



## **Advancing the human rights of women caught up in the criminal justice system.**

WELCOME to the second edition of the WIPAN e-news bulletin

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### **MENTORS RECRUITED, TRAINED AND READY TO MENTOR!!**

Over the past month WIPAN have been busily recruiting, interviewing and training women volunteers from the community to mentor women being released from prison.

The program aims to encourage the mentee's autonomy, support their community reintegration and promote their overall wellbeing. The program is aligned with a strengths based perspective.

The outcomes of similar programs outside of Australia show that women leaving prison are less likely to re-enter prison if they are part of a mentoring program on their release.

We are very excited and proud to have twenty volunteer mentors waiting to be matched with women recently released from prison. The mentors are an incredible group of women that are from a diverse cultural and professional background, who cover a wide age range, who have various skills and interests and all of whom are equally passionate and committed.

Women mentees can be referred from any agency, (government or non-government), and/or anyone involved in supporting them.

For more information, email [Samantha Bamforth](#) at WIPAN or call 02 8011 0692 or 0415 454 770, or visit the [WIPAN website](#)

### **FUNDING GRANTED**

The [Ian Potter Foundation](#) kindly granted WIPAN funding in early 2010 to purchase a vehicle and a budget for fuel. We have recently acquired a small Toyota hatchback from Mosman Toyota. It is already proving to be an invaluable asset to the organisation, allowing us easy commuting to community service providers, clients and correctional facilities in the wider metropolitan area. Thank you to the Ian Potter Foundation for their generous grant.

The [Sisters of Charity Foundation](#) generously awarded WIPAN with a small grant to assist the WIPAN mentoring project. The funds awarded have paid for the insurance of the WIPAN vehicle, the catering expenses for the regular mentoring meetings and the public liability insurance premiums for the volunteer mentors. Our many thanks to the Sisters of Charity

Foundation.

WIPAN are incredibly excited to announce that the [Office for Women's Policy NSW](#) have granted funding to a subsidiary division of our mentoring project funding that will focus specifically on violence and the pathways in/out of prison. WIPAN will provide specialist training to our mentors in regards to all forms of victimisation through violence so as to best assist our mentees to break the cycle of violence and encourage their personal growth beyond the suffering caused by violence. WIPAN will advocate for the women's needs founded upon evidence-based research. We are incredibly appreciative for the financial support provided by the Office for Women's Policy NSW and endeavour to take full advantage of such a fantastic opportunity.

### **EDNA RYAN AWARDS**

On the 14th of May the [Women's Electoral Lobby](#) (WEL) held their annual Edna Ryan awards night in recognition of women who have made a feminist difference in 2010. Our very own Kat Armstrong, the Public Officer and Treasurer of WIPAN, received the Edna Ryan award for "Battling: for making it against the odds".

Kat said that she "was very humbled to have been nominated for the award by Joan Bieleski, a women activist whom she greatly admires" and that she was "extremely honoured to have won the award and to be in the company of such courageous feminist activists". Congratulations to Kat, we are all very proud of her achievements.

### **FAREWELL TO BARBARA BIGGS**

Barbara Biggs has resigned as the Media and Communications Executive Committee member of WIPAN. Barbara has worked tirelessly as a volunteer executive member for WIPAN for the past two years and has contributed enormously to the success of WIPAN. We are very sad to see Barbara go and wish her all of the best in the future and her new plans. We thank her sincerely for her passion and commitment to WIPAN and the women WIPAN service.

### **POSITION VACANT – VOLUNTEER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER**

WIPAN is seeking a new female volunteer executive committee member, with a media/communications background, to be a part of the organisation. The position requires that the successful candidate attend a monthly executive meeting where organisational direction/issues are considered and voted on. The successful candidate must also be available via email during office hours between meetings to address any issues that arise in the interim. The WIPAN executive committee board works as a democracy. The chosen candidate must be committed to advancing WIPAN as an organisation and passionate about assisting women caught up in the criminal justice system.

For further information please email [Kat Armstrong](#)

### **FAMILIES BOOK LAUNCH – CRC & CSNSW**

Deirdre Hyslop the Principal Advisor Women Offenders for [Corrective Services NSW](#) invited WIPAN to attend the Families Handbook presentation on the 4th of May, which was launched by the Minister for Corrective Services, Phillip Costa MP.

[Community Restorative Centre](#) (CRC) developed The Families Handbook in partnership with Corrective Services NSW and serves as an invaluable resource guide for families and friends of people in prison. It provides an overview of the criminal justice system, the journey that a prisoner will take through the prison system, and pre/post release information.

WIPAN highly recommends The Families Handbook to any person or organisation that would like to have an understanding of how the NSW criminal justice system operates. We believe that with greater knowledge comes greater opportunity and capacity to support loved ones in prison.

For further information click [here](#)

### **WIPAN MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN & MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

New memberships are very important to WIPAN. A membership is not simply a fundraiser; it informs our potential funders that communities are right behind us. It demonstrates that the community understands the importance of our work, cares enough to support our efforts and

believes that the women we assist are worthy of our support.

By becoming a member of WIPAN you have the opportunity to play an active part in the continued growth and future development of the organisation. As a member, you can choose to be active in many different ways, depending on your interests, skills and the time you have to give. If you would like more information about becoming a member, please email [Kat Armstrong](mailto:Kat.Armstrong@wipan.net.au) or call on 0428 312 035.

To our current members, thank you for your ongoing support of WIPAN. Your voice, support and experience have been paramount to the success of WIPAN. As it is nearing the end of the financial year memberships must be renewed. Your continued support will be greatly appreciated.

## **MEMBERSHIP FORMS**

To become a member please complete the membership form, which can be downloaded from the following [link](#) and mail to: WIPAN, PO Box 345, Broadway NSW 2007

COSTS: \$5 for Individual Concessions (prisoners, ex-prisoners, concession card holders & students), \$30 for Individual membership & \$50 for Organisational membership. All memberships are valid for 1 year.

## **Reclink - AGENCY OF THE MONTH!!**

[Reclink Australia Inc](#) is a charitable organisation whose mission is to provide sporting, social and arts activities to enhance the lives of people experiencing disadvantage.

Targeting some of the communities most vulnerable and isolated people – those who experience mental illness, disability, homelessness, substance abuse issues, addictions, and social and economic hardship – Reclink are committed to encouraging participation through a range of structured and informal programs and activities. They promote and deliver the health, social and economic benefits of physical activity to an otherwise largely under-represented population in sport and arts programs.

Some of the activities already operating in Sydney are swimming, lawn bowls, ten-pin bowling, gym sessions and a Bronte beach BBQ. These are FREE ongoing activities. For further information regarding activities or attendance to the Reclink networking meetings contact Peter Cullen, the National Development Manager on 0421 442 340 or [peter.cullen@reclink.org](mailto:peter.cullen@reclink.org)

A Woman's Place, Samaritan House, Reclink and WIPAN have come together to form a Women's Networking initiative aimed at providing FREE social, sporting and arts activities for disadvantaged women in Sydney. The activities that are currently in the development stage are boxing classes, a pamper day and swimming lessons. Event details will be posted shortly. If you require further information or would like to attend the Women's Networking meetings please contact Petra at Samaritan Services 02 9211-5794 or Samantha at WIPAN 02 0811 0692.

## **Contact WIPAN**

For further information about WIPAN including our executive members, general members, our funding bodies, strategic plan or WIPAN vision & aims please contact us.

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