



Rural Lifestyle Options Australia

MAGAZINE

ISSUE 13
AUGUST 2020

BIANNUAL PUBLICATION

IN THIS ISSUE

**National Injury Insurance
Scheme Queensland**

Page 7

**NDIS Goals & You
(Planning for Success)**

Pages 16 - 18

**Broncos Charity
Partnership 2020**

Page 19

Thriving people, Strong communities

QUEENSLAND

For the Scenic Rim Region
PO Box 617, Beaudesert QLD 4285

For the Logan and Ipswich Areas
PO Box 6095, Logan Central QLD 4114

NEW SOUTH WALES

For the Gold Coast and Northern Rivers
PO Box 238, Murwillumbah NSW 2484

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Search 'Rural Lifestyle Options Australia' to find us on:



Produced and published twice yearly by the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia New Business, Communications and Innovation Division with contributions from the Board, Staff, Participants, Partners and Volunteers.

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Nicholas Power
Executive Leader Brand and Innovation
nick.power@rloa.org.au

ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES

David Gordon
Chief Operating Officer
advertising@rloa.org.au

To gain permission to reprint any material that appears in this publication, please contact social@rloa.org.au.

The views expressed in the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of Rural Lifestyle Options Australia.

The organisation takes no responsibility for equipment, products or services advertised in this publication.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders both past and present.

CEO Welcome

Welcome to the thirteenth edition of the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia magazine.

I would like to start this update by acknowledging how proud I am of the efforts of our staff, participants, and families over the past six months. It really has been a joint effort by all. Additionally, without the ongoing support provided by my Executive Team and the Board of Directors, we would not have been able to navigate through these uncertain times. Since I returned from maternity leave on the 6th of January 2020, as an organisation we have witnessed a great deal of change. When the news of COVID-19 reaching Australian shores broke, plans were put on hold however our organisation's commitment to fulfilling dreams and assisting people to achieve their desired goals was still achieved.

Despite our inability to control what was happening further afield, and with the support of my Executive Team and the Board of Directors, I recognised that we were still in a position to control what was happening at Rural Lifestyle Options Australia. Our participants and our workforce were at the heart of our plan, which saw the whole team working together seamlessly to introduce new safety measures and precautions to mitigate any potential spread of the virus and to ensure the organisation's mission of 'Supporting a life of choice' remained resolute. After many months of our office staff working tirelessly from remote working arrangements, on the 1st of June 2020, our three office locations re-opened. This was the first phase of our two-stage plan, which was founded in advice from both federal and state governments. We want to reassure our staff, participants and families that we are continuing to monitor federal and state governments' updates on the ever-evolving COVID-19 situation and have the resources and infrastructure in place to handle any situation that may transpire to continue to best support our people in the community. I consider myself grateful for how our team stepped up in the face of this adversity and empathise with those who have been affected by tragedy and heartbreak on account of this pandemic. I would also like to acknowledge the federal government's financial contributions over this period to ensure our organisation could continue to support vulnerable people in the communities in which we operate.

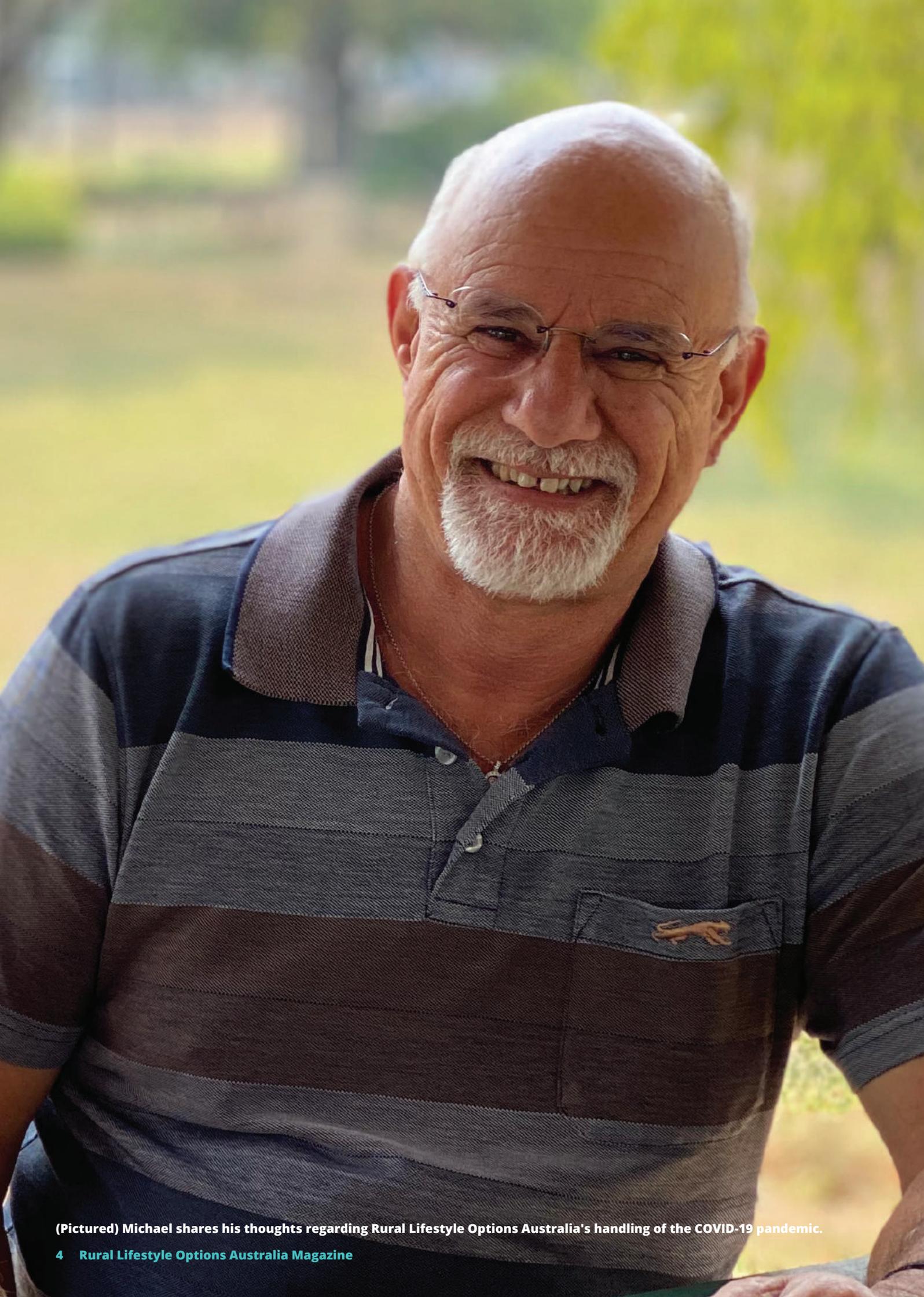
In this edition of the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Magazine, you will hear from one of our participant's Michael, who submitted an editorial reflecting on his experience throughout COVID-19 (Pages 4-6). I am proud of the positive feedback we received from many participants and their families for the organisation's handling of this situation and appreciate the time contributed from Michael in preparing his piece. In addition to this you will learn about our latest service offering 'Attendant Care and Support' under the National Injury Insurance Scheme (Page 7) as well as our revamped 'Tree Change' Short Term Accommodation Holiday package under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Page 11). You will also read about how we have progressed our commitment to reconciliation (Pages 8-10). We are looking forward to sharing with you the next stage of our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in rural and regional communities. Since our last edition, we have had several staff members receive awards and achieve some amazing feats, including Leanne Cahill who achieved 15 years of service to the organisation (Page 24-25).

