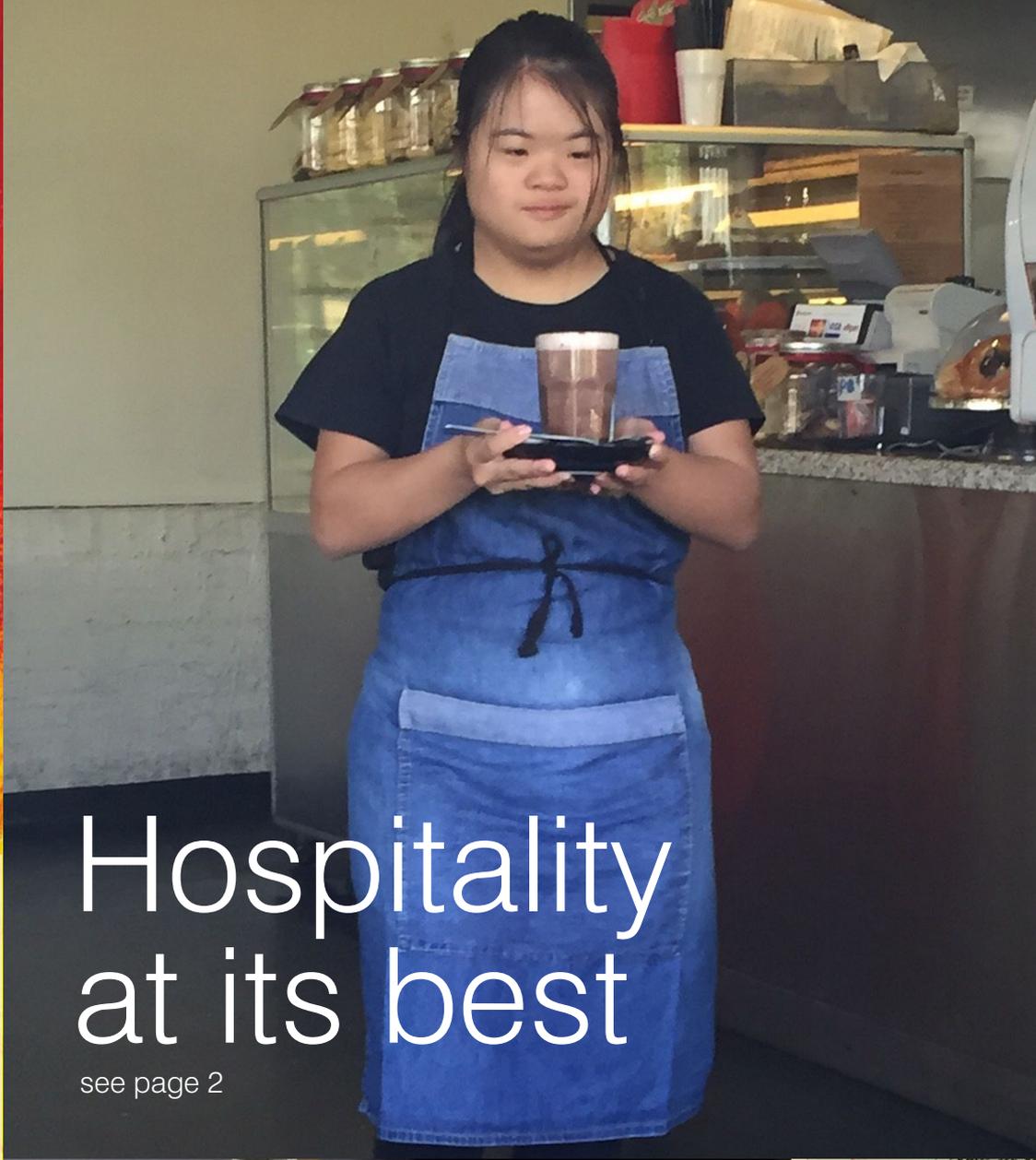




alkira
sun

Autumn 2016



Hospitality at its best

see page 2



Place & train: Hospitality at its best

Alkira is continually working to support people with an intellectual disability to pursue their individual aspirations and goals and to be part of the wider community. For many people this involves seeking employment, volunteering or work experience placements. Alkira's Place & Train Service is the vehicle for people who access Alkira's services to pursue such roles either within their own local community or within the broader community. (Place & Train was formerly known as Individual Community Options – ICO). Over the last few years Place & Train have sourced and fostered relationships with a variety of businesses and different industries including retail, hospitality, agriculture, childcare, aged care and recreation/leisure and currently has 42 people placed in permanent part time positions within the community. Through Alkira's Individualised Planning process, 'hospitality' was highlighted as a preferred area of employment for many people. Place & Train have partnered with a number of outstanding, progressive and forward-thinking individuals and businesses to bring to fruition people's aspirations of working within the hospitality industry. These businesses promote and support genuine community inclusion for people with disabilities, and as an organisation we would encourage you to support those who support Alkira.

