

Hope!

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

April, 2023 | No. 9

Above and Beyond

If Parramatta Mission is the "beating heart" of our city, then our volunteers are her lifeblood. Every day, we see this demonstrated as our team stepping up to answer the call and smashing all expectations.

Our most recent Rich Person/Poor Person dinner event was a tremendous success, thanks to our amazing team of volunteers who showed up on the night and selflessly gave their time, talents and good heart.

I want to share the story of the event and acknowledge our heroes who made it all possible.



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Above and Beyond - Continued

On the evening of 30th March 2023, around 90 guests came to Meals Plus, yet they were different from our usual daytime guests. Many of them were in fine suits and dresses, ready for an unforgettable night of dining and community insights. Soon they were let in and gathered for welcoming addresses and briefing for the night in the coffee shop area.



At the entrance to the courtyard, Hana and Lal presided over the guests' designation for the night with a random draw of fate. Every drawing of "rich person" is met with much cheer, coupled with the realisation by all that another opportunity to escape the "poor tables" is lost – much like in real life, often chances and entitlements can be both arbitrary.



Our vision

A Community Transforming Lives



Coming into the hall, we have the amazing waiting team of Alistair, Angelia, Graham, Felicia, Marijcke, Sheena and Tania that just blew everyone away from the first “napkin flick.” They provided exceptional services on the night no less worthy of fine restaurants, with food prepared by a professional chef team to match.



In our kitchen was the Meals Plus kitchen team of Chloe, Jeremy and Prem led by Sue. They made simple food so great and full of care that most guests at poor tables actually preferred their food!



"The gift of service leads to a lifetime of love."

MARY WHITE



Then there is the champion duo of Darshan and Sabrina, who were the first to greet all guests and also ran the raffles throughout the event, imploring all guests to dig a little deeper to support our cause.



We want to give a shoutout to Tony and Penny, for staying behind after their regular Meals Plus shift to help us set up the venue.

With everyone's combined effort, the event proceeded smoothly, from the initial shock (as intended), through a dining experience with disparity, into the evening debriefing for guests. Powerful words were spoken by Luke Hannan the MC, Davyn, Rev Geoff Smith, and of course by Paul himself – who shared the living story of Meals Plus and our transformational community.



In our Hall that evening, we saw much laughter, some tears and many hearts shaken. And all of this only came to be possible by the hands and hearts of our volunteers, whose commitment, passion, and generosity will always be remembered, and to whom most go our most heartfelt gratitude - for they went above and beyond. Now so must we all.

“The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.”

OSCAR WILDE



Milestones

In March, two of our volunteers reached their first milestone on their PM journey: first year anniversary for Paul and Jeremy (not pictured). They are backbone of the Friday kitchen crew and have made Friday such an efficient train to run. Hope you will both be with us for a long time!



Then a week later, we say farewell for now to Tracy, whose journey now takes her homeward bound across the Ocean Pacific. To us all, Tracy is a very special person, who brought with her so much kindness, compassion and a big heart, and we are blessed to have her helping us during the entirety of her stay in Australia



Did you know that it's been since two years since Indra and Chao first started volunteering here at Meals Plus? To the right was a photo taken last year of Indra with her 2022 NSW Volunteer of the Year Certificate.



Our values:

Grace
Inclusion
Dignity
Faith and
Hope

Mark These Dates! Events and Training for Volunteers

With the National Volunteer Week (15 May – 21 May) just a month away, we want to make sure that we are getting people ready for the celebration.

We will organise a fun day-out all our volunteers. For the event, we will usually go for a venue like Parra League to play bowling and virtual rides with food included. We will try to aim for a time that suit everyone, so it would likely fall on the afternoons of 26 May (Friday), 27 May (Saturday) or 28 May (Sunday).



STANDARD MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID COURSE			
SESSION ONE (3 hours)		SESSION THREE (3 hours)	
Part 1	Mental Illness	Part 1	The MHFA Action Plan for Anxiety Problems
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk factors, prevalence and impact Spectrum of interventions 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis first aid for panic attacks Crisis first aid after a traumatic event First aid for anxiety problems
	Mental Health First Aid		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MHFA Action Plan 		
Part 2	Depression	Part 2	Psychosis
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs, symptoms and interventions 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs, symptoms and interventions
SESSION TWO (3 hours)		SESSION FOUR (3 hours)	

We are exploring the option for some volunteers to go sailing at Rushcutters Bay in May. At this stage, we are still working out the date, but if you are interested, please let Chao know.

Mental First First Aid Training!

Sue has managed to secure some spots for a two-day Mental Health First Aid training course at Blacktown on 2 June and 3 June, 9:00am to 4:00pm.

This is completely free for our volunteers, but places are limited.

If you are interested in any of the above event, please confirm with Chao by email:
chao.zhou@parramattamission.org.au

The fundraising team would like to acknowledge the great work of our volunteers and the valuable contribution that you make to the operations of our services. We regularly send out newsletters with updates from Parramatta Mission and also our appeals at certain times of the year.

If you would prefer to be taken off the mailing list for these things please email fundraising@parramattamission.org.au and let us know.

*From the
Fundraising
Team.*



March Community Hub Day

On 22 March 2023, we had an awesome Community Hub Day with many services in attendance. One of the team managed to capture the services ready for action in a panoramic shot below. Take a look!



For each Community Hub Service, guests can expect to access many critical services, especially Centrelink, Legal Aid, Housing Support and even ID Service from the Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages.



The next hub day will be on Wednesday, 26 April 2023, so please let anyone in need of support know about the date!

Corporate Volunteering Days for April and May

For the following dates, we have large group of volunteers to help from 9:30am to 1:00pm. If you are scheduled on those dates, you can take the day off or leave early.

If you need to have your shifts on those days for placement, please contact Chao for alternate shift arrangement.

27th April, Thursday
11th May, Thursday
15th May, Monday
17th May, Wednesday



The Quiet Spot

“Witches are naturally nosy,” said Miss Tick, standing up. “Well, I must go. I hope we shall meet again. I will give you some free advice, though.”

“Will it cost me anything?”

“What? I just said it was free!” said Miss Tick.

“Yes, but my father said that free advice often turns out to be expensive,” said Tiffany.

Miss Tick sniffed. “You could say this advice is priceless,” she said, “Are you listening?”

“Yes,” said Tiffany.

“Good. Now...if you trust in yourself...”

“Yes?”

“...and believe in your dreams...”

“Yes?”

“...and follow your star...” Miss Tick went on.

“Yes?”

“...you’ll still be beaten by people who spent their time working hard and learning things and weren’t so lazy. Goodbye.”

– Terry Pratchett, *The Wee Free Men*

From everyone on the Parramatta Mission team, we hope you stay healthy and happy always! Please accept our sincerest thanks from us to you, for all that you have done and are doing, forever grateful.

Thank you 

