



News Release – EMBARGO Tuesday 1 December

## **Disadvantaged, disaffected and disillusioned — Does this have to be Melbourne in 2030?**

*Report calls for immediate action*

Melbourne risks losing its status as one of the world's most liveable cities due to massive population growth, a lack of affordable housing, increasing poverty and lack of access to public transport, services and job opportunities, a leading philanthropic organisation has warned.

In a report released today, the Melbourne Community Foundation warns that Melbourne is in danger of becoming a city of disadvantaged, disaffected and disillusioned citizens in 20 years if we do not act now - providing grass roots solutions by addressing the social/economic topics raised in the independent research paper.

Community needs were identified in the report; *MacroMelbourne, Social and Economic Disadvantage in Melbourne: Trends, Challenges and Priorities for Philanthropic Investment*, which calls for an urgent need for philanthropic investment to deal with the challenges of poverty, housing affordability, social equity, environmental sustainability and public health.

The new report — updates the Melbourne Community Foundation's blueprint for a liveable city, *MacroMelbourne toward 2030*, launched in 2006.

It reveals a disturbing trend of social disadvantage and inequity, particularly across Melbourne's outer suburbs, and highlights challenges facing governments and communities in the next 20 years:

1. Rapid population growth, particularly in outer urban areas.
2. Ongoing impacts of the global financial crisis.
3. Rapid increases in the number of people with multiple and complex needs.
4. Ongoing challenges facing migrant, refugee and Indigenous communities.
5. Lack of access to affordable housing.
6. Lack of access to affordable transport and communications.

The health and wellbeing impacts of climate change, particularly on vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

But while the report paints a grim picture, it also offers a solution by recommending priority areas for philanthropic investment to help reduce disadvantage.

Melbourne Community Foundation chief executive officer Ms Sarah Davies said the foundation commissioned the MacroMelbourne report to highlight areas for urgent government and community investment.

"Melburnians need to know their city and communities are safe, inclusive, affordable, tolerant and sustainable places to live," Ms Davies said.

"The only way we can achieve this is by closing the gap between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' — which has widened significantly in the past decade — and by encouraging governments and communities to invest in projects that assist struggling communities from the ground up."

MacroMelbourne has funded more than a dozen grassroots community projects across Melbourne since the initiative began three years ago with extraordinary success.

The second phase of MacroMelbourne will fund a further 14 community projects, particularly focused on meeting needs in the outer-Melbourne growth areas of Wyndham, Melton-Caroline Springs, Hume, Whittlesea and Casey-Cardinia.

The projects cover issues ranging from community transport, migrant employment, juvenile justice, disability services and energy-efficient living.

**Report details:** *Social and Economic Disadvantage in Melbourne: Trends, Challenges and Priorities for Philanthropic Investment*. Prepared for the Melbourne Community Foundation by Belinda Robson and John Wiseman; McCaughey Centre, VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health and Community Wellbeing, Melbourne School of Population Health, University of Melbourne.

**Get involved:** [www.melbournecf.org.au](http://www.melbournecf.org.au)

**MEDIA NOTE: Launch of MacroMelbourne on Tuesday 1 December at 10.30am**

**Eureka Tower, Level 89, 7 Riverside Quay, Southbank**

The following information is available:

- PDF copy of report
- Key report findings and recommendations
- Backgrounders - Melbourne Community Foundation, MacroMelbourne
- Booklet - MacroMelbourne projects 2009
- Project Leaders / spokespeople for MacroMelbourne

Melbourne Community Foundation CEO Ms Sarah Davies and Karen Mahlab, Board Director, Melbourne Community Foundation are available for interview.

For media interviews please contact: Nicola Archer, Nicola Archer Communications on 03 9534 1285 / 0419 002 769

## Media Summary - EMBARGO Tuesday 1 December, 2009

### ***MacroMelbourne toward 2030 Report outlines investment needed for a liveable, equitable, sustainable city***

The MacroMelbourne Report **brings together** the current research, statistics, trends, thinking and Government policy regarding disadvantage and inequality in metropolitan Melbourne;

**Outlines the most significant challenges** facing Melbournians in the next 20 years:

- Population growth (particularly in outer urban areas)
- Impacts of the Global Financial Crisis (Particularly unemployment)
- Increase in number of people with complex needs
- Increasing cultural diversity
- Lack of access to affordable housing, transport and communications
- Impacts of climate change, particularly on vulnerable and disadvantaged communities

**Commissioned by:** Melbourne Community Foundation (MCF), June, 2009

**Authors:** Belinda Robson & John Wiseman, University of Melbourne  
McCaughey Centre, VicHealth Centre for the Promotion of Mental Health & Community Wellbeing. Melbourne School of Population Health

**Collaborators:** Committee for Melbourne, Melbourne Cares, ProBono Australia, the Victorian Local Governance Association, the Victorian Council of Social Service, RMIT University, Deakin University and the Victorian Government

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### **Key Recommendations:**

1. For Melbourne to be a **liveable, equitable and sustainable city** and **meet the economic, environmental and social challenges** of the next 20 years, we must **invest in community projects that reduce disadvantage and inequality**
2. The key focus for philanthropic investment in the next three years should be in Melbourne's new outer urban growth areas (Melton-Caroline Springs, Wyndham, Cardinia-Casey, Hume and Whittlesea.

