impaired access standard.

Govetts Leap at Blackheath in the Blue Mountains National Park is one of these iconic lookouts that is set to be upgraded with accessible paths, toilets with disabled access, and access improvements to the carpark."

To help everyone in the community access nature at its best, you can visit nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/access-friendly to plan your next trip this spring.



A kayak launch at Murray Valley Regional Park helps individuals get in and out of their kayak or canoe safely and easily. Photo credit: Rhys Leslie, Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).



Louisa enjoyed taking part in a photo shoot for the cover of the spring edition of Enable magazine.

As part of the Meet our Achievers series in recent editions, we have been getting to know the team working at AchievAble Enterprises to share their stories, passions and dreams for the future. This time we sat down with Louisa – a passionate and caring young woman who has worked with Achieve for 17 years.



From left to right: Leanne, Louisa, Stuart and Marie working at Finsbury Green.

Over this time Louisa has worked on many different projects to further develop her skills including on site at the Department of Industries, Finsbury Green and the Royal Botanic Gardens.

As part of Achieve Australia's new collaborative project with Finsbury Green, Louisa is one of two employees who work at the national company's Greenacre premises on a weekly basis. She says one of the best things about going to work at Finsbury is the people.

"The staff are kind and friendly," says Louisa. "I like the work I do at Finsbury, I enjoy putting things together like books and flyers into folders."

AchievAble Enterprise's Operations Manager, Leanne Larche, says that Louisa is a very valuable member of the team who loves to help others. "Louisa always puts in 100% at work and has a very friendly and caring nature," says Leanne. "She is always helping others and loves to listen to the radio, singing along to her favourite song while getting the job done."

Leanne went on to say that Louisa is also

passionate about taking up new opportunities. "Louisa likes to learn new things and is one of the first to put her hand up to help with a new job that comes in," she says.

In 2018, Louisa took up a unique opportunity to volunteer as part of Spectator Services at the Invictus Games in Sydney. At the event, she was paired up with other volunteers to help people attending find their way around the various venues. Louisa says she really enjoyed meeting lots of different people at the games. "We met some soldiers and got photos with them. That was really cool, I loved the soldiers," says Louisa.

Paul, Louisa's dad, sees first hand many of the benefits that she gets from going to work and actively participating in the community. "Going to work helps Louisa use her skills and gain new skills," says Paul. "She enjoys going to Newington and Finsbury Green, she is happy and likes going to work."

But it's not all about work for Louisa. In her spare time she loves watching ballet and movies like *The Wizard of Oz* and likes going out bowling with friends.

When asked what she would like to do in the future, Louisa revealed that she would like to keep learning new things and further develop her passion for dance. "I would like to learn something different one day, like tap dancing or ballet," she says with a smile.



Meeting a group of soldiers from The Australian Army was a highlight for Louisa, pictured with her colleague Christopher, at the

A crafty team

WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS

“Yasmin didn’t talk to anyone when she first started working here, not even to me. Now she chats to everyone and her confidence has grown tremendously.”

- Rhonda, volunteer at The Sewing Basket



For the past three years, Rhonda and Yasmin have shared a close and special bond at The Sewing Basket. The pair work together every Monday and Friday at the Newington shop, sorting and pricing all the craft items such as beads, buttons and knitting needles to go display.

Miss Rhonda, as she is affectionately known by Yasmin, says that it took time to establish a bond, but now they are very close. “Yasmin didn’t talk to anyone when she first started working here, not even to me,” explains Rhonda. “Now she chats to everyone and her confidence has grown tremendously.”

Working at The Sewing Basket has been

a way for Yasmin to not only improve her communication skills, but she is also learning work-based skills in a busy retail environment. Yasmin says she also really likes having morning tea with the team at The Sewing Basket and working together with Rhonda. “I like helping Miss Rhonda,” she says. “I’ve learnt how to package things, to put the stickers on and find where things go in the shop.”

Rhonda, an avid craft enthusiast who likes knitting and patchwork, says she has volunteered at The Sewing Basket for five years but has known about the shop for many years before this. “I used to shop at Crowle Home and everyone was so nice,

so I always wanted to come and volunteer here,” she recalls. “I enjoy meeting all the customers because everyone has the same interests.”

What makes The Sewing Basket special, says Rhonda, is the skilled team of volunteers and staff who are always available to help customers find just what they need in store. “Many shops today are cutting down on customer service, but that’s the number one thing we offer at The Sewing Basket which makes us different.”

Another part of the attraction for our customers is that The Sewing Basket truly is place for everyone in the community, providing supported employment for people with disability, offering local volunteering opportunities for enthusiasts, and through the sustainable sale of donated fabrics and materials.

These unique features, along with the rise of more environmentally conscious shoppers, has seen the growth of The Sewing Basket in recent times. Most recently this has seen

a new pop-up shop open in Balmain in Sydney’s Inner West earlier this year.

Achieve Australia’s new Manager of The Sewing Basket, David Rafferty, says that even further growth is on the horizon.

