



Sydney
Community
Foundation

ProjectWOW!

2015 Report

A SYDNEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
PLACE-BASED PROGRAM
IN WESTERN AND SOUTH WESTERN SYDNEY

COLLECTIVE IMPACT = CHANGING LIVES
www.sydneycommunityfoundation.org.au



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our innovative place-based philanthropy program ProjectWOW! is now in its third year.

Each local project is designed to meet the challenges faced by the community. Our work begins by inviting residents, local service providers, police, council and business to identify what is most needed to bring about change in the places where they live, work and belong.

We have discovered that in each community there are people seeking access to education, skills and training. Through ProjectWOW! many people have gained education for the first time while others have re-engaged with learning or gained access to skills and training for work. A key factor in preparing to get a job is having opportunities that are safe and accessible, mentoring, and simply the support of having someone on your side.

Our thanks go to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services for their 2012 challenge grant of \$500k, and to the major Foundations who promptly matched these funds. With this welcome contribution, Sydney Community Foundation has successfully taken the risk of leading a new kind of community philanthropy and developing ProjectWOW! into a successful program covering three disadvantaged suburbs in Western Sydney. In Warwick Farm, Fairfield and Claymore we have begun to tackle real problems identified by the communities in which we are working.

Our place-based philanthropy continues to inspire donors and partners to make multi-year grants well beyond the \$500k initial challenge. \$1.9 million has so far been raised for ProjectWOW!. This ongoing funding allows us to achieve success in breaking cycles of disadvantage.

Together, we change lives one by one, building communities where people feel a greater sense of belonging. We support education and employment pathways, in particular for women and girls, we grow start-up social enterprises for those who have been long-term unemployed, support refugees to learn English, gain skills, and enter the workforce, and we assist women and children who have escaped domestic violence.

We aim to mentor and bring professional skills and leadership to each community so that self-sufficiency and sustainability ensue. Local leaders in each area have emerged and are being supported to develop professionally and increase the impact of their work.

This report informed by our partners Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections, STARTTS, Woodville Alliance and Whitelion, tells the story of what Sydney Community Foundation and our donors are achieving collectively.

We believe the early successes of ProjectWOW! are a model for other Australian communities. For the first time, in 2015 we collected wellbeing impacts of the program and the moving stories contained in this report show the positive effects we are having on individuals and their families.

Sydney Community Foundation thanks everyone who has so willingly given time, advice, funds and mentoring to build capacity in these communities. It is a pleasure to work with dedicated community leaders in the grassroots organisations that we fund. We are working together in new ways to solve the problems of our time: growing youth unemployment, lack of belonging and declining access to vocational education and employment. This collective effort of government, donors and community is an example of how community foundations can play a leading role in strengthening community life.

Please continue to work with us and to help support people greatly in need in our own community.



Jane Jose
Chief Executive, Sydney Community Foundation

WHY PLACE-BASED PHILANTHROPY?

For most, Sydney represents opportunity and offers safety, and security. Beyond the rich history, economy, the climate, the excitement and the beauty of our harbour and beaches, Sydney gives a lot of people hope.

From all across Australia, and from around the world, people come here to grow and succeed, or to pursue a better life for themselves and their families.

The role of the Sydney Community Foundation is to share the prosperity enjoyed by many, and to fulfil the city's promise of enabling all people to belong, participate and thrive.

We support education and employment pathways, in particular for women and girls, we grow social enterprises for those who have been long-term unemployed, support refugees to learn English, gain skills, and enter the workforce, and assist women and children who have escaped domestic violence.

We live in a time when a moment can change everything - an opportunity given, someone showing support can build confidence, courage, and change a life for the better.

We invite philanthropists to give to the causes that matter most to them.

ACROSS GREATER SYDNEY

84,043

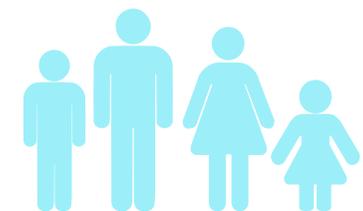
HOUSEHOLDS



HAVE AN INCOME

OF LESS THAN

\$299 PER WEEK



30,615

OF THESE ARE FAMILIES

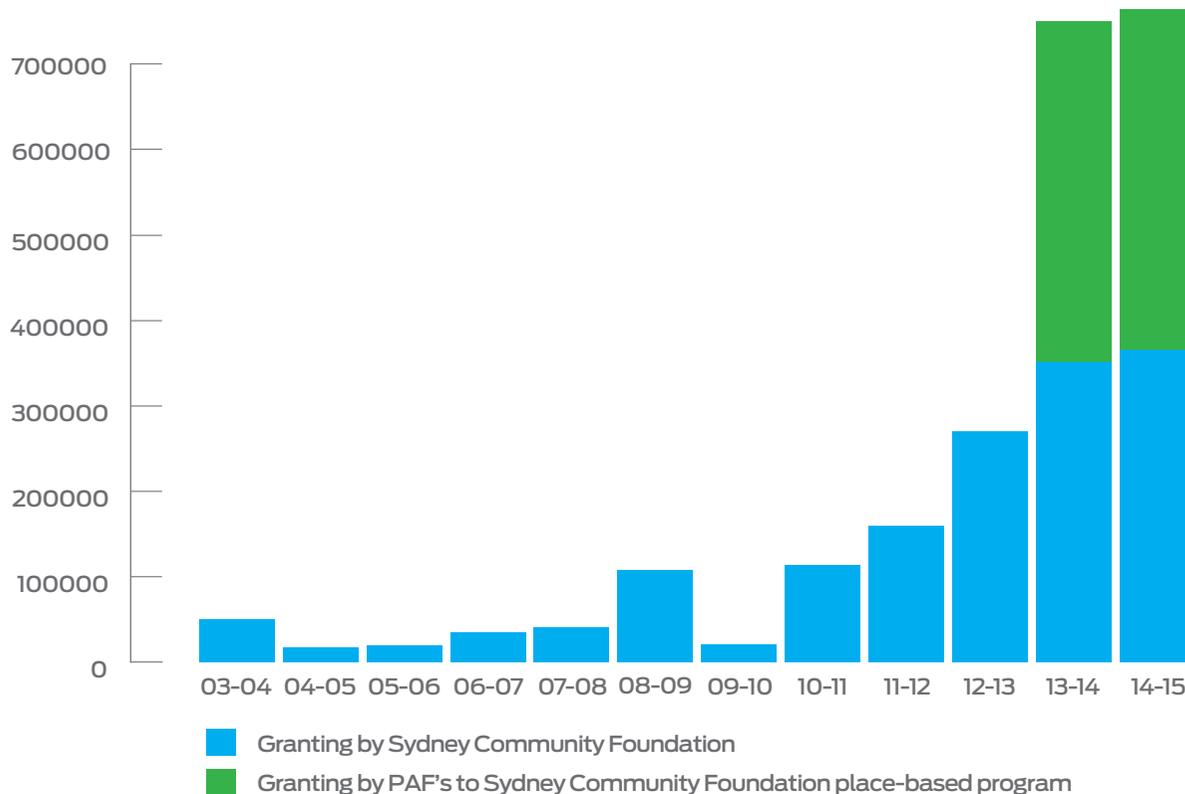
ABS Census (2011)

