

belong

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Shining a light on dark days

Chaplains bringing hope

Model students hit runway

Building self-esteem on the catwalk

First chapter of literacy story

Community helps senior to read





CEO'S Message

"May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed" (Psalm 20:4). With these words the Bible crystalises how people can bring their ambitions to fruition with spiritual guidance.

Carinity is also helping Queenslanders to achieve their dreams through its community endeavours. In this edition of *Belong*, we share some examples of how Carinity has made several people's aspirations become a reality.

When Gwenda Jayawardhana and Margaret Fulton forged their friendship four decades ago, it unknowingly set Gwenda on a path that led to her dream job – working as a chaplain in a Carinity aged care community (p.3).

Carinity is also helping young people secure better futures through work and study. We speak with three teenagers who dropped out of school early but are transitioning to their ideal vocations after acquiring skills through programs offered by Carinity (p.4).

For Ruth McCabe, the life she planned with her family turned into a nightmare when she was

diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. In hospital, Ruth met a Carinity chaplain who helped her through the darkest days (p.6).

Growing up in foster care, Rose Fitter never attended school and was denied a formal education. Now, at the age of 73, she is realising her dream of being able to read, thanks to helpful carers and staff at Carinity's Summit Cottages (p.8).

Many young women dream of a career as a model. For two Carinity Education students, dressing up and walking down a runway represents a chance to build their self-esteem, foster a positive body image, and support an important community organisation (p.10).

And finally, Barbara Horbury rarely gets to see her family in person but reconnecting with them is now possible thanks to technology designed specially for seniors. The new Mobi device is helping her stay mentally active while alleviating social isolation (p.12).

Please enjoy this edition of *Belong* as we share stories of people who are achieving their goals through Carinity.

Jon Campbell

Faith powers lasting friendship

An enduring friendship forged four decades ago remains strong within the extended Carinity family.

Growing up in Brisbane, Gwenda Jayawardhana spent much of her spare time visiting Margaret Fulton, her older neighbour who now lives at the Carinity Kepnock Grove retirement community in Bundaberg.

Gwenda says she has her "Aunty" Margaret to thank for unknowingly guiding her on a path that led to her becoming a Carinity chaplain.

"I dubbed her my honorary 'Aunty' growing up as she lived across the road from our family and I would often go knocking on her door just to spend time with her," Gwenda says.

"Often as we worked together she would have the radio playing in the background, tuned in to the local Christian radio station.

"Aunty Margaret was indirectly sowing seeds of the gospel into my life and I didn't even realise it, but I look back on this time now with much gratitude and thankfulness.

"One of the greatest things about friendship is age is no barrier, nor the passing of time. Life sometimes gets in the way, but Aunty Margaret was always a faithful prayer warrior."

The friends recently met in person for the first time in five years at Carinity Kepnock Grove, which



Margaret Fulton helped sow the seeds for a young Gwenda Jayawardhana to eventually become a Carinity Chaplain.

Margaret calls "a lovely place to live with lovely people".

Margaret says her shared Christian faith with Gwenda, a chaplain at Carinity Clifford House aged care community in Brisbane, had "consolidated our friendship".

"When I found out that Gwenda was going to be a chaplain with Carinity I thought she is the very person they need because she's so caring and considerate," Margaret says.

"I have known her since the day she was born and she's just as lovely as ever. I have kept her in my prayers and I'm very thankful that our friendship has remained all these years."

Anyone interested in becoming a Carinity chaplain can visit carinity.org.au/carinity-communities-chaplaincy or phone 07 3550 3719.



A skills course for early school leavers offered by Carinity Fassifern Community Centre helped Liam Ziebarth and Shanice Hook transition to tertiary studies.

Teens working towards career dreams

Liam Ziebarth and Shanice Hook have faced some adversity during their teenage years.

Introverted and bullied at school, Liam dropped out of Year 11 after being unable to fit into a “rigid education system”.

Shanice, who overcame childhood cancer, left halfway through Year 12 because she “couldn’t handle the workload with all the other things that were going on with my life”.

After quitting school and with few career options in their tiny townships of Kalbar and Aratula, Liam and Shanice enrolled in the *Get Set for Work* program at Carinity Fassifern Community Centre in Boonah.

The Queensland Government-funded initiative helps people aged 15 to 19 years who have left school to transition into work or undertake further education or training.

Liam and Shanice, both 19, are now in a tertiary preparation program ahead of commencing an Education Degree at University of Queensland Springfield next year. Liam aims to teach history to high school students, while Shanice wants to become a primary education teacher.

“I owe a great deal to *Get Set for Work* for me actually following the idea of going back into some form of education as I’d very much given up on it after I dropped out of school,” Liam says.

