



THE NATIONAL  
YEAR OF  
READING

LEND LEASE  
SOUTH  
AUSTRALIAN  
PROJECTS

CATALYST-  
CLEMENT  
STUDY

HIPPY!

PERSPECTIVES  
ON  
EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING

NORTHERN  
PARTNERSHIPS  
UPDATE

TELLING IT  
LIKE IT IS

IDEAS THAT  
WORK

SOUTHERN  
RISE  
EDUCATION  
CENTRE

## News from the Executive

### 2012 National Conference Update

- The scheduled dates are 23-26 September with the extra day for local government.
- The theme is Creating a Learning Culture for Employment and growth
- Invitation for workshop presentations to be distributed shortly.
- If you have some ideas about cutting edge programs, please contact Peter Blunden at [peterrb@melton.vic.gov.au](mailto:peterrb@melton.vic.gov.au)

### Project for International Exchange (PIE)

Jan Simmons has just returned from overseas with some new ideas about setting up this project. She is looking to gather a conversation group to meet on line either by phone hook up or SKYPE.

Jan can be contacted on [jsimmons@morrison.org.au](mailto:jsimmons@morrison.org.au)

### Advocacy

- Jan Simmons and I spoke to the Victorian Public Libraries Network in September and had a favourable reception.
- The chair, Max Eastcott, is searching for possible funding sources to create a handbook to assist local governments for implement learning communities ideas and principals.

### Strengthening of ACLN Inc

The Executive have begun a process at looking at ways to strengthen the Network. It is now a 3 stage process. To repeat

1. The first stage was a facilitated system mapping exercise looking at the dynamics of a learning community and its interrelationships and the properties and services of the Network itself. This was achieved by a small group. Our limited resources dictated its composition to a couple of States.
2. The next stage was held around the time of the Adult Learning Australia Conference. This meeting looked at the values underlying the network and the services that it could be offered.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> stage is to develop from the gathered material a series of strategic steps for the sustainability of the Network.

### Congratulations to Adult Learning Australia

I have just returned from Melbourne where I attended the national conference of Adult Learning Australia. It was a well organised conference with an interesting array of keynote talks, workshop presentations and discussion topics.

### Thanks

Our thanks to our member Rod Wangman of the Albury Wodonga Community College. Through that assistance, another member of the Network, Gary Saliba, has received a nomination to attend a Victorian Government organised Conference- the Creative and Innovation Conference.

## THE NATIONAL YEAR OF READING

**Australian libraries and library associations are behind a campaign to turn 2012 into the National Year of Reading, linking together all the great things that are already happening around books, reading and literacy, and giving them an extra boost, with inspirational programs and events taking place across the country.**

Libraries will be partnering with government, the media, writers, schools, publishers, booksellers, employers, child care providers, health professionals and a whole host of other organisations that share our passion for reading.

Our message will be that it doesn't matter what you read – romance and adventure are just as relevant as a classic novel. Everyone can start their reading journey with content that they find interesting and engaging.

The story can be in any format – books, e-books, novellas, magazines, screen games. And it doesn't have to be a story. Non-fiction is fine too, and then there's poetry, graphic novels, newspapers, song lyrics.

The National Year of Reading 2012 is about children learning to read and keen readers finding new sources of inspiration. It's about supporting reading initiatives while respecting the oral tradition of storytelling. It's about helping people discover and rediscover the magic of books. And most of all, it's about Australians becoming a nation of readers.

While much of the activity will happen through partners and at a local level, we will be running four national campaigns.

- The Reading Hour (like Earth Hour, on 25 August 2012)
- Public library membership drive
- One Country Reading (favourite books for adults, teens, children)
- Writers-in-residence in workplaces
- Visit the website [www.love2read.org.au](http://www.love2read.org.au) for more information

Below is member Vanessa Little with the Prime Minister, Hon Julia Gillard



## Lend Lease South Australian Projects

I have been working with Lend Lease (formerly Delfin Lend Lease) in developing urban communities for the past 13 years. My responsibilities have crossed a variety of areas including care, education, community and economic development; all focused on providing a platform for the continued learning and development of people of all ages.

### Mawson Lakes

After 14 years, Mawson Lakes is now a vibrant and sustainable urban community – socially, environmentally and economically. With over 10,000 people living in 4,000 homes and 1,000 apartments, 6,000 workers in Technology Park, University SA and the Mawson Central business and town precinct, and 7,000 primary, secondary and tertiary students, Mawson Lakes has truly become a mixed use community where people can live, learn, work and play.