*"...Even a small investment in a growth area can have a significant long-term affect in improving quality of life by reducing the stress on an area's sustained social resources." (National Growth Alliance 2007).*

# MacroMelbourne toward 2030 Report

*Disadvantage and inequality in metropolitan Melbourne*

## Key trends, challenges & areas for philanthropic investment

### POPULATION GROWTH

**Rapid population growth, particularly in outer urban areas is creating new concentrations of disadvantage and inequality as well as significant pressure on physical and social infrastructure.**

- Melbourne's population will reach five million by 2030
- Number of households in Melbourne is expected to grow by 41% between 2005 and 2031 (*Department of Planning and Community Development 2006*)
- Fastest growing municipalities from 2001-06 were Melton (8.9% average annual population growth rate) and City of Melbourne (8.6%). The outer urban municipalities of Wyndham (5.9%), Cardinia (4.5%) and Casey (4.1%) also recorded high average annual growth rates. Casey recorded the largest absolute growth in this period, numbering 40,700 persons. Followed by Wyndham (28,900) and Melton (28,100) (*DSE 2006*)
- Craigieburn and Roxburgh Park experiencing social challenges related to high population growth, especially related to achieving social cohesion and strong community identities (*Robson 2009*)
- Young people are especially vulnerable to social disadvantage due to the low levels of recreational and social activities.

### Best areas for investment:

- Community information centres and meeting places
- Community development project officers
- Sporting, cultural and recreational groups and facilities
- Improved access to transport, particularly for parents with young children, young people and older people
- Community safety and crime prevention initiatives
- Re-engage disadvantaged students in education and learning
- Parenting programs linked to children's contact centres
- Support for children in 'out of home' care
- Youth services and facilities

### GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS

**The global financial crisis is putting an increasing strain on vulnerable individuals, households and communities as well as on community support organisations.**

**Unemployment**, combined with the rise of smaller households and single parent families, has driven ongoing rises in poverty and income inequality (*Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2008*).

- Unemployment in Australia (as a result of the Global Financial Crisis) will rise by around 600,000 to 8% of working age population (*Access Economics 2008*) and long-term unemployment expected to almost quadruple by 2011 (*Brotherhood of St Laurence 2009*).
- Nationally, 3.8% rise in youth unemployment between December 2008 and January 2009, the largest monthly increase ever recorded (*Parliament of Australia 2009*)
- Unemployment in Victoria as at 5.7% (*ABS May 2009*)
- Job losses have hit hard in outer suburban areas such as Coolaroo in Melbourne's north, with companies including Caterpillar, ABC Learning Centres, Ford and OneSteel cutting back drastically.
- Communities in outer suburbs such as Epping and Cranbourne are likely to suffer as a result of significant job losses (*Centre of Full employment and Equity 2009*). The absence of transport, jobs and services in new outer suburbs means residents are forced to travel long distances

### **Poverty, disadvantage and inequality are increasing, particularly in outer suburban areas:-**

- Poverty in Victoria increased from 7.7% in 1993-94 to 10.7% in 2003-04 (*Saunders, Hill and Bradbury 2008*)
- Deprivation and social exclusion among welfare service clients has remained constant despite the economic boom which preceded the global financial crisis (*Still Doing it Tough report, Social Policy Research Centre 2009, Saunders & Wong 2009*)
- Greater Dandenong, Maribyrnong, Hume, Darebin, Brimbank and Moreland council areas ranked as the most socio-economically disadvantaged in metropolitan Melbourne
- Most people in outer suburbs have few local job opportunities and must drive more than 30 minutes to work
- 23,299 Victorians are homeless (*Census 2006*), with a growth in the numbers of older people and families experiencing homelessness (*Council to Homeless Persons 2008*)

### **Best areas for investment:**

- New employment, education and training opportunities, particularly those that assist in addressing affordable housing, accessible transport and communications and climate change
- Assisting disadvantaged communities access Workforce Participation Partnership Funds to help unemployed people unlikely to be able to find employment through mainstream programs
- Low interest loans to assist households to navigate difficult times
- Projects that assist communities and community organisations to pool resources, reduce consumption and develop more efficient practices

## MORE PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

**Specialist services for people with a disability, the aged, people with mental health issues and the homeless are operating at full capacity and complex client needs are increasing.**

**The whole community is affected by the growing demands related to people with complex needs.**

- Melbourne's **ageing population** will continue to increase, placing greater pressures on health and service agencies. The highest numbers of people aged over 75 are in Whitehorse (13,083), Boroondara (12,749), Monash (12,443) Moreland (11,660), Glen Eira (11,617), Kingston (11,043), Darebin (10,400) and Banyule (9,048)
- The number of people in Victoria aged over 65 with a severe or profound disability is expected to rise by 14.6% between 2006 and 2010 (*Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2007*)
- The number of people in Victoria with a severe or profound disability is projected to continue to grow from 335,300 in 2006 to 362,800 in 2010 (*AIHW 2007*)
- Number of people with a diagnosed **mental illness** is expected to increase by at least 100,000 in the decade 2009-19 (*DHS 2009*). In any 12-month period, approximately 44% of people with severe mental illness are not serviced by either the public or the private system (*DHS 2009*)
- Mental health presentations to hospital emergency departments increased from 29,734 in 2001-02 to 46,474 in 2006-07. There are also increasing rates of acute inpatient involuntary admissions and crisis presentations, with a 13% increase in Crisis Assessment Teams contacted since 2001-02 (*DHS 2008*)
- Around 30% of **homeless Victorians** have a mental health issue and 43% have problems with substance abuse (*Chamberlain, Johnson and Theobald 2007*)

