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Social Mission department gets big tick of approval

By Kirralee Nicolle

The Salvation Army's national Social Mission team has received overwhelmingly positive results in a recent accreditation process, a key TSA leader says.

guide to make social services even more effective, according to Chief Secretary Colonel Winsome Merrett.



TSA's Social Mission Department staff are delivering person-centred care in all areas of the department's work.

The department undertook Health and Community Services Standards Accreditation (QIC), a review process that analyses community- and wellbeing-focused programs according to five standards: governance, management systems, consumer and community engagement, diversity and cultural appropriateness and service delivery.

These standards were applied to all four Social Mission focus areas: alcohol and other drugs, homelessness, family violence and youth services. In all these areas, the auditors found no areas of non-conformance, with some opportunities for improvement serving as a

Head of Quality and Safeguarding Bernadette Roberts said the accreditation reviewers' response to the audit of Social Mission was genuinely heartfelt, and their positive feedback was consistent across all Social Mission sites, streams, business partners and mission-enabling functions.

"It was encouraging to see the multitude of examples that clearly demonstrate person-centred, safe, seamless and effective experiences for the people Social Mission support," Bernadette said.

The auditors' feedback reflected that Social Mission personnel demonstrated

a clear commitment to the department's mission, vision and values in all areas. Feedback from external stakeholders confirmed that TSA's social services are considered a 'benchmark' in the industry.

"This exceptional result can be attributed to our organisational culture, with the auditors sharing that staff at all levels stated they feel supported, safe, valued and empowered," Winsome said.

"My congratulations to each one of you who work within Social Mission, and my sincere appreciation and thanks for the way in which you continue to transform Australia, one life at a time, with the love of Jesus."

NEWS

More than Just Brass at Orange Corps

By Lauren Martin

Restarting the Just Brass program at Orange Corps (NSW) has opened doors to new family connections.

Brass music is in Corps Officer Major Colin Young's blood. "I've been teaching young people to play brass instruments since I was 15 years old," he says. Without wanting to give away his age, that's more than 40 years!

Orange Corps had to close its popular Just Brass program due to COVID-19 restrictions. Majors Colin and Kate Young were prayerful and considerate about when and how to restart it.

"The families that had been involved had moved on," Colin said. "We wanted to open it up but to keep numbers small so that we could be intentional and care for whole families."

Just Brass programs in The Salvation Army usually get involved directly with schools. At Orange, while all schools have been approached, Just Brass is an invitational program. Each student receives individual lessons, leading up to proficiency enough to join a band.

"Everything will lead to the students joining the corps band," says Colin. "Advancement comes when they home-practice and where they are involved with an ensemble that is better than them."



Major Colin Young teaches a Just Brass student.

of being disappointed about the loss of an outreach opportunity, Colin and Kate decided to step into the gap and organised for a Sydney band to visit the corps on the weekend that used to be set aside in the community for the Brass Celebration.

"We have taken up the challenge to use that weekend and continue to provide a band weekend," Colin said. "We put the word out and invited people to a band concert at the corps. We were very fortunate that we got some television coverage of the Just Brass program, and they mentioned the concert as well."

Blacktown Corps Band visit

On 9-10 March, the Blacktown Corps Band visited Orange Corps, and their concerts filled the hall. More than 3000 people also watched the Facebook Live event.

The Youngs are planning more band events, which will be an outreach to the community and an encouragement to Just Brass participants to see talented musicians they can aspire to.

"Currently, we have about seven young people involved in Just Brass," says Colin. "We are hoping it will grow but we also want to keep numbers small so that we can be really intentional in supporting our families."

One of the families involved has two children learning instruments and also one parent – what a joyous noise when they are all practising at home! For Colin, Brass is not an outdated tradition in The Salvation Army but a vibrant means of connection.

"I have repeatedly tried to not get involved with brass ministry, but I just can't escape it! Everywhere I go, I've ended up getting involved in brass ministry. It's in my blood!"



Major Colin Young is passionate about teaching children.

Orange Corps has a strong band and used to be heavily involved in a community Brass Celebration weekend, but recently, the event has stopped. Instead



Major Darren Kingston and Aux-Lieut Katharine Brown at the Salvos' Prayer Tent at Fairfield Markets.

'Would you like me to pray for you?'

By Dean Simpson

Major Darren Kingston is passionate about prayer – and he is adamant that the general public generally wants to be prayed for.

He should know. He's prayed with thousands of people during his officership, mostly people on the streets.

"You might not believe it, but when you ask someone – anyone – if they'd like some prayer, most will say yes," Darren says.