“There are many customers who want to see us expand to other areas and we know there’s a need in the regions for employment opportunities for people with disability and shops like The Sewing Basket,” says David. “We hope there will be even more shops in the future as we continue to expand.”

For Rhonda and Yasmin, they will continue working together at Newington, so be sure to say hello if you are in store or ask for some expert advice for your latest project.

To find out more about The Sewing Basket, visit thesewingbasket.com.au where you can also subscribe to our monthly email newsletter, A Good Yarn, to keep up to date with the latest announcements, sales and stories from our shops.



“I like helping Miss Rhonda. I’ve learnt how to package things, to put the stickers on and find where things go in the shop.”

- Yasmin, employee at The Sewing Basket

How depression is different in people with intellectual disability



In our winter edition of Enable we explored the causes, types and signs of depression and where to get help. In this follow up article, we delve a little deeper into how the signs of depression can be different in people with intellectual disability.

Dr Rachael Cvejic, Lecturer at the Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry, School of Psychiatry at UNSW Sydney, provides some key insights into what these differences can be, the signs to look out for and current research and resources that are available for the community.

How are the signs of depression in people with intellectual disability different?

For people with a mild intellectual

disability and those with reasonable verbal skills, the signs of depression can be similar to those in people without an intellectual disability. But for people with a more severe intellectual disability, or those with limited communication skills, symptoms of depression can be harder to identify. This is because when considering changes in mood and other signs of depression we usually rely a lot on a person's verbal skills and their ability to recognise and describe their feelings.

How can the signs of depression in people with intellectual disability be picked up?

To identify signs of depression in people with more severe intellectual disability or those with limited communication skills, we rely a lot more on descriptions provided by someone who knows the person well, such as a family member or carer, about any changes in a person's behaviour.

What are some of the changes to look out for?

These changes could include the person having a sad facial expression more often than usual, being tearful or crying more frequently, seeming irritable, refusing to take part in activities they previously enjoyed, or spending a lot more time alone. Other changes in behaviour could include changes in appetite, sleeping patterns, and changes in their activity levels.

But, these sorts of changes could also be due to physical health problems. They might indicate that the person is in pain, or they could be a side effect of medications. So it is really important that health

professionals consider these possible causes of changes in behaviour as well.

Can depression or other mental health conditions in a person with intellectual disability sometimes be overlooked?

Sometimes, it might be incorrectly assumed that behaviours are related to the person's intellectual disability, rather than to a health or mental condition. Carers should always seek help if they notice changes in a person's behaviour. And health professionals should always rule out physical causes before evaluating possible mental health changes.

What treatments are available to assist a person with intellectual disability who is experiencing depression?

It is important to know that there are treatments, both medication and non-pharmacological, that can assist someone with an intellectual disability and depression. The first step is to talk to your General Practitioner.

Is there any research currently underway to help improve the outcomes for people with disability?

There is a lot of research happening that aims to improve outcomes for people with an intellectual disability experiencing depression and other mental health conditions, both in Australia and overseas. For example, the Department of Developmental Disability Neuropsychiatry at UNSW Sydney is leading a number of studies that aim to improve the health and mental health of people with an intellectual disability, as well as their access to quality health services. A full list of our projects can be found by visiting 3dn.unsw.edu.au/our-projects

Are there any resources available in relation to your research?

As part of our work we have also

developed resources for health professionals, disability professionals and carers, to help them to better meet the needs of people with an intellectual disability and co-occurring mental health conditions. These include written guides, videos, podcasts, and eLearning modules. These resources are all available for free and can be accessed through our website.

For further information and to access additional resources, visit 3dn.unsw.edu.au/content/education-resources

"...when considering changes in mood and other signs of depression we usually rely a lot on a person's verbal skills and their ability to recognise and describe their feelings."

Rachael is a registered psychologist and early career researcher with broad research interests including neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry. Her clinical and research experience includes working with people with mild and major neurocognitive disorders, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and inherited neurodegenerative disorders including fragile X-associated tremor ataxia syndrome and Huntington disease.



OUT & ABOUT



SYDNEY CRAFT AND QUILT FAIR

We were thrilled to meet many new customers and catch up with our regular shoppers at the recent Sydney Craft & Quilt Fair, held at the ICC from 19 to 23 June. At The Sewing Basket stand visitors shopped for a wide range of donated fabrics, patterns, haberdashery and more, while taking the opportunity to learn more about our work supporting people with disability.

Across the five-day fair, The Sewing Basket achieved nearly \$9,000 in sales, which is an incredible effort from everyone involved. Our sincere thanks go to all our volunteers who helped customers at the stand and kept the shelves fully stocked at the event. We look forward to attending the fair again in 2020.

CAMP FLAMINGO COMES TO SUMMER HILL HOUSE

In August, local Sydney artist Mulga created a flamboyant flamingo display at Summer Hill House to the delight of participants and staff. The 5-metre long mural has been created to brighten the day of everyone who visits and comes complete with a special poem written by Mulga in a celebration of Summer Hill House.



