

2017-2018



# Annual Report

Gold Coast Community Legal Centre  
& Advice Bureau Inc.



Dignity,  
human rights  
& social justice  
for people on the  
Gold Coast









# Annual Report

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& Advice Bureau Inc.

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# About Us

Gold Coast Community Legal Centre is a non profit community based legal service advising and assisting the Gold Coast since 1982.

## Our Vision

- Dignity, human rights and social justice for people on the Gold Coast.
- Build a just and inclusive society that values difference and diversity, and the rights of all people and their communities to the social and economic resources they need to exercise their human rights influence the development of law to recognise the needs of people who are socially or economically disadvantaged
- Assist people who would otherwise be denied access to justice, due to social or economic disadvantage, to exercise their legal rights.

## Our Goals

- Promote access to justice
- Provide free legal advice and information
- Assist people to address their legal problems
- Increase community awareness of the law
- Produce clear, easy-to-read publications

## Description of Services

The Gold Coast Community Legal Centre & Advice Bureau Inc is a generalist legal Centre, providing assistance, advice and advocacy across a wide variety of areas, including but not limited to family law, child protection, domestic and family violence, consumer issues, tenancy law, employment law, fencing, trees and other neighbourhood disputes, motor vehicle collisions, drink driving and other driving offences and civil contract issues.

We also provide extensive duty lawyer work in child protection and domestic and family violence detailed on pages 20 and 22.

Due to an increased need for assistance in areas of family law, family violence and child protection our work in this area has expanded considerably as detailed on pages 25.

This year we have continued representation services at the Mental Health Review Tribunal and have extended our knowledge and expertise to best help those experiencing mental health issues as detailed on pages 24.

## Hours of Operation

The Centre is open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8.30am until 4.30 pm and on Tuesdays from 8.30 am to 8pm. Appointments can be made during between 9am and 4pm each day.

All of the solicitors see clients by appointment booked up around a week in advance except for the evening walk-in advice clinic on Tuesdays from 5pm.

## Outreach Clinics

The outreach clinics continue to be in high demand with numbers remaining consistently high and appointments being filled very quickly as soon as they become available. Currently the Centre offers services at ten (10) different outreach clinics described in detail at pages 16-19 of this report.

## Community Legal Education

We also deliver community legal education and talks to community groups and other agencies in the Gold Coast area. Regular family law mediation information sessions are held weekly at the local Family Relationships Centre. In addition, legal staff deliver CLE talks on request to local organisations on issues including wills, powers of attorney, traffic matters, dealing with police, and consumer law. More information on our community legal education is on page 28.

## Volunteer and Pro Bono Contributions

We have community and legal volunteers who are an integral part of our service and critical in extending our vision to help the Coast's most vulnerable member's have access to legal information, referral, community education advice and casework. On pages 34 to 38 we detail the extensive contribution they make to our Centre.

“The legal centre has for the first time allowed me to put my education to good use and it is the best thing I have done with my degree so far.”

Law student volunteer Sophie  
Gorrick, Griffith Community  
Lawyering Clinic





# Management Committee and Staff

Our Centre is made up of a diverse range of staff and volunteers who help provide the community the services which the Centre offers. We have a fantastic management committee who work all year round to make decisions to ensure the Centre operates to the best of its ability based on resources, staffing, funding and changes in the community.



**President**  
April Vincent



**Vice-President**  
Cr Dawn Crichlow OAM  
(resigned 21.07.18)



**Secretary**  
Bobbi Reilly



**Treasurer**  
Joe Ranieri



**Ordinary Member**  
Dennis Nettlefold



**Ordinary Member**  
Simone Fraser



**Ordinary Member**  
Sunil Dutt



Our staff are continuously working hard to meet the community needs in regard to free, front line, grass roots legal advice and assistance. All staff share a common value of wanting to help the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in the community and they work together to achieve this shared goal



**Director & Principal Solicitor**  
Victoria Shiel



**Coordinating Solicitor**  
Tanya Diessel



**Senior Solicitor**  
Manny Palma



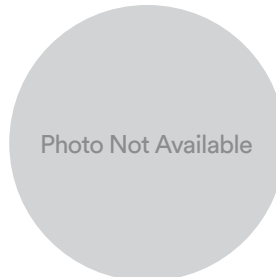
**Solicitor**  
Anne Pridham



**Solicitor**  
Amelda Schrenk



**Solicitor**  
Mariette Curcuruto



**Solicitor**  
Mark Brady



**Solicitor**  
Rikki-Jane Buckland



**Solicitor**  
Skye Worth



**Administration Coordinator**  
Heather Buckley



**Administration and Referral Officer**  
Tryll Gemparo



**Finance Officer\***  
Carolyn Ashcroft

\*Vicki Hall ceased employment as Finance Officer in November 2017; Carolyn Ashcroft commenced November 2017.



# President's Report

*April Vincent*

## Welcome to the Gold Coast Community Legal Centre & Advice Bureau Inc's Annual Report. This has been a year of consolidation and settling down after last year's major relocation to our current premises.

The old kindergarten provided to us cheaply by the Gold Coast City Council has fulfilled all the hoped for aspirations that prompted our move. But the "old" aspect has had some predictable ramifications: need for a new roof and some fencing issues recently attended to, plus the usual renovation follow-ups.

However, the building and its tree-filled outdoor spaces has contributed to a friendly and relaxed atmosphere that is a great help to the stressful or unhappy background being dealt with by many of our clients. And of course the clients of the other organisations who operate here along with us.

This consolidation has seen new solicitors employed, or current part-time hours increased and new services provide by us to the Gold Coast community. Duty lawyer work for Legal Aid on the fronts of domestic violence and child protection has been very valuable to us and to those helped out at the Courthouses. Our staff are also assisting with Mental Health Tribunal work, Elder Abuse Prevention support services, Seniors Legal Service and the new Health Justice Partnership at Gold Coast hospitals.

There has been considerable workplace training and planning organised over the past year, and this will no doubt continue given the current funding and employment requirements. The volunteers on reception are having training days every six months, and also attended the very interesting Accidental Counselling course provided by Lifeline, which included the office/administration staff.

A new strategic plan has been agreed after sessions for the staff members and the Management Committee, and the staff have attended the required Workplace Bullying and Harassment training.

