

Building better lives together



Brotherhood
of St Laurence

Working for an Australia free of poverty

Building better lives since 1930

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the June 2015 edition of *Building better lives together*. As always, thank you on behalf of the Brotherhood of St Laurence for supporting our work to help create a fairer Australia.

We can all see that the world we live in today has dramatically shifted for young Australians making the transition from school to work. The certainties of past generations have been swept away in the modern economy. A first job is much harder to find for our youth. Today, employers place so much emphasis on education, skills and work experience. Youth unemployment for 15 to 24-year-olds sits as high as 20 per cent in some areas. One in five unemployed Australians happens to be a teenager.

When we were young, most of us moved more easily from job to job. We could be more confident that if we buckled down, we could save for a deposit on a house of our own. That's much harder for our young people today.

Nowadays, more than 290,000 young Australians are categorised as unemployed and, if you're

under 25 and looking for work, your chances of finding a job are declining.

I believe a national Youth Transitions Service – providing early career advice, targeted vocational training and, importantly, work experience – must be implemented to help tackle this crisis in our community. The Brotherhood of St Laurence has piloted the approach, working with employers and harnessing the local community effort of sporting and service clubs in youth unemployment hotspots.

Tapping into the productive potential of young people is vital to secure future prosperity. We also have broader obligations to better build the capacity of young Australians to find work so they can build a good life for themselves in our nation.

As parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbours – and as good citizens – if we don't care about the



Tony Nicholson

next generation, who will care for them?

Your support allows us to continue to provide innovative programs and services that ensures young and disadvantaged Australian children, teenagers and young adults are educated and trained, so they can find sustainable work and prosper in our community. Thank you for your care and concern.

Best wishes,

Tony Nicholson



Without a job, there is no future. Our kids and grandkids have the same aspirations as we did: a home, a job and a reliable income. If we don't invest in future generations, where will we be? **Support us to help young Australians find work.**

Please give to our Winter Appeal.
www.bsl.org.au

Vital skills help young job seekers pursue their career goals

Jessica, 20, had always dreamed of working in child care. With the Brotherhood's help she's working hard to make it happen.

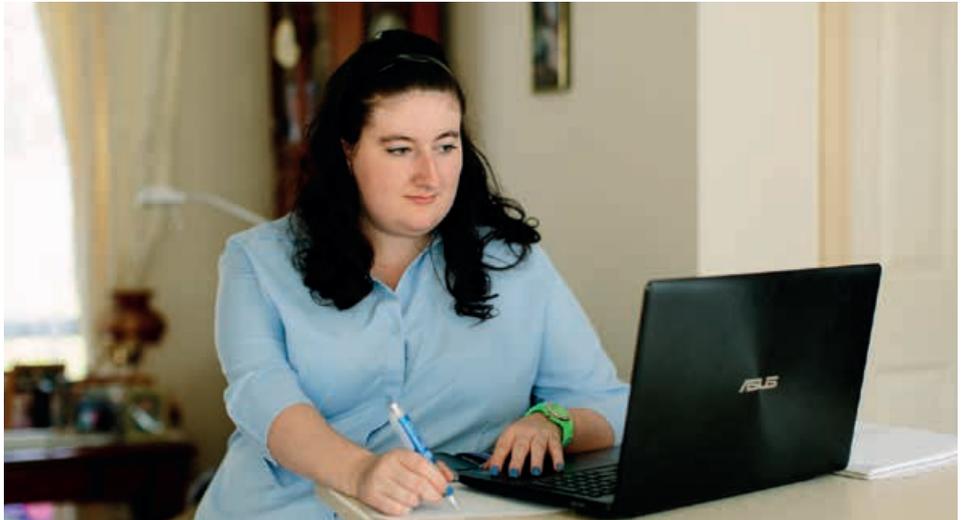
One in five unemployed Australians is a teenager. Jessica, who has been job-hunting since she finished school two years ago, is one of the human stories behind these stark statistics.

'I knew it would be hard to get a job, but I didn't think it would be this difficult', she said. 'I want so much to find work.'

However, she has renewed hope after completing the Brotherhood's Youth Transitions Program.

It helps young people aged 15 to 24 who are thinking of leaving school, or have left school, and are not sure what path to take.

This program gives them career guidance, job and apprenticeship



Jessica is working towards getting her dream job in child care

preparation, job search training, work placements, connections with employers and ongoing support.

'I thought it went really well', Jessica said. 'I actually know how to write a resume now, and cover letters. I had a mock interview. I'd never had an interview before.'

Jessica is now applying for jobs and volunteering three days a week.

Many of the Brotherhood's programs for young people are provided free or at low cost. This vital work would not be possible without your support.

For more information visit www.bsl.org.au/services/young-people/

AGL cooks up a storm

When our wonderful volunteers from AGL cooked up a storm for 50 hungry seniors, they found themselves challenged in a way they weren't expecting.

The 20 volunteers were busy planning and cooking a two-course meal for our senior citizens at the Coolibah Centre in Fitzroy, when a young homeless man came to the kitchen door.

The Brotherhood's Senior Manager of Development, Victoria Cosgrove, said he'd been drawn by the delicious food aromas.

'Bill told us that his mother was in hospital and his father had recently passed away. He had been sleeping rough for the past three nights and hadn't had anything to eat', she said.



Corporate volunteers from AGL

'Our volunteers quickly put together a hot meal for him, and packed up plenty of sandwiches for later. We will never turn anyone from our doors. As Mother Teresa said: If you can't feed 100 people, then feed just one.'

To find out more about our corporate volunteers go to www.bsl.org.au/get-involved/corporate-support/

Youth Foyer offers hope for the future

A teenager has overcome great personal challenges to be selected for the 29th Victorian Youth Parliament.

