

# arbias Newsletter

Issue # 4

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# A word from the CEO...



Hello Team

This last quarter of the year has seen a number of events that respond to our theme for action this year 'time for investment' and include the inaugural Victorian services state forum held in Ballarat. The purpose of the forum was to strengthen teams and culture, share knowledge and education, provide an opportunity for networking and having fun (team building). The theme of the forum for 2024 was "A time for investment" and to answer the question "Why we do what we do?"

The agenda was quite diverse which ensured focus and engagement by the participants. The agenda included but not exclusive to a Panel discussion delivered by Board Director Gabrielle Levine, myself and Mario, and presentations from TAC executive, Leanne (NPAIS), the annual CEO Awards the recipients of whom were Michael (ITS), Loise (RIPL), Veronica and Kathy (administration). There were activities (games) at the of each of the two days where staff could 'let their hair down'.

The forum was preceded by a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony. This traditional smoking ceremony and acknowledgement of the Traditional Aboriginal Custodians, the Wadawurrung people, was conducted by respected Aboriginal elder **Uncle Paul, and Tristian Harris** from Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co operational Limited. Uncle Paul explained the significance of the ceremony, while accompanied by the distant echo of the didgeridoo and clap sticks. CEO John Eyre paid respects to Uncle Paul and the Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the land on which the forum was convened. The ceremony was truly symbolic, a time for reflection, mutual respect and cleansing.



## Opportunity for improvement

Our agency was the subject of a WorkSafe Improvement notice which assisted us to improve processes and training. WorkSafe described our efforts as 'above and beyond' lifting the notice.

## Certification

We were also the subject of a NDIS quality certification Audit resulting in certification as an approved provider for another 18 months.

## A veteran

Veronica (affectionately known as Ronny) passed her 10-year anniversary with arbias, now noted (name plaque) with pride on our 10-year honour board; Well done Ronny!!



## Coming up 😊

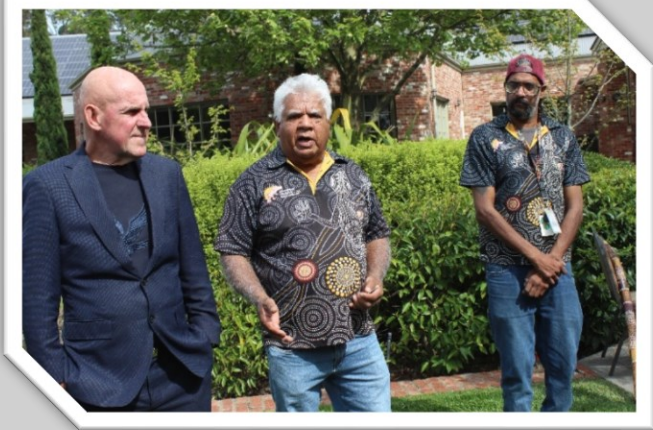
- November each year triggers the Board Annual General Meeting where the Directors meet to stand for re-election and Directors must decide to sign off on the audited financials. The process is followed by a dinner and discussion about the next years plans and innovations.
- Christmas celebrations (stay safe everyone)

# Inaugural Victorian State Forum

The Victorian inaugural annual forum is certainly the highlight of recent arbias events.

Held at the Mercure Hotel & Convention Centre Ballarat, the content was a mixture of networking, learning as well as having fun. Everyone had the opportunity to meet and mingle and get to know other staff across all arbias sites within Victoria.

The conference commenced with a traditional smoking ceremony and acknowledgement of the Traditional Aboriginal Custodians, the Wadawurrung people. It was an honour to have respected Aboriginal elder Uncle Paul, and Tristin Harris from Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co operational Limited with us.



Uncle Paul explained the significance of the ceremony, as being a means of spiritual purification; Tristin played the didgeridoo and clap sticks, as the smouldering native plants produced their cleansing properties.



The smoking ceremony may have been a first-time experience for many and definitely a highlight of the forum.