Our exit strategy focussed on working closely with the key remaining stakeholders – the City of Salisbury, University of SA, Technology Park – and the community and business groups established to support the raft of programs, services and activities that are delivered at Mawson Lakes. Many of these will continue to operate through the Mawson Centre (a learning, cultural and community centre), the Denison Centre (a multi-purpose sporting and community facility), the University campus, the various child care centres as well as the primary and the secondary schools.

With the completion of Mawson Lakes, the energies of Lend Lease in South Australia have now moved two new projects, Blakes Crossing which commenced in April 2009 and Gawler East which will be launched later this year.



## Blakes Crossing

Blakes Crossing is a small 90 hectare component of the wider Blakeview development, some 30 kms north of Adelaide. It will comprise 1,500 homes with an estimated population of 4,000 people, a neighbourhood village centre, a mixed-use employment zone and an integrated education-community precinct comprising of a child care centre, R-12 school, community centre and adjacent neighbourhood open space shared with community.

Blakes Crossing is located within the City of Playford, one of the most disadvantaged local government areas in Australia, with a range of challenging issues including poverty, high unemployment, low school retention rates, high crime rates, limited access to affordable housing and low levels of social inclusion.

Lend Lease has already commenced tackling the high unemployment rates and poor skill levels in the region through several initiatives. One is *Target Work*, an Education Department practical skills training project, which provides construction programs for youth with a career focus on trades. We partnered with local secondary schools to provide 50 Year 10 students with training and work experience in planning and constructing a major linear path. The project involved laying paths, planting trees and landscaping, and gave students the opportunity to gain 10 accreditation points towards their SACE certificate for the work they completed.



Another is the *Woolworths Fresh 40* training program where, in partnership with several agencies, we ran a pre-employment training program for 40 disadvantaged individuals, with the goal of their gaining work in Woolworths' stores across northern Adelaide. Participants were required to attend a 4-week skills-training program and then complete a 50-hour work placement in a Woolworths' store. The outcomes have been exceptional with 38 participants successfully completing the program and of these 28 have already secured employment.

The third initiative is the *Build 'Em Up* project, funded by DEEWR, which is seeking to train 300 participants and achieve 200 employment outcomes across the building and construction industry in northern Adelaide.

We are currently in the process of identifying the need and opportunities for community and health services and facilities at Gawler East, including child care, church and aged care facilities, in addition to recreation and sporting facilities. We are planning to liaise with the local indigenous community to facilitate a positive contribution and inclusion of aboriginal culture through the development of interpretive hike and bike trails. In addition, the project has agreed to include training and employment outcomes in all civic and construction contracts to ensure that we continue to facilitate work experience and job opportunities, especially in the green job area.



Readers wishing more information on Lend Lease's South Australian projects or the work we have been doing in care, education, community and economic development, are welcome to contact me at [stan.salagaras@lendlease.com](mailto:stan.salagaras@lendlease.com)

Dr Stan Salagaras Manager Community & Education Services (SA), Lendlease

# Catalyst-Clemente study finds learning turns lives around

A groundbreaking university course for people struggling with homelessness, mental illness and long-term unemployment has resulted in improved health, housing, financial and social outlooks among participants according to the new *Addressing Multiple Disadvantage* study.

The Catalyst-Clemente program provides accredited university courses in humanities subjects such as literature and Australian history as a step towards overcoming poverty and other serious challenges.

Modelled on a successful initiative in the United States, the program is based on the belief that poverty is more than just a lack of access to material goods – it's also about social exclusion.

Subsequently, the way out of poverty is also about engaging them in activities that lead to social interaction, learning and community participation.

## New study findings

According to the *Addressing Multiple Disadvantage* study, a survey of participants two weeks into the 12-week Catalyst-Clemente semester picked up an improved satisfaction with life across a range of categories which grew, often significantly, by the end:

- 66% were satisfied with their life shortly after starting the program, 76% by the end.
- 51% were satisfied with their health after starting the program, 65% by the end.
- 60% were feeling part of the community after starting the program, 76% by the end.
- 12% were satisfied with their financial situation after starting the program, 27% by the end.
- 24% were satisfied with their housing situation after starting the program, 36% by the end.

Mission Australia's CEO, Toby Hall, said Catalyst-Clemente had been an outstanding success.