Belal, 19, joined the Education First Youth Foyer at Kangan Institute of TAFE last July, soon after it opened.

An innovative service that provides accommodation to young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in exchange for a commitment to study, the Foyers are a collaboration between the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Hanover Welfare Services and the Victorian Government.

Kangan, the second of three Foyers, houses 40 young people aged 16 to 24. It has offered Belal 'opportunities I've never had'.

'Coming from a family with mental health issues, I couldn't live at home', he said.

'Life is completely different now. It's like a utopian heaven with opportunities I've never had. I've been provided with so much support to help me achieve my dreams.

I'm completing a bridging program at La Trobe University and then starting a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in politics and philosophy in July.'

Belal will join more than 100 young people when they spend three days 'taking over' Parliament House to



Education First Youth Foyer student Belal

debate issues that are important to them and influence future legislation.

'I aspire to become a diplomat serving Australia abroad'.

Find out more about the Foyers at www.bsl.org.au/services/young-people/support-for-school-leavers/youth-foyers/

New ways to connect through study and work

The Brotherhood is leading the way with innovative methods aimed at reconnecting disadvantaged young people with school, or helping them to find work.

A new program aimed at students aged 11 to 14 is achieving great success. Run out of a high school in Melbourne's outer south-east, the Re-engaging Early Secondary Education and Training (RESET) program integrates young people back into mainstream classrooms.

Psychologist and program manager Lucy Vernon said: 'We're seeing some students who haven't been to school for two years and are now attending regularly.'

The Brotherhood's Given the Chance program has helped 10 young people secure a 12-month traineeship with international hotel chain Radisson.

The partnership is part of an industry employment initiative, which aims to assist national employers by recruiting and arranging the right training for disadvantaged job seekers – particularly young people



Brotherhood programs aim to reconnect young people with school or to find work

– who are willing and able to work. The recruits are also undertaking a Certificate III in Hospitality.

Both programs are funded by private donations, as well as philanthropic trusts. We are very grateful for the generous support which allows us to continue this vital work.

For more information go to www.bsl.org.au/services/young-people/ and <http://giventhechance.bsl.org.au/>

Our research maps the persistence of poverty

Almost a quarter of people who lift themselves out of poverty are poor again soon after, according to a stark new analysis by the Brotherhood of St Laurence's Research and Policy Centre.

The new study identifies Australians who are more vulnerable to falling into poverty – including older people and the long-term unemployed – and are more likely to remain poor, or move in and out of poverty.

Researchers Dr Francisco Azpitarte and Dr Eve Bodsworth found that among those who experienced poverty, 12 per cent were still poor more than a decade after the first statistics were recorded.

Dr Azpitarte said that although poverty is relatively short-lived for

many Australians who experience it, for some groups it can be persistent.

'In particular older Australians, the long-term unemployed, people with limited education, households where no-one has a job, households where at least one member has a disability – not just individuals with disabilities themselves – and people living in highly disadvantaged areas are more likely to remain poor', he said.

'Even if they are able to leave poverty they are more likely to become poor again, and the longer

people remain in poverty, the less likely they are to escape it.'

The Brotherhood's research, 'Persistent Disadvantage', is a chapter in a major new report, *Addressing entrenched disadvantage in Australia*, published by the Committee for Economic Development of Australia.

To view the report go to www.ceda.com.au/research-and-policy/policy-priorities/disadvantage

Over half a century of giving

Margaret Dean's involvement with the Brotherhood of St Laurence spans more than 50 years.

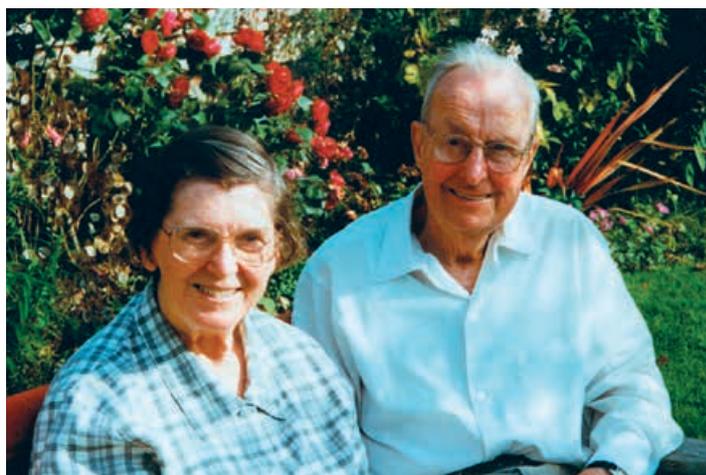
'My husband Stan and I first learned about the Brotherhood through our church group, the Canterbury Fellowship, which worships at Trinity College every Sunday', Mrs Dean said.

That was back in 1958, and before the first of their five children was born.

Their involvement became more personal after they met David Scott and his wife Diana in the 1960s. Mr Scott was the Brotherhood's third executive director and nephew of its founder Father Gerard Tucker.

'Stan and I were always involved with charities, both volunteering and donating', Mrs Dean said.

Through all the years of child-raising, working, travelling and then enjoying retirement, the Deans always kept up with their involvement.



Margaret Dean with her late husband Stan

Her main interests nowadays are in the Brotherhood's work with unemployed young people, and with its work in retirement and ageing.

Her beloved husband died in 2003, and Mrs Dean still continues to support charitable works in every way she can.

'I give on behalf of Stan and me', she said.

For more information about supporting the Brotherhood's work, go to www.give.bsl.org.au or telephone (03) 9483 1301.



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