Michelle Latailakepa
Chief Executive Officer



Contents

- 02** CEO Welcome
- 04** Through Michael's Eyes
(A Participant's Perspective on COVID-19)
- 07** National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland
- 08** Our Update on Reconciliation
- 10** Reconciliation with Raven
- 11** Do you need a Tree Change?
- 12** Mates Become Housemates
(Ronald and Caane)
- 14** Looking Back, Looking Forward
- 15** International Women's Day 2020
- 16** NDIS Goals & You (Planning for Success)
- 19** Broncos Charity Partnership 2020
- 20** Out & About (In The Community)
- 22** Containers For Change
- 23** Transparency, Governance and Strategy
- 24** People, Engagement and Culture
- 26** People Conference Melbourne 2020
- 27** Meet Cindy



(Pictured) Michael shares his thoughts regarding Rural Lifestyle Options Australia's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

THROUGH MICHAEL'S EYES

A participant's perspective on COVID-19

One morning I was listening to the news on the radio where a story of a respiratory virus had been detected in China and it was feared it would spread throughout the country and some were even suggesting, an international spread of this virus.

I recall thinking that it was just an illness, one of many no doubt doing the rounds of China and as such, I was not at all worried about this virus getting to Australia.

Shortly after, the first news reports came about the virus arriving in Australia and infecting Australians, it had been given the name of COVID-19 yet I was still unconvinced of its dangers. Initially I thought the reaction from the government was uncalled for, I did not understand the dynamics nor the deadly consequences of the, what was now, a pandemic.

I became more concerned with the reports of infected people overseas and to hear Australia's infection rate was also increasing. There were many news stories reporting the spread and affect of the COVID-19 but the one that affected me the most as a NDIS participant, was that the NDIS have agreed to extend all participants' support-plans and funding for another twelve months at its current level.

With the introduction of new laws, one of which being working at home, I wondered if my supports would continue from RLOA and as to how they were going to handle this situation.

This made me wonder if I am at risk of contracting this infection and indeed, how much of a risk was I at? I was concerned my supports would stop, as I am aware my Lifestyle Support Workers fill in shifts with other participants from time to time.

How would the proposed social distancing work when they have, in some cases, a number of participants? This turned my thinking to the possibility of actually catching the disease and how it would affect me without the support I receive on a daily basis from RLOA; these were worrying thoughts indeed.

At this point I was searching for direction and RLOA came through with a well thought out response that took into consideration, not only the wellbeing of all participants and families, but employees alike, and this recognises the fact that, "We are all in it Together".

It was this response that was the subject of a communication from RLOA, sent to all participants and their families. It gave the pledge to continue all supports with as little disruption as possible, however it also outlined some changes that needed to be made in order to protect us all.

(Continued on page 6)

These changes were new to us all and we had to learn better hygiene habits and come to terms with, not only what social-distancing was but also to abide by the rules. To comply with this, RLOA supplied extra Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for those who use this in their care.

This PPE was personally delivered by Service Managers while all participants and families were contacted either, personally or by phone to answer any concerns they, or their family may have. The Service Managers also inquired if additional services were needed.

To make sure all Lifestyle Support Workers and supporting staff alike were on the same path to achieving the goal of no transmissions of the COVID-19 virus, new procedures and protocols were introduced making way for a structured, accountable approach to management in all areas of the company.

My Lifestyle Support Workers concentrated on not only hygiene, but what we could do out of the usual routine during the "lock down" period, where community participation was very restricted.

With the support I received I was able to tidy up around my garden (work I had wanted to do for some time) and complete a lot of housework while board games and musical instruments also took up a lot of time as did great conversation and laughter. I was able to take part in some cooking with great results while at the same time, my usual care arrangements continued on as normal.

When I required help in doing my weekly grocery shopping my Lifestyle Support Workers were right by my side (despite putting themselves at a greater risk) ensuring I had clear access to the entry / exit of the shops while also ensuring the correct social distancing was being kept including while I was at medical appointments.

Now that restrictions continue to be lifted normality is once again returning to our lives. I sure did miss the social part of life seeing friends and family and with RLOA's support, I intend to catch up with them again along with continuing with my Justice of the Peace work and pursuing my passion of star-gazing and playing the didgeridoo.