"Catalyst-Clemente students are often dealing with extremely complex issues," said Mr Hall.

"From the study we know 79% have experienced homelessness (with 44% sleeping rough); 87% are on government pensions or benefits; almost half have had to ask an agency for food/clothes/accommodation/money in the past 12 months; and a similar number are wrestling with physical and mental health conditions.

"It's a huge achievement for people struggling with these challenges to be able to apply themselves to a university subject. It's even better to know the positive impact that participation is having."

Associate Professor Peter Howard, ACU's National Leader of Catalyst-Clemente, said the course's impact on the students was immediate and profound.

"This university program is transformational in nature in that it brings about new learning opportunities and new futures for people. Catalyst-Clemente is only possible through the collaboration and the will of organizations to look for new educational pathways for people experiencing multiple disadvantage," said Professor Howard.

## Long-lasting impacts

According to Dr John Falzon, Chief Executive Officer of the St Vincent De Paul Society, the most significant benefit of the program was its potential to turn lives around.

"Catalyst-Clemente is having a real and hopefully long-lasting impact on people's lives – bringing them back into contact with the community and improving their image of themselves and their relationships with family and friends.

"If someone's interacting more broadly with the community, all the other factors important to successful participation are made more likely for each individual – getting a job, finding a stable home or receiving counselling – and the results of our study attest to that fact."

The *Addressing Multiple Disadvantage* study was funded through an Australian Research Council grant and involved academic partners from Australian Catholic University, Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, and the University of Western Australia, in collaboration with Mission Australia and the National Council of St Vincent de Paul.

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## **HIPPY: Making a difference for mums and dads**

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a two year home-based parenting and early childhood enrichment program for parents of four to five year olds.

Operated locally by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, HIPPY Australia targets disadvantaged families with an aim to empower parents to be their child's first teacher.

Naomi Crew, who provides program support nationwide, said the program focused on education but was also based around the positive interaction between parents and children and the way that learning happened through those interactions.

"We think that all parents have these skills already but they just need the support to be able to use the skills in the right way," Crew said.

Crew said the first year of the program was based primarily around activities for children but in the second year, when the child was actually in school, the focus shifted to the parent and included information around early childhood development.

The program has been going in Australia for about 12 years and Crew said over 3000 kids had taken part so far.

Originally, communities contacted the Brotherhood directly, but since the scheme received \$35 million from DEEWR in 2007, the government has been identifying the communities it wants HIPPY operating in, based on a range of disadvantage indicators, Crew said.

Disadvantages such as socio-economic, social isolation due to geographic location, parents with a non-English speaking background and newly arrived refugees were targeted, she said.

The program has grown from nine to 51 sites since the government got involved with around 15 sites running at a time, Crew said. And she added that DEEWR's target is to reach 3000 families before the current funding comes to an end in 2013.

Although operated by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Crew said HIPPY partners with community organizations which subsequently assume operational responsibility for the program locally.

"That's probably one of the most important elements of the program, making sure the community can trust us," Crew said.

*This article first appeared in Education Review September 2011 and reproduced with their kind permission*

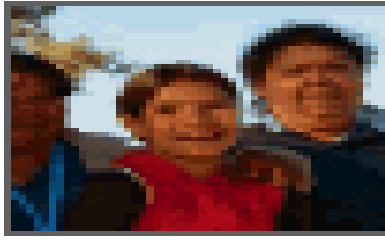
## **Perspectives on Education and Training: Social Inclusion, 2009**

This article focuses on the barriers to participation for each of the 'at risk' groups on two levels:

- self-assessed barriers to access/participation in education (potential exclusion from education); and
- the prospect that the participation of these groups in wider society would be inhibited by poor educational outcomes (potential exclusion due to low education).

Data in this article are drawn from the four-yearly ABS Survey of Education and Training (SET), most recently conducted in 2009

The conclusion is set out below



This article has explored the concept of social inclusion and in particular whether some groups are at risk of being socially excluded. Education acts as a protective factor against social exclusion, therefore, educational attainment, and engagement in education or training and employment of 'at risk' groups, have been explored. The groups examined here included people who live in disadvantaged areas, people whose parents have low levels of education, people with disabilities or long-term health conditions, as well as people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD).

People living in the most socioeconomically disadvantaged areas (lowest SEIFA quintiles) were, on average, less engaged in study and had lower levels of attainment. While young people had higher levels of educational attainment than older people in all SEIFA quintiles, the difference was least in the most disadvantaged areas. Young people in disadvantaged areas also reported a higher incidence of barriers to participating in further education.