Our mentor and local Councillor Dawn Crichlow has recently tendered her resignation from the Management Committee due to other commitments. Dawn has been on the committee for many years and had been when I joined it back in the Davenport St days. She has been President and Vice President, but has always looked out for the Advice Bureau and Legal Centre interests in the ways she does so well. Thanks for everything Dawn, and we hope to keep seeing you.

Our volunteers continue to provide great support and involvement in our Gold Coast community, so it is a proud day for all with the Honorary Life Memberships which have been awarded.

Thanks to the staff for their wonderfully understanding work, and to the volunteers including the walk-in clinic solicitors, and also to our Management Committee for the outside viewpoint they provide to our service.

The organisation continues to grow and offer a wider range of services to the community, despite the ongoing competition for funding against other service providers. This is a credit to the professionalism of the Management team.

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**April Vincent**  
President



# Acknowledgment of Funding Sources

The Gold Coast Community Legal Centre & Advice Bureau Inc greatly appreciates the funding provided to the Centre to enable us to provide free legal advice and assistance to the Gold Coast community. Without the funding provided, the Centre would not be able to operate and Gold Coast residents would be limited in their access to free legal services.

Gold Coast Community Legal Centre & Advice Bureau Inc. acknowledges its funding sources:

The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General and Legal Aid Queensland provided funding through the Community Legal Service Program (CLSP) for our legal service. The CLSP program is managed by Legal Aid Queensland.

The Centre received an annual grant from the City of Gold Coast as a contribution towards our rent.

We received a grant from the City of Gold Coast to assist with the update and collation of the Community Resource Guide as well as volunteer and back-office expenses.

We received payment from Legal Aid Queensland for our provision of the Domestic Violence Duty Lawyers Services and Child Protection Duty Lawyer at Southport Courthouse and our work in the Mental Health Tribunal.

We received funding from Bond University and Griffith University to place students at the Centre as part of a clinical education course run by the University.



**Australian Government**  
Attorney-General's Department



**Queensland**  
Government



CITY OF  
**GOLD COAST.**





# Director and Principal Solicitor's Report

*Victoria Shiel*

It is a pleasure and a privilege to report on another successful year of our Centre's operations. Our Centre continues to go from strength to strength, with increasing and diversified services to clients being provided and closer working relationships within the Gold Coast community ensuring that we help as many people and particularly those vulnerable and disadvantaged as we can.

All staff and volunteers are to be commended for their dedication to this service. Our large team of student, legal and community volunteers bring a vibrant energy and enthusiasm to our Centre and greatly enhance our ability to help those who reach out to us.

This year we are honouring some amazing members of our organisation who have devoted in excess of ten years, and in some cases over 20 years to working together to shape and sustain our centre by presenting them life memberships of the association. It is also with sadness and gratitude that we farewell Dawn Crichlow from our Committee after 27 years of service. Dawn's enthusiasm and passion for our work has played a pivotal role at our Centre and I cannot thank her enough for what she has contributed.

## Service Delivery Improvements and Highlights

Our statistics show that we are closely aligned with the Queensland Strategy and Investment model and that we comfortably met our overall targets for information, advice, and casework and community legal education for the 2017-18 year.

This year we were successful in obtaining funding to deliver a new service to deliver domestic and family violence legal help in safe locations. This new position works collaboratively with community and government partners in the integrated response network and goes a long way to attempt to ensure that no door is the wrong door for people needing help.

We continue to be involved in delivering DV and CP duty lawyer services at the local Magistrates Courts and also attending during the afternoons as needed for matters listed on an urgent basis.

Our expertise and work in the area of mental health law is increasing and we are assisting more people in this jurisdiction.

Our Tuesday night advice clinic is running well and we delivered 494 advices this reporting period. We have conducted 2 information training sessions for volunteer lawyers and have a roster of volunteer lawyers who work with us at our evening advice sessions.





Our outreaches across the Gold Coast at neighbourhood and community centres are extremely popular and appointments fill quickly. Working in these other agencies we reduce the stress and travel time and enhance our referral pathways.

In addition to the formal and informal placements of students at our Centre from Bond and Griffith University we also conducted a legal student clinic with Griffith University called “Community Lawyering Clinic Gold Coast”

Family law remains the area most people seek our assistance and the areas of child contact and family and domestic violence the main areas people sought advice on. We have noticed a significant spike in people seeking assistance with domestic and family violence than over the same period in previous years. The expanded specialist and domestic violence court at Southport has seen a spike in people requiring our help and assistance in this area and we are significantly involved in this court through our role as a duty lawyer and our ongoing role in stakeholder meetings and the local community.

The main civil areas of law we have advised on this reporting period have been credit and debt and employment law and demand in both these areas is higher than the corresponding period in 2016-17.

## Overview of Cooperative/Collaborative Activities

Our service remains committed and involved in a number of cooperative and collaborative activities across the Gold Coast.

For another year we have a staff member, Skye Worth as the Chairperson of the Family Law Pathways Network. This network hosts a number of workshops and events throughout the year for professionals working in family law and the membership includes mediators, social workers, solicitors, counsellors and community and government workers.

We are members of the Domestic and Family Violence Integrated Response Network, the Homeless Connect Network and the Multicultural Communities Council

Our outreach service at the Southport Court House was developed in strong collaboration with the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre and we operate out of their rooms at the Court House.

Our service relies heavily on volunteers and the referrals we receive from Volunteering Gold Coast allow us to have a full complement of volunteers. Heather Buckley attends the Volunteering Gold Coast Network meetings and training that they provide.

We have again hosted tax help volunteers at our organisation and find this is a greatly appreciated service for the Gold Coast community, with appointments booked up very quickly.

We are very grateful to the Palm Beach Neighbourhood Centre, Palm Beach Library, Nerang Neighbourhood Centre, Oxenford Rage Community Centre, Upper Coomera Community Centre and Family Relationships Centre at Ashmore who provide us free of charge with a venue and the facilities to conduct our outreach services.

**Victoria Shiel**  
Director & Principal Solicitor

“Our Centre continues to go from strength to strength, with increasing and diversified services to clients being provided and closer working relationships within the Gold Coast community ensuring that we help as many people and particularly those vulnerable and disadvantaged as we can.”