### **Best areas for investment:**

- Strengthen capacity of agencies to support families with multiple challenges and needs (e.g. health, disability and substance abuse areas)
- Support programs to meet the needs of carers, particularly those from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Training opportunities, mentoring and employment exchange programs for community sector staff
- Investment in new information and communications technologies to improve capacity of community service agencies

## INCREASING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- 10.5% increase in the percentage of people speaking a language other than English at home between 2001 and 2006 (*Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2008*)

- In 2007-08, Victorian population increased by almost 100,000 – a 1.8% growth rate – which included 58,000 migrants (*DIAC 2009*)
- By 2011, 23% of Australians aged over 65 will be from a culturally and linguistically diverse background (*Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia 2009*)

**Melbourne’s increasing cultural diversity creates significant challenges for people from migrant and refugee backgrounds and for Indigenous people.**

- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds face difficulties including having qualifications recognised, unfamiliarity with the local employment market and employer attitudes
- The socio-economically disadvantaged, Indigenous communities, people living in rural and regional areas and people from non-English speaking backgrounds suffer severe inequalities in health care. These groups face lower levels of access and less successful outcomes in relation to health prevention and promotion (*DHS 2009*)

**On nearly every indicator of health inequality, Indigenous people are the most disadvantaged population group in Melbourne (Allen Consulting 2008):**

- Indigenous life expectancy is 60 years for men and 65 for women compared to almost 79 and 84 for the total population
- Indigenous people are homeless at a rate six times greater than their representation in the general population (*Department of Education and Early Childhood and the Department of Planning and Community Development 2008*)
- Less than one quarter of Indigenous Victorians have finished year 12 and are three times more likely to be unemployed than non Indigenous Victorians.

**Best areas for investment:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve employment, education, health, housing and community service opportunities for recently arrived migrants and refugees</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve employment, education, health, housing and community service opportunities for Indigenous communities</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

**LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**Affordable housing is out of reach for more and more people.**

- In 2005-06, 23% of households spent more than 30% of income on housing, an increase from 16% in the previous decade (*Access Economics 2008*)
- Only 20.8% of all new lettings across Victoria were affordable to lower income households (*DHS March 2008*). Across Melbourne just 8.9% of dwellings let in the March 2008 quarter were affordable, compared to 16.8% of dwellings in the same quarter in 2007.

## Best areas for investment:

- Support investment in innovative social and public housing models, particularly those suitable for older people and people with a disability or mental illness
- Assist low income households to retrofit existing housing to reduce the impact of rising energy water costs
- Support community housing organisations in developing advocacy strategies for fair rental and new models and affordable housing

## COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT

- Only 46.5% of Australian households have broadband access to the internet (*Census 2006*)
- More than half Melbourne's households do not have broadband access, generally corresponding to lower-income suburbs
- Poor access to transport continues to be a major driver of disadvantage and inequality, particularly in outer urban areas.
- People living in Melbourne's fringe suburbs nominated petrol (and lack of access to public transport) as the expense most commonly contributing to their financial hardship (*Victorian Council of Social Service*)

## Best areas for investment:

- Improved public transport access, particularly in outer urban areas
- Support for Neighbourhood Houses and community learning centres to purchase computers and run computer classes in disadvantaged areas
- Up-skill marginalised groups such as older people, people with a disability and homeless or at risk communities to access the internet

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate vulnerability is closely related to other sources of social, economic and environmental vulnerability – people without the financial resources to adapt to a changing climate will suffer the greatest effects.

Likely impacts of climate change on health and wellbeing outcomes in metropolitan Melbourne are:

- *Food* – increased droughts and extreme weather events will impact on Australia's local and imported food supply leading to price rises and scarcity
- *Water availability* – people on low incomes will struggle to afford water tanks or water saving technologies

- *Energy* – transforming our energy system to withstand impacts of climate change and transition to renewable energy will increase energy costs
- *Housing* – housing will need to alter to provide adequate protection from heat and extreme weather events. Costs make retrofitting prohibitive for people on low incomes
- *Transport* – petrol and public transport cost increases due to higher electricity costs / emission reduction programs will make mobility more expensive

### **Best areas for investment:**

- Improve understanding of impacts of climate change on the health and wellbeing of vulnerable and disadvantaged communities
- Climate literacy and community engagement projects to inform debate about transition to an equitable low income society
- Support retrofitting programs for low income households that include solar panels, water tanks, upgrades of heating and cooling systems and insulation
- Explore new urban growth area strategies for transitioning to an equitable low carbon future. This could involve employment and training focussed on energy efficient housing; energy efficient transport systems; water and energy harvesting and urban food production

In summary, the MacroMelbourne Report suggests a range of indicative possible project areas address the following:

1. Rapid population growth, particularly in outer urban areas
2. Ongoing impacts of the global financial crisis
3. Rapid increases in the number of people with multiple and complex needs
4. Ongoing challenges facing migrant, refugee and Indigenous communities
5. Lack of access to affordable housing
6. Lack of access to affordable transport and communications
7. The health and wellbeing impacts of climate change – particularly on vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

It will be essential to work closely and collaborate with relevant community organisations and policy makers to develop specific project proposals in order to maximise the potential for relatively small philanthropic investments to lead to outcomes capable of being generalised and scaled up.