GIVING EDUCATION AND LIFE SKILLS
IS AT THE CORE OF PROJECTWOW!,
AND PEOPLE'S MOST OFTEN USED
DESCRIPTION OF HOW THEY FEEL
IS "MORE CONFIDENT".

HAVING CONFIDENCE HELPS UNLOCK
EACH PERSON'S POTENTIAL TO BE
HAPPY AND THRIVE.



THE GROWTH IN OUR IMPACT 03-15



Sydney Community Foundation has inspired and connected philanthopists and donors to join us in place-based giving to people in need in our city. By connecting like minded donors, our active sub-funds and their giving circles we have increased our giving. We teach donors how best to make a positive social impact. Below are some of the projects we have helped design and fund through *ProjectWOW!*

OUR PLACE-BASED IMPACTS 2014-15

PROJECTWOW!

Sydney Community Foundation's Place-Based Philanthropy program ProjectWOW! directly supports people facing hurdles in their daily life.

In every community there are people who seek access to education and training and pathways to employment.

Many gain education for the first time, others re-engage with learning or gain access to skills training for work.

WARWICK FARM

EDUCATION & WORK

- 26 women completed TAFE
- 71 women on pathways to employment
- 175 K-2 kids accessing tablet technology and online learning

YOUTH

- 25 girls completed Strive Girls Group
- 20 boys started Thrive Boys Group
- 30 girls at risk of disengaging in school, learning important vocational, life and safety skills

EMPLOYMENT

- 7 women in the micro-business incubator with business plans
- 5 women in jobs
- 5 jobs for people with disabilities
- 10 sole parent women completed beauty training as part of The Violet Room project
- 40 community members involved in measuring the impact of our work

BELONGING

- 250 people attended events
- 40 people participated in sharing their stories
- Key stakeholders attended quarterly Steering Committee meetings to assess outcomes and project direction

FAIRFIELD

HOPE+ YOUTH PROJECT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 50 year 12 students interviewed
- Local council engagement in project
- Local high school engagement in project
- Local services to run program for refugees in local high school
- 35,000 young people to access online youth portal under development

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

- 150 applications received in the first 8 weeks for skills training
- 12 people completed Barista training and gained work
- 12 young people taken on a Sydney cultural excursion for the first time
- 20 women provided with commercial sewing training and skills for work
- 60 young people per year to be mentored by local business people with a range of skills

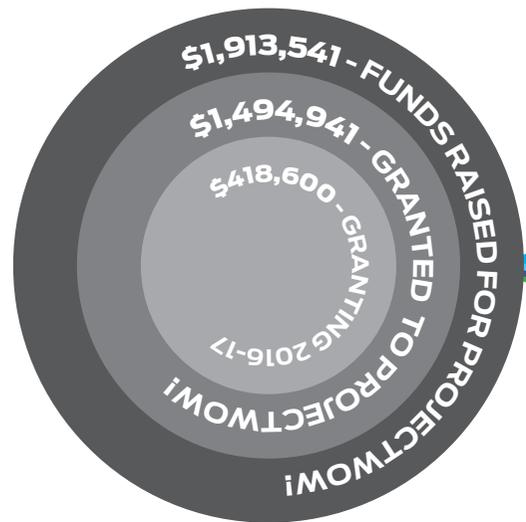
CLAYMORE

RISE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING CENTRE

- 20 young people per month suspended from school supported for 23 days in the RISE alternative learning centre
- Families of the young person at risk supported by local services at the centre
- 600 young people at the local high school given access during holidays and after school hours to services at the centre
- 3,300 people in the Claymore Community with a sense of improved community safety

EDUCATION

- 20 young people per month assisted and encouraged to re-engage with education



ProjectWOW! FIGURES TO DATE: (2012-2015)

- ❖ **PEPPER'S CAFE + CART**
social enterprise cafe and mobile coffee cart
- ❖ **STRIVE GIRLS GROUP**
empowerment for girls
- ❖ **DOORWAYS**
education (TAFE) and employment pathways
- ❖ **BOUNCE!**
basketball court for Warwick Farm youth and families
- ❖ **MICRO-BUSINESS INCUBATOR**
small business education, funding and support
- ❖ **FASHION ENTERPRISE**
vocational study for at-risk girls at Miller Technology High School
- ❖ **THE VIOLET ROOM**
beauty education, employment pathways and social enterprise
- ❖ **GREENER CLEANER**
lawn-mowing social enterprise
- ❖ **TECH LIBRARY**
devices for use by K-2 students in Warwick Farm
- ❖ **10 WOMEN LEADERS**
capacity building for local community leaders
- ❖ **THRIVE BOYS GROUP**
education and empowerment for boys
- ❖ **THE CLOTHES BOX**
secondhand clothing and homewares social enterprise
- ❖ **THREADS FOR LIFE**
sewing groups for refugee women to promote belonging and enterprise
- ❖ **HEADSTART**
education, training and life skills for refugee students in Years 11 & 12
- ❖ **CREPE + COFFEE CART**
food based skills training and social enterprise for youth
- ❖ **YOUTH ONLINE**
online community portal for Fairfield youth
- ❖ **YOUTH MENTORING**
life purpose discovery through exposure to culture
- ❖ **RISE**
youth at risk alternative learning centre and support for their families

PROGRESS REPORT

LIVERPOOL

Sydney Community Foundation has partnered with Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections (LNC) to deliver ProjectWOW! in Warwick Farm since 2013.