**Victoria Shiel**  
Director & Principal Solicitor



# Coordinating Solicitor's Report

*Tanya Diessel*

It is with great pleasure that I write my first report as Coordinating Solicitor of the Centre. This role was created to assist the Director/Principal Solicitor in the responsibilities of the Centre and I moved into it in August 2017.

As many of you may be aware, I have taken on other responsibilities and duties within this role in assisting Victoria in making sure the Centre meets its requirements and obligations. This report is touching on some of those aspects which I have been involved in.

## Reception Volunteers

Our reception continues to be manned by a great team of volunteers, comprising of both community volunteers and law student volunteers. We continue to have a large diversity of community and law student volunteers, with a combination of those who have been with the Centre for years and those who are new to the reception role and having a experience getting involved with the Centre.

Thank you to our reception volunteers on your commitment, and willingness to turn up each shift, with a smile and attitude ready to take on whatever the day throws at you, which we all know can be challenging at times but that is what makes it even more worthwhile.

Thank you for adapting and your flexibility in what is required of you on any given shift, for dealing with clients first-hand in whatever emotional state they contact us in, for leading the way for our newer volunteers and helping them as they are confronted with the reality of the rollercoaster that can sometimes happen even within the space of a 4-hour shift. Your commitment, effort and presence you bring to the Centre is never unnoticed and always appreciated.

Please have a look at the "Community Volunteer" page for a detailed list of our reception volunteers

## Law students

We have had another successful year of law students coming through the Centre, gaining not only experience for their own benefit, but also opening their eyes to the issues in the community, raising their awareness on the importance of volunteering and 'giving back' as well as the benefit they bring to the Centre by allowing us to give clients a greater service. Students are shown this part of the legal profession that they generally are unaware of before walking in our doors. As many of you have engaged with the students whilst they are with us, for whatever duration they are here, you will have heard how wonderful they think the experience is and the 'light bulb' moments they have had in realising the types of legal issues and matters people deal with which aren't televised or generate media attention, but are still important, stressful, emotional matters they are fighting.





I sincerely thank all the staff and volunteers who engage with the students, talk to them, share experience with them and make them feel welcome. Not only are they getting something out of this but our clients appreciate the extra work they can help with beyond what the constraints of solicitors appointments allow.

To see all the programs and clinics we had this year for law students, and a comprehensive list of all who attended, please read the “Law students” page.

### Walk In Night Clinic and Volunteer Solicitors

Night Clinic has been a great success this year with more volunteer solicitors coming on board. We have increased our number of volunteer solicitors which enables us to be able to assist a greater number of clients to turn up on a Tuesday evening.

A massive thank you to our committed team of volunteer solicitors and the law students who make our Night Clinic a success! For our volunteer solicitors who come from a variety of backgrounds and work experiences, the Night Clinic can be overwhelming and a challenge when it is not part of their usual employment duties to provide quick advice on a variety of areas of law – so your willingness and commitment to keep turning up to the standing-room-only reception and helping us give competent and quality legal advice is very much appreciated.

Have a look at the “Walk In Advice Clinic” page for more information on the night clinic and number of clients seen, as well as the “Volunteer Solicitors” page for the list and background of our volunteer solicitors

### Building and Centre upgrades

Since moving into the new premises in December 2016, we have all settled in now and call it home.

The building itself has continued to improve with updates to technology, additional security cameras and approval of the new boundary fence. There is still plenty more changes to come in the future so it is exciting to see how things will look in 12 month's time.

Thank you everyone for a great year and I look forward to what the next 12 month's brings to the Centre – whatever challenges, hurdles, successes and triumphs we will see though.

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**Tanya Diessel**  
Coordinating Solicitor

“I sincerely thank all the staff and volunteers who engage with the students, talk to them, share experience with them and make them feel welcome. Not only are they getting something out of this but our clients appreciate the extra work they can help with beyond what the constraints of solicitors appointments allow.”

**Tanya Diessel**  
Coordinating Solicitor

# Deliverables for 2017-2018

The area of law most people sought advice on was family law claiming more than half of all advices and mostly the help sought in children's matters and family violence, followed by civil law particularly in the areas of debt, employment, tenancy and consumer complaints and advice in criminal law was considerably less sought after this year.

**4,567** 

The total number of legal advices given during this period

**1,100** 

We completed 1,100 legal tasks including court documents and letters during this period

**1,291** 

We opened 1,291 new cases (including duty lawyer services) during this period

**8,500** 

We gave legal information and referral in over 8,500 instances during this period

**33** 

We delivered 33 community legal education activities during this period

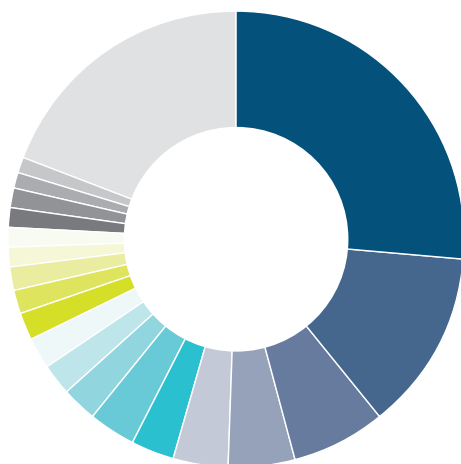
**1,234** 

We appeared in court as a duty lawyer for 1,234 cases during this period, greatly exceeding our targets

**55** 

We assisted in the mental health review tribunal for 55 clients

Areas of law

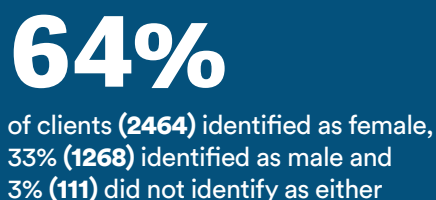
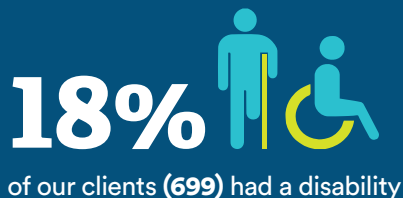
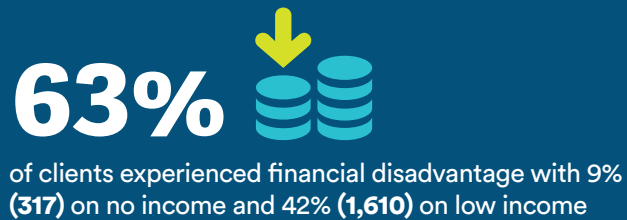