For media interviews with Sarah Davies and Karen Mahlab from Melbourne Community Foundation about MacroMelbourne, please contact:

Nicola Archer, Nicola Archer Communications on 03 9534 1285 or 0419 002 769

Images of maps and full MacroMelbourne Report PDF and the MacroMelbourne Book of community initiatives / projects go to [www.melbournecf.org.au](http://www.melbournecf.org.au)



## **MEDIA RELEASE - PROJECT 2**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**

### **Innovative green scheme helps families save money on water and power**

An innovative pilot scheme to teach low-income families to cut their utility bills by saving energy and water is being set up in the outer Melbourne region of Whittlesea.

The Sustainable Families Project is one of 14 selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

The project builds on work done by Kildonan UnitingCare to help vulnerable households manage their energy consumption and avoid disconnection in Melbourne's rapidly growing northern corridor.

The need was identified by Kildonan's financial counselling team, which frequently encounters people in crisis with unaffordable bills. Kildonan also offers energy audits for struggling households.

"With the low level of disposable income for such households, any financial stress can render a financial situation unmanageable," says Stella Avramopoulos, CEO, Kildonan Uniting Care.

One of Victoria's most culturally diverse regions, Whittlesea is characterised by families with young children, large mortgages and heavy debt. Many are home buyers on new housing estates and are under enormous financial and social stress.

Adding to the strain, these new areas lack infrastructure and public transport which means residents rely on private cars and are vulnerable to rising petrol prices. Households in newly developed areas also often face the problem of energy inefficiency and poor thermal capacity of new housing.

Climate change research has found that disadvantaged households are most vulnerable to excessive water and energy use and unaffordable bills because of rising costs, lack of funds to upgrade housing and appliances, illness, unemployment, language barriers and large family size.

The Sustainable Families Project will ensure families receive the best information, support and guidance about environmentally and economically sustainable living.

If successful, it also will be extended to other urban growth areas.

Projects supported by MacroMelbourne cover issues ranging from community transport, migrant employment, juvenile justice, disability services and energy-efficient living, and particularly focus on addressing inequity and disadvantage in the growth areas of Wyndham, Melton-Caroline Springs, Hume, Whittlesea and Casey-Cardinia.

Each project offers a grassroots solution to a significant problem through collaboration and partnership between community organisations, support services and government.

Community needs were identified in a new report, *Social and Economic Disadvantage in Melbourne: Trends, Challenges and Priorities for Philanthropic Investment*, which found that Melbourne is in danger of becoming a city of disadvantaged, disaffected and disillusioned

citizens as it struggles with the challenges of poverty, housing affordability, social equity, environmental sustainability and public health.

Commissioned by Melbourne Community Foundation (MCF), the report reveals a disturbing trend of social disadvantage, particularly across Melbourne's outer suburbs, and highlights challenges facing governments and communities in the next 20 years.

"Melburnians need to know their city and communities are safe, inclusive, affordable, tolerant and sustainable places to live," MCF chief executive officer Ms Sarah Davies said.

"The only way we can achieve this is by closing the gap between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. Each of these projects works towards achieving that."

Run by Kildonan UnitingCare in collaboration with family support and energy efficiency programs, the Sustainable Families Project must raise \$307,000 to cover the cost of salaries, administration, equipment and provision of energy efficiency products to households.

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**Released for:** Melbourne Community Foundation – [www.melbournecf.org.au](http://www.melbournecf.org.au)

For information on MacroMelbourne report and project initiatives please contact Nicola Archer, Nicola Archer Communications 03 9534 1285 / 0419 002 769



## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 3**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**

### **New community shuttle to help disadvantaged back on the road**

A community transport service will run in Melbourne's rapidly growing outer suburbs to meet the needs of the elderly, young people, the unemployed and people with disabilities who have limited access to transport.

The Hume & Whittlesea Community Shuttle Service is one of 14 projects selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

The municipalities of Hume and Whittlesea have grown rapidly over the past 10 years and are continuing to grow. Provision of infrastructure and services has not kept pace, leaving many residents with few transport options.

The transport crisis is particularly difficult for older residents, people with disabilities, young people and newly emerging communities.

“We want to make sure that we can provide a stop gap in the Craigieburn area, by addressing the needs as soon as possible. We want to make sure the elderly, people living with disabilities and single mums do not feel isolated and can get to hospitals, social activities and to the shops”, says David Mazotta, Co-ordinator Community Renewal, Hume City Council.

The new shuttle service is being run by LINK Community Transport and Whittlesea Community Connections on behalf of the Northern Transport Links Project and will use community vehicles to meet critical transport needs, including to and from medical appointments, employment and social and recreational activities.

The project is a collaboration between Craigieburn Community Renewal, Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Salvation Army, Whittlesea Community Connections, Whittlesea Area Community Care Assistance, Plenty Valley Community Health and Craigieburn Health Service.

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The Hume & Whittlesea Community Shuttle Service needs \$80,000 a year to cover the cost of a transport coordinator, vehicle operating and related costs.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE - PROJECT 4**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**

### **Job mentor scheme tackles rising unemployment in Hume**

An innovative grassroots mentoring program is proposed to tackle rising unemployment in Melbourne's rapidly growing northern fringe.