My regular hydrotherapy will continue, much to my benefit as will some social interaction when going to the movies. Being a ex-scuba instructor, a swim in the sea and lunch of fish and chips with a view of the beach will be most welcome.

As grateful as I am for all of this, I am just looking forward to again returning to enjoying the best life I could have, made possible with the aid of RLOA and their Lifestyle Support Workers.

**Thank you to Michael for sharing this article.
To learn more about our response to COVID-19
please visit www.rloa.org.au/news**

1ST PRIZE

**\$250K GOLD
TO BE WON!**

+ HUNDREDS OF FANTASTIC PRIZES!

**Buy a ticket to support Rural Lifestyle Options Australia's Unfunded Projects at:
playforpurpose.com.au/rural-lifestyle-options-australia**



NIISQ

NATIONAL INJURY INSURANCE SCHEME QUEENSLAND



Written by David Gordon,
Chief Operating Officer

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia is a community focused organisation who are proud to provide essential services to people in rural and regional communities.

As our footprint continues to grow, we are always looking for new ways to support vulnerable members of the community.

Recently, RLOA registered to provide 'Attendant Care and Support' under the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland (NIISQ). The NIISQ provides treatment, care and support services to people who have sustained serious personal injuries as a result of a motor vehicle accident, irrespective of fault.

With a strong history of delivering supports to people with a disability for almost 30 years, we felt this scheme would be complimentary to our current service offerings, and more importantly something we could confidently deliver.

In April 2020, RLOA received interim approval to deliver 'Attendant Care and Support' under the NIISQ.

Under this scheme, RLOA will provide services for people who need support for both a short term injury to assist with their recovery; and for people who need regular support on a long term basis, to support the individual to live as independently as possible.

Examples of how our staff will assist people eligible under this scheme include:

- Getting the person ready for their day
- Setting and maintaining a personal care routine
- Cleaning the person's home and gardening
- Managing the person's day to day routine
- Assisting the person attend appointments
- Assisting the person with tasks and errands
- Integrating the person into the community

In July 2020, the organisation received full approval to deliver 'Attendant Care and Support' under the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland.

Based on the successful delivery and approval from the relevant governing bodies, we plan on also offering this essential service in New South Wales and further afield.

We look forward to sharing with you some of the successful outcomes we have helped facilitate for our NIISQ participants in the next edition.



To learn more about the
National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland,
please visit www.rloa.org.au/niiisq



Our update on reconciliation



Written by Fiona Gazzard,
Executive Leader People and Culture

Every edition, we reflect on the steps our organisation has taken in realising our vision for reconciliation.

Since our last update, we have continued to encourage staff members from all areas of the organisation play their part in championing the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with the view to strengthen our relationships with Indigenous peoples in the areas in which we operate.

In late 2019, the organisation formed a new RAP Working Group (RWG) to progress our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and to develop RLOA's second phase 'Innovate'.

The RWG meet bi-monthly and are responsible for ensuring the deliverables agreed to in the 'Innovate' RAP are met.

Part of the role of the RWG is to also facilitate opportunities for employees and leaders to engage in cultural learning opportunities and events. Our 'Innovate' RAP at the time of this publication, is currently under review from Reconciliation Australia.

Unfortunately, due to complications arising from COVID-19, we were unable to move forward with our planned in-person events this year for National Close The Gap Day (19 March 2020) and National Reconciliation Week (27 May - 3 June 2020).

Close The Gap Day is a national day of action to pledge support for achieving Indigenous health equality by 2030. This year the theme was "We nurture our culture for our future, and our culture nurtures us".

Staff were encouraged to join more than 250,000 people who had taken action for Indigenous health equality by signing a petition which calls on the Australian Government to commit to providing adequate and long-term financial recourses to achieve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equality.

While we couldn't physically be together for National Reconciliation Week, the RWG organised a Virtual Morning Tea in recognition of this important week. Members of management, staff and participants all joined the Virtual Morning Tea through Zoom to acknowledge the shared histories, cultures and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as part of our commitment to reconciliation in Australia.

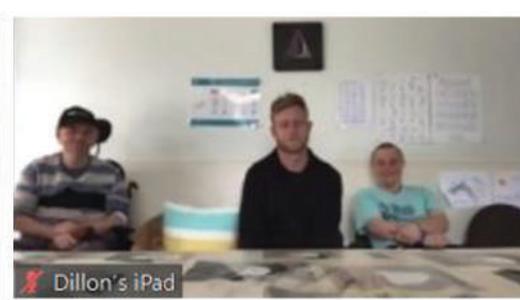
This event also saw the launch of a new Online Indigenous Cultural Awareness training program for all staff, through Your Mob Learning. The training program gives us all a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and how it impacts the workplace, community and our approach as an organisation. It has also assisted us as an organisation, identify cultural gaps providing the knowledge on how to influence and contribute to Indigenous reconciliation in the workplace and wider community.