- Family or domestic violence 2948 / 26.58%
- Child contacts or contact orders 1424 / 12.84%
- Property in marriage 736 / 6.64%
- Divorce 505 / 4.55%
- Child residency 425 / 3.83%
- Other civil 366 / 3.30%
- Credit and debt owed to client 352 / 3.17%
- Consumer complaints services 273 / 2.46%
- Motor vehicle accident 265 / 2.39%
- Property de facto 244 / 2.20%
- Credit and debt owed by client 210 / 1.89%
- Consumer complaints products 189 / 1.70%
- Employment Other 175 / 1.58%
- Family Law Other 168 / 1.52%
- Employment conditions / entitlements 155 / 1.40%
- Road traffic and motor vehicle regulatory offences 151 / 1.36%
- Employment unfair dismissal 138 / 1.24%
- Parenting plan 131 / 1.18%
- Fence / Boundaries / Ret.Wall / Encroachment 122 / 1.10%
- All Other Problem Types 2,112 / 19.05%
- Grand Total = 11,089 / 100.00%



# Our Clients

The Centre advises and assists a variety of Gold Coast residents. Clients who attend the Centre come from varying backgrounds, lifestyles, financial positions and cultures. Below are some statistics on the clients which the Centre has assisted in the last year





# Outreach Services

Once again we can truly say that we celebrate another year of very successful collaboration with the services who very generously host our various outreach clinics by warmly welcoming us to their premises. This generosity allows us to continue to provide a service to the whole Gold Coast community, with our solicitors strategically located in areas of the Gold Coast where there is the most need for our services.

## Nerang Neighbourhood Centre

Every Tuesday and Thursday, we are hosted by the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre at 29 Martin Street, Nerang to provide a legal service to residents of Nerang and neighbouring areas. Given its very central location, we have found that clients are able to travel to this centre to obtain assistance from many areas, with the feedback being that it is easy to access, both in terms of location, ease of parking and availability of public transport.

The longstanding relationship with the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre has proven to be mutually beneficial, with many clients of the centre being referred to our service for legal assistance and our solicitors also being able to refer clients back into the centre for counselling, foodbank, emergency crisis funding assistance and a complimentary migration advice service. The centre has also been keen to facilitate our law students on placement being in the centre and staff have gone out of their way to make them welcome in the centre.

### Snapshot of this outreach

**323** clients seen  
**90** experiencing DV  
**182** were female  
**212** financial disadvantage  
**23** homeless  
**39** main language not English  
**5** ATSI.  
**67** disability

## Oxenford and Coomera Youth & Community Centre

Every Monday we provide an outreach service at the Oxenford and Coomera Youth Centre on Oxenford-Tambourine Road. This service has proven to be very popular with clients living in the ever-expanding upper reaches of the Gold Coast, with some coming from as far afield as Pimpama and Beenleigh, and with the service also being very popular with people living in the Eagle Heights/Mt Tamborine area as it is a relatively short journey into Oxenford.

The feedback has been that clients are appreciative of having a service located within such easy reach. Also there are many families living in this area with access to only one vehicle per household and the proximity of the centre to public transport, being well serviced by buses and adjacent to the Oxenford shopping centre, further increases the accessibility of our service.

Our location within the centre facilitates effective referrals from the centre to our service where a need is identified and we are also able to refer our clients to the many courses and support services provided to the community within the centre.

### Snapshot of this outreach

**145** clients seen  
**45** experiencing DV  
**68** were male  
**86** financial disadvantage  
**25** main language not English  
**7** interpreters used  
**2** ATSI.  
**26** disability

## Palm Beach Neighbourhood Centre

Every Tuesday we provide advice and assistance by way of appointments at the Palm Beach Neighbourhood Centre, where, like the Nerang Neighbourhood centre, we have had a collaborative relationship for many years. This service, located in the southern area of the Gold Coast, enables us to provide assistance to people in an area where statistics demonstrate there to be a high level of disadvantage in the community. We assist many clients at this location for whom travelling to our main office in Southport would prove difficult in many circumstances. As with the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre, working collaboratively with the Palm Beach Neighbourhood Centre allows us to refer our clients to the many services offered at that centre, including support programs, financial and social work counselling. Being located within the centre also allows its staff to refer clients to our service where the need is identified.

### Snapshot of this outreach

**172** clients seen  
**141** experiencing DV  
**132** were female  
**123** financial disadvantage  
**16** main language not English  
**4** ATSI.  
**19** disability



### Coomera Community Centre

We are fortunate to be offered a room in this house that was donated to the community. We provide a generalist advice clinic here each Wednesday. The Coomera Neighbourhood Centre is located at 65 Beattie Rd, Coomera. The centre features family, meeting and counselling rooms, a children's play area, baby change facilities and a kitchen.

#### Snapshot of this outreach

- 63 clients seen
- 19 experiencing DV
- 35 were female
- 36 financial disadvantage
- 5 main language not English
- 4 ATSI.
- 15 disability

### Upper Coomera Community Centre

Every Wednesday one of our family law solicitors attends at the Upper Coomera Community Centre located on Reserve Road, Upper Coomera to provide assistance to clients with family law matters, including children, property and DV matters. This service experiences a very high demand, with appointments filling very quickly as soon as our diary opens.

The availability of this service again demonstrates our centre's capacity to take services into those areas of the Gold Coast where a strong need has been identified.

#### Snapshot of this outreach

- 158 clients seen
- 135 experiencing DV
- 116 were female
- 119 financial disadvantage
- 13 main language not English
- 4 ATSI.
- 13 disability

### Varsity Lakes Community Centre

Each Monday one of our solicitors is welcomed into the Varsity Lakes Community Centre on Mattocks Road, Varsity Lakes where we are provided with a space to provide our services to the local community. The demographic of this area is that it has a high density of government housing and is identified as being in high need of services such as ours.