LNC's mission is to contribute to building a strong, inclusive community that overcomes disadvantage by providing a range of accessible information, community development, capacity building and advocacy services.

The centre has been operating for over 30 years in the Liverpool Local Government Area and currently offers 65 programs weekly with 22,000 people accessing them annually across their two drop-in Neighbourhood Centres - Warwick Farm and Heckenberg. LNC has 100 members and over 20 volunteers.

In 2013, Sydney Community Foundation, having previously funded Pepper's Place Coffee Shop and a young girls' group called Strive, made the decision to commence a pilot program of place-based philanthropy in Warwick Farm. The aim was to contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty, disadvantage and crime in Warwick Farm by investing in the women at the grassroots level of the community, while creating a replicable model. Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation, Weir Anderson Foundation and McLean Foundation contributed the initial operational funding.

SCF facilitated a consultation with government, non-government services, donors and the local community help Warwick Farm residents identify the priorities of change for the local area, and these continue to guide the program.

The consultation identified seven needs and it was decided to begin work on the three most needed:

- Education/Employment
- Youth
- Strengthening the Community.

A Steering Committee made up of SCF staff, donors, community members, government and non-government agencies was formed. In the last two years LNC has been able to continue delivering projects already in place before the consultation and through the support of the Sydney Community Foundation and their donors, has been able to deliver new projects to meet the identified need from the consultation.

A LIFE CHANGED ALISON'S STORY

One of the women whose life has been changed through the work of Sydney Community Foundation gave us this heartwarming feedback...

"My kids are really proud of me, and my husband. They're really, really proud of me and the things that I've done.

Who would have ever thought I would be where I am today?

I'm not earning a whole packet-load of money - to me that doesn't matter. If I hadn't got the job, I'd still be volunteering there or down here because it's just

who I am. I just like to help the community... to actually give back and help the community, it makes me feel good."

Your support means we can change more lives, like Alison's.

Alison once shopped for her family at the Food for Life Market in Warwick Farm. Since graduating from the 'Doorways to the Future' program supported by Sydney Community Foundation.

She now runs it.





WARWICK FARM PROJECTS

STRIVE

Strive is a young girls group that provides living skills, education and social skills for young women from Year 6 to Year 10. It has so far been funded by SCF donors: First Seeds (an SCF sub-fund), Sherry Hogan Foundation, Weir Anderson Foundation and others. The group has just completed its third year and has received promises of ongoing funding by SCF donors.

“This year, the girls have been able to participate in workshops and events that they would only be able to dream of. Last term the girls participated in a fashion shoot and worked with models and designers. They also participated in the March Against Human Trafficking, something they really felt strongly about.”

Jess
Strive Program Facilitator

THE VIOLET ROOM

The Violet Room: Beauty and Health Careers Incubator and Social Enterprise provides training in beauty therapy and a specially fitted out room from which trainees can operate. This provides them with an income and offers very affordable services for the community. *The Violet Room* is now supported by Dermalogica and SCF's Sydney Women's Fund.

Dermalogica has recently provided scholarships for two women to complete their Diploma in Beauty at the local TAFE and they have refurbished *The Violet Room* with professional equipment and products. This will enable the therapists to provide a high quality service at very low prices for the local community.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS INCUBATOR

A Business Incubator originally funded by EBay through SCF. This project needs funding to continue beyond 2015.

The project takes ten women through a 12 week course where they learn how to start their own business. They develop a name, a logo, a business plan and acquire

public liability insurance. Once they have successfully completed the 12 weeks they are given a \$500 start-up grant to establish their businesses. They are then given support from the Business Incubator Manager in establishing and building their business for the rest of the year. Nine participants graduated from this course in the first year and nine more in 2015.

PEPPER'S

Pepper's Place Coffee Shop social enterprise and Pepper's Coffee to Go Coffee Cart turned over \$30,607 at end of May in the 2014 – 2015 financial year. Costs and wages were \$35,688. This year only \$5,000 of top-up funding was required via SCF. These two projects alone have created 32 hours of employment each week for 3 women.

A wonderful return for \$5,000 in donations.

GREENER CLEANER LAWN MOWING

This small but very good enterprise covers its costs and creates 20 hours of employment for 3 women weekly.



THE CLOTHES BOX

The Clothes Box social enterprise employs a disadvantaged woman with 14 children for 9 hours per week. While SCF has not provided financial support to this project, many of our partners, including Commonwealth Bank, First Seeds sub-fund and Dermalogica donate clothes, bedding, furniture and homewares to this enterprise. The Clothes Box is located in LNC's Heckenberg site and is in the most disadvantaged region in NSW (ABS, 2011). The community has access to clothes and other items for free or at very minimal charges.

DOORWAYS TO THE FUTURE

The *Doorways to the Future* TAFE course provides a pathway to education and employment. Over 60 women have gone through this course in the last three years. Initially students could cover the low enrolment fees, however, with the increases imposed by TAFE the enrolment fees are now out of reach of disadvantaged women. SCF has provided over \$10,000 in the last two years for enrolments. This has meant that women have been able to graduate from these courses and go onto further education or employment.