# Why we do what we do...

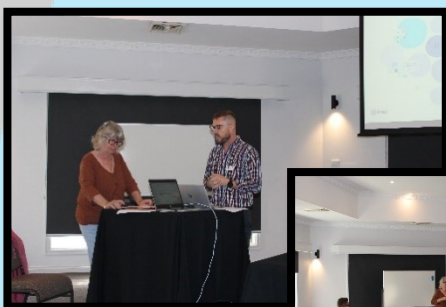
It was a great turn out of staff and day one comprised of a full agenda with a variety of presentations and interesting conversations. To start it off, John welcomed all staff and expressed his deep gratitude for the work they do; He was joined by Board Member Gabi Levine who gave an insight of the long-standing efforts of the Board as well as acknowledging arbias staff on the dedication in their work.



TAC Provider Specialist Glen Barton provided an update of the TAC, and what they are all about, including their partnership with arbias.

Leanne Mathews from the NPAIS team shared interesting details about supporting clients with ABI , responding to behaviours of concern as well as self-care advice.

It was wonderful to have some colleagues from NSW join the forum and on day 2, David Forfar and Cath Light presented on the work that ITS Case Workers do in NSW and gave an insight about the program. This was an unknown topic for many and the audience showed great interest not only for the admirable work they do, but the amazing stories that Cath kindly shared with the group.



Michelle Allen from CU Health gave an update of the services that they provide and the benefits that arbias staff are able to utilise.



Bringing the conference to a close, Narelle Woods gave the final presentation and explained the nature of a non-for-profit organisation and the financial position as well as challenges of such a status, while also elaborating more information on CU Health services.



# Fun and games...



There was fun and laughter to be had as well during the forum and so Kathy and Mario had a few activities up their sleeves for everyone to enjoy. Interactive games, competitions and activities not only brought a welcomed change to the agenda, but it also brought everyone together as these unfolded into a constructive (literally) and laughter-filled afternoon.



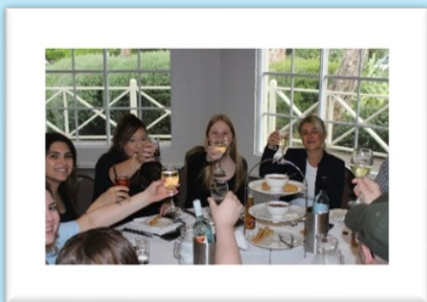
# CEO Awards 2024

The CEO Awards for 2024 were also announced at this year's forum; Recipients of the award for 2024 were: Veronica Thorne from Intake at Hope St, Michael Kuusik from ITS Wyong, Loise Ndung'u from RIPL Wheelers Hill and Kathy Seriotis from Hope St. Congratulations to all the recipients as well as those nominated – and there were many! Well done everyone 🙌🙌🙌🙌



## Time to relax....

After a long day, everyone had the dinner to look forward to. A time to unwind, eat and mingle. The night was enjoyed by all and the food was delicious! The perfect way to end the day.



# Good new stories

## ITS Goulburn – NSW

An ITS client by the name of “Jaqson” who is a 19-year-old man that has experienced bullying, family upheaval and AOD issues both in himself and his parents, was referred to me to assist with housing, counselling and attending pro social activities that would enable him to live a life with more structure and hope.

Jaqson had been initially hesitant to work with ITS and was hard to track down for the first month, however he has shown a massive change in his attitude recently. He is being proactive in searching for rental properties and has (finally) started attending group sessions with Flourish, a local support service I referred him onto. With Flourish, he is attending classes on candle making and t shirt printing. Reports from Staff at flourish are positive. I have set up Jaqson with an account with Headspace for phone counselling, but he is yet to engage, despite this he is receptive to counselling and understands the need for this.

Jaqson had been living for a few weeks in TA as tensions living with his grandfather made it unbearable but at time of writing he is back home.

After the initial standoffishness Jaqson has now been calling me several times a week to have lunch where we brainstorm plans for his future. Watch out for some unique and creative Graffiti themed clothing coming out of Goulburn!

We have together attended services NSW to obtain his proof of age card and birth certificate. We have attended multiple housing meetings, and he has been proactive in looking at accommodation and required minimal prompting to attend DCJ and Centrelink for his supporting documentations. I will often call him to remind him of needing important paperwork only to be advised that he has already arranged.

Jaqson is due to start a trial for bricklaying work. I have used brokerage to purchase work wear for him. This will be one of his first jobs and is aware that this type of employment can be physically demanding yet he claims he is excited to give it a go.