Snapshot of this outreach (for demographics)

- 87 clients seen
- 21 experiencing DV
- 51 were female
- 63 financial disadvantage
- 16 main language not English
- 41 ATSI.
- 6 disability

"You have truly shone a light in a very dark situation for me and I am so very grateful."

Client

"Excellent professionalism by the staff and couldn't have been more accommodating with my case."

Client



# Outreach Services

## *continued*

Without the generosity of our hosting services, we would not be able to provide the coverage that we have across the entire Gold Coast region and we thank each and every one of these centres for their assistance.

### Coolangatta Library

Each Monday we have a solicitor operating out of The Strand Building at Coolangatta in a space generously provided to us by the Gold Coast City Council. This location enables us to service not only the residents of the Southern Gold Coast but also clients across the border in NSW who either have Queensland-related issues or Commonwealth law matters, such as family law. The demand for this service has been very high.

#### Snapshot of this outreach

**208** clients seen  
**32** experiencing DV  
**116** were female  
**113** financial disadvantage  
**16** main language not English  
**6** ATSI.  
**35** disability

### Coolangatta Court House

Each Friday we provide duty lawyer services at the Coolangatta Magistrates Court for people appearing in Court for domestic violence applications. This new service fills a previous unmet need for assistance and has been a very busy outreach.

#### Snapshot of this outreach

**92** clients seen  
**92** experiencing DV  
**52** were female  
**55** financial disadvantage  
**16** main language not English  
**9** ATSI.  
**20** disability

### Southport Specialist Domestic & Family Violence Afternoon Service

We have been conducting a pilot of this service for since March 2017 and it fills a significant gap of assistance for urgent applications in the afternoons. The pre-existing Legal Aid Queensland enhanced duty lawyer service generally only operates for the morning civil callovers. We have developed the new service in consultation with DJAG, LAQ, and the Southport Court Registry to provide a duty lawyer service for urgent listed matters each Monday to Thursday afternoon.

#### Snapshot of this outreach

**199** clients seen  
**199** experiencing DV  
**168** were female  
**95** financial disadvantage  
**16** main language not English  
**9** ATSI.  
**30** disability

"I would be lost without them."

Client

"This is such a valuable and vital service for the community, Thank you very much!"

Client

## Ashmore Family Relationship Centre

The Family Relationship Centre at 207 Currumburra Road Ashmore provides us with a space which enables us to have a solicitor at the centre every Thursday, with this service being primarily focussed on family law matters, including issues of domestic violence.

In addition to providing a legal service within the centre, our solicitors form an integral part of the information sessions offered to clients of the centre who are participating in the alternative dispute resolution processes offered by the centre for their parenting matters. Our solicitors focus on providing information on the process, the consequences of likely outcomes, the legal framework on children's matters and what participants can expect to happen in court if their matter is unable to be resolved at the Family Relationship Centre. This collaboration has led to a very effective referral process between our two organisations and has proven itself to be very beneficial to parents dealing with separation and parenting issues, essentially meaning a "one stop shop" for clients.

### Snapshot of this outreach

- 62 clients seen
- 40 experiencing DV
- 46 were female
- 39 financial disadvantage
- 39 main language not English
- 2 ATSI.



# 1,509

clients were seen by the Gold Coast region Outreach Services. 975 of those identified as female.



# 814

clients experienced domestic violence



# 941

clients experienced financial disadvantage



# 201

clients had a main language other than English



# 86

clients were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander People



# 231

clients had a disability





# Walk-In Advice Clinic

Walk-In Advice Clinics give the Gold Coast community access to immediate free legal advice. The Gold Coast Community Legal Centre provides a walk-in advice clinic so that clients can access legal services on an urgent basis without the need to wait for an appointment, as well as providing the opportunity for free legal advice outside normal business hours.

## Tuesday Evening Walk-In Clinic

The Centre has continued the evening walk-in advice clinic on a Tuesday evening from 5pm onwards, with no appointment necessary.

The Tuesday evening walk-in clinic has staff solicitors who work on a Tuesday evening according to a roster created.

The Centre also invites solicitors from external firms, organisations or departments who hold a practicing certificate to volunteer during the evening walk-in clinic. These solicitors are orientated and given appropriate induction materials to ensure they comply with the Centres policies, procedures and risk management guidelines. The Centre appreciates the time and effort volunteered by these solicitors as their varying knowledge and expertise enable the Centre to be able to provide a greater depth of services, as well as the general assistance provided in helping us to see as many clients as possible seeking out of hours/urgent legal advice.

The reception is operated by law students who are also trained, orientated and inducted into the position. These law students volunteer out of their own time as they seek to gain a greater expose to the practical side of the law. Law students greet clients, conduct conflict checks and progress the client through the intake process to see a solicitor. Without law students operating reception during the evening walk-in clinic, we would not be able to provide the level of services which we currently do.



# 494

clients were seen by the Walk-In Advice Clinics. 248 of those identified as female.



# 120

clients experienced domestic violence



# 299

clients experienced financial disadvantage



# 16

clients had a main language other than English



# 15

clients were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander People



# 75

clients had a disability



# 26

clients experienced homelessness



# Domestic Violence Duty Lawyer Services

## *and Interagency Collaboration*

We deliver services at Southport 5 days a fortnight as 'preferred suppliers' for Legal Aid Queensland. We work under the Legal Aid Queensland Duty Lawyer Service along with other preferred suppliers and Legal Aid funds the position. Our solicitors work to a duty lawyer roster set by Legal Aid; we are usually rostered to attend court to act as duty lawyers between two and four days each week. We are usually rostered as duty lawyers for the aggrieved person or applicant in the matter. Five of our lawyers share this role on a rostered basis.

The role includes providing advice, assisting with preparation of documents, carrying out negotiations with other duty lawyers or private solicitors and providing court representation.

This year we assisted and represented **730** people as part of this service.

### Coolangatta Domestic Violence Duty Lawyer

In July 2016 we introduced a new service at the Coolangatta Magistrates Court. Each Friday we provide a solicitor to provide duty lawyer services for people attending the court for domestic violence matters.