So have your next coffee, breakfast, lunch or meeting at one of our Place & Train Hospitality partners:

Black Trestle Café
367 Whitehorse Road, Balwyn

Pet Lovers Café
RSPCA Complex
3 Burwood Highway
Burwood East

Red Cup Café
1124 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill



Front Cover: Top, Shu-Lin Chang, Oaks Café, Acorn Nursery. Bottom: Shu-Lin Chang with work colleagues Above: Tara Scott and Leigh Walters

Convent Bakery
1 St Heliers Street
Abbotsford

Hastings Marina Bar & Bistro
21 Mullet Street
Hastings

Oaks Café
Acorn Nursery
673 Canterbury Road
Surrey Hills

The Freckled Hen Café
131 Union Road
Surrey Hills

Bread Street Bakery
22 Hamilton Street
Mont Albert

Smart Brown Catering
Ph: 1300 884892

If you decide to have a Saturday morning coffee at the Black Trestle Café, you may encounter Taku Ikeda waiting tables. Love your animals? Visit the RSPCA's Pet Lovers Café where you may be greeted by Georgina Pitts and/or Sarah Laycock. Shu-Lin Chang is working in the Oaks Café at Acorn Nursery in Surrey Hills – waiting tables, clearing and cleaning tables and helping in the kitchen. After completing a work experience placement at the Convent Bakery, Matthew Foo now spends each Wednesday morning working at the Red Cup Café in Box Hill.

For over five years, Tanya Grant has been working at the Marina Bar and Bistro in Hastings where she assists with food preparation as well as display and storage; and similarly Michael Porter has worked at Bread Street Bakery in Mont Albert for several years getting himself there for those early morning 'bakery' starts.

Over the last few years both The Convent Bakery in Abbotsford and Smart Brown Catering in Box Hill have partnered with Place & Train to provide opportunities for a number of people in a variety of placements. Amir Khan is currently placed at Smart Brown Catering, whilst the Convent Bakery employs three Alkira Clients - David Frith, Tara Scott and Leigh Walters. Emily Porter and Peter Cooney both currently work at the Freckled Hen Café in Surrey Hills

Our Place & Train partnering businesses provide a range of employment options for Alkira Clients, the benefits of which can be clearly seen on the faces of their employees as they go about their work. As an organisation, we are very grateful to all of our partners who provide outstanding opportunities for the people Alkira supports to be contributing members of our community.

If you have an opportunity for a placement within your workplace, whether it be hospitality or another industry, please contact Alkira's Place & Train team of Louise Kingston on l.kingston@alkira.org.au and/or Kristin Nuske on k.nuske@alkira.org.au or telephone Alkira on 9890 1365.

From the Board of Management



It is with sadness that the Board of Management has accepted the resignation of Ray Cranwell, Alkira's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Ray will be retiring sometime in the September quarter of this year.

For over 21 years as CEO, Ray has made an outstanding contribution to Alkira and has overseen an extraordinary time of growth and development. Throughout this time of exemplary service, Ray has earned deep respect from everyone he works with and his warm and friendly approach will be missed by all of us.

The Board of Management has engaged the firm Brooker Consulting to assist us in appointing a new CEO. Brooker Consulting has a strong record in the successful appointments of leadership roles in organisations within the disability sector.

We are also pleased that Ray will be remaining as CEO until the appointment of his replacement and will be available for assistance with the transition.

At a time closer to Ray's retirement, we will be organising a suitable celebration to acknowledge and thank Ray for his contribution to Alkira.