Fiona Gazzard



Nicholas



Dillon's iPad



David Gordon



Ines Ramos



Kara Marks



Kirily Isherwood



RLOA User



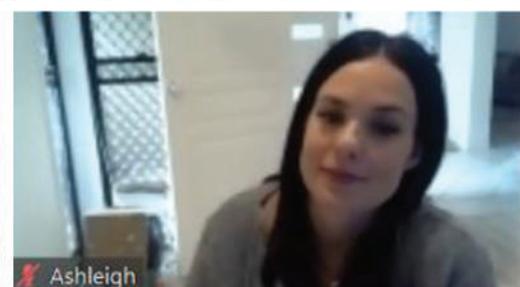
Robert Rees



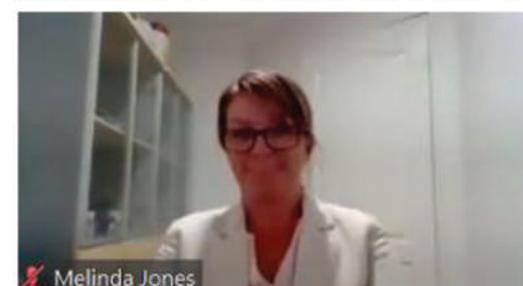
Annett



johnhollingworth



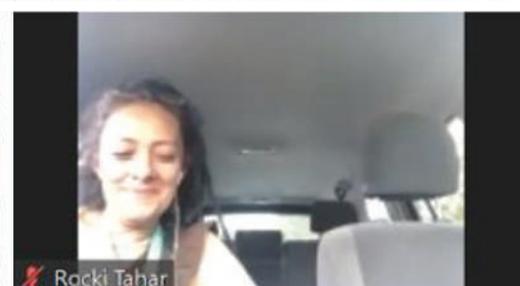
Ashleigh



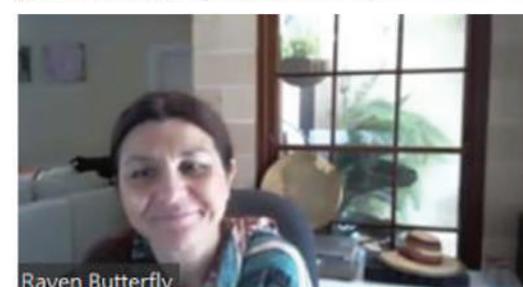
Melinda Jones



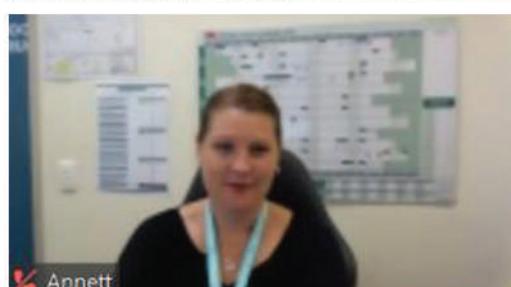
michelle.latailakepa's iPad



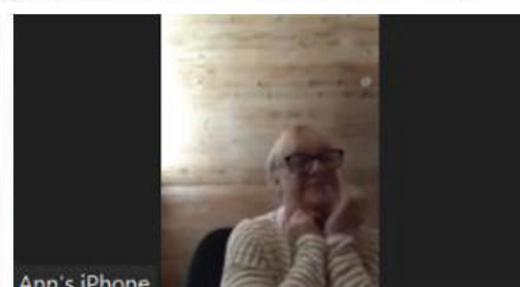
Rocki Tahar



Raven Butterfly



Annett



Ann's iPhone



In this together

National Reconciliation Week 2020

RECONCILIATION WITH RAVEN



Written by Raven Watson,
Finance Manager

Cooee.

Now that I have your attention I would love to take you on a journey to bring you inside the circle and explore with you aboriginal ceremonies.

These ceremonies are filled with dance, song, handmade musical instruments, ritual and often elaborate body decoration and traditional clothing which are led by Elders.

The ceremonies are held for many reasons including a connection with the mythological stories also referred to as dreaming or dreamtime. Some ceremonies are a rite of passage for young people between 10 and 16 years, representing a point of transition from childhood to adulthood.

The dreamtime brings us back some 65,000 years ago to the very beginning of creation, when the ancestors created the whole world.

The ceremonies performed are very distinct to the different territories and regions and each of these dreamtime stories connect in with land, ancestral spirits and the songlines of this land.

These songlines are known as essential navigational tracks and hold important knowledge of ancient memory codes which Aboriginal elders access through singing to the landscape.

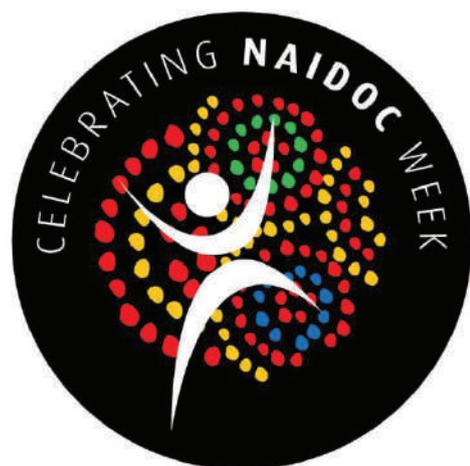
This singing of the information tells stories and is much more memorable than a list of facts where each location acts as a memory and this knowledge is literally grounded into the landscape.

Ceremonies and rituals today are performed at sacred sites across Australia which allows the continued flow to reinforce belonging, social connection, strength of identity, who you are and the connection to the land and ancestors. As part of this oral culture, the stories from the songlines are verbally passed on from elder to elder and shared with the children as teachings through song, dance, artwork and storytelling.

As part of our commitments under our Reconciliation Action Plan, we are continuing to explore other ways to remain connected on this journey. One aspect we have implemented internally is a new monthly segment to staff named 'Reconciliation with Raven' which sees me delve into topics relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples, which this Magazine article is an extension of.

As I continue to share important aspects of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultures I do acknowledge that my intention is not to understand this complex and rich belief system.

My intention however is to immerse myself in their dreamtime stories, in their artwork of the songlines and in their songs to connect with the land and this amazing landscape which we all call home. I look forward to sharing more learnings of this beautiful culture as we walk this reconciliation journey together.



Always Was, Always Will Be.

8-15 NOV 2020



Do you need a Tree Change?

Reconnect with nature with a holiday to the beautiful Scenic Rim, Queensland.

Whether you choose to go for a stroll along hundreds of kilometres of wheelchair accessible walking tracks, go hot air ballooning, hire a kayak or fish on a fresh water lake, taste award-winning wines, enjoy fresh seasonal produce or simply explore the local art galleries and cafés – there is something for everyone at this world heritage location.

This beautiful region is big, bold and knows what it is about. One of the great food bowls west of Brisbane, the area has a rich agricultural history and is home to six national parks making it the perfect escape if you enjoy spending time outdoors, amongst mother nature.