This year we appeared for **92** people at this Court

### Urgent Afternoon Domestic Violence Support Southport Court House

Since March 2017 we commenced a new service Monday to Thursday afternoons at the Southport Court house providing legal advice and in-court representation to aggrieved persons (men or women) who attend at the Southport DFV Court registry requesting an urgent hearing of their application. This service fills a significant gap of assistance for urgent applications in the afternoons. The pre-existing Legal Aid Queensland (LAQ) enhanced DFV duty lawyer service generally only operates for the morning civil callovers. The new service was developed in consultation with DJAG, LAQ, and the Southport Court Registry and we are pleased to now have funding for this service.

This year we acted in **199** urgent afternoon matters as part of this service.

### Interagency Collaboration

Our Centre has worked hard this year to work even closer with other agencies working in the area of domestic and family violence.

We continued to participate in the operational working group weekly meetings at the Specialist Court and value the role as an opportunity to work together for systemic change and innovation

We are members of the integrated response network to ensure we are aware of and make appropriated referrals and work in closely with existing and emerging services on the Coast.

"The matters that I have been a part of have awarded me with firsthand opportunities that I would not have received in any other clinic position."

**Law student volunteer Hayley Schmalkuche, Griffith Community Lawyering Clinic**

"The reassurance and the support has improved my health."

**Client**



# Child Protection Duty Lawyer Service

Throughout this year, the Centre has continued to take an active role in the Child Protection Duty Lawyer service provided at the Southport Magistrates Court. Four of our lawyers are able to provide these services.

The duty lawyer service provides parents, young people and other interested individuals (such as grandparents, aunts, uncles and elders) with valuable legal advice, assistance, referral and representation on the day the matter is to be heard in Court. By increasing the individuals who can receive legal advice about the child protection matter, it is hoped that family members can take a more active role in what can be an intrusive process to intervene in a child's life.

The information and advice is aimed at protecting the client's rights from any unjust accusations and ensuring that they are aware of the process involved at the different stages of the matter. The advice may be in relation to an investigation which must be carried out, whether it is necessary for a child at risk of harm to be taken into custody and placed with a kinship carer or into the foster care system, whether ongoing intervention is required or whether there are any appeal options once a decision has been made.

In addition to providing advice and referrals to appropriate services, we also assist in completing Legal Aid forms, negotiating on certain parties' behalf and representing the most vulnerable unrepresented parties in the Children's Court.

This year we advised **34** people at the Courthouse needing our help in this jurisdiction


"I was not made to feel like any of my questions were silly. Thank you for your help."

Client

"One of the things that has really resonated with me and changed the way I view my law degree is that what I do matters and that I do have the opportunity to impact someone's life."

Law student volunteer Paige Lambert,  
Griffith Community Lawyering Clinic





"I would be lost  
without them"

Client



# Mental Health Review Tribunal

The new Queensland Mental Health Act 2016 commenced in March 2017. Legal Aid appointed Gold Coast Community Legal Centre to a list of legal service providers to provide representation to community mental health patients and in-patients at mental health facilities at their Mental Health Review Tribunal hearings.

The new Act now provides legal representation for a youth patient with a review of a Treatment Authority and other patients with a review of a Forensic Order, or an Application for Electro-Convulsive Therapy, or where the Attorney-General appears in their matter to be granted representation to advocate on the patient's behalf before the Tribunal.

The mental health jurisdiction has been both challenging and exciting as it expands the Centre's focus on social justice programs to reach the most vulnerable members of our community.

## Case Study

We assisted a woman with a Mental Health Review Tribunal hearing in relation to an application for Electronic Convulsive Therapy. We visited her in hospital on several occasions and with her consent spoke to her family to ensure we were acting in her best interests. After this hearing concluded we then provided her with further legal help in relation to debt and tenancy matters.

"If I have learnt anything over my 12-week placement, it is that I have gaps in my knowledge of the law and everything I have done in university does not compare to real life situations and dealing with a person's circumstances and feelings."

**Law student volunteer Paige Lambert,  
Griffith Community Lawyering Clinic**

"It was refreshing to see many people giving their time to help the community."

**Law student volunteer Mitchell  
Anderson, Griffith Community  
Lawyering Clinic**



# Mobile Services in Safe Locations

The Queensland Government sought applications from community legal centres to distribute reinstated federal funding, announced in April 2017. One of the projects funded under this process was Gold Coast Community Legal Centre's 'Mobile services in safe locations',

The program was developed in consultation with some members of the Gold Coast Integrated Response Network, which includes the Gold Coast Community Legal Centre, specialist police, health services, Centrelink, specialist domestic violence services, housing and homelessness services, and other organisations. The consultations had identified a need for responsive legal services to be provided in the community, in places where victims and survivors of domestic and family violence feel safe. A community lawyer with extensive experience was appointed to the role.

In its first six months of operation, the MSSL has provided services at:

- Specialist domestic violence services, particularly Domestic Violence Prevention Centre (DVPC). It is envisaged that this relationship will result in a 'staff swap', where specialist counsellors from the DVPC will work from the Gold Coast CLC office in Southport, while the MSSL lawyer is based at the DVPC office.
- Queensland courts during the afternoon, as Legal Aid Queensland's duty lawyer services operate in the morning, and there is limited assistance available for applicants seeking urgent domestic violence protection orders.

The MSSL is also exploring providing services in correctional facilities, hospitals and health services.

Feedback from members of the Integrated Response Network has been overwhelmingly positive. 'Women being able to access specialist legal advice and support in the safe environment of a DV agency ensure two things: firstly, they are able to access two supports at the same time and not have to spend time and money travelling between agencies coordinating appointments; secondly, the safe environment of a DV agency means they can engage openly with the lawyer and gain joined-up support from their advocate, the lawyer, and DV support staff at Court,' said Rosemary O'Malley, CEO of Domestic Violence Prevention Centre.

Victoria agrees, saying, 'It's clear that we're able to get better results for clients when we can see them in the community, when they feel safe. It also means we can deal with the range of legal problems they have, and provide holistic support, in partnership with other members of the Gold Coast Integrated Response Network. This means that people can address the varied types of legal problems they face, they can get other supports in place, and they can feel safer and move on with their lives.'