Peter Harrison
President – Alkira Board of Management

Family forums 2016



Caden Bettles & Chris Miller cook up a storm

Alkira's Family Forums kicked off 2016 again with a Welcoming BBQ. Sunday 20th March saw a beautiful day in Melbourne for a BBQ and over 40 people attended Thurston Street to enjoy great food and great company. Chris Miller, Alkira Senior Vice President and Caden Bettles, Alkira Client took charge of the cooking and did a fabulous job. It was lovely to welcome some of Alkira's newer families as well as welcoming back families who participate in Family Forums on a regular basis. Those who had not yet seen Thurston Street's new Café and Integrated Training Kitchen were thrilled with the transformation. All in all it was a brilliant way to start the year. There were lots of people who helped both leading up to and on the day to make it a great success. Thank you!

The next Family Forum will be held on Tuesday 17th May from 7:00pm – 9:00pm in the Training Room, 3 Thurston Street, Box Hill. Our guest speaker will be Kathy Havers, Director - Financial Planning at Catalyst Financial Group. Kathy is also President – Bulleen Heights Secondary School Council and has a son with special needs. The topic for the evening will be 'Financial and Legal Strategies for Families Supporting People with Disabilities'.

Our July Family Forum will be on Tuesday July 19th from 7:00pm – 9:00pm. The topic will be the NDIS and we hope to have a family representative from the Barwon region who can enlighten people on the process of the NDIS from a family's perspective.

Dates and details for further Family Forums in 2016 will follow in the next edition of the *Alkira Sun*.

Strategic Plan 2016

Towards the end of 2015 the Board of Management, with the assistance of Anton Benc from Benchmarking Partnerships, conducted a number of forums involving Alkira clients, family members, carers and staff to facilitate the development of a planning framework for Alkira for the next 3 - 5 years. The process established a Vision, a set of Values and Objectives for Alkira that can be built on, actioned and measured. These Objectives will also provide a focus for everyone involved as we move towards a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) environment.

Alkira's Vision...

To be a
leading
boutique
intellectual
disabilities
service
provider
in Eastern
Metropolitan
Melbourne

Alkira's Values...

We Value:

- **Challenge**
to be comfortable with discomfort, to think, to question, to adapt
- **Care**
...for people and the organization
...about personal and organizational growth and development
- **Inclusiveness and Collaboration**
inclusive, meaningful and engaging partnerships with people both within Alkira and the wider community
- **Enrichment and Celebration**
opportunities for learning, developing and growing. Then recognising and celebrating achievements

Alkira's Strategic Objectives...

1. To Successfully Transition to NDIS
by transitioning timely and smoothly to NDIS
2. Expand Revenue Sources
by actively pursuing & seeking a mix of revenue sources which build on service offering to clients
3. Live a Shared Culture
by articulating, espousing & living a shared culture which embraces our values
4. Attract and Retain a Sustainable Workforce
by securing quality staff with aligned values & the right skills and competencies
5. Meet the Needs, Interests & Wishes of Clients in Services & Supports
by understanding and meeting the needs, interests & wishes of all clients
6. Establish and Maintain Community Engagement & Partnerships
by having strong & reliable relationships/partnerships with mutual benefits to deliver our strategic outcomes
7. Alkira Being Known & Recognised as a Leading Integral Service Provider in our Community
by establishing and maintaining a Marketing Strategy
8. Provide Sustainable Facilities & Technology
by having appropriate infrastructure, facilities & supporting technology to deliver services.

We hope you will be part of a continuing journey with us as we move into a period of change, challenge, excitement and enrichment.

Peter Harrison

President – Board of Management

Having a Say



Another Valid 'Having a Say' Conference has been and gone and I am happy to say that the Conference theme of 'Ready, Set, Connect' was a principle that was fully embraced by everyone who attended. Although this was my first time at the Conference, I did not feel like an outsider as the representative members of Alkira's Client Committee (Caden Bettles, Jovana Blagojevic, Bernadette Mahoney, Francis Petty, Paul Van Leeuwen, Ruth Walker and Steven Zarezky) introduced me to their colleagues from around Australia as well as providing guidance as to what was expected of me at such an eclectic meeting of Individuals with Disabilities.

Upon arrival at our Ocean Grove accommodation on Tuesday, we were all impressed with the size and quality of our lodgings (the fact that there was a large spa helped with our excited first impressions).

With the Conference beginning on Wednesday and finishing on Friday, we decided we could not spend all of our time at our beach house so we quickly got into work mode and organised ourselves for the busy schedule ahead.

On the first day of the Conference we participated in some 'come and try' programs as well as attending various lectures on topics such as NDIS funding planning, how to effectively speak to doctors, how social networking can help bring together isolated individuals, and more.