“I wasn’t thinking about what I was going to do in the future. I don’t have any doubts that without the course I would still be living

in Kalbar working six hours a week at my old job and doing not much else.”

Before *Get Set for Work*, Shanice was lacking direction and was unable to connect with other people.

“The course helped but it was definitely the social part of it that helped me the most. I’m not a very social person, I’m very nervous and shy so it really helped me to connect with and talk to people,” Shanice says.

“I always knew that I wanted to go into teaching, but I didn’t know if there were any options. Carinity showed me there are options out there and you can do something.”

Carinity helped Kayden Rieck secure his dream job, with the teenager now working as an apprentice diesel mechanic.

“I was looking for jobs through school and then I went to the *Get Set for Work* course. The course helped me budget and develop more skills in talking to people,” Kayden says.

Carinity Community Development Coordinator Samantha Caves says programs run at Carinity Fassifern Community Centre help young people to “lay the foundations to win the job of their choice”.

“We offer participants aged 15 to 19 years a *Certificate II in Work Skills and Vocational Pathways*, transitioning them into future study or employment,” Samantha says.

For more on the work skills and education programs run by Carinity phone 07 3550 3737 or visit carinity.org.au/communities.

Chaplains shine light during dark times

Ruth McCabe's darkest days would have been even darker were it not for a woman named Noelene Kidd.

Noelene, a Carinity chaplain, was by Ruth's bedside when she spent two months in hospital fighting a rare form of cancer in 2013.

"I wasn't supposed to live through the cancer, so the doctors were trying to keep me hopeful but being realistic at the same time," Ruth says.

"Because it was such a rare form of cancer there's no support group for it, and those who get it generally don't live too long.

"My four children and my parents were stressed, my husband was stressed, everybody was stressed. Noelene was the calm in the storm. She was great to talk to.

"You get so sick of people prodding you and poking you and doing medical types of things and with the psychologist the same thing happens, they're evaluating your answers. It was nice to have someone just to sit and talk with – someone who 'gets it'.

"My time in hospital was pretty dark but I think it could have been much darker without Noelene being there.

"There were days when I thought, 'If I'm going to

die anyway, let's get it over and done with', but she kept re-routing me to the hope."

Around 60 Carinity chaplains serve multi-denominationally in hospitals, correctional centres and aged care communities from Cairns to the Gold Coast.

Reverend Don McPherson, head of Chaplaincy and Mission Services, says Carinity longs to train and place more chaplains around Queensland to meet a growing need to support and assist more people facing challenges.

"This increasing demand for chaplains is being driven by the growing realisation of the benefits of caring for people holistically and by increased social isolation and rising incarceration rates," Don says.

Ruth encourages people to support the chaplains who bring comfort, by offering a listening ear or spiritual guidance, by donating to the 2018 Carinity Chaplains Appeal.

"One day I was running my kids to and from school and sports and the next thing I'm bedridden for weeks on end," Ruth says.

"You don't know when you're going to need that support, and it could be the difference in someone's life."

“ You don't know when you're going to need support, and it could be the difference in someone's life ”

- Ruth McCabe



Please help us **make a real difference** to the lives of people in need by supporting the **2018 Chaplains Appeal**.

Your gift can be made through the attached donation form, by phoning **07 3550 3737** or online at **carinity.org.au/donations**.

Ruth McCabe says a Carinity hospital chaplain helped her to “see hope” during her fight against a rare form of cancer.

Rose opens book on world of reading

Describing his love of literature, actor Benedict Cumberbatch said, “reading is one of the joys of life, and once you begin, you can’t stop”.

For Rose Fitter, her chance to experience the joy of reading has been a long time coming.

After more than 70 years, the Mount Morgan pensioner is finally learning how to read and write with help from her carers and staff at Carinity Summit Cottages.

Growing up in numerous foster homes, Rose was denied a formal education and not once attended school.

“I never had any opportunities to do anything like that, I just worked. I wanted to learn but they wouldn’t let me do it, where I lived,” Rose says.

After moving to the Carinity Summit Cottages residential community last year, staff discovered Rose’s inability to read.

Carers Cheryl Cunynghame and Leeann Rolfe have been helping Rose on her inspirational journey towards literacy.

After doing 18 months’ worth of learning in less than three months, Rose can now read and comprehend 200 words and is enjoying primary school-level books.

“I have a lot of children’s books that have been given to me to read. There have been

quite a few good ones and I’m reading a couple of different books every day,” Rose says.

“I’m happy here where I am and happy I can do something I couldn’t do before and that I have a new hobby. My friends are all happy for me too.”