FASHION ENTERPRISE MILLER

2 years ago, 8 girls were identified as being at risk of dropping out at Miller Technology High School. LNC approached SCF to help. SCF helped design a program aimed at building self esteem, mental and emotional wellbeing and tools for success. The project offers opportunities to participate in fashion and beauty workshops. From this initial program two of the girls entered further education and one went on to participate in the Women's Business Incubator

and is now running her own jewellery business. This program was run again at the school with similar success this year. Funding was provided by SCF donor, the Abel Dunn Foundation.

TECH LIBRARY

Sydney Community Foundation secured funding from Adobe for a technology library in Warwick Farm Primary School. 55 students from Year 6 were taken on an excursion to Adobe where they were introduced to technology they had never seen before. Students are now able to become familiar with, and gain confidence using technology. This project also provided casual employment for a disadvantaged woman to maintain the library and equipment.

10 WOMEN LEADERS

The Snow Foundation, at the recommendation of SCF, funded a leadership course through which 10 women from LNC and the local community are currently being taken on a journey of self-belief and developing confidence in their ability to work for their community. This will enable them to take the next step and become community leaders.

THRIVE

The new Thrive Boys Group runs each Friday afternoon for Year 6 boys during the school term. The group aims to reach out; challenge, strengthen and grow the young men from the community. The goal behind forming the group was that the boys would discover a place that was theirs, where they could be surrounded by other males, have the opportunity to develop social skills, strengthen friendships and be encouraged to make healthy/productive leisure and recreational choices.

To see 10 out of 13 boys attend every week has been very promising and makes it clear that the boys have found a place where they feel comfortable

and accepted. We see a wide range of ethnicities which is also fantastic. Seeing these boys accept and appreciate the various cultures in their community has been very encouraging.

With a large group of boys such as this attending, especially in these early stages of the Thrive program, it demonstrates what a positive place the Warwick Farm centre and the Thrive program is for these young men of the local community.

"It has been great to see the boys be so inclusive, and the relationships between the boys have definitely become stronger.

There has been a definite growth in attendance and I am certain that this will continue into next year. The best result has definitely been the attitude changes we have been seeing in the boys. Some of them began attending the group with a severe lack of respect for others and it has been great to see that slowly but surely their attitudes are beginning to change as the group continues.

"I have personally been greatly encouraged by the progress and development that we are seeing in the group as a whole as well as in the individual boys."

Tom Burton (Youth Worker for LNC)



BOUNCE

In 2014 LNC was successful in winning a \$10,000 grant in *The Daily Telegraph's Champions of the West* competition for a multi-purpose court for the youth of Warwick Farm.

The community's desire for the court was identified at the consultation phase. There are no youth sport and recreational facilities in Warwick Farm and this project has the potential to reduce vandalism, crime and discourage the gang mentality that can exist in disadvantaged communities.

The prize was promoted by Channel 7 and The Daily Telegraph and attracted through SCF, a further \$13,000 from the Abel Dunn Foundation. An additional \$25,000 was secured from Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation. The LNC community and the *Strive* group also fundraised to support the project. LNC later successfully applied for a \$109,000 grant through NSW Government Community Builders. In the last 12 months \$150,000 has been raised to build the court and provide amenities to go with it. The court will be finished early 2016.

We have come a long way in addressing the needs identified in the first consultation in Warwick Farm.

And we have measured our impact during this time through conducting an Impact Measurement Workshop last year and, more recently, an evaluation of the wellbeing changes in the community brought about by ProjectWOW! using the Most Significant Change Technique.

“Without knowing we had SCF there to support us we would never have had the confidence to start the Bounce project.”

Pat Hall
Operations Manager, Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections

IMPACT MEASUREMENT MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

In 2015, Sydney Community Foundation sought to measure the changes in wellbeing of participants and the wider community involved in its place-based philanthropy program ProjectWOW! in Warwick Farm.

Since 2012, a series of projects for women and girls has been run at Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections (LNC) in Warwick Farm.

The projects, including supported TAFE courses, a micro-business incubator and several small social enterprises, aim to build confidence, skills and to create pathways to work.

In line with new thinking on measuring impact of ongoing place-based philanthropy programs, Sydney Community Foundation commissioned program evaluation specialists, Clear Horizon, to measure the qualitative impacts of the program on individuals and their community using their *Most Significant Change Technique*.

The technique includes the collection of personal stories from a variety of stakeholders through interview and extracting the 'most significant', and sometimes unintended, benefits that have resulted from the program.

It was a highly engaging process, at the end of which people were invited to share the word they heard most the story collection exercise.

Words used most often to describe what people had gained were:

- Confidence
- Belonging
- Empowerment
- Connection
- Safety and Acceptance

Once the stories were extracted from the interview recordings, a group of key stakeholders were asked to read all of the stories and select those stories that conveyed the most significant change. The selected stories are below.

STORY 1. PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

I started volunteering at the Food for Life market. That was in 2009.

With this youth centre being here now, there's a lot more activity. There are more programs, which has brought families to the centre, and that's helped a lot of families mix in the community. I think the centre would be the main hub now. People know that they can come here. You've got the coffee shop, you've got the programs, you've got health services. It's got it all in the one spot, so now people - they'll even come to my shop, Food for Life, and I'll send them around to Pat and Pat can refer them on.

I did the class at the Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections. The Outreach Program came on and I have referred heaps of people to come and do the Certificate III in Retail course. A lot of my friends have done it and they've got jobs now, so it's worked out really good for them.

I've also done the computer course. I had nothing to do with computers. I was totally hopeless at it. I came and did the computer course, and then when I got my job at Food for Life, they kept asking, 'Do you know how to do this? Know how to do that?'

I was like, 'yeah'. So I kept coming here. So that helped me with doing Excel and Word. I'd never opened anything before. That was something I'd watch my kids do. Doing it for yourself gives a lot of women confidence.

None of this would have happened if Pat wasn't here doing what she does. Financially this is a really, really poor suburb. What Pat's done has just lifted this community. If Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections wasn't here, it would definitely be just a little suburb, just off the highway, that was ignored.