Expectantly, many of the topics included NDIS centric information for those already in the scheme, as well as for those about to enter it. These topics included; how to prepare for the transition to the NDIS; accessing equipment and aids; and shaping the NDIS as it is rolled out. Reports from those already accessing funding from the NDIS were positive but it was emphasised to expect a big learning curve when starting out.

After a busy first day we headed to the Sphinx Hotel for dinner and a show, which in this instance were the auditions for the Annual Red Faces competition that forms part of the Closing Ceremony. We watched many talented musical, comedy and even magical acts with Alkira's representatives in the competition being Paul Van Leeuwen, Jovana Blagojevic and Caden Bettles dancing to an Elvis number.

On Thursday Alkira's representatives along with Alison Jones hosted the come and try program 'Zombie Thriller Dance' which proved to be very popular, with many individuals committing to dress up as zombies and perform a 'flash mob dance' as part of the Closing Ceremony.

Thursday night saw no reprieve from dancing as the much awaited Fancy Dress Dinner Dance was held at The Pier Geelong on the picturesque waterfront. Great food and great company was accompanied by rocking tunes provided by the band 'Controversy'. It is safe to say that after such a busy day, everyone slept very well that night.

Friday morning – time to pack up and make our way to Deakin for the last time in 2016 and the Closing Ceremony. The '2016 Having a Say Conference' was deemed a success by its organisers and now all that was left was the 'Red Faces' finalists to perform and the 'Alkira Zombie Thriller Dance' along with the Flash Mob to storm the stage for a zombierific send off.

The importance of keeping connected with ones colleagues was highly emphasised throughout the Conference and I believe all of the Client Committee representatives came back ready to convey the power that keeping connections alive with one's peers, has.

Evan Stewart

Facilitator – Alkira Client Committee

Stephen John Quick

5th March 1978 -
3rd January 2016



Stephen was a beautiful person, with a beautiful smile and a beautiful nature. He was courageous, fun loving, kind, generous and creative. We were all very saddened by Stephen's passing at such a young age – just shy of 38.

Stephen was born in 1978 and was much loved by his parents, Lois and Ron Quick and siblings Jennifer, Ian, Carolyn and Lisa and our deepest sympathies are with the Quick family during this difficult and sad time.

Stephen came to Alkira's Training & Support Services in 1998 at the age of 20. A wonderful contributor to the Alkira community, he embraced his friends, colleagues and staff alike. With his beautiful smile, his keen sense of humour and his polite caring nature he soon endeared himself to everyone.

Joining in programs like Exploring Melbourne, Healthy Eating, Scrapbooking, Op-Shop and Volunteering in the Elderly Citizens Dining Room, Stephen set about getting the most out of his opportunities and making the most out of his life – and this he certainly did!

It is no secret, however, that his favourite programs involved performing and creativity – programs like 'The Bandits'. Stephen held no fear of the stage or performing – in fact he loved and thrived on it. In his younger years, Stephen had performed in the Australian Ballet and attended the Johnny Young School of Dance. He also performed with the Nadrasca Drama Group, usually taking the lead role – acting, singing and dancing. Stephen's tap dancing in particular was special and really something to see!

The Bandits were a perfect fit for Stephen and didn't he shine! Often taking the lead singing role he loved it and along with his friend Emily they performed many beautiful duets on numerous occasions. For many years Stephen performed with The Bandits at concerts and community group events throughout Melbourne and even throughout country Victoria. Stephen also played a pivotal vocal role in the production and launch of The Bandits' CD called 'We're Steppin' Out' in 2007. He really loved to sing, so much so his Support Person for many years Sue recalls '*on shopping trips and other outings Stephen would sometimes simply break into song*', bringing great joy to those around him.

Another love of Stephen's was cooking. He completed a Hospitality Course at Box Hill Tafe, and after taking part in cooking programs he loved to share recipes and also lots of ideas on how things could or should be done.

Away from Alkira, Stephen loved to fill his weekends and evenings going out to local musicals and community theatre group shows, as well as catching the 'big' shows at city venues. He was also a member of Special Olympics Victoria competing in both Swimming and Bowling and in later years Bocce.

Stephen was with Alkira for 17 wonderful years. He was inspirational and a joy to be around and will be sadly missed by us all!



