

Housing Trust News

Issue 04, January 2017 Newsletter

Happy New Year!

A very warm welcome to Housing Trust's first newsletter of 2017. I am so proud to lead this terrific housing organisation, working with so many of you to find new ways to make your home safe and comfortable for you and your family.

Thank you all for your support last year. Those of you who completed the Tenant Satisfaction Survey certainly gave the Team here a great big tick, with over 400 tenants completing the survey. 89% of tenants were satisfied with the Housing Trust. This is great news for us, and please tell your friends!

We have very big plans for the year ahead. We have lodged a development application with Wollongong City Council to build around 31 new social and affordable housing homes in Dapto and we are starting work on a new project in Flinders that will see about 8 new homes built, mainly for older

people. I hope to make more announcements about other projects in the next few months – wish us luck in our bids and tenders.

As always the team here is finding new ways to support our tenants. This year we are working on a partnership with Southern Youth and Family Services to help homeless young people find and maintain a home. We are also working really closely with Grand Pacific Health and the Partners In Recovery Program to assist tenants with mental health conditions to receive the best possible services.

I was very proud to present scholarships to three wonderful young people, all of whom are determined to get a great education. The Housing Trust is happy to help!

All the very best to you and yours for the rest of the summer.

Joan Ferguson
CEO

'A brighter future' for Housing Trust education scholarship winners

Three very deserving Housing Trust tenants were the recipients of the inaugural Tylah West Education Scholarship during a presentation on Tuesday the 20th of December. Jackson Clark, Fleur Warren and Asil Habara all received scholarships to assist with their education, recognising their aspirations and hard work so far. Their proud families also attended the event.

The scholarships, which are sponsored by Global Skilled Solutions and the Housing Trust, ease the financial burden of education by purchasing items that assist students to further their studies. They encourage and help increase education completion rates, and are one of the ways that the Housing Trust supports its tenants and the wider community.

The scholarship program was named in honour of Tylah West, a young Aboriginal trainee at the Housing Trust who sadly passed away in June 2015. Tylah was an inspiring young woman who excelled at her job and took every opportunity to create a brighter future. Her growth and transformation were acknowledged by everyone who worked with her. The scholarship represents Tylah's development and growth while working at the Housing Trust.

Providing scholarships to those in need helps to increase their access to tertiary study, and to expand their employment opportunities and skill sets. The Housing Trust is very pleased to be able to offer this opportunity yearly to young people in the community. Information on our scholarship program for 2018 will be out soon.



L-R: Joan Ferguson, Paul Scully MP, Jackson Clark, Fleur Warren, Asil Habara, Hon. David Campbell.



Tylah West Education Scholarship Cake, in memory of beautiful Tylah West.



The three Tylah West Education Scholarship recipients Jackson, Fleur and Asil.

A home for Christmas



After four and a half years on the waitlist, Leasha and her two sons had a place to call home just in time for Christmas.

The family had been living in a motel room for the last 6 months, and prior to that they were couch surfing and camping to ensure they had somewhere to stay.

"It's such a relief to know we have a roof over our head," said Leasha. "Knowing I have somewhere I can put the kids makes a big difference, knowing we have a safe house that we don't have to leave."

The home was furnished with generous donations from the Salvos Stores. The Salvation Army also

donated gift cards and a hamper to help the family settle in to their home.

"Thank you so much – words can't say it," said Leasha. "The boys will be jumping with joy because they have a house to live in. We'll have dinner at home tonight!"

1 in 200 people are homeless each night, and 10,000 of these are children.

The number of homeless people in the Illawarra increased by over 66% between 2006 and 2011, and this is likely to be increasing still.

As Leasha said, "If it can give someone else hope, then I am happy to share my story".



Heidi (HT Staff), Leasha (HT Tenant), Karen (Salvation Army), Sue (HT Staff)



Leasha and her 2 sons in their new home (HT Tenants)

Our Christmas Concert

Around 100 tenants attended the Christmas Concert on Tuesday 6th December at the Fraternity Club and had a great time. As well as dancing with Santa to John Clegg's interactive music show and enjoying a delicious Christmas lunch, children received lolly bags and had their faces painted during the festivities.

The Christmas Concert was a free event that allowed the Housing Trust to show our appreciation for our tenants and bring residents together.

We would like to continue this event in 2017 and hope more tenants can join us!



Our next issue will be out in April 2017, to stay up-to-date please check our website or facebook page. If you have any items that you would like us to address in our Housing Trust News please contact us.

Tenant Advisory Group (TAG)

Interested in becoming a member of the Housing Trust's TAG?

Have your say, share your ideas and be a positive force in community housing. Please contact our Community Engagement Officer Joanne Reed by

Email: Joanne.Reed@housingtrust.org.au

Phone: 4254 1121

HT Digital Newsletter

This will be the last edition of our newsletter via post. From April 2017 we will send you an SMS to let you know that our HT newsletter is available on our website (housingtrust.org.au) and if we have your email address in our system, it will be sent to you online.

Please contact the Housing Trust to let us know your email address or if you would still would like to receive the newsletter by post.

Email - info@housingtrust.org.au or

Phone - 42541166