From stunning waterfalls, to breath-taking canopies, Rural Lifestyle Options Australia will be with you every step of the way to help you make the most of your holiday in this amazing destination.

Our Emerald House is the perfect place to stay while visiting the Scenic Rim and with 200kms of travel included with your stay, no attraction or activity is out of reach. Emerald House is a fully accessible facility boasting large open living areas, a generous undercover outdoor space with table tennis and a basketball hoop, gaming console, on-site computers and a dedicated media room with Netflix, among other amenities.

RLOA's friendly and experienced Lifestyle Support Workers will be with you every step of the way, providing 24-hour support to ensure your individual needs are taken care of.

Most people stay a week at a time, but shorter and longer stays are available depending on your needs. Each stay caters to a maximum of two guests at a time to ensure you get the tailored support you deserve, during your holiday.

Emerald House is the perfect getaway for nature and animal lovers and for those who want to escape the hustle and bustle of city life. Here, natural beauty meets country charm and welcoming smiles stretch as far as the breathtaking vistas.

Our location is less than 60 minutes drive from Brisbane and the Gold Coast, and a short distance to local shops and attractions within the Scenic Rim itself.

If you are looking for a break, consider a Tree Change and discuss your options with one of our friendly team members today!

To book your next getaway with RLOA, please call 1300 032 175 or to learn more visit www.rloa.org.au/treechange



MATES BECOME HOUSEMATES

Ronald and Caane

(Pictured) A friendship between Ronald and Caane has blossomed into the pair living in a SIL arrangement.



After meeting each other at Emerald House, Ronald and Caane developed a beautiful friendship, one that has now seen them moving into a Supported Independent Living (SIL) arrangement together!

Service Manager Rocki Tahar said that it was a combination of their "shared love of bowling" and "weekly trips to play at the local alley" that helped Ronald and Caane form such a strong friendship. "Caane moved into the SIL first, and then when Ron was ready to move out – it was a match made in heaven. I remember taking Ron to the property for the first time, and he was absolutely stoked!" Recently, Executive Leader Brand and Innovation Nicholas Power visited Ronald and Caane at their house for an interview to see how they were settling in.

"It's been good mate. We enjoy going bowling together and going to the local RSL on a Friday night. Ron likes to dance around the piano there and there is an open stage where he likes to dance around too. It's great! We also go to the park together" said Caane. When asked about how they have coped over the past few months during the pandemic, Caane said "It's been very very restrictive, you can't do much. I can't just go to the gym or to a coffee shop. So we have been doing a lot more around the house and watching Netflix. I definitely can't wait for things to open back up. I heard my gym is opening back up soon, which is good."

"I have been going shopping with my Lifestyle Support Worker, he takes me to shopping to get food, we go to Coles, we go to Aldi, get food and drinks and that has been good!" said Ron. "Ron and I spend the afternoons together and make dinner and then in the evenings sometimes we have a few drinks" said Caane. Ronald appears to be the prankster of the household, with Caane reminiscing about some of his recent antics. "He likes to put the outfit from *Scream* on and hide in the cupboards until I walk past and he jumps out. Sometimes he scares the hell out of me!"

"I also like to play guitar, I support the Sydney Rabbitohs and like to watch wrestling on my iPad. I also like to watch movies" said Ron. "Last night we watched *The Mask*" recaps Caane.

When asked what they would like to do once the pandemic passes, they both opted for seeing their families. "I haven't really travelled too much, I would like to do that I think. See mum and dad down in Tasmania I think" said Caane. "My mum Leanne is in Bathurst, I would love to go visit her" said Ron.

We are proud to be supporting Ronald and Caane to live a life of their choice.



Looking back, Looking forward

(Pictured) Michelle Latailakepa receiving a donation of \$200 from the Freemasons, Beaudesert Lodge in 2015.



Written by Michelle Latailakepa,
Chief Executive Officer

Since 2015, our Unfunded Projects initiative has formed the backbone for many projects, which without community support, would not have been made possible.

It might sound cliché, but from time to time I like to stop and reflect on just how far we have come as an organisation. In 2015, one of the first initiatives I introduced at the beginning of my tenure as CEO was our Unfunded Projects. The intention of our Unfunded Projects initiative was to raise funds for important projects that added value to the lives of the people we support and as a way to show donors, where their donations were going when they supported RLOA.

Our first fundraising target was to purchase the specially designed sensory equipment required for the new Sensory Room we had just built. Through utilising our savings, RLOA was able to contribute \$6,182.41 towards the panelling, painting and electrical work required to get the Sensory Room prepared. Through the generosity of our supporters, we met our goal of first goal of \$5852.71. Today, this incredible space is still a much loved part of visiting Emerald House and is often used when people stay for Short Term Accommodation. Since our first project, **we have successfully funded sixteen Unfunded Projects**, which is driven by the needs of the people we support. I consider this an incredible achievement for a community based organisation operating across drought-stricken rural and regional communities, especially throughout this period.

Over the past five years, our Unfunded Projects initiative has achieved incredible feats which have truly made a difference in the lives of the people we support. To name a few, your support has assisted with renovations of our community facilities (\$40,328); funded free and subsidised transportation for participants (\$276,717); and has even provided emergency Short-Term Accommodation to a young man, who at no fault of his own became homeless (\$116,000).

It has been an incredible journey and I am sincerely grateful to everyone who has supported our cause. Whether you dressed up as a superhero and supported our 1:5 All Abilities Relay events, bought a ticket to support us in the Play For Purpose Charity Raffle, donated or purchased items at our Preloved Homewares Op Shop, held an internal fundraiser through your business, popped some loose change in one of our donation tins or been apart of our Workplace Giving program, it has all contributed to bringing some of these amazing projects to fruition. I am proud to announce that to date **we have raised \$607,922.92**.