Proof, he says, is his experience praying for people in shopping centres, at community events and anywhere the spirit leads him.

"I've seen people converted, people healed, people restored in relationships, and people just thankful that someone wants to pray for them," Darren says.

"People do like The Salvation Army. They know we do good things in the community and most people know we are a Christian organisation – so they trust us."

Darren is a Team Member at Macquarie Fields Salvos and loves nothing better than getting involved in the community.

Ingleburn Alive

He was at it again recently, participating in the Prayer Tent ministry at the annual Ingleburn Alive festival in Sydney's south-west.

It was the second successive year that members of Macquarie Fields Salvos have set up the Prayer Tent, which also offers free bottles of water, sunscreen and a chat.

Thousands of people flock to the Ingleburn Alive 'street party' festival each year for live music, carnival rides, food and market stalls.

"We had a great day," Darren says. "Last year was the first time we had the Prayer Tent, and it went so well that we decided to apply again ... and the organisers said yes.

"We prayed for a grieving lady, a lady with mental health, prayed for people's families, men with anxiety, a guy seeking direction, a Muslim man seeking joy, four teenagers and a child needing prayer for their exams.

"We also saw Jesus heal bladders, bloating, arthritis, knees, a broken arm, a foot complaint and an ulcer. Praise God!"

Fairfield 'on fire'

About 20km up the road is Fairfield Salvos, and they have also adopted the Prayer Tent ministry under the leadership of Auxiliary-Lieutenants Katharine and Russell Brown. Darren often joins the Fairfield Prayer Tent during outreaches.

The Browns and their team were also in action over the weekend at the popular Fairfield Markets at Fairfield Showground.

Russell was equally enthused about their experience of praying for people. "Isn't Jesus awesome!" he says. "We prayed for healing of leg for a man from a Buddhist background, prayed for a lady selling crystals and she encountered Jesus' love, have spoken words of encouragement over a mother and her kids and she wants to come to an 'encounter night' at the corps."

Darren said he would love to expand the Prayer Tent ministry to include other community events.

"It's such a simple ministry to set up but it can have a lifelong impact on the people we pray for," he says. "Wouldn't it be great if every corps out there had a prayer tent that they set up at markets or community events on a regular basis?"

"We'd really see an impact for the Kingdom then!"

VIEWPOINT



The Salvation Army's Andrew Hill (left) and Hope 103.2 radio presenter Ben McEachen.

Believe in Good – but what is good?

Good. What is good? The Salvation Army's General Manager for Community Fundraising, Andrew Hill, was recently interviewed by radio presenter Ben McEachen on Hope 103.2 about why it was time to reframe 'good'.

Q Andrew, here's an easy question for you. What is good?

A Well, we know God is good absolutely right up front, and we know that he calls us to do good in the world and to do good things in his name. So, in essence, that's what good is. Everything that is good in the world comes from God. That's what we believe. And with so much turmoil and confusion and distress that's going on in the world, I think we want to point people back to what is good and being able to do good for others and to look out for their fellow man and look out for each other. So yeah, that's what good is.

Q And Andrew, what you just said there, does that explain to some degree why Salvos came up with the Believe in Good campaign?

A I think we wanted to start a new conversation. Certainly, there's many older Australians that know who The Salvation Army are, and that goes

right back to their experience of The Salvation Army standing alongside them in the trenches during the wars. But we are finding more and more that younger people or different cultures really don't know who we are as much as that older generation. So, we wanted just to start a new conversation and be able to reach those people that maybe don't know us as well as some others do.

Q And how do you think the Believe in Good campaign will do that? Because it grabbed my attention, but I already knew about The Salvation Army. So why do you think it would start a new conversation about the Salvos?

A I think people are looking to see how can I actually reach out in my community? How can I look for what the opportunities to do something beyond just maybe sitting behind my device or just sitting in my own home? The ad and



the whole campaign is saying, actually, let's look out for opportunities to do good for each other. And you can do that through The Salvation Army. And we want to tell that story.

Q **And did you hope to redefine 'good' along the way?**

A Yeah, absolutely. We saw that the word good as a lot of words like that, or similar to that have been watered down when you say, oh, how are you doing today? Yeah, I'm good. What does that actually mean? Let's talk about that. What is good? Are you really good? And if you're not good, let's have a chat and maybe we can go a bit deeper. We want to reframe that word. Good.