The Craigieburn Employment Mentoring Program is one of 14 projects selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

More than 100 jobs have been lost recently in Craigieburn with the closure of several large companies, and research suggests a more jobs will be at risk if the economy further contracts.

The mentoring project aims to increase employment in the region by setting up a one-stop job service at the local neighbourhood house, the Craigieburn Education and Community Centre.

The service would help residents to choose or find alternative careers, find and apply for vacant positions, prepare for job interviews and prepare or improve on their resumes.

"At Craigieburn Education and Community Centre Inc, we assist the community to find ways to help themselves. The Employment and Mentoring project will provide much needed assistance to local residents undertaking their own search for employment and by providing possible pathways for further education if required", says Rita McMillan, Manager, Craigieburn Education and Community Centre.

An initiative of the Craigieburn Education and Community Centre, the project aims to involve agencies and services including Centrelink, the Brotherhood of St Laurence and Job Network's providing specialist support, advice and training.

It will offer one-to-one advice and encouragement, referrals, assistance with resume writing, email creation, job hunting, cold canvassing and interview preparation in a comfortable, informal environment.

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The Craigieburn Employment Mentoring Program must raise \$50,000 to cover a salary for program co-coordinator, transport, administrative supplies and other incidentals.

It also is seeking in-kind support from volunteers with expertise in writing CVs and applications.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 5**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**

### **Migrant women trained as childcare workers in a win-win for Whittlesea**

Refugee and migrant women will be trained as bilingual childcare workers under an innovative employment scheme that aims to cut the jobless rate in Whittlesea.

Run by Whittlesea Community Connections in partnership with the City of Whittlesea's Economic Development Unit and Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE, the pilot will help the women to access accredited training, gain new skills, practical experience and pathways to employment, while recognising the skills they already have.

The Women in Work Community Enterprise project is one of 14 selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

As well as helping women who face significant disadvantage in the private jobs market, the program will meet a growing demand for childcare workers who are bicultural and speak languages other than English.

Once trained, the accredited childcare workers will be contracted to work in community services, meeting high demand in the area.

“Whittlesea is a rapidly growing community with many young families from diverse backgrounds. These families are increasingly struggling to access child-care, particularly services that are culturally relevant. Local women from migrant and refugee backgrounds clearly have the capacity to address this community need”, says Emma Antonetti, Settlement Team Leader, Whittlesea Community Connections.

Whittlesea is the third largest multicultural local government area in Victoria, with the 2006 Census recording 140 countries of birth with 57 per cent of the population born in non-English speaking countries. Over the past five years, 4612 new-arrival migrants and refugees have settled in the region.

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The Women in Work Community Enterprise needs \$25,000, which to cover the cost of training 25 women through Northern Metropolitan Institute of TAFE. It also requires \$60,000 to employ a project worker for a year and \$18,000 to cover establishment and operational costs.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 6**

Tuesday 1 December, 2009

### **Early intervention program gives young offenders a chance to change**

Youths in Melbourne's outer east will benefit from an innovative pilot program designed to keep young offenders out of jail.

The Whittlesea Youth Diversion Project is one of 14 selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

A joint partnership between the Brosnan Youth Services, City of Whittlesea Youth Services and Whittlesea Police, the project expands on a Police and Youth Services Referral program being piloted by the City of Whittlesea Youth Services in partnership with local police, which diverts young people away from the criminal justice system.

City of Whittlesea Council Director of Community Services, Russell Hopkins said, "Research has found that antisocial behaviour early in life can predict a range of adverse outcomes in adulthood."

"Young people are over-represented in the justice system and serious young offenders often progress to the adult criminal justice system. This project aims to nip that in the bud."

Under the pilot, the police youth resource officer refers young offenders who are not already linked to the juvenile justice system to council youth development workers within 48 hours of them coming to the attention of the police. Council workers refer the young person to appropriate agencies and services then track the outcomes to evaluate the success of the early intervention program.

The program is being expanded to examine factors that trigger antisocial behaviour in young people and to identify community hot spots.

"By the time the kids get to the youth justice system, go to court and given a (DHS) youth worker – it's too late, they've committed ten offences and we want to get in their first to help", says Tim Forster, Leading Senior Constable Whittlesea Police.

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"The only way we can achieve this is by closing the gap between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. Each of these projects works towards achieving that."

The Whittlesea Youth Diversion Project must raise \$142,000 to employ a full-time youth development worker and part-time research officer, plus program funds.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 7**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**



### **Early-learning program fosters pride in “deadly” Aboriginal kids**

An innovative new project is being set up in the City of Whittlesea to provide culturally appropriate early learning programs to local Aboriginal children.

The Bubup Wilam Indigenous Education Pathways project is one of 14 selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

The project, which aims to nurture strong, proud and “deadly” kids in a culturally rich and supportive educational environment, will expand on programs offered by the recently opened Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Centre, establishing solid educational pathways for local Aboriginal children.

The Aboriginal population of Whittlesea is young and growing; with more than 20 per cent of the Indigenous residents aged under eight. However, Aboriginal families do not have strong social or cultural ties to the Whittlesea municipality and many families with young children travel outside the area to access culturally appropriate support.

“It’s an exciting project and if we can make sure that the Aboriginal culture is reflected in the learning environment then the transition from kindergarten to primary is more likely to have families and children engaged in the schools, which means better learning outcomes for everyone”, says Mary Agostino, Manager Family Services, City of Whittlesea.