## Case Study

A client was referred to us by a domestic violence service. The Police had applied for a domestic violence protection order to protect her from her former partner, but had also applied for a domestic violence protection order against her. Her former partner had made allegations that she had been violent toward him. Upon taking the clients instructions and viewing her evidence, it was clear that the client was the victim of domestic violence and that she was the person that was most in need of protection. Our service wrote to Police Prosecutions for the client and made submissions as to the relevant legislation and police policy, and the facts and evidence of the case. We requested that the police withdraw their application against the client. On the next court date the application against the client was withdrawn; the submissions had been successful. This saved the client from having to go through further court processes and a domestic violence hearing. The client was also protected by a final five year domestic violence protection order in her favour.

"It's clear that we're able to get better results for clients when we can see them in the community, when they feel safe."

**Victoria Shiel, Director/Principal Solicitor Gold Coast CLC**





# Case Studies

Throughout the year, our solicitors work with clients to assist them in their legal matters. This can range from advice, minor casework or more extensive casework for the more vulnerable and disadvantaged clients. Below are some case studies of matters which our solicitors have assisted clients in during this year, having successful outcomes which may otherwise more have been achieved if the Centre wasn't able to provide the services which it does.

## Case Study #1

The client attended clearly in distress and not knowing what to do. She had been married to her partner for 10 years and had 2 children. Her life with her partner had been incredibly difficult from the start. She had been repeatedly sexually assaulted over time. Her husband was an expert gas-lighter - to the point that he had her convinced that the things she was seeing and experiencing were not 'real' - even an incident in which he had threatened to kill her and the children and forcibly removed them from her that she and the children clearly remembered was 'not real' he kept telling her. He had attacked her self esteem and beaten her down over the years. When she ended the marriage he would not leave the home - he started to increasingly verbally and emotionally abuse her and physically hurt her children. He was attempting to bully her into an unfair property settlement as his 'price' for leaving the home, telling her that 'things would get a lot worse around here' if she did not agree to his terms. It took several sessions to get her story and work with her to obtain the detail and put a plan in place. She kept asking 'Is this real? Is this domestic violence? Can you tell me?' We were able to assist her in drafting a strong application for a domestic violence protection order, and obtain a strong temporary protection order for herself and the children, and successfully had him ousted from the home.

## Case Study # 2

The Mother was referred from Domestic Violence Court seeking advice in relation to parenting and property matters. Her Husband had fled Australia at the conclusion of the domestic violence proceedings and left her with no address or contact details. He also left her with debts in joint names which she felt pressured in entering into because of the emotional domestic violence exerted during the relationship.

We assisted in providing advice and drafting her Initiating Application, affidavit and Notice of Risk for parenting and property matters when it was apparent that the other party could not be found or served in Australia. The application sought orders for substituted service (as he had been utilising email correspondence up until the Protection Order was put in place), sole parental responsibility to the Mother, primary care of the children to the Mother, supervised time-spending at a contact centre for the Father and the ability for the Mother to solely sign a passport and travel overseas with the children. She also sought that the Wyndham points could be transferred solely to her to help pay off some debts, which would necessarily require the Registrar of the Court to intervene and sign transfer documentation in the Father's absence or refusal.

During the Court process, the other party did not provide any responses or attend Court when required. However in making enquiries about his location, the Mother received information that the Father was travelling using his brother's passport. She provided information in affidavit form to the Judge and Final Orders were made ex parte that listed the children on the Airport Watch List and that both the Father and his brother's names were restrained from removing the children from Australia. The other parts of her application were also successful, which eased her ongoing safety concerns for her and the children.

### Case Study # 3

A client presented to the Centre regarding a fencing issue. In 2015, the client's neighbour erected a dividing fence without consulting the client as to the height or costs involved. The client approached the neighbour regarding the fence height and offered to contribute his labour, but at no time was the sharing of costs discussed. When the client attended the Clinic, he had been served with a tax invoice for half of the fence materials and labour of the work which he didn't think reasonable as he could have done the labour himself, saving both parties money. He also didn't believe it fair that one neighbour can just put up a fence without consulting the other. We drafted a letter to the neighbour, outlining that our client was not liable for the amount claimed as there was no consultation and agreement prior to the fencing work taking place. The client returned to the Centre to inform us that, despite our information sent to the other party, the neighbour had submitted an application with QCAT. When the client presented the letter from our solicitor to the Tribunal, the case was dismissed and the client was not asked to contribute to the payment of the fence at all as the neighbour had acted outside the parameters of the legislation regarding dividing fences.

### Case study #4

A client came to the Centre after been involved in a motor vehicle accident. Neither driver had insurance on their vehicle and the client was not at fault as the other driver hit the client from behind at traffic lights. Our client took a photo of the other drivers licence and got their phone number. After getting quotes to repair the vehicle, the other driver stopped answering the clients phone calls and responding to messages. The client came to the Centre and we advised that to write to the other party and subsequently take legal action if necessary, the client needs the other drivers address. The drivers licence does not have an address on the front which the photo was taken of. We assisted the client in obtaining the other drivers address through the Department of Transport and Main Roads and wrote to the other driver. After no response, we assisted the client file an application in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal where it was ordered that the other driver pay the cost of repair to the client's vehicle.

### Case study #5

An elderly lady approached the Centre as she was fearful of her neighbour but had a dividing fence issues which needed resolving. The client explained that her neighbour is a middle-aged man who yells and swears at her, which has caused her, living on her own, to fear interacting with him. The diving fence was falling apart and was missing palings. The client had a small dog which was getting through the fence, causing more conflict between the neighbours as the other party would become angry when her dog was in his yard. The neighbour had threatened to damage clients gardens if her dog was in his yard again. The Centre assisted the client apply for a Peace and Good Behaviour Order to provide protection for her from the other party threatening to or causing damage to her property or herself. The Centre also assisted in problem solving temporary fencing solutions such as putting up chicken wire until the fence issue can be resolved once client is ready to proceed with that cause of action.

"One of the things that has really resonated with me and changed the way I view my law degree is that what I do matters and that I do have the opportunity to impact someone's life."

**Law student volunteer  
Paige Lambert, Griffith Community  
Lawyering Clinic**

# Community Legal Education

Community Legal Education provides information, skills and direction for people with a view to early resolution and solution of legal problems and helping people be better aware and informed of their rights and obligations.

Our Centre has a long history of providing community legal education to the Gold Coast Community across a large number of locations and covering a range of topics.