We believe in transparency which is why we proudly publish each project we have funded, to give you the confidence in where your money goes when you donate to RLOA. As our footprint continues to grow, we will be continuing to raise money for important projects which support the communities we serve which wouldn't be possible without your ongoing support. I hope RLOA can continue to rely on you to assist us in achieving our purpose of "Thriving people, Strong communities". To support our cause, please visit www.rloa.org.au/donate



International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March, 2020.

The campaign theme for this year was [#EachForEqual](#) and called on individuals to actively choose to challenge stereotypes, fight bias, broaden perceptions, improve situations and celebrate women's achievements.

This year, staff from our three office locations chose to strike the [#EachForEqual](#) pose to motivate others to recognise the importance of this day. Rural Lifestyle Options Australia are proud to support this initiative and are passionate about making a positive difference for women everywhere.



NDIS GOALS & YOU

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS



Written by Robert Rees,
Executive Leader Support Services

Goals are things you want to achieve with support from the NDIS and other supports and services.

There are generally 3 to 4 goals in your plan over different periods of time, you could have short term, (generally the life of the current plan) medium term and long term goals.

An example of a short term goal could be:

To be supported with my self-care and household activities so that I can become more independent.

A long term goal example could be:

I would like to live independently in a house of my choosing.

This allows you to reach smaller goals as you go so that you are ready to achieve your long term goal in the future. Goals should be outcome based, an example of this would be to focus on an outcome rather than the supports required to achieve the outcome.

For example, if you like to spend time at the library your goal may be to access the greater community and have access to activities that you enjoy. Goals need to be broad enough that you can make changes to services or supports throughout the year so that you can use different types of services to help achieve the same goal.

We suggest that the easiest way for you to think about goals is to think about what's important to you.

Use the list below to think about all the aspects of your life and what's really important to you:

- Communication
- Improving relationships
- Health and well being
- Confidence building
- Recreation activities
- Socialising
- Work
- Volunteering
- Improving relationships
- Daily living skills
- Accessing public transport
- Living arrangements
- Increasing independence
- Increasing mobility

Once you have identified what's important to you think about how you link this to goals and what supports you would need to help you achieve these. The guide below will assist you with this.

What's important to you?

- I like going to the library every week.
- I would like to have more friends.
- I want to improve how I communicate.

(Continued on page 18)

Goals:

- To access my community and participate in activities I enjoy.
- To build relationships with others.
- To improve my ability to communicate with others.

Supports I need:

- A Lifestyle Support Worker to assist me to access the activities I enjoy.
- Support from an allied health professional to help me to work on my relationship building skills.
- Assistance from a speech pathologist to help me with assistive technology that I can use to increase my communication skills.

Here at Rural Lifestyle Options Australia, we are always available to assist you with all aspects of your NDIS plan. We suggest that the easiest way for you to think about goals is to think about what's important to you.

We work with you to assist you to achieve your goals. Some examples of these are below:

Participant A - Jimmy

It was important for Jimmy to get fit.

His goal was "I'd like to improve my health and fitness in ways that I enjoy".

With support from his Lifestyle Support Worker, Jimmy joined the local gym. He is also using his funding to work with a Lifestyle Support Worker to cook his own healthy meals.

With ongoing support, Jimmy has lost 10kgs and smashed his goals out of the park!

Participant B - Ruby

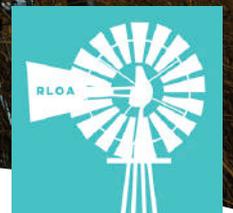
It was important for Ruby to be seen as a valued member of her community.

Ruby thought about this and decided she would like to volunteer in some capacity, her goal was "I would like to attend courses to enable me to seek volunteer work."

With assistance from her Lifestyle Support Worker, Ruby now volunteers at the Preloved Homewares Op Shop, three mornings a week!

Need support with the NDIS?

We can help.



Visit www.rloa.org.au or call 1300 032 175 to learn more!

BRONCOS

CHARITY PARTNERSHIP 2020



SEASON LAUNCH
BRISBANE
BRONCOS
SEASON LAUNCH



Written by Nicholas Power,
Executive Leader Brand and Innovation

In late 2019, we received confirmation that Rural Lifestyle Options Australia had been announced as an official charity partner for the Brisbane Broncos 2020 season.

This partnership resulted in the successful funding of our fifteenth Unfunded Project, an Aigo Standing Transfer Aid, thanks to a \$3,000 donation from the Brisbane Broncos Community Fund.

This piece of equipment is used to support people staying at our Short Term Accommodation and is complementary to electric lift systems. It provides a safe means of transfer from a bed to a chair or from a bed to a bathroom with the help of a Lifestyle Support Worker. The user's participation helps to maintain their independence.

As part of this partnership, RLOA received a signed jersey from the players which I have been wearing to the gym (kidding - we will raffle it) and an invitation to the Season Launch event at the Fortitude Music Hall in March, which I attended with my partner Melanie.

After an enjoyable evening rubbing shoulders with the likes of Alfie Langer and Wally Lewis, the excitement for what this partnership would mean for the organisation was at an all time high. And then of course COVID-19 hit, like a tackle from Wendell Sailor back in his hay day.

Two other major benefits included in this partnership is the opportunity to raise awareness and sell raffle tickets for our Unfunded Projects initiative at a dedicated Broncos' home game, as well as player visits to our participants.

Neither unfortunately could proceed this year as originally planned due to government restrictions but we are still grateful for being recognised in this partnership for the 2020 season.

As a silver lining, it has been confirmed by the Broncos camp that we will return as a Charity Partner for the 2021 season, which will see these two other opportunities for the organisation come to fruition.



Watch Former Broncos Captain Justin Hodges pledge his support for our Unfunded Projects initiative at www.rloa.org.au/donate



OUT & ABOUT

IN THE COMMUNITY

Recently, Andrew chose to visit King Tut's Putt Putt at Surfers Paradise.





Recently, Megan decided to visit Wynnum Waterfront for a walk and to have lunch by the water.



