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Connecting People in Communities

She's a Winner!

Congratulations to Ro
for naming our newsletter



Our thanks to Ro who won the Name our Newsletter Competition held at our National Volunteer Day celebrations on 12 May. The prize was a free twelve month VNQ membership for her organisation ...



VNQ to the Rescue

Our Referral Officers at Work!

At short notice, VNQ Referral Officers successfully recruited 30 volunteers to act as facilitators for the participants learning to cook in Jamie's Ministry of Food mobile kitchen when it visited Townsville recently.

The Learn to Cook program ran over two cycles of five weeks each from March to June. Classes were held over six days, including evenings and weekends.

Two of the volunteers, Margaret (pictured above in the kitchen) and her husband Mike, got involved with the Townsville mobile kitchen after they retired and were looking for ways to get involved in the community.

"I love the program!" Margaret said and volunteered because it encourages people to think about what they're eating and minimises the community's reliance on processed and take away food.

Some people volunteered at several sessions and one dedicated volunteer

attended every day for cycle 2.

Volunteers were recruited as facilitators to help the trainers make sure that classes ran smoothly and participants enjoyed their class.

**"I love the program!
My husband and I
volunteered because
it encourages
people to think about
what they're eating."**

The facilitators' tasks included food preparation and workstation set up, welcoming participants, and providing support for the trainer and participants during the classes. They also helped out with the cleaning, washing dishes and tidying up during and after class.

The basic cooking course comprised a 90-minute class once a week for 5 weeks at which participants learnt Jamie's hints and shortcuts to cooking simple, nutritious and tasty meals using fresh ingredients.

To all those who volunteered, great effort. They couldn't have done it without you!

boost your skills

Know a job seeker who needs a bit of extra help?

Registration is now open for the second round of the Free City Libraries Path to Employment series aimed at boosting job seeking skills.



Participants will learn how to stay healthy and motivated, how to write a resume, address selection criteria and gain insights into what employers are looking for in their

employees.

VNQ will again be presenting an information session on Volunteering as a pathway to employment. A site visit of some of our member organizations to offer insights into the

diversity of volunteers options that might support job seeking or career goals is also being organized..



To book or find out more about the program visit website <http://bit.ly/pathtoemployment>.

VNQ partnered in the March series with a Volunteering Pathway to Employment information session and site visits to our member organizations, the Good Shepherd Home, Townville Multicultural Support Group and the Tropical Museum of Townsville.



Timeout -Volunteers on the T150 Tour

It is important for Volunteers to take time out from their demanding duties at their Non-for-profits organisation. Sounds easy but it is often overlooked. So we need reminder dates in the yearly calendar to ensure that it is not forgotten.

These dates can be found at:

<http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/news-media-and-events/key-dates/>

For 2016 you'll find:

National Volunteer Week: 9-15 May

National Student Volunteer Week: 8-14 Aug

What participants said about series one

Marie appreciated the number of places people could volunteer to develop their skills.

Before the course I hadn't heard about all these different places could volunteer, network and develop their skills and knowledge. The Good Shepard Home in Townsville is vibrant and uplifting and I like the idea of helping people.

"I had a moment of clarity during the course..."

Marie enjoyed dispelling the negative stigma often associated with unemployment.

"You can replace the self-doubt with the ability to showcase yourself in the search for work. I had a moment of clarity during the course—I was applying for the wrong jobs!"

"Now I'm on the right track for me."



Damien really enjoyed

discovering the diversity of places that you can volunteer for in Townsville as well as seeing which agencies are available to help people find work.

"I learned how to better structure my resume and have gained contract employment."

Leisel learned the value of networking and marketing yourself.

She looked forward to each day of the course and really enjoyed Sally Lawrence's session on resumes.



Volunteering can help combat depression

Reducing the risk of depression is an important benefit of volunteering. A key risk factor for depression is social isolation. Volunteering keeps you in regular contact with others and helps you develop a solid support system, which in turn protects you against stress and depression when you're going through challenging times.



Lynne's Story

Investments that did not support the relaxed lifestyle Lynne anticipated in retirement saw her job searching after being out of the workforce for some time.