Q **And right at the start of this conversation, Andrew, you touched on how The Salvation Army is anchored in the things of God, the things of following Jesus. As you reach out to the broader community of Australia, and you're talking about believing in good, how does The Salvation Army's belief in a good God integrate with the rest of society who may not necessarily hold that position?**

A Well, I think it comes back to how we were founded. Our founder, William Booth, he looked out onto darkest England. He looked out into London in the streets of London back there in the 19th century. And he saw that things weren't good. There were people in desperate situations, but William Booth knew that he couldn't go straight to them with here's the gospel of Jesus. If they didn't have food in their belly, if they didn't have a roof over their head, if they were enslaved by prostitution or drugs and alcohol. So, the physical need and the discussion around the physical need needed to happen. And so, we need to, and we still

do in today's society, we want to see Australians and interact with Australians that are desperate for hope. They're desperate for something good in their life. So, let's address the physical need that they may have. That might be a mental health situation. It might be homelessness, it might be someone escaping violence. We want to talk about that physical need, that physical distress you're in, and we want to help you with that. And along that journey. And as we do that and we come alongside you, then we can touch on what the real hope is, and that's the hope of Jesus. But we're not going to go straight to the hope of Jesus without actually going, well, actually something physical is going on that we want to help you with.

Q **Andrew, you've mentioned also wanting to change a conversation, spark a new one, also encourage people to get involved. What would a 'believe in good' movement look like in Australia?**

A It could look amazing. It would be a movement where everyone wanted to partner with us. Everyone wanted to come together to do good. So, I see our community, and it doesn't just have to be a church. It can be anywhere where Christians meet, wherever believers meet, or people that just want to have a great community meet and share and converse and go deeper and just go beyond the surface of maybe where we are these days, which is maybe a text message or just an interaction that's very, very shallow, but where a community comes together and they celebrate what is good about that community. And that is maybe breaking bread and having a meal together. It might be just having a conversation over coffee and going a bit deeper and say, 'Hey, what's really going on?' And how can we maybe go a little bit deeper by conversing and being friends?

**For more information on the
Believe in Good campaign, go to
<https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/believe-in-good/>**

ARMY ARCHIVES



The Salvation Army Austral Lasses band in 1906.

When the lasses banded together

By the turn of the 20th century, The Salvation Army was in full swing around the world and breaking new ground with its spirited style of ministering to the masses.

One thing The Salvation Army was good at was attracting attention, with many of its soul-saving rallies being staged outdoors, accompanied by a brass band.

Brass bands throughout the 1800s were mostly comprised of men, but by the early 1900s, The Salvation Army was literally turning heads with all-female brass bands.

The Austral Lasses Band was one such band, paving the way for the formation of many other Salvation Army and community women's bands in subsequent decades.

The Austral Lasses Band became so popular and proficient that they toured southern Australia and New Zealand – twice.

Major Ruby Strange, a band member, recorded many of the band's touring experiences. The band, she wrote, "drew great crowds because it was unique in being all lassies".

The band toured "the Commonwealth and New Zealand" and so successful was its odyssey that it was renamed 'The Famous Austral Lasses Band' for its second tour, according to Ruby.

Commencing at Yea, Victoria, on 20 August 1905, the women performed non-stop for two years, "covering something like 16,000 miles by rail, boat, horse-drawn coaches and on foot" with "many and varied experiences during that wonderful tour" including two earthquakes, being [sand]bar bound on the south coast of New Zealand for two days and being asked, "to play at the great Band Contest held in the Exhibition Building at Christchurch".

How'd the girls go? "The adjudicators classed our band as an A1 Organ Band; we were very thrilled," wrote Ruby.

It was a long way from their humble beginnings when they'd practise from 9am to 6pm under Major Will Gore in "the old Hamodava Tea Room upstairs the back of Headquarters, Bourke Street" in Melbourne. "At first came some weird sounds," Ruby wrote. But the players from NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland and New Zealand persevered for six weeks and "Will Gore soon brought about perfection".

Ruby wrote that many of the women "became officers when the band disbanded", and, most importantly, "many souls were won for Christ during that great tour".

The Salvation Army continued its use of female brass bands throughout the first half of the 20th century, predominantly due to the absence of many men who had gone to war.

One of the more popular bands in the 1940s was the Melbourne Ladies' Salvation Army band.

As men returned from war and Salvation Army corps experienced a growth in membership, many all-female bands were largely disbanded. It became the norm that boys generally joined the band and girls played the timbrel, although over the past 20 years the number of girls playing in corps bands has again increased.

*Some information sourced from bandblastsfromthepast.blog and Salvation Army Museum assistant manager Barry Gittins