The issue of inter-generational disadvantage was examined by looking at the possible influence of parental background on young people's educational attainment. Young people who had a parent with a Bachelor degree were much more likely to have a degree themselves than were other young people. While people with parents whose highest educational attainment was Year 12 or below performed less well themselves, more than half held or were studying towards a Certificate III or higher qualification.

People with a disability or long-term health condition were more likely than those without such conditions to have poorer outcomes in educational attainment and participation as well as engagement in full-time work. However, there was considerable variation here. People with mental or nervous conditions had worse outcomes than did people with physical disabilities in their educational attainment or participation and engagement in full-time work. People with severe or profound activity limitations were similarly disadvantaged when compared to those with a lesser degree of restriction due to disability.

People from CALD backgrounds did not show up as being 'at risk' of social exclusion because of poor educational outcomes. In fact, people who spoke a language other than English at home had, on average, higher educational attainment and greater participation in full-time study than people who were born in Australia and mainly spoke English at home. However, proficiency in English was shown to be a critical factor in determining educational outcomes. People who were proficient in English were twice as likely to have, or be studying towards, a university degree than people not proficient in English. Poor English proficiency was also associated with lower engagement in full-time work and participation in work related training.

The results of this analysis showed that the outcomes of the 'at risk' groups varied considerably according to their particular circumstance, and while most people seemed to have achieved relatively good outcomes in education and training, particularly with more young people studying than previous generations, some groups continue to face major challenges. Particular disadvantages identified in the analysis were for people with specific obstacles to their full participation in society, such as those with mental or nervous conditions, severe physical disabilities and people with poor English skills.

Even so, of all reported barriers to learning across the 'at risk' groups, the types of barriers reported most often tended to be lack of time, finances and too much work. This suggests that while certain characteristics such as having a disability or mental illness, may be associated with specific disadvantages, individuals at risk of social exclusion may also be experiencing common underlying problems that may stem from or compound their circumstance.

## Update from Northern Partnerships Unit

The Northern Partnerships Unit is located within the School of Education at RMIT University. This year it has been involved in a number of projects mainly focussed on youth transition and career education. In 2011 the Unit has worked on a number of key partnership projects including:

- A partnership with Hume Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network (HWLLEN) and the Whittlesea Youth Commitment to deliver:
  - An Environmental Scan of the Hume Whittlesea region
  - A partnership evaluation of the Hume and Whittlesea Youth Commitments
  - Home sustainability assessment programs trialled in two local secondary schools
  - Input into a number of career education programs for young people
    - An Employment Opportunities Fair
    - Real Industry Interviews
    - A Middle Years' Symposium
    - Try a Trade, Making Choices Breakfast and the Northern Careers & Employment Expo
- A contract in partnership with Kangan Institute to deliver the Workplace Learning Program to secondary schools located in the City of Hume and the City of Whittlesea
- An ARC research project entitled "School Community Learning Partnerships for Sustainability". This project is in its third year and researchers have documented stories of good practice from a number of primary and secondary schools in Victoria and Queensland. A guide book is currently being produced and will be available for others to learn from.

As Program Director I lead a dynamic team and also am privileged to meet and work with many great people and organisations working on key issues communities in the growth corridor of Northern Metropolitan Melbourne.

Leone Wheeler  
Program Director  
Northern Partnerships Unit

Below is one of the students involved in the program.





## Telling It Like It is

A new report about indigenous education was launched recently: VIYAC Voices Telling It Like It Is: Indigenous Youth People on Education.

Link here:

[http://www.viyac.org.au/news/file/VIYAC\\_Research\\_Print\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.viyac.org.au/news/file/VIYAC_Research_Print_WEB.pdf)

The key findings that came through in this publication include:

- The importance and value the Indigenous young people place on Indigenous culture in the curriculum
- The key role of family in this cultural aspect of their education
- The importance of family with regard to their participation in education
- The importance and value to them of Indigenous community leaders and professionals and
- The importance of cultural safety and visual identification of Aboriginal symbolism in school environments

Great article in The Age recently about the importance of oral language skills.

Prof Munro says a fifth of children start primary school with weak verbal skills, putting them at higher risk of poor performance. Yet little attention has been paid to the oral language skills of young students. Speaking and listening have not been accorded the same significance as reading, writing, spelling and counting.