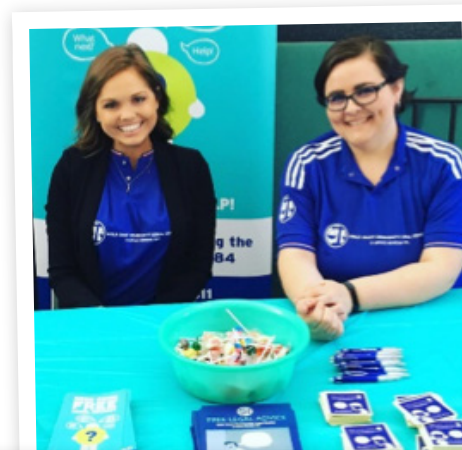
Highlights of our community legal education this year included:

- Regular community legal education in partnership with our local Family Relationship Centre. Our solicitors provide information to parents and grandparents considering mediation in relation to children. We deliver the legal component of the session and mediators provide information and resources on family dispute resolution.
- We deliver several community legal education sessions at Universities targeted at students in relation to the history, role and ongoing need for community legal centres as well as the importance of volunteering and giving back to the community once students enter the legal profession.
- We also deliver an annual talk to Probus Clubs and the Queensland Justice Association.

We also are regular participants in various community events which take place on the Coast. Please refer to the Community Engagement page to find out about what events/activities the Centre has been involved in.

“It’s comforting to know that for those who can least afford it, that your organisation is on hand to help and provide guidance during stressful times.”

**Gold Coast Councillor**







# Community Engagement

Our Centre is dedicated to been involved in local community events and showing our commitment to supporting services, like ourselves, which aim at helping and bringing awareness to issues within the community.

During this year, staff and volunteers of the Centre attended various events over the Gold Coast, promoting the Centre, providing information about our services and access to free legal advice as well as creating networks and relationships with other organisations.

## Varsity Lakes Seniors Expo

In August 2017, we attended a Seniors Expo at one of our outreach locations, the Varsity Lakes Community Resources Centre to promote and inform attendees about the free services we provide for Gold Coast Seniors on the southern end of the Coast. There was a lot of information about other help and resources for people living in this part of the Coast available at the expo.

## Child Protection

In September 2017, Rikki attended events held for Child Protection week. We had a stall set up on different days at various locations over the Coast throughout the week promoting the Centre as well as having activities for children to interact with.

Child Protection week is held over a week in September each year where various community centres, local council areas and organisations host a family fun day for parents and children to attend. Children are entertained with free activities and events whilst parents can find out information available to help children who may be involved in child protection matters. This week is aimed at raising awareness and providing information for child protection as well as remembering children who may have been affected or exposed to child abuse and protection issues.



## Wheelie Bin Race

On the 24th March 2018, staff and volunteers of the Centre participated in a Wheelie Bin Race hosted by the Oxenford and Coomera Community Youth Centre at their "Fast & Ludicrous" family fun day.

The race involved a converted wheelie bin as the mode of transport with a team member travelling in the bin for the duration of the track. This was one of the many events/activities held at this family fun day and the Centre attended to show the support for the community, be part of this free event and have an enjoyable afternoon.



## Walk For Justice

On the 15th May 2018, staff and volunteers of the Centre participated in the Queensland Law Right Legal Walk for Justice where an aspect of the walk was held on the Gold Coast, focused on Domestic Violence awareness.

This walk involved an early morning gathering at the Southport Courthouse where the walk began, heading towards the broadwater and back to the courthouse to raise awareness for Domestic Violence. Participants from local domestic violence organisations, legal staff and Domestic Violence Court staff and Magistrates took part in this event.

## NAIDOC Week

On 5 July 2017, our Centre celebrated NAIDOC week by Manny and Rikki attending the Titans NAIDOC Day at Firth Park in Mudgeeraba. Manny and Rikki had a stall set up promoting the services of the Centre at this event and were actively involved in activities throughout the day. NAIDOC Week celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





## Homeless Connect

In August 2017, Anne and Tryll attended the Homeless Connect Day held at Metricon Stadium. The Centre had a stall set up to provide information about the Centre to attendees of the event, as well as network with other services for future collaboration and referral pathways.

This day is held every year to bring awareness to homelessness on the Gold Coast. Services, organisations and businesses attended the event to provide information, referrals and on-the-day services (such as hair cuts and food available) for attendees of the event seeking help with homelessness issues.

## Gold Coast Multicultural Network

This year we continued our relationship and collaboration with the Gold Coast Multicultural Network who supports the various multicultural communities around the Gold Coast. The network helps to bridge the gap between different communities and encourage greater diversity through various events, network meetings and education opportunities.

We attended various Meet, Greet and Eat opportunities throughout the year which allowed the Centre to network with different organisations and cultural groups and inspire members of such communities to seek assistance for legal matters. In particular, a focus was placed on encouraging more awareness about domestic violence and we established contact points at the Centre where vulnerable people could seek assistance.

In August 2017, Tanya and Rikki attended the Multicultural Café held at Southport Church of Christ. They had a stall set up to raise awareness about the Centre and interacted with the other vendors, enjoying the variety of cultural performances and food available.

## Domestic Violence Paddle Boarding

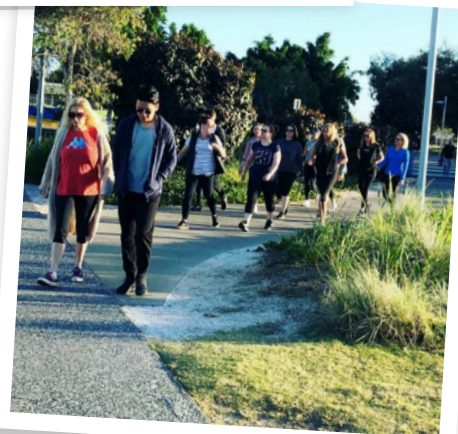
In September 2017, Rikki attended the Gold FM sponsored Stand Up to Domestic Violence Paddle Board event. This event is held to raise awareness about domestic violence and encourage people to stand up and speak out about it.

## National Day of Remembrance

On the 2nd May 2018 our solicitor Skye represented our Centre at the National Day of Remembrance.

This event is part of Domestic