



St Vincent de Paul Society
CANBERRA/GOULBURN
good works

18 April 2018

CEOs to brave the Canberra cold for the 2018 Vinnies CEO Sleepout

Recent figures from the 2016 ABS Census of Population and Housing has shown that over 40,000 young people are experiencing homelessness in Australia, and 531 Canberrans under the age of 24 years are doing it tough.

With over 2.9 million Australians living in poverty and over 116,000 experiencing homelessness, many thousands of them children - we need to take action.

To highlight this issue and raise much needed funds to tackle it, an anticipated 150 of the region's business and community leaders will brave the cold at the National Museum of Australia, on 21 June for the 2018 Vinnies CEO Sleepout. Participants this year include Dr Brendan Nelson AO, Director of the Australian War Memorial, Justine Saunders, ACT Chief Police Officer and Greg Hood, CEO of the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, who was the top fundraiser at last year's Sleepout. We are also pleased to have the team from our long-time supporter Canberra Toyota back on board.

National Museum of Australia director, Dr Mathew Trinca will participate in the sleepout fundraiser and said the Museum is proud to host this year's event.

"In a nation as affluent as Australia it's important to provide time for people who need a hand," said Dr Trinca.

St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn CEO, Barnie van Wyk, says the funds are necessary to break the cycle of inter-generational poverty, homelessness and disadvantage.

"If you're a young person growing up with lack of stable housing, it is extremely difficult to concentrate in school and if you're constantly moving from one place to the next, it undermines your self-esteem and can create stigmas that can stay with you throughout your life," says Mr van Wyk.

"For CEOs to sleep out one night in the Canberra cold, it can give them some practical insight into how hard it can be to hold a job, continue study or keep a family together."

"The funds raised last year went directly back into the local community. They contributed to our numerous services including the Clemente Program that provides disadvantaged people with access to tertiary level education; youth programs such as the Vinnies St Nick's Young Carers Program; and for the past year, the provision of over 11,000 instances of support through our Night Patrol Van, which we anticipate will increase due to the arrival of our second Night Patrol Van, thanks to our friends at Canberra Toyota."

"This year we aim to raise \$480,000. If we achieve or better still exceed this, we will not only be able to continue our existing programs, but improve our capacity to provide a hand up to local people in need through expansion of services and early intervention programs, particularly for the region's youth," shared Mr van Wyk.

Interviews are available at the launch of the 2018 Vinnies CEO Sleepout with:

- Mr Barnie van Wyk – CEO, St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn
- Dr Mathew Trinca – Director, National Museum of Australia

Media: To arrange an interview please contact kristi.monfries@svdp-cg.org.au or on mob: 0447 471 320, ph: 02 6234 7341

Registrations for the Vinnies CEO Sleepout are now open at www.ceosleepout.org.au