Recently, Glenn decided to catch his favourite form of transport (the train) to his favourite restaurant in Surfers Paradise (Yum Cha Noodle Haus).



Recently, Martin decided to visit Surfers Paradise for a day by the beach!





DONATE YOUR CONTAINERS AND HELP US CASH-IN

WE'LL GET 10 CENTS FOR EACH ONE

Use Scheme ID 'C10072058' to donate to Rural Lifestyle Options Australia

 ELIGIBLE CONTAINERS



Most glass, plastic, aluminium, steel and paper-based cartons between 150mL and 3L.

Visit containersforchange.com.au
to find out more



TRANSPARENCY

GOVERNANCE AND STRATEGY



Written by Katrina Ryan,
Director

Katrina was inducted to the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia (RLOA) Board as a volunteer Director in early 2019.

Katrina joins RLOA from a clinical background as a Registered Nurse with skills in wound management and as a Breast Care Nurse. She holds a Bachelor of Business from the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane and completed the Australian Company Directors Course in 2017. For over 3 years, she has also been a volunteer board member for Kidsafe Queensland.

With over thirty years' experience in both the public and private sector, Katrina has held many varied roles across hospital, community and corporate settings. For the past fifteen years, Katrina has held executive positions in both the for-profit and not-for-profit space. Most recently as a General Manager with Healthscope Hospitals and as a General Manager at UnitingCare.

Katrina has a passion for the integration of health care services across the care continuum. She has a passion for open transparency across the patient journey with clear processes, policies and procedures to support good clinical leadership and governance. Some key projects Katrina has led over her career have been focused on improving patient/client experiences and the transition to the community setting in both the private and not-for-profit health sectors.

This experience has highlighted the need for robust governance and strategy in organisations. RLOA was already well established as a provider of choice and provided a sound and robust system of governance. This is key to setting the tone and culture for the organisation.

In August 2019, along with fellow Board Directors Carole Caswell and Ann Armstrong, Katrina attended the Better Boards Conference to further develop skills and share knowledge around systems and governance to support RLOA's strategic aspirations, as the organisation undergoes the next phase of development and growth.

Whilst there is no one-size fits all approach to governance and strategy for a board, this is underpinned by a sound culture. This culture is what is experienced at the RLOA Board through open communication, transparency and a clear understanding of the organisation.

Further developing governance and strategy provides both the opportunity and the challenge as a volunteer Director of the board for RLOA while working alongside the RLOA Executive Team. This is where joining RLOA as a Volunteer Board Director became attractive to Katrina, in addition to the opportunity to contribute to a worthy organisation which supports families making important life choices in the Disability sector.

To learn more about our Board of Directors, please visit www.rloa.org.au/ourboard

PEOPLE

ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURE

What we do is just as important as how we do it.

Nominations for the Above and Beyond Award are submitted by peers to the Rural Lifestyle Options Australia Executive Team who assess nominees against a set of criteria.

Where exceptional practice has been demonstrated and the nomination is supported, the staff member is presented with a framed certificate by the CEO. Recipients of this award also receive a \$100 RLOA Gift Card, feature in our Annual Report, biannual Magazine and across our social media pages. COVID-19 forced us to be creative in how we presented these awards to our wonderful staff in order to adhere to best practice Social Distancing guidelines.



Raven Watson



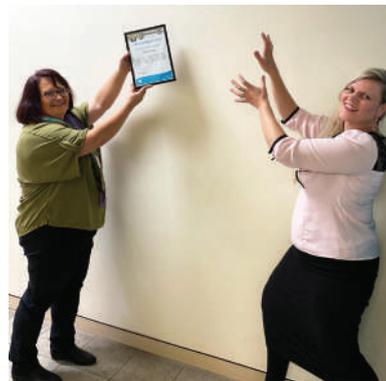
Robert Rees



Rocki Tahar



Fiona Gazzard



Cindy Reeves



Rebekah Imber



New EAP Provider

We are pleased to announce that we have changed providers for our Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

We now offer all staff access to an EAP through an independent counselling support provider named Acacia, which provides 50% more benefits to staff than our previous provider. We now offer six free confidential counselling services to assist staff with any personal or work related issues they may be experiencing in a positive way.

For instructions as to how to download the App, please contact hrrsupport@rloa.org.au

17.5 Years of Service

Working for any company continuously over a period a time is a big achievement.

At RLOA we like to celebrate and recognise the contribution of staff who have been on this journey with us for long periods of time. Previously we acknowledged 5, 10, 15 and 20 year milestones, but we are now pleased to acknowledge 17.5 years of service also.

If a staff member achieves 17.5 years of service they will receive an award acknowledging this milestone, a letter from the CEO and a \$175 RLOA Gift Card which can be used at a variety of major retailers.

Heroes of COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the 'Heroes of COVID-19' award was created as a small gesture of gratitude for those who had demonstrated exceptional practice throughout this period.

In order to be acknowledged, staff nominated their peers by sending a confidential email to our CEO. All recipients received a certificate acknowledging their efforts and a \$50 RLOA Gift Card, which can be used at all major retailers.

We are proud to announce that 42 staff members were nominated by peers and rewarded for their efforts under this Special Award Category.

Passionate about our cause?



Consider your next career move at www.rloa.org.au/careers



Celebrating 15 Years of Service

A big congratulations to Leanne Cahill, who recently received her 15 Years of Service Award from Michelle Latailakepa, Chief Executive Officer.

Please accept our heartfelt thanks, an "elbow bump" from the CEO and good wishes on the anniversary of your employment with Rural Lifestyle Options Australia.

PEOPLE

CONFERENCE MELBOURNE 2020

The NFP People Conference is Australia's biggest event focused on how to attract, train and retain the best people for the NFP sector. It's designed for managers and team leaders, HR professionals and volunteer managers, board members and senior leaders working at Australian NFP organisations.