*This is why we do what we do, despite minimal engagement at the onset my client has smashed it out of the park the last few weeks. 😊 🙌 🙌 🙌*

*Paul Avenell – ITS Case Worker – Goulburn, NSW*

# Good new stories

## ITS Newcastle– NSW

Hi Guys,

I would like to introduce you to Oscar. He has been an ITS client for 9 weeks and has completely turned his life around.

Oscar has a vision impairment which affects all aspects of his daily life. His condition is pixelated vision which causes colours to bleed or fade and objects to appear pixelated. This has never been addressed until our Newcastle ITS worker took him to the ophthalmologist a few of weeks ago.

Since he picked up his glasses (with a little financial assistance from arbias - we only paid the gap of \$99), and he can see properly for the first time in years, He can now read which has enabled him to complete the Equips program after several years of addiction.

Allison also provided Oscar with a microwave, as his accommodation only has an electric stove which has a broken oven. Allison has also helped him organise dental treatment to have his wisdom teeth out.

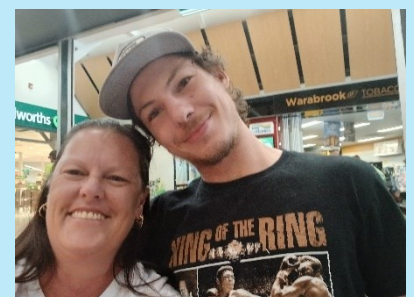
This young 28-year-old man now has a new lease on life.

He is drug free – he no longer has constant pain thanks to his teeth extractions and can see perfectly.

Look at that smile on his face 😊

It is so rewarding to have a gold star like this on your case load. Allison has been with us less than three months and to get a result like this is testament to her dedication to these guys.

Well done Allison and most of all well-done Oscar. 🙌🙌🙌



Cath Light – ITS Program Lead - NSW

# Good new stories

## ITS Nowra – NSW

Nowra 'Circle of Service Specialist Team' (we didn't name it!!)

Won the team member (recognition) for the month 😊

GO JULES!!

*Julie Irvine – ITS Case Worker – Nowra, NSW*



## Support Coordination - Vic

I am pleased to share some good news regarding two of my clients.

### CINDY

Cindy lives with her mother, Yvonne, and has been my participant since July 2023.

For the past year I have encouraged them both to engage with a support worker that will provide social engagement for Cindy and provide some respite for her mother.

Recently I was contacted by Yvonne who informed me that she was ready to accept the supports from a worker, so I contacted an independent worker who provides supports for another client of mine.

We met up at a café, where I made introductions, and we all agreed on a plan for Cindy to visit places, such as animal farms, and animal rescue homes, as Cindy is a big animal lover.

Cindy is not a morning person, but on the day, she was so excited about a farm visit, she was up and dressed, ready to go by 9am!

There are ongoing plans for weekly days out and there may be an opportunity for Cindy to commence in some volunteer work with animals soon.

Yvonne is pleased that Cindy is enjoying her time with her worker and Yvonne has time to herself and her garden.

### ADELE

Adele had been made homeless for the past few months, not long after I started as her Support coordinator.

I was not able to conduct a welfare check during that period except for contact with the Police who had sighted her on a few occasions. Eventually Adele contacted North Richmond Community Health- Outreach workers, who were able to engage with her semi-regularly and in some instances provide temporary -accommodation (via) Launch housing.

After a few false starts, myself, Adele, and the Outreach workers came together, and we viewed several SRSs' before finding one in Hawthorn.

Adele has quickly settled in, making the room her own and enjoying the comfort, safety, and privacy that it provides.

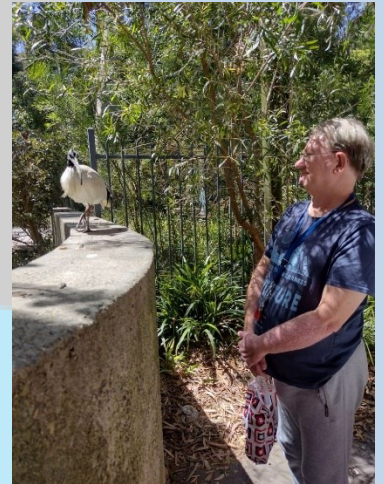
There are shops and a tram stop which are conveniently located close by and Adele enjoys the freedom of using these and to come and go when she wants.

