



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

WELCOME to the 4th edition of the WIPAN e-news bulletin

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### **WIPAN BOOK LAUNCH: SELF HELP GUIDE FOR WOMEN PRISONERS**

WIPAN are extremely proud to announce the launch of our **SELF HELP GUIDE FOR WOMEN PRISONERS** at 3pm on the 7th of September at the Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney. The Honourable Jodi McKay, Minister for Office of Women's Policy is set to officially launch this book.

The Self-Help Guide is designed for women caught-up in the criminal justice system. It is a self-advocacy resource addressing commonly encountered bureaucratic and legal issues faced by women including healthcare, housing, children, complaints, fines and compensation needs. It explains in plain language the procedures that a woman must follow to have her basic needs met, if they are otherwise not being met. The guide is an instructional resource providing up-to-date contact details, sample letters and processes to follow. The guide is available in both English and Vietnamese and will be circulated amongst women prison libraries and education centre's across NSW.

We would like to thank our partners in the development of the resource, [Public Interest Advocacy Centre \(PIAC\)](#), and also our funders, the [Sidney Myer Fund](#), for their generous financial support.

It is necessary to submit an RSVP to attend the above launch and we invite you to do so by emailing [WIPAN](#) as soon as possible, so that numbers can be finalised. WIPAN look forward to seeing you there.

### **WIPAN 2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

All wipan members, both voting and non voting, and the broader community are invited to attend the 2010 WIPAN AGM. The venue is NCOSS - 66 Albion Street, Surry Hills, the date is Monday, 6th September 2010 and the time is 6pm. For more information about the AGM, please email [WIPAN](#)

### **SISTERS INSIDE: DEBBIE KILROY VISITS WIPAN**

WIPAN had the recent pleasure of meeting with Debbie Kilroy of [Sisters Inside](#) (QLD) in Sydney.

Debbie is the Director of Sisters Inside and for the coming 12 months will be visiting various community services providers throughout NSW to rally interest and support for the International Sisters Inside Conference to be held in Sydney in August of 2011. The conference titled "Are Prisons Obsolete?" is a bi-annual conference that attracts numerous influential consumers and professionals, both locally and internationally, offering a great opportunity for sharing of knowledge and networking regarding women in the criminal justice system. Debbie herself an ex-prisoner, is a passionate activist for the rights of women prisoners and the first ex-prisoner in Australia to have been accepted to practise Law. WIPAN highly recommend any individuals or organisations that are interested in meeting with Debbie, becoming involved and/or attending the conference to contact her through the [Sisters Inside website](#).

## **HOMELESSNESS FORUM**

WIPAN was invited to attend the Homelessness Forum at Minter Ellison on the 2nd of August opened by the Honourable Linda Burney and hosted by Sue Cripps from [Homelessness NSW](#) and Chris Hartley. The forum attracted a diverse group of community service providers to discuss the various issues affecting homeless persons across Sydney. Some of the more significant issues discussed were those relating to policing, discrimination, self-determination and the changing public perception of homelessness, all of which were related to the human rights of homeless persons. Robyn Banks, former CEO of [PIAC](#) and now Tasmania's Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, presented a talk on human rights detailing how these play out at a grassroots level. Janet Meagher, Divisional Manager of [Psychiatric Rehabilitation Australia \(PRA\)](#) and consumer, presented a talk on systemic change, enabling consumer participation in decision-making and the need for a social change movement that allows us as a society to support and include homeless persons. Overall it was a very engaging and informative forum and we look forward to hearing more from Sue and her team.

## **NEEOPA FORUM**

WIPAN was invited by the President of [NEEOPA](#), Alison Monroe to attend their most recent NEEOPA forum hosted by Freehills. NEEOPA is the NSW Equal Employment Opportunity Practitioners Association and was established in 1985 for the purpose of assisting organisations implement quality equal employment opportunity programs. Current members seek to share experiences and ideas, network, gain support and achieve a deeper insight into the principles of EEO, Affirmative Action, Workforce Diversity and Work-Life Balance. The topic of the day was orientated around creating employment opportunities for youth and as such included guest speakers from QANTAS, Yalari and Youth Mentoring whom discussed how their programs assist youth navigate their way into the workforce. NEEOPA focuses on disadvantaged employee pools that may otherwise be overlooked. WIPAN have been invited back to speak during their upcoming showcase forum to present women ex-prisoners as a potential employee pool. If you would like further information about NEEOPA please visit their [website](#)

## **WIPAN VISIT EMU PLAINS CORRECTIONAL CENTRE**

WIPAN would like to thank Rita Vella, Manager of Offenders Programs and Services (Acting) at Emu Plains Correctional Centre for meeting with us to discuss how we can engage women in prison into the WIPAN mentoring program. Rita has kindly invited WIPAN to attend the upcoming staff meeting where we will be able to introduce our program directly with the staff that work alongside the women daily.

## **BOOK DONATIONS**

WIPAN welcome the donation of books for women in prison. Books of all descriptions are a very welcomed resource for women prisoners. If you would like to donate books to us please contact us to arrange pickup or delivery. At present we have eight large boxes full of books ready for delivery and will be making regular drops off to women's prisons as the books continue to be donated. Thank you to those women who have already generously donated.

## **SERVICE OF THE MONTH: ABORIGINAL WOMEN WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN LEAVING PRISON PILOT PROJECT**

WIPAN recently visited Cath and Therese at the AWLPP in Penrith to learn about their 2-year pilot project supporting women leaving prison.

The AWLPP aims to assist Aboriginal women exiting prison in the Metro West Region to reconnect with their children who are in care or living with other family members. The Project also assists the clients with reintegration back into the community by assessing their needs pre-

release and case management post-release.

The program provides supported accommodation to the client in one of their project houses and has the capacity to house and case manage the client for up to 12 months post-release. The AWLPP works in three phases: Pre-release, Day of Release and Post-Release and will accept clients that are Aboriginal, have children in care, have a history of domestic violence and/or a history of drug and alcohol misuse, and are being released on parole. To contact Cath or Therese please call 02 4732 2318.

## Contact WIPAN

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

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