Why this story was chosen to reflect change

- It captures the 'truth' (LNC/SCF) of what we are doing
- It demonstrates a range of outcomes possible with relatively small resources
- It will probably make a difference to her kids' lives, break a generational problem
- It acknowledges Pat, and LNC and what they do
- Describes how one life is made so much better by the opportunity provided
- It's made her home life better and safer – she has earned more respect from her husband (more equality)
- Describes change to herself, her kids, the community (change on many levels)



STORY 2. PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

I got involved with the project here at Warwick Farm because of TAFE. Since then I've been doing a few TAFE courses. I'm just able to be more confident. There's my self esteem, that's really changed. I mix in with people easier. I just feel happier within myself.

Yeah, it's been a big change.

My kids are quite happy. They say: 'Oh Mum, you've got TAFE on such and such a day.' They're proud that I'm doing something and they can see that I'm benefiting from it, so yeah, you just feel proud of yourself.

I'm just able to be more confident in myself. It makes it easier, even if I'm just doing daily shopping things, I can get things done knowing I can be around other people. It's just made normal life things easier. Before, I used to go to the shops and want to quickly go home, thinking, 'Oh, I can't do this'.

When you do a TAFE course well, you can do almost anything when you're mixing with other people and also being around people you don't know. It doesn't scare you as much.

It just gives you a purpose to life when you feel more confident. Before this you'd think, 'nobody would miss me if I weren't around,' but then when you get more confident, you realise more about what's going on in your life. You realise you will be missed and, yeah, I always thought I wouldn't be. I just didn't want to live any more.

When you've sort of been at home, don't know anyone, you don't mix in with anyone. You go out and you feel uncomfortable, so it's just very important now to be able to do what you want to do, without being limited to only what you think you can do.

With the other TAFE, I couldn't stay all day, it was just too formal and you think, 'I don't belong here,' and the teachers aren't as understanding. With having depression it's just really hard to do everyday things, let alone go to TAFE. It's just too hard.

Outreach is so much better, it's more tailored to what I need, and the teachers are just more understanding. That makes you feel like you belong. You don't have to worry about being scared about being yourself. You don't need to feel stressed. You can just feel comfortable enough to learn, without having to struggle, or be scared, or anything. It's just comfortable.

I just don't know where I'd be without these sorts of courses. You've just sort of got that purpose in life. Without the course I'd be at home, just a real mess, not even wanting to leave.

If I'm just home without anything to do, I'd most probably think, 'why bother with living?' I know I've got family, but I mean to say, I have to have something for me. This is for me. I'm not doing this for anyone else.

Why this story was chosen to reflect change

- It demonstrates overcoming anxiety, isolation, builds participation
- Provides an insight and understanding of people's struggles
- Shows an increased sense of belonging in life
- Shows a big change from feeling like nothing to having confidence to do lots of things

STORY 3. PROGRAM DONOR

I see a lot of gratitude here at Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections, which I think is a really beautiful thing. I think that some of the dangers, or potential dangers with funding initiatives, are that sometimes there is a perception that people who are better off are just handing out charity to people who are poorer.

This program, in the way that it truly is place-based, isn't about giving charity. It's more about working with the community, which engenders collaboration, because, I think people can see that we're all equal, that we're all in the same boat. Obviously, some of us have easier lives than others but I can really see that there is no judgement. And I think that's a really lovely result that I personally pick up on.

I see a lot more excitement about the future in terms of hope and potential. I think things like the coffee cart have enormous possibilities. Kicking goals has implications for everyone here. It's not just one person involved, it is their families and the greater community as well, because if you change one person or their beliefs, it affects everyone they know.

Their enthusiasm and energy levels are much higher now. And the innovation is incredible here. I think because Pat Hall doesn't come from a very rigid or business background, anything is possible. I think that one of the beauties is that you can be quite left field; the world's Pat's oyster, and as she's thinking about how to do things, there's more positive attitudes around of "let's try it".

To me, the most important change would be the opening of eyes to the possibility of opportunity. That ability to see - along with confidence and some runs on the board - that everything is possible and life doesn't necessarily have to be limited.

It's the hope that's been generated from doing some great things and the impact it's had, means that now everyone is open to any opportunity and willing to go for it. I think that's probably the most important result because that will have long-term effects.

The local council, state and federal governments are much more constrained than we are. They are more focus-driven on statistics such as how many people are employed in an area. I think an organisation like this realises that you can't get someone employed until they feel confident and they actually know what their skillset is.

All of this work is about empowering the community to actually stand up and to say, 'Enough, we're going to be responsible for our future, and for our children's futures'.

Why this story was chosen to reflect change

- It demonstrates donor's journey and observation of change
- Describes the beauty of how the environment can empower people to entertain the possibility that life can be different
- Demonstrates the community side of giving. If you work together you can change the world
- Gives donors an understanding of the gratitude of the community

STORY 4. PROGRAM DONOR

I first heard about Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections through the Sydney Women's Fund lunch a couple of years ago where Pat Hall spoke so eloquently. I was pretty inspired by what she was talking about and what she was doing. Then I came to the International Women's Day event in 2014, and again was very inspired by what I had seen, and what Pat was achieving out here, and wanted to see what I could do, to do more. So I got a bit more involved with Sydney Women's fund and am doing what I can to help.

Observing Pat, the many times that I've seen her in action, is that she's moving – she's one of the most dynamic entrepreneurs that I know - and obviously she's thriving in this environment and building up this whole community.

The International Women's Day event was just awesome. There was such a feeling and a buzz of people really wanting to help their community. Looking at the projects that Pat's now put forward, this year it was clear to me that she is really thinking strategically about what needs to happen within this community, and is trying to get the support to get those projects rolled out. I'm very interested in place-based programs, because to me, nothing works with people coming along saying: 'Hi, we're from the government, we're here to help' or 'Hi, we're from head office, we're here to help'.

Programs have to be driven by the community and be what the community wants, and that seems to me to be what Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections is doing. From my point of view as a funder the hope would be, I guess, a move towards sustainability, a move toward real impact.

I guess I'm certainly seeing that, as I see by partnering with the Sydney Community Foundation, the centre is able to attract more funding. They're expanding the scope of the programs that they're engaging in.