The conference focused on six themes:

1. Managing people well
2. Leadership
3. People and organisational strategy
4. Strengthening HR
5. Recruitment
6. Health and wellbeing

Melinda and Fiona attended different concurrent sessions across the two days with speakers including:

- Kon Karapanagiotidis, CEO & Founder of Asylum Seekers Resource Centre.
- Craig Davis, Co-Founder, Sendle.
- Shereena-Lee van de Berkt, Head of Domestic HR, Medecines Sans Frontieres.
- Annette Young, Head of People & Culture, The Smith Family.
- Cassandra Hatton, General Manager Human Resources, St Vincent de Paul Society.
- Ramon Wenzel, Research Assistant Professor, Learning for Purpose, Centre for Social Impact.



Fiona Gazzard

Executive Leader People and Culture

I found the two days to be incredibly inspiring, with so many being open to sharing their experiences and journeys. I particularly enjoyed the Design Thinking for HR Leaders Workshop, this workshop highlighted the importance of 'knowing' your team and then tailoring reward, recognition and feedback to the individual. We started by pairing up with other workshop participants and interviewing each other with specific questions. The purpose of the interview was to really listen to what the other person was saying to identify their values and preferences, and only speaking yourself to clarify something they had said. We then designed an award for that person based on what we had learned about them. Kon Karapanagiotidis' closing message was very moving and demonstrated the positive impact that can be made by an engaged and empowering leader. This session left me feeling very blessed to be working with leaders within RLOA who are equally as engaged and empowering.



Melinda Jones

People and Culture Coordinator

As a HR professional I took away some very valuable information. On day one, when listening to Cassandra Hutton from St Vincent de Paul Society she talked about creating powerful moments to engage and mobilise our people. Her advice was to really make that connection with employees and drive trust and values. When joining the Recruitment session with Kylie Flament from Green Connect she discussed how an organisation can overcome barriers to employ diverse candidates. On the last part of day one, Christina Ryan from Disability Leadership Institute talked about recruiting for a culture and inclusion. On day two I went to a Health and Wellbeing session with Kathryn McEwen talking about being resilient and leading resilient team cultures. Having that flexibility in the workplace and offering shorter working arrangements to get better values out of your employees. For the last session of the conference I went to a recruitment session with Olivia Passmore at Ethical Jobs and she talked about job ads, connection and making sure your first impression counts.

MEET CINDY

NDIS INTAKE AND SUPPORT OFFICER

Cindy joined Rural Lifestyle Options Australia in December 2019 and is one of our NDIS Intake and Support Officers for the Gold Coast and Northern New South Wales regions.

Prior to joining the organisation, Cindy held roles in both the community service and education sectors which supported people with a disability in the community.

Cindy notes that her favourite aspect of working for Rural Lifestyle Options Australia is “seeing participants happy and achieving their goals”. She also enjoys the “friendly staff” and the feeling of “being apart of a team”.

Outside of work, Cindy enjoys spending time with her family, arts and crafts, going to the beach, cooking and entertaining.



To contact Cindy Reeves, NDIS Intake and Support Officer about support for you or your loved one please call 1300 032 175 or email cindy.reeves@rloa.org.au

Keep an eye out for one of our 8 fleet vehicles to learn how we can support you or your loved one today.



Our Story



Kiara - Jo - Rob - Nate

BEHIND THE EXPERIENCE

Where it all began...

With art always being a passion I was inspired to pursue a career in what I loved doing.

As a young child, I remember winning the handwriting competitions at our local show. I would sit and draw for hours and paint onto canvas to challenge myself and what I could do. It became clear that this was my calling. Am I an artist? No I wouldn't say that I am, however I enjoyed being 'neat' and back then certainly challenged throughout my senior schooling years I found that art 'grounded' me to some extent. I always remember saying to dad that I wanted to be a tattoo artist when I left school, his reply "There's no money in it" (I remind him every now and again and he still stands by what he said). I always looked at tattoos as if they were art on a blank canvas.

Not fulfilling my desire to tattoo, to my dad's delight I was very lucky to be offered a full time apprenticeship in sign writing once finishing school. It was rare in such a small town to have such an opportunity offered so close to home. Soon after, I started my first year and later completed my 4 years in signwriting to become 'Trade Qualified'. Loving the industry and the endless list of what can be achieved inspired me to keep furthering my skills. I also completed courses in air brushing, wrapping vehicles, continued to paint for our local show and picked up some bits and pieces along the way. I continued to work for the same company for nearly 10 years before branching out on my own and starting Eagle Eye Signs & Graphics.

My husband worked a full time job so I predominantly ran the business for the first few years as a sole trader until our family grew. Kiara was born and 4 years later, Nate. Rob and I decided we needed to build our business to allow for future growth so we sold where we were and built our second home where we currently work today. We are now a partnership and work as a very dedicated team together. Rob has picked up the industry quite quick and often puts up with me telling him what to do. It hasn't been smooth sailing and we have certainly had hurdles to jump over but like most businesses when your drive is so strong you continue to get up in the morning and keep going.

The industry is challenging and keeps us on our toes. I would be lying if I said I knew everything about the industry after all this time. In fact, we learn about new products every single week. We need to keep up with our modern society and allow ourselves to keep growing to facilitate the demands of what is to offer. We pride ourselves on the quality of our work and have extremely high standards of what we produce. 19 years on and we still find what we do rewarding and somewhat satisfying. Rob and I will continue to grow our business and keep smashing goals. We are currently in the process of discussing our next exciting 'add on' to our business and look forward to many more years of creativity and sharing our passion with you all.

Some of the services we offer are: Large Format Printing - Banners - Shop Front Signage - A-Frames - Corflute Signage - Vehicle Signage - Trucks - Vans - Boats - Pull Up Banners - Stubby Coolers - Flyers - Business Cards - Graphic Design Service and much more.

Please visit our website www.eagleeyesigns.com.au or check out our Facebook page.

Rural Lifestyle Options Australia are proud to support local community businesses like Eagle Eye Signs & Graphics.