Summit Cottages Residential Manager Margaret Eather says in 20 years working in the aged care industry she has never heard a story like Rose’s. She says the transformation in Rose’s demeanour has been significant.

“She has just blossomed, she’s happy and she’s interacting more with the other residents. Her self-esteem and general well-being has grown dramatically,” Margaret says.

The wider Mount Morgan community, from Carinity Summit Cottages nurses, gardeners and cooks, to local school students, is helping Rose on her literacy journey.

“The high school students come over in the afternoons and spend time with the residents and listen to Rose read and we’ve also got Grade 1s from the primary school who come and read with residents,” Margaret says.

Rose is looking forward to reading her birthday cards for the first time when she turns 74 later this year.

Rose Fitter is learning how to read with assistance from carers and staff at Carinity Summit Cottages in Mount Morgan.





“The modelling event helps to create positive body images, self-esteem and self-confidence”

– Ben Sullivan

Model students turn heads to help cause

Two Carinity Education Rockhampton students have turned heads at the same time as building their self-esteem and helping a not-for-profit community service.

Alysha Goltz and Makayla Carter swapped the classroom for the catwalk when they took part in the annual RACQ Face of Rockhampton modelling competition. The event consisted of runway and photographic modelling.

Carinity Education Rockhampton Principal Ben Sullivan said participating in the event helped the girls develop their confidence, self-esteem and presentation skills and create a positive body image.

“Part of Alysha and Makayla’s preparation was for them to consider their appearance, grooming and dress standards – a way of instilling positive ideas and good social values,” Ben says.

RACQ Face of Rockhampton raised money for RACQ Capricorn Helicopter Rescue, which provides a free aeromedical service around the Capricorn Region 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

“At the school we like our young people to engage with the community. Our students are always finding new ways to contribute to the school and to the community, a sense of attachment, wanting to grow and improve and to leave a mark,” Ben says.

Carinity Education teacher Fionula Fanning, who coordinated Alysha and Makayla’s entry into the charity modelling event, says the girls practised their runway walking after school and during school holidays.

Their preparation and training paid off. Wearing outfits from Vanessa Eyles Photography, and with support from Elite Avenues Modelling, Makayla was runner-up in Teen Miss Catwalk for 13 to 17-year-olds.

Alysha, who had previously won a state-wide competition for Indigenous models which resulted in her competing in Sydney, placed fourth in the photographic section.

“Carinity is very proud of the results but most importantly the event helped the girls develop knowledge of what they can achieve. Now they can set and achieve new goals,” Fionula says.

Carinity runs alternative education schools at Rockhampton, Hervey Bay, Brisbane and Gladstone for students who have had difficulty succeeding in mainstream schooling. For more information visit carinity.org.au/education or call 07 3550 3737.

Carinity Education Rockhampton students Alysha Goltz (right) and Makayla Carter (left) turned heads at a modelling competition which boosted the young women’s self-esteem. Photos by Thalep Ahmat.



Tech savvy seniors

Barbara Horbury had never used a computer but she is now fast becoming as tech savvy as her grandson.

The 77-year-old Hervey Bay resident is the first person in Queensland to own a "Mobi" tablet device, as part of her Carinity Home Care package.

Mobi powered by Breezie is a personalised digital hub which aims to help seniors live more independently while staying connected with family, friends and the wider community.

Accessed via a Samsung Galaxy Tab S2 tablet, Mobi is specifically designed for older users to cut through the complexities of technology with a simplified, user friendly format.

"The system itself is fantastic as it is set up to make it easy to use, especially for someone who doesn't really know what they are doing," Barbara says.

"The icons are large and easy to read and understand and everything that I could possibly want is set up on it like Skype, email, calendar, Facebook, transport and home delivered shopping options."

Barbara, who decided she needed help at home following major back surgery, also uses her Mobi to maintain her mental fitness by playing memory games.

"Having never really used a computer before I was a little scared but excited to look at this option, as it would increase my social connections and assist with



Carinity Home Care client Barbara Horbury can stay connected with her family by using a Mobi tablet device specifically designed for seniors.

maintaining and improving my memory," Barbara says.

"I live in Hervey Bay and my closest family is located on the Sunshine Coast so I only get to see them when one of us visits. My daughter and her family are working or still at school so visiting isn't always possible.

"The Mobi tablet allows me to communicate with my family via a video link-up, which opens up a better way to communicate with them, and it means they can have that personal contact with me to ensure that I am okay.

"I know that with a little more help I am going to master this technology and it will assist me in my life."

Mobi powered by Breezie is available through Carinity Home Care. For more information call 1300 109 109 or visit CarinityHomeCare.org.au.



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