Bubup Wilam works in partnership with families to offer a kindergarten program for three and four-year-old Aboriginal children built on the strengths of the local Aboriginal culture.

The Bubup Wilam Indigenous Education Pathways project will work with Whittlesea's Aboriginal families, communities and stakeholders to expand the program and build solid educational pathways for local Indigenous kids.

It will encourage community participation in the design and delivery of Aboriginal early-years services and programs, and will engage schools in the area to help smooth the transition between kindergarten and primary school for Aboriginal families.

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The Bubup Wilam Indigenous Education Pathways Project needs \$75,000 a year to employ a project officer to run the program.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 8**

Tuesday 1 December, 2009

### **Prevention project to foster community engagement and harmony in the Growth Corridor-Cardinia**

State and religious schools in Cardinia will be invited to participate in an innovative preventative program designed to foster community harmony and assist migrant and refugee children and their families settling in Melbourne's outer east-Cardinia.

Building Harmony on New Housing Estates is one of 14 projects selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

While it is one of the fastest growing areas in Australia, Cardinia hasn't been exposed to high levels of culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

This will change dramatically over the next few years as increased numbers of migrants and refugees are expected to move out to new housing estates in search of affordable housing as well as the need to enroll their children in local schools.

In neighbouring Casey, the migrant population rose from six per cent to 24 per cent in the five years to 2006. A similar growth is likely to occur in Cardinia, particularly centred in Pakenham and Officer.

"Many disadvantaged migrant and refugee children and young people experience difficulties when settling with their families in traditionally mainstream new-growth corridor areas," says Cheryl DeZilwa, CEO, Windermere™.

"These children and young people are at risk for many reasons, including limited opportunities to participate in community life, lack of engagement due to a diversity of religious and cultural backgrounds, disassociation from previous formal and informal networks and a lack of a sense of belonging."

The project aims to build the capacity of at-risk young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, and their families, to live harmonious and productive lives in the newly established communities.

Led by Windermere Child and Family Services, with the support of the Southern Integrated CALD Child and Family Network and multicultural communities, the project hopes to involve multi-faith and government schools such as; St Brigid's Catholic School, Officer Primary School, St Margaret's, Minaret Islamic College and Manaratha Christian School.

It will implement collaborative social and education programs with the Multifaith schools and deliver activities aimed to create racial harmony and cohesion.

"The importance of involving the school community in the Growth Corridor is to ensure that young people and their families are provided with opportunities to enhance social interaction, cultural understanding to assist in the creation of harmonious communities. Cross cultural education programs for children and young people often alleviate the fear of other cultures and leads to mutual respect and harmony."

If successful, this prevention program could inform best practice for other growth corridor areas in Australia about the importance of healthy community dialogue and cross cultural awareness in constructing a harmonious community in new growth housing areas.

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Building Harmony on New Housing Estates needs \$40,000 to employ a part-time youth worker, plus funds for community consultations, payment of peer educators and related program costs. Additional funding would enable the youth worker to be employed full-time and for the project to continue for two years.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 9**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**

### **Internet safety comes online for young people in Cardinia**

Internet savvy young people from disadvantaged communities will benefit from a new scheme that studies the way technology is used by families in a variety of urban settings.

The Screen Stories and Community Connections project is one of 14 selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

Initiatives in Australia and the UK suggest that providing low-cost computing and internet in places such as public-housing estates may offer a cost-effective way to reduce inequity and marginalisation, and promote social inclusion.

But there is little evidence to support the theory or to test the impact of unanticipated outcomes that arise from living in a connected community.

The Screen Stories project is being run by the University of Melbourne's McCaughey Centre in partnership with the Alannah and Madeline Foundation, Flinders University, VicUrban, and the University's Department of Information Systems.

Its findings will be applied to the Cardinia Road residential and business precinct in outer urban Melbourne, with the aim of establishing a model of an innovative, technologically connected, equitable and socially inclusive community.

The community will reap immediate benefits from the findings, which will be used to broaden a cyber-safety campaign run by the Alannah and Madeline Foundation.

In the longer term, it will benefit communities such as Officer, a new suburb for up to 15,000 residents.

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The Screen Stories and Community Connections project needs \$100,000 to add to the funding and in-kind support already sourced from the University of Melbourne and VicHealth.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 10**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**

### **Snapshot of life improves quality of life for kids with disabilities**

They may not see the world as we do, but the lives of children with physical and intellectual disabilities including autism, cerebral palsy and Asperger's syndrome have been dramatically improved by taking photographs of the world as they see it.

Photography on the Move was launched three months ago at schools in Casey Dandenong and Frankston to provide educational support for children with autism, to great success.

It is one of 14 projects selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

Part of the Appreciating Autism Program run by Women's Health in the South East (WHISE), Photography on the Move uses visual aids and creative expression to assist kids with disabilities to learn and concentrate in class.

Most children involved in the program have trouble communicating, for reasons such as language difficulties, short-term memory impairment, sensory defensiveness, oral-motor dysfunction, reduced fine and gross motor coordination, poor pragmatic and expressive language skills and poor self-esteem. This can impact on their ability to interact with teachers and their peers.

"Children with autism spectrum disorder have been found to perform poorly on tasks requiring verbal skills, but do excel in tasks requiring visual and spatial skills," said Tricia Elliott, CEO, WHISE.