Daily knockbacks for the jobs she applied for started to take a toll on Lynne's mental

health. One of the most debilitating aspects of job hunting was the lack of response or acknowledgement of her applications.

"Wondering why nobody wants you starts feeding your self-doubt and affecting how you see yourself and how you perceive your abilities," Lynne said.

About 18 months into her job search, Lynne woke up one morning and thought 'Why the heck should I get out of bed? I've got nothing to give.'

"Fortunately I recognised this was an early warning sign of depression and that I needed to do something. I needed something that would get me out of the house and thought of volunteering."

Armed with a list of potential volunteer jobs from VNQ's website, Lynne made an appointment and had an interview with one of VNQ's Referral Officers. VNQ recognised the value of Lynne's skills and immediately offered her a role as Receptionist/Administration Officer.

***"A key risk factor
for depression is
social isolation."***

Lynne said her positivity returned within days of starting volunteering.

Within a few months, with new skills and renewed confidence, Lynne has taken on the additional duties of Referral Officer at VNQ.

Lynne said "Volunteering hasn't changed my financial situation however I am definitely better prepared to go out into the paid workforce. I would highly recommend volunteering not just as a path to employment but as a solution for social isolation and risk of depression."

Q: *Why should I volunteer?*

A: *Volunteering has "favorable effects on depression"*

According to a BMC Public Health study from 2013, volunteering has "favourable effects on depression."

A key factor in depression is social isolation, and there are few better ways to make friends and meet people than volunteer work.

Source: <http://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/articles/10.1186/1471-2458-13-773>

How VNQ can help...

If you are feeling isolated and feel volunteering can help you, we encourage you to call VNQ on (07) 4725 5990 or email reception@vnq.org.au to find out how volunteering can help you.

Our Referral Officers will work with you to find the most suitable and enjoyable volunteering position for you. With hundreds of different volunteer roles on our database, there is lots of choice.

New look VNQ...

*What it took to achieve a new look
and feel for Volunteering North
Queensland...*

Look at you!! >>>



The picture (right) shows the fresh new look and we love it! Other small not-for-profits might at some time consider a facelift too, so we're sharing our approach to the task.

Firstly, you need the idea, drive to get it done and a reason to do it. The reason was simple, VNQ branding had a 1990s feel and look about it. To improve our public image, it was obvious we needed to modernise our communications materials, including social media and our web page. At the same time, Management were reviewing our vision and mission in order to raise our profile to better promote volunteer participation and to support our community organisations.

Secondly, you need a team of skilled staff to pull it off. Our team collaborated and consulted to achieve the great new look - Communications Officer, Carole came from a branding background; Graphic Designer, Barry created the images and style guide to ensure consistency and Christian covered the IT infrastructure, hosting, hardware and software needed.

With determination, you can do it!

Thirdly, you need to project manage all the aspects even if using simple Excel to manage tasks flow and completion. All projects must have a scope. Our scope covered:

New logo and Style Guide / Signage / Brochures, banner, business cards and promotional material / Web and simple web address (& later an Intranet) / Social Media platform / VNQ uniforms

Lastly, we needed consistent effort over 4 months by the volunteers to create the outputs, so the cost was mainly staff hours rather than financial outlays. The picture above shows some of the team involved. Go to our web www.vnq.org.au and Facebook to check out the rest. With determination, you too can do it.

Tip of the Day

ctrl + c can be used on selected text and objects to copy them to a clipboard. While **ctrl + v** is used to paste the copied content.

The chef in us all

...To crack an egg, hold the pointy ends in one hand and crack it on a flat surface (not an edge). No shell fall out or split yokes anymore!

...To peel ginger, instead of a vege peeler use the edge of a spoon.

Over 40??

...Where are my glasses when I need them!

Never mind, just try this...

Curl up your index finger making a TINY hole. Now hold that slit to your dominant eye and peek through

Did You Know...

Non-for-Profits can qualify for

Office365 Business Essentials...

for FREE. You get cloud based email, Office apps, online storage + Skype!!

Business Hours

9-4 Tue, Wed, Thu

Phone

07 4725 5990

Email

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