Mulga paints Camp Flamingo at Summer Hill House.

The story of Camp Flamingo

Once upon a time in the jungles of Peru there was a summer camp called Camp Flamingo and it's where all the flamingo's went on summer camp and they had heaps of fun and did fun activities like going on waterslides and having food fights and having bonfires and roasting marshmallows and having sing-alongs by the camp fire and stuff. The boss of the camp was called Naomi the Flamingo and she was heaps good at juggling chainsaws.

By Joel 'Mulga' Moore

FESTIVAL OF INCLUSION 20-21 NOVEMBER

Achieve Australia is proud to be the Principal Sponsor at the Festival of Inclusion to be held at the University of Sydney and Sydney Olympic Park from 20 to 21 November. The festival will explore current social inclusion initiatives, research and activities to promote a more inclusive society for all people.

At the event there will be keynote presentations by experts in the field, panel and World Café discussions, workshops such as arts, dance, sports and drama, and a market place offering inclusive options for people with disabilities, families, carers and supporters.

Tickets start from \$25. For more information and to book, visit festivalofinclusion.com.au



EVERYBODY DANCE NOW DISCO 30 NOVEMBER

In celebration of Social Inclusion Week, Achieve Australia is partnering with EVERYbody Dance Now Disco. The disco for all abilities is expected to attract more than 100 people and will be held on Saturday, 30 November from 4pm to 6pm at North Ryde Golf Club.

Featuring a live DJ and a special pamper corner, the over 18's disco has an entry fee of \$10 per person. Entry for carers is free. For more information and to register, visit achieveaustralia.org.au/event

UPCOMING EVENTS

10 October
World Mental Health Day
Do you see what I see?

1 November
Annual Achieve Australia
Golf Tournament
Strathfield Golf Club

20-21 November
Festival of Inclusion
University of Sydney and
Sydney Olympic Park

23 November - 1 December
Social Inclusion Week
Connect, Collaborate,
Celebrate!

30 November
EVERYbody Dance Now
Disco
North Ryde Golf Club

PLAY A DREAM ROUND OF GOLF

Annual Achieve Australia Golf Tournament
Friday 1 November 2019
7am-3.30pm
Strathfield Golf Club

- Raise funds to support our new Achieve My Dream program, designed to turn dreams into reality for the people we support.
- 18-hole round on Strathfield Golf Club's new course.
- Luncheon featuring entertainment, special guests and prizes as well as live and silent auctions.

Register at achieveaustralia.org.au



achieve
australia
building extraordinary lives



SMASHING THE BARRIERS FOR WORKERS WITH DISABILITY

Photo credit: nine.com.au

NEWS

Take a look at some of the latest news and highlights in the disability sector.

ABC News, 11 July

WOMAN WITH DISABILITY WINS NDIS FUNDING FOR SEX THERAPIST IN 'PRECEDENT-SETTING' CASE

For the first time, a person with a disability has won the right to have a sex therapist paid for under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), but advocates say the ruling does not go far enough.

Business Insider, 23 July

DYLAN ALCOTT TO SMASH THE UNEMPLOYMENT STIGMA SUFFERED BY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Hot off the back of winning the men's quad wheelchair singles final at Wimbledon, Australian Dylan Alcott has returned home to inspire change. The tennis star has teamed up with his own sponsor Nike as well as ANZ bank to launch the Remove the Barrier initiative to get Australian employers to rethink disability in the workplace.

Brisbane Times, 28 July

ROMANCE NOVELIST HELEN HOANG WRITES ABOUT LOVE ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

At age 34, Hoang learned she had

Asperger's syndrome, a high-functioning type of autism. That revelation inspired her to create characters who are also on the spectrum, a trait that had yet to be explored in the romance genre and is resonating with readers.

The Financial Times, 7 August

SPECIALIST DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION GETS \$40M BOOST

Impact investor Christian Super has made a \$40 million investment to fund development of an initial 25 specialist disability accommodation units and encourage further institutional backing for the emerging housing type backed by NDIS subsidy.

Disability Support Guide, 14 August

SUBMISSIONS OPEN FOR DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has officially opened its public submissions. The Government is also funding a legal advisory service and advocacy support for people who want assistance to make a submission, however, this support is not yet available.

SUBMISSIONS AND INFORMATION LINE NOW OPEN FOR THE ROYAL COMMISSION

1800 517 199

DRcenquiries@royalcommission.gov.au

disability.royalcommission.gov.au/submissions



NOT SURE WHICH DISABILITY SERVICE TO CHOOSE? TALK TO AN EXPERT.

Achieve Australia's expert Support Coordination team are here to meet your needs and find tailored solutions that are right for you and your family.

- Independent advice
- Free initial consultation
- One-on-one support
- Financial guidance
- Negotiations on your behalf

For more information or to book an appointment, visit our website, call or email our team.