"The photography program emphasises a child's strength and potential and helps to manage difficulties and limitations."

Physically handling the camera can set a challenge for the children, and help to develop skills such as fine-motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Looking through a viewfinder promotes focus and attention to detail, while scene selection develops skills in decision making and initiative, raising the child's awareness of the environment.

"To see the smile on their faces when they realized they could express themselves through the camera rather than through speaking, was infectious. We were equally as thrilled as the students! And, the teachers were amazed at the transformation of the students during the sessions," said Robyn Smith and Helena Bishop, program co-ordinators.

Fifteen students aged between 11 and 15 took part in the first Photography on the Move program, which was offered in three schools in Casey, Dandenong and Frankston. Organisers plan to expand it to other schools to meet the high demand.

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Photography on the Move must raise \$75,000 to cover the cost of staff and simple digital camera equipment. The project also is seeking assistance from qualified volunteers.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 11**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**

### **Independent living no longer just a dream for people with disabilities**

People with complex disabilities may soon be able to live in their own home with a range of supports in the community thanks to a capacity building initiative being established in Melbourne's rapidly growing south-east.

A Home of My Own is one of 14 projects selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

An initiative of Personalised Lifestyles Assistance, a small community-based advisory service developed by families to create supported living alternatives for people with disabilities, the program will assist people living in the outer urban fringe areas of Casey and Cardinia to realise their dream of living in a home of their own.

While it has plenty of affordable housing, the region has limited infrastructure to assist people with disabilities to live independently in the community.

"Once thought impossible for people with complex disabilities, the great Aussie dream of living in your own place can be achieved through inspiration, discovery of possibility, creative thinking, sharing of stories and harnessing a wide range of supports – many of which are bound in one's community", says Deb Rouget, Manager, Personalised Lifestyle Assistance.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates that up to 5,288 people in Casey and Cardinia are living with severe disabilities. Nearly 350 people are registered as waiting for accommodation.

A one-day seminar for 30 individuals with disabilities and their families will offer practical options and tell the stories of similar people who are living in their own homes, with a range of support. Nine individuals will receive follow-up support to help think about their dream and begin to plan to move into personalised, supported living.

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The Home of My Own project needs to raise \$19,400 to cover the cost of a one-day workshop and follow up support.

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## APPROVED RELEASE – PROJECT 12

Tuesday 1 December, 2009



### **Innovative social housing scheme to help pensioners in the west**

Elderly pensioners in Melbourne's western suburbs will benefit from an innovative new program that supports them to remain at home while encouraging them to contribute to the community.

The integrated aged-care project is one of 14 selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

Run by Fronditha Care, it will focus on the culturally and linguistically diverse communities of Brimbank, Melton and Maribyrnong, offering an integrated service to support elderly pensioners who are asset poor and who cannot afford market rent.

The model will include 104 social-housing units rented at 25 per cent of the pension; home-based care for tenants; a transport service to the local shopping centre; a community centre and volunteer program; information and referral for existing tenants and those making enquiries.

There also will be a residential aged-care facility providing varied levels of care, and a community centre that would be available to ethno-specific organisations.

"This model of care provides security and certainty to elderly people whilst ensuring they remain connected to their community", says Penni Michael, CEO, Fronditha Care.

The integrated aged-care project would enable elderly tenants with limited mobility to have contact with a wider group of people and participate in activities in their own language and culture.

It would enhance their lives by helping them to remain relevant, useful and active.

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The integrated aged-care project must raise \$24,795 to employ a part-time social worker over six months to further develop and implement the model.

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## **MEDIA RELEASE – PROJECT 14**

**Tuesday 1 December, 2009**

### **Interest-free loans to keep Wyndham residents on the road**

Low-income families in Wyndham will soon be able to access interest-free loans of up to \$500 to help maintain their cars in an innovative scheme to tackle unemployment in the region.

The No-Interest Loan Project is one of two community transport schemes being set up in Wyndham to overcome a critical shortage of public transport in the area.

The projects are among 14 selected for funding under the second phase of Melbourne Community Foundation's MacroMelbourne initiative, which aims to reduce social disadvantage and inequity and make Melbourne liveable for all its citizens.

The second transport scheme, WynCabs Laverton North Shuttle Service, will use cabs to run a low-cost shuttle service to transport employees to the rapidly growing industrial estates of Laverton North and Derrimut.

The grassroots projects are an initiative of UnitingCare Werribee Support and Housing and will be run in partnership with various government and community organisations.

“These two projects will address the critical shortage of transport experienced by many Wyndham residents,” says Carol Muir, CEO, Uniting Care Werribee Support & Housing.

“Families depend on cars to get children to schools, health services and shopping centres, and if their car breaks down, they often cannot access essential basic services. If an income earner can't get to work, they may face unemployment and homelessness.”

Public transport is limited in the Wyndham area, where infrastructure has failed to keep pace with rapid growth, and employers in the Wyndham area often require private transport as a condition of employment.

But while a recent survey found businesses on the industrial estate have difficulty attracting and retaining employees, this requirement rules out 65 per cent of local job seekers who do not own cars. Many of those who own cars cannot afford to maintain them.

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The No-Interest Loan Project must raise \$43,500 to cover the cost of a finance-administration position, establishment costs and a loan pool of \$20,000.