I view my philanthropic funding in the same way I view my business investments, that is I take an investment perspective to it. To me, it's like I'm making an investment, in that I'm not really interested in putting money away and never thinking about it again. I would hope that the money I invest with Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections out here, you can get a real return on and that you can actually multiply your effect from that money.

It's very much the case that investing in women and girls is a really good investment, because women will then reinvest what they get into their families, and that has a multiplier effect.

Why this story was chosen to reflect change

- Shows that with many donors we have the capacity to do amazing things
- Depicts the importance of donors and the value of thinking about return on investment
- Shows the effect of donors on building entrepreneurial spirit
- Shows the value of investing in women because they reinvest in their families.

PROGRESS REPORT

FAIRFIELD

The Hope+ project in Fairfield focuses on improving employment prospects for young people in an LGA where youth unemployment is approaching 30%.

Hope+ has developed from SCF's initial support of The Parents' Café at Fairfield High School. Hope+ is supported by the Ian Potter Foundation.

Fairfield High School Intensive English Centre (IEC) Student Survey
In order to better understand the

career and educational aspirations of newly arrived migrant youth, we surveyed the majority of senior students at Fairfield Intensive English Centre and we continue to work with them and their teachers to develop programs that are tailored to their needs. We have managed to gain a good understanding of youth unemployment, education and other relevant issues in the Fairfield LGA and the region. Attached is a profile of the employment issues facing young people in Fairfield.



TRENDS & STATISTICS

YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT FAIRFIELD

- Youth Unemployment (15-24 year olds) 14-16%
- Much higher for 15-19 year olds
- Another 17% underemployed
- Highest rate since statistics started being collected in 1978.
- Long-term unemployment a new trend – skills atrophy and mental illness problems
- Complex environment – high uncertainty
- Some suggest that there aren't enough jobs. Others that there is a hidden jobs market, meaning that a lot of jobs don't get advertised.
- Others point to the fact that employers also find it difficult to find staff.
- Young people lack the right skills – personal and soft skills, not technical
- National employment system failed – candidates are not adequately trained. They don't stay in jobs.
- Work for the Dole doesn't prepare people for the jobs of the future
- Advances in technology: self-checkouts, online shopping, fall in manufacturing jobs, internet globalising labour.
- Education still increases chances of finding employment but a higher level is now needed compared to before.
- Lack of experience makes it very difficult to find a job. Entry level positions have disappeared due to technology and employers downsizing to prepare for tougher economic outlook. There isn't anyone who can train them.
- Business confidence low – small business aren't taking on new workers.
- Casualisation of the workforce - getting a job is not the same as keeping a job.
- Disadvantage is a huge contributor, in South West. It is twice that of more affluent Sydney suburbs. Fairfield is the 3rd most disadvantaged LGA in the State according to SEIFA Index of disadvantage. Young people need other support before they can start looking for work.
- Skills training out of reach since TAFE fees went up.
- Apprenticeship commencements are 22 per cent lower in 2014 than they were in 2013.
- Education system is not adequate enough and young people are not work-ready. Schools also give rise to unrealistic aspirations and a no consequences environment.
- No government supported transitions to work programs - first time after 25 years.
- We simultaneously have a youth unemployment crisis and also a worker shortage. Australian businesses often struggle to find the right people to fill jobs, despite rising unemployment nationwide.
- Research suggests that basic employability skills, where worker can arrive on time, take instruction and get on with others, are wanting in this generation of young people.
- Poor motivation is an issue - a proportion of young people simply don't want to work
- Fairfield has a lot of new migrants. Also, 70% speak a language other than English at home. Apart from language issues, many missed out on education while in refugee camps and a significant number have mental illnesses.
- Some suggest that better careers programs are needed. Perhaps a case management system that leads youth into employment.
- CEDA Report - The high probability that 40 per cent of Australia's workforce, more than five million people, could be replaced by automation within the next 10 to 20 years. Most people in Fairfield work in such industries. Fairfield also has one of the most unqualified workforces in Australia (64% have no qualifications).
- Some research recommends that there needs to be a focus on developing a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation so that young people can be prepared for the complex and ever-changing environment that's ahead of them.

HOPE + INITIATIVES

#headstart

Navigating the road to work

#headstart is a multi-agency initiative which targets newly-arrived young people who have experienced disrupted education and are at risk of leaving school. It is based on a similar project previously run by STARTTS at Fairfield High School. It aims to support 60 students in 2016.

Program partners include

- Fairfield High School
- TAFE
- Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors-STARTTS
- HopePlus
- Local Job Network
- Business
- Others

Each agency offers its own component to the program and coordinates to work with school to introduce participants to post-secondary education and career options.

- The program will initially target year 10 students so that they can receive further support in years 11 and 12 (through other initiatives).
- These will often be students attending the Intensive English Centre (IEC) who are about to, or have recently moved into mainstream schooling.
- Each group will consist of 10-15 students.

STARTTS has experience working with young people from refugee families who have suffered trauma and bring special skill to this sensitive work. The aim is to develop best practice transitions and careers programs to be introduced in other schools across the Fairfield LGA.

Project Aim :

To engage and raise the awareness of high school students to alternative career pathways.

The program will be designed to give ownership of learning to the students. Negotiation is ongoing with a focus on tapping into students' interests, dreams and potential to get an idea of where to take the groups.

The program will have the flexibility to respond to emerging strengths and needs.

The group with very poor written language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills will be supported by a second teacher specialised in LLN to work intensively with students in smaller groups and assist the teacher to strengthen the program design in these areas.

Consultation will take place with participants to help design future projects. Giving the participant a voice builds confidence and a sense of ownership and belonging, while developing their advocacy skills.

TAFE mini-tasters will be arranged so students can get a first-hand taste of study in each area. This involves visits to other campuses.

Activities such as this provide further learning opportunities for the participants who contribute to planning the trip using public transport, this reinforces ownership of learning and imparts skill in independent travel.