From left: Ray Cranwell, Alex Moore,
John Ritchie, Arthur Ritchie

Fundraising & Community Relations

'International Order of Old Bastards' AU Chapter Inc. (IOOB)

Since Alkira began in 1954, we have relied upon support in a variety of forms from the broader community. Organisations which have provided and continue to provide support are often well-known to us like the Rotary Clubs of Box Hill, Box Hill Central, Mont Albert & Surrey Hills; The Freemasons; and the Bendigo Bank among others. There is one organisation, however, which has provided an enormous amount of support to Alkira, particularly Alkira's Residential Services over many years which the wider Alkira community may not be so familiar with – the 'International Order of Old Bastards (IOOB)'. Yes, a somewhat unusual name!

A little history: IOOB had its beginnings during World War 11, when Lieutenant Colonel Fred Kibbe was in Brisbane with other US military officers on active duty and came to recognise that in Australia the term 'Bastard' was often used as a term of endearment. He and his colleagues upon socializing during that time formed the 'Bastards We Have Met Club'. After the war Fred returned to America but kept in touch with Club Members and very soon thereafter formed the IOOB.

From humble beginnings with a few dozen military members, the organisation has grown and now boasts over one million members throughout the world from a variety of differing countries and industries. The purpose of the IOOB is to conduct fundraising events to raise money primarily to provide assistance to those persons in the community who have found themselves in necessitous circumstances or facing unfair challenges. Even though the name may be a little light-hearted, the IOOB is a serious registered charity with the ATO, and is properly Constituted and Incorporated with no religious, political or other affiliations.

The A.U. Chapter of the IOOB was first formed in Melbourne in 1978. Fundraising for the IOOB AU Chapter consists of six lunches each year at Crown Casino where unpaid guest speakers entertain while members of the IOOB sell as many raffle tickets as possible. All raffle prizes, time and efforts of people are generously donated by members of the IOOB and their friends, colleagues and personal contacts.

Some years ago Arthur Ritchie, brother of John (John has been with Alkira's Training & Support Services for 53 years) who is Vice President and Life Member of the A.U. Chapter brought Alkira to the attention of the IOOB as a worthy recipient of their fundraising. From there and for the many years since, Alkira's Supported Group Homes received food hampers with items purchased and put together by the members themselves and delivered to the Alkira each Christmas. In more recent years the hampers have gone, but the IOOB has instead donated Coles Myer vouchers, again for use by the people who live in Alkira's supported homes. These vouchers with a value in the thousands of dollars have afforded the residents of our homes a great deal, such as food items, replacement of kitchen utensils and equipment and some luxury items like the recently purchased coffee machines.

The IOOB is an outstanding organisation that supports many different people and groups in the community. Alkira is extremely grateful for their contribution to our community and in particular the joy they have brought to the many residents in Alkira's homes at Christmas time. Thank you!

New Faces



Catherine Bedford
House Co-Ordinator



Julie Burbidge
Disability Educator



Amanda Carkagis
House Co-ordinator



Richard Fetherston
Disability Educator



Antoinette Gatsios
Alkira Client



Sebastian Halstead
Alkira Client



Jessie Howlett
Momentum/Pathways Student



Julia Holdsworth
Alkira Client



Albert Low
Relief Residential Support Worker



Cameron McDowell
Momentum/Pathways Student



Meagan McKinnon
Momentum/Pathways Student



Mark Ratcliffe
Relief Residential Support Worker



Matthew Stibbard
Residential Support Worker



Mohamed Turay
Residential Support Worker



Laura Ryan
Momentum/Pathways Student



Alison Vail
Alkira Client



Kennedy Van
Momentum/Pathways Student



Monique Vanderstadt
Momentum/Pathways Student



Lauren Wells-McIntosh
Alkira Client



Helen Williamson
Administration Officer,
Thurston Street Reception



Melissa Wilson
Momentum/Pathways Student

My gift to Alkira

Here is my 'gift' of:

\$10 \$50 \$150 \$500 \$1,000 \$2,500

I would like to contribute to 'The Alkira Foundation':

\$ _____ (enclosed)

I would like more information about making about making a 'bequest' to Alkira:

Contact Details:

Title: _____

First Name: _____

Family Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

(Donations over \$2 are Tax Deductible)

Payment Details:

Credit Card (MasterCard Visa)

Number _____

Exp Date _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Cheque / Money Order

I would like to donate by cheque/money order payable to Alkira Centre - Box Hill

*Please note payment via credit card can be emailed to Alkira at: info@alkira.org.au or telephoned through to reception at Thurston Street on (03) 9890 1365.