*Dominic Graham – Support Coordination – Vic*

# Good new stories

## Community Programs - Vic

One of our clients Gary had been admitted to hospital and he has been in hospital for 1 month. We visited him 2 weeks ago to see how he was going; he was very emotional and really happy to see us. He mentioned that we were his closest friends when we arrived at his bed. Nurses were surrounding him and told them who we were. Gary also had a whiteboard with our names on it for contact purposes. He was also in tears and wanted to go back home. His goal was to get better after his operation and so he could return home, and couldn't wait for us to take him out for a service. Later on during the week, after seeing Gary, the nurse advised that he was going home that week and that Gary couldn't wait to see us again. He is now recovering from home. Gary is a person who is very emotional and wanting love from friends and family, which he has lost and the only thing that keeps him motivated to focus on his goals is arbias and the Community Programs service.



*Nelly Lay & Liam Bartlett – Community Programs, Vic.*

## Compliments

### TAC RIPL – Wheelers Hill

**From:** Georgia Valantasis  
**Sent:** Thursday, 28 November 2024 9:23 AM  
**To:** Kathy Seriotis <[kseriotis@arbias.com.au](mailto:kseriotis@arbias.com.au)>  
**Subject:** Good news story - Wheelers Hill

Compliment received from Resident's family - Wheelers Hill

WH staff drove client to watch her nieces play netball. The family sent a message and said *"She loved it and we loved seeing her so happy. We believe this is due to her environment and the people who are caring for her thank you to the team at Wheelers Hill"*

Kind regards,

**Georgia Valantasis**

**House Supervisor - arbias Ltd**

**TAC RIPL Accommodation Wheelers Hill**

# Compliments

## Intake – Vic



Dear Veronica + Arbias  
Team

THANK YOU !!  
for being so professional  
and supportive of our rural  
clients

Love your work!!

from : Foster Medical  
Center + Center.  
thru NPMH

From start to finish  
so professional + supportive  
Thankyou  
CH.

Hope Street recently received this card,  
which says it all!

Great to have such feedback and well-done  
team! 🙌🙌🙌

# Compliments

## TAC Case Management– Vic

**From:** Marina Simundic <[msimundic@arbias.com.au](mailto:msimundic@arbias.com.au)>

**Sent:** Friday, 15 November 2024 8:39 AM

**To:** Mario Nuzzo <[mnuzzo@arbias.com.au](mailto:mnuzzo@arbias.com.au)>

**Cc:** Bonnie Halliday <[bhalliday@arbias.com.au](mailto:bhalliday@arbias.com.au)>

**Subject:** Recognition from provider

Hi Mario,

I just wanted to share some recognition from Shan's TAC coordinator about Bonnie:

"An initial tangent – Bonnie's work with Shan (Buddhika) has been outstanding! I'm so appreciative of her willingness to go above and beyond in her work over months with him, despite the challenges and his at times unacceptable language/behaviour.

Bonnie has been not just an excellent professional, but so compassionate and empathetic, and I'd really like to formally acknowledge that.

I tried to keep in touch as much as possible, especially when incidents or abusive calls took place, but I know this has taken a toll on Bonnie. I'm sad that she has stepped back, but I totally understand, and she has been a huge part of some huge positive progress for Shan.

I look forward to working with Reilly moving forward in this case."

**From:** Marina Simundic <[msimundic@arbias.com.au](mailto:msimundic@arbias.com.au)>

**Sent:** Thursday, 7 November 2024 10:30 AM

**To:** Mario Nuzzo <[mnuzzo@arbias.com.au](mailto:mnuzzo@arbias.com.au)>

**Cc:** Bonnie Halliday <[bhalliday@arbias.com.au](mailto:bhalliday@arbias.com.au)>; Isabella Gatsios <[igatsios@arbias.com.au](mailto:igatsios@arbias.com.au)>

**Subject:** Compliments

Hi Mario,

I just wanted to share that a provider who has recently worked with Bonnie and Isabella really sang their praises to me over the phone today! He said they were both lovely and it was amazing that we had 2 people this good in one organisation 😊 Just wanted to share this compliment in recognition!!



*Wishing you  
all a safe and  
happy  
Festive Season.*