Community partners will offer case management services or presentations to expand experiences for the participants. (Partners play an important role in finding solutions beyond the program capability)

STARTTS will provide psycho-education group work using art as a medium of delivery. It builds group dynamics so that individuals become team players, build their own community and gain confidence which motivates learners. STARTTS will design an evaluation plan for the program.

Job Network will provide resume writing, budgeting and interview skills for participants.

This entire project will be one of the first pilots in the Hope+ collective impact initiative, which aims to develop a best practice program that will help young people in Fairfield transition into meaningful education and employment.

Outcomes for participants:

- Develop literacy and employability skills while discovering the array of Vocational Education and Training options available to them through TAFE.
- Promote social cohesion and tackle barriers to education, training and employment.
- Gain better access to services available.
- Gain greater confidence in study and successfully engage in further learning opportunities.

Outcomes for service providers:

The program will strengthen relationships working in partnership with community (government and non-government) agencies, while effectively supporting a reduction in economic and social disadvantage for a targeted group in our local community.



Fairfield Youth Community Portal

As part of the wider Hope+ program we are developing a Fairfield Youth Community Portal. This project has already generated a lot of interest from other service providers, young people and the Council and it will be one of our main tools for future engagement of partners and community members. Fairfield Council has recently offered to become a partner in the development of this tool, which will help us gain access to a number of local networks and this will make it easier to get community participation and content for the site and to connect young people with potential employers.

Youth Employment and Education Action Group

We are currently negotiating the terms and conditions of Hope+ running a Youth Employment and Education Action Group for the Fairfield LGA, which is intended to be a network of all local organisations, JSA employment agencies, businesses, and schools concerned with supporting young people to transition into meaningful education and employment. This is due to commence in the third quarter of 2015 and will be the start of our first collective impact collaboration network. Fairfield Council has also offered to contribute some funds towards this network but we are yet to learn how much.

Coffee Cart

We have begun a Coffee and Crepe Cart social enterprise, which has already started running initial barista training for young adults, with 12 participants selected from over 150 applicants for our first course. Placements with potential for future employment have been found for all participants and attendance after four weeks is 100%. It is a pilot project that aims to develop a best practice approach to helping young people develop the right personal, communication and presentation skills to get their first job. Many in this first pilot are recent migrants who hope that this involvement will help them get their first job in Australia.

Youth Engagement

We have developed a youth group that meets regularly to plan and initiate projects that will raise awareness about social and other issues that are important to young people. We use this engagement to better understand young people in the Fairfield LGA and to mentor them to be more proactive when it comes to their future employment, education and wellbeing.

Collective Impact Networking

One of the major successes of Hope+ so far was an invitation to participate in a closed national network of collective impact and complexity science practitioners, which is made up of people who have years of experience solving complex social issues. Through this involvement, we were able to better understand the current ecosystem of collaborative work in Australia, what has and what hasn't worked and what the likely future trends are.

PROGRESS REPORT

CLAYMORE

RISE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAM

Project Aim:

The RISE Alternative Learning Program Pilot endeavours to re-engage young people who are suspended or chronically disengaged from mainstream education at Eagle Vale High School, through a flexible life skills based curriculum to ignite their interest in education, training and/or employment.

The RISE Alternative Learning Program commenced on Monday 20 July 2015. Since this time, the program has been running 5 days per week at Gumnut Cottage and POCET (Point of Contact for Early Transition) in Claymore. The program is being delivered through partnerships with Eagle Vale High School, Mission Australia, Save the Children and Macquarie Fields Police.

Achievements

- Recruitment of Corin Boughton to coordinate the program
- Program commenced in its new form on the 20 July 2015
- The Alternative Learning Centre is now named RISE (Reengagement Initiative towards Supportive Education). This name was decided upon in consultation with young people and local service providers.
- Eagle Vale High School has referred 22 young people to RISE since July
- 3 young people were supported to successfully returned to school and are receiving post program support
- 3 young people have decided that the program does not meet

- their needs at this point
- 3 young people and their families have been referred to Ability Links to receive support regarding legal issues, transport and housing
- Save the Children continues to facilitate one session per week of health promotion and digital media activities
- Mission Australia facilitates one session per week 'Rock and Water' or 'Love Bites'
- Macquarie Fields Police deliver one session per week of the White Ribbon Domestic Violence program
- UpFront Youth Services are a new partner who will support young people through case management
- A mini library for young people attending the program has been established with access to books whilst engaging with Whitelion
- A local Personal Trainer delivers health and nutrition workshops as well as offering free group PT sessions to young people attending RISE

Challenges

- Managing and balancing different expectations from school, young people and community.
- Managing the referral and intake process with Eagle Vale High School.
- A high level of referrals that have been received have no consent forms and the school have not spoken to the parents about the program prior to referral. We cannot contact families without consent.



RISE

CASE STUDY

“Elyce”

(The name of the young person has been changed).

Elyce is 12 years old and is enrolled at Eagle Vale High School. On Corin’s first interaction with Elyce she was timid and made no eye contact. Elyce did not enjoy interacting with teachers or the principal and had a school attendance rate of 4% for the 2015 calendar year.

In Corin’s first conversation with Elyce, she asked if she was receiving learning support, counselling or accessing any welfare programs. Elyce and her parents were not aware that they could access any of these services. Corin explained that she could support Elyce in connecting to these services at the school, as well as any other services in the community. Elyce began talking to Corin about attending 5 different primary schools, finding it hard to make friends and having difficulty writing in class, due to a wrist injury.

Elyce’s mother told Corin that she, her husband and her eldest daughter has been diagnosed with disabilities but that Elyce had not been diagnosed yet. Corin explained to Elyce’s mother that she could access learning support without having a diagnosed disability. Corin also offered the option of tutoring through Whitelion partner Social Alchemy and Elyce said that she would like extra tutoring in geography and science.

Elyce’s attendance to the RISE program was very high (80%) and when she did not attend the program her parents informed Corin by text or phone. Elyce was very engaged in all set activities but she

was mostly interested in creative arts. Corin supported Elyce to find art classes in the local area by referring her to Ability Links. Ability Links sourced a list of highly recommended art schools for Elyce who then contacted Heffalump Art School. Elyce has been attending art classes for about 4 weeks now and is loving it.