“Millions of dollars has gone into literacy programs, but if we don't have an essential oral base then the literacy results are not going to be achieved,” Professor Munro says. “I could make exactly the same statement for numeracy.”

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/chattering-classes-point-way-to-language-skillsuccess-20110828-1jgcn.html#ixzz1WMrVYuPn>

**Thanks to Deb Chapman for permission to reproduce this article**

## Ideas That Work seminar series

The second Ideas That Work seminar was held at VU Sunshine convention centre on Wednesday 3 August. (Our first one was held in April and showcased the engaging talents of Visiting Professor Jim Diers who talked about community engagement)

This seminar was entitled “Delving Deeper into Diversity: issues in lifelong learning and education.” A very diverse group of about 30 people heard moving, informative and challenging presentations by Pauline Vetuna (writer for DiVine website) and Prof Barry Golding (academic from University of Ballarat) about a range of issues in diversity with particular reference to education and lifelong learning. Pauline has posted her talk on her blog, called: **Just the messenger**, <http://paulinevetuna.wordpress.com/2011/08/06/challengingmainstream-perceptions-of-disability/>

There has been some great feedback about the seminar, including “an informative, educational and deeply inspiring morning”, and “the seminar was really good. (We) thought the presentations were very interesting, prompting discussion in our team about the merits of Men’s Sheds”.

The Ideas That Work seminar series addresses one of the action plans in the Brimbank Community Learning Strategy: “develop and deliver programs that engage adults and address the removal of barriers to learning services.”

We aim to host quarterly seminars to build and promote interest in the lifelong learning sector in Brimbank, celebrate inspiration and share great "Ideas That Work". We are planning our next seminar in October 2011.

If you have any ideas that work that you would like to share or learn more about, please contact Deb Chapman, Learning Coordinator at [Debc@brimbank.vic.gov.au](mailto:Debc@brimbank.vic.gov.au) or on 9249 4177, Mondays to Wednesdays.

## **Southern Rise Education Centre**

Wodonga South Primary School is part of Southern Rise Education Centre which includes the primary school, three year old and four year old preschool groups, a Maternal and Child Health Program and will soon include a Childcare Centre. Southern Rise Education formed when two local Preschools and Wodonga South Primary School all relocated from existing sites to the new site in White Box Rise Estate, Wodonga, in April 2011.

Southern Rise Education centre has been designed with modern, purpose-built facilities which include an indoor stadium, outdoor synthetic running track and sports field, pod style learning centres and a dedicated facility for an Out of Hours School Care Program. We are very proud of the new facilities and the quality of the educational programs we offer. We are a well-respected high-achieving school community and we now have the facilities to enable us to fully implement a more extensive range of quality programs that meet the needs of all of our students.

### **Feedback Invited As Usual.**

As we want to improve, we would like to hear from you about the usefulness of this newsletter to you.

Does it help you in your work?

What features could be included?

### **Do you know of other potential members?**

We have had a boost to our membership this year increasing from 34 to 45. While this is great news, our strength and our sustainability will only come from an increased membership. So, where appropriate, please encourage others to join

The individual subscription has been reduced to \$50 per annum and is open to those without institutional support while the organisational subscription remains at \$330 as it has for the last 3 years.

***The subscription form is on the next page***

# Membership Form

I wish to join as an (please tick)

Institutional/organisation/Company member (\$330 per calendar year)

Personal member (\$50 per calendar year)

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Other		Surname	
First Name(s)			
Position:			
Name of Organisation / Company/ institution:			
Address			
Post Code:			
<u>Contact Numbers:</u>			
Office Telephone:			
Fax No:			
Mobile:			
Email Address:			
The name of another contact if you are not available			
Please return completed form to: email: <a href="mailto:alcn@tpg.com.au">alcn@tpg.com.au</a> or post to:  Australian Learning Communities Network Inc PO Box 664, Albury NSW 2640 phone: 02 6021 5690; Fax: 02 6021 0616  <b>On receipt of the completed form, you will be issued with an invoice to pay.</b>			
For the purpose of networking, I consent to the details of our membership being distributed to other members of ALCN Inc and on the Learning Communities Catalyst website and understand that this consent is for the purpose outlined above and can be revoked at any time			
I acknowledge that my membership details are a correct reflection of my personal situation ( <b>only applicable to Personal Membership</b> )			
Name .....		Signature .....	