The WynCabs Laverton North Shuttle Service must raise \$50,000 to cover a part-time salary, plus travel and administrative costs.

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## PROFILE

### **Sarah Davies, CEO Melbourne Community Foundation**

The youthful experience of exile and loss after her cotton salesman father was forced to flee Sudan without any of the family's possessions instilled in Sarah Davies an appreciation for what it means to suddenly be left with nothing.

Born in a convent in East Pakistan and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, where she lived until she was seven, Sarah has devoted her life to helping others in need.

Now living in Melbourne with her young family, Sarah works with several not-for-profit organisations dedicated to reducing disadvantage in the community and meeting the needs of at-risk young people.

She is the CEO of Melbourne Community Foundation, the chair of Kids Under Cover, which works on the prevention of youth homelessness, and is a director of the Skyline Education Foundation, which provides scholarships and support programs for talented Year 11 and 12 public school children facing financial hardship, and the Victoria Police BlueLight State Council.

Sarah started with Melbourne Community Foundation two years ago and relishes the chance it has given her to work helping donors to achieve their charitable objectives while generating new donors and encouraging community philanthropy.

A thought leader in the community, she works with community organisations to identify projects and activities that can benefit from philanthropic assistances.

As well as her not-for-profit commitments, Sarah works on a monthly roster as a bail justice with the Department of Justice, hearing cases involving people arrested outside of court hours.

For the past eight years, she has provided respite care for a young autistic girl who stays with Sarah's family one weekend a month. Not only does it assist the child, but it helps to involve her own children and help them to understand the need to contribute to the community.

Humble, talented, graceful and driven to make change where it counts, Sarah's achievements were recognised last year when she won the winner of the BrainLink Woman of Achievement Award. BrainLink is a not for profit organisation that supports individuals & families who have been affected by brain injuries such as MS, Parkinson's disease, stroke and other neurological disorders.

Sarah names among her many inspirations her father, the founder of the Lighthouse Foundation Susan Barton, a *Big Issue* seller named Rob, and the 2009 student leadership group at Carey Grammar School.

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For media interviews please contact: Nicola Archer, Nicola Archer Communications on  
03 9534 1285 / 0419 002 769 – nicolaarcher@bigpond.com



## **PROFILE**

### **Karen Mahlab, Board Director, Melbourne Community Foundation**

One of a new breed of social entrepreneurs channelling their business skills, networks and profits into social change, Karen Mahlab has sat on the board of the Melbourne Community Foundation for eight years and is the brains behind its acclaimed MacroMelbourne initiative.

The initiative, launched in 2005, outlines the challenges facing Melbourne over the next 25 years, creating a vision for the city for “all of its people” and helping to bring about change and reduce inequality by linking grassroots community projects with the companies, philanthropists and government organisations that can assist them.

Karen is a trustee of the Melbourne Community Foundation, the National Council of Jewish Women Foundation and Jewish Aid Australia, and sits on the development committee of the Castan Centre for Human Rights at Monash University.

A former account manager with advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather, Karen has run her own business, Mahlab Group, since 1992, providing publishing, database management and development, research and marketing services to the corporate, legal, finance and commercial property sectors.

In 1998 she established Pro Bono Australia, a high-profile social business that provides resources to the not-for-profit sector, and promotes not-for-profit organisations within the corporate and philanthropic worlds. With approximately 1.3 million contacts a year through its publications, news services and websites, Pro Bono Australia received international recognition as a finalist in the 2001 Stockholm Challenge International Awards for websites encouraging democracy and social justice.

Born and raised in Melbourne, her achievements saw her named as a finalist in the Victorian Telstra Business Women’s awards in 1997.

Karen is inspired by her family and colleagues, and the work of Body Shop founder, the late Anita Roddick. She has many, eclectic interests that cover mind, body and soul.

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## PROFILE

### **Trudy Wyse, Manager of Community & Donor Services, Melbourne Community Foundation**

From the time she was young, Trudy Wyse has taken an active interest in social justice and community development, involving herself in political life and the women's movement while at university.

An experienced social policy analyst and consultant with particular expertise in program design, implementation and review, Trudy has a background in economics, community development and capacity building, local government, philanthropy and management.

As the Manager of Community and Donor Services for the Melbourne Community Foundation, Trudy provides advice and support to donors who have philanthropic funds with the Melbourne Community Foundation, and advises the foundation on grant-making policy, procedure and the implementation of strategic initiatives.

She is passionate about supporting organisations who are working to achieve positive social change in areas where there is entrenched disadvantage and inequality.

Melbourne-born and raised, Trudy began her career working in training research for the Federal Department of Labour and Immigration and has since worked across all three levels of government and run a successful private consultancy, WWW Communications, specialising in policy development, evaluation and management advice in human services and health.

As the manager of community development for the Stegley Foundation, she helped shape a dynamic and proactive model of strategic philanthropy, establishing partnerships between community organisations, advocacy groups and local government and hosting forums to expose philanthropists to social policy issues.

Trudy sits on the boards of several community and philanthropic organisations including the Mullum Trust and Leadership Plus.

She also is working to establish Changemakers, a new philanthropic entity designed to work with other national charitable trusts and foundations to encourage the development of social-change philanthropy.

During her downtime, Trudy loves art, music and theatre and can regularly be found enjoying productions at the Malthouse and Red Stitch theatre companies.

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