Elyce returned to school on Monday 24 August but due to illness was then absent for a few days. Corin has been supporting the family to communicate Elyce’s absences to the school and assist in completing any absentee notices to ensure that the school does not escalate this to the Department of Education and Communities as truanting (as happened previously).

When Elyce recovered from her illness, Corin began meeting with her every Friday at lunch time for four weeks. In addition to this, Elyce attends a social skills program on Monday mornings at the school facilitated by Mission Australia. The program is focused at supporting year 7 students’ transition to high school, make friends and feel supported. Elyce will also continue to meet with her case worker from Mission Australia once a week.

Corin is continuing to support Elyce’s parents with issues relating to housing and guardianship of their eldest daughter. These issues have the ability to impact on Elyce’s school attendance and as a result, Corin will continue support through information and referrals to organisations such as Ability Links, Macarthur Disability Services, Legal Aid and other organisations as necessary.



CONCLUSION

Independence and belonging are what we aim to give people whose lives are touched by this program.

ProjectWOW! is demonstrating that new and creative partnerships in philanthropy, working with government and community organisations can deliver change in people's lives.

This new kind of investment into disadvantaged communities is leading to local capacity building and has the potential to bring about social change. Along with the NSW Government's focus on investment in infrastructure in Western Sydney this investment in community and social development is vital for Sydney's West and its people.

I look forward to a continuing and strong partnership with all our collaborators in government,

community and especially with the generous donors and private philanthropists who give to this innovative program and have enable us to expand it to new communities.

In 2016 Sydney Community Foundation will be looking to begin a new place-based project with an inner city community. We know that each of these communities can become stronger when we change lives one by one.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Jose". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jane Jose
CEO, Sydney Community
Foundation

APPENDIX

The ProjectWOW! Vision

The original vision was to shine a torch on the ‘forgotten’ suburbs and communities in the most disadvantaged local government areas and to help reduce social problems that government or community service providers alone cannot effectively tackle. The intention was to support and create social enterprises as an economic direction, as well as to meet the human need for shelter, education and protection arising from the serious socio-economic problems and lack of strategic investment in these disadvantaged communities. It was to bring a geographical focus to tackle social issues.

The model developed is designed to work within a postcode of need with a community steering committee. We are guiding, funding and mentoring local grassroots organisations. We lead social change identifying human needs, assets missing in the community and create opportunities for developing community leaders.

Together we developed evidence-based actions around core areas of social change.

- Education
- Children and young people at risk
- Employment and enterprise

The need for new models of community housing and ways to manage homelessness, women’s safety and family violence intersect with this work. Through tackling these vital areas together, often through simple but creative projects, individual lives improve. This is the collective impact that can be achieved in a whole of community approach, contributing to long-term social change across an entire community. The process aims to build local capacity and develop strong local leadership.

Taking an evidence-based approach

The research project, *Portrait of Women and Girls in Greater Sydney* conducted by Sydney Community Foundation’s Sydney Women’s Fund highlighted the relative disadvantage in South Western and Western Sydney. *The Portrait* forms the evidence base for ProjectWOW!. The social problems identified are often exacerbated by gender, for new migrants, refugees and indigenous people.

Grassroots organisations working in these disadvantaged communities face chronic under-investment, particularly from the corporate and philanthropic sector.

Sydney Community Foundation and its Sydney Women’s Fund are in a unique position to build the case for social and financial impact investment into the places of greatest need in Sydney and to broker the required resources.

When a single or few stakeholders work toward achieving social change, investment is often short term or ad-hoc and impacts are typically small and difficult to sustain. Collective impact programs require sustained community, philanthropic and government support over five to seven years to reduce entrenched disadvantage.

For collective impact to succeed, collaboration between philanthropic bodies, corporate organisations, private philanthropists, government, the community sector, research bodies and the community itself must be sustained over a significant period. This pilot project has been funded for three years, which is only a beginning.

What is Place-Based Philanthropy?

'Place-based philanthropy' is social investment into a geographic area of entrenched disadvantage. This location focused giving seeks to bring together resources needed by the community to support the changes they wish to achieve. We are piloting place-based philanthropy through the design and delivery of a tailored collective impact program detailed further in the report.

The collective impact outcomes we seek are a greater sense of belonging and safety, improved education and employment.

For Sydney Community Foundation, place-based philanthropy is strategic, targeted social investment for impact. It gathers the community together to reach a common agenda and provides finances, human resources, products and services to people of all ages in Western and South Western Sydney. Our approach is particularly focused on supporting women and girls experiencing great need and disadvantage.

This pilot program delivers change by bringing together partners to give to, and work with, the local community and its grassroots service providers in a new, creative, and effective way. The outcomes are growth in self-esteem and confidence for individuals, capacity building for people one-by-one and for the organisations that help them. In economic terms there are micro-economic gains from the establishment of successful social enterprises and social capital is being built by encouraging people into work and independence.

Initiated with funding from Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation through a grant made in March 2013, Sydney Community Foundation was then able to secure a challenge grant of \$500,000 from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services in 2013.

Sydney Community Foundation quickly matched the grant by drawing together philanthropic partners eager to collaborate. These included Portland House Foundation, Ian Potter Foundation and The McLean Foundation; and Sydney Community Foundation sub-fund and individual donors.

Together with our partners, we have named the program ProjectWOW! This is a response to how people have reacted when we tell stories of the early gains for people in the community. WOW! Is Australian slang meaning: a person or a thing that is amazingly successful. We want the pilot to be amazingly successful and at the end of the first year are off to a strong start.

With our partners we are defining a brilliant new way for government, philanthropists and the community to work together to help people in poverty change their lives. WOW stands for Winners of Western Sydney.

ProjectWOW! is demonstrating it can become a model for other communities in Australian cities.

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PROJECT WOW!

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**Thank you for supporting
Sydney Community Foundation's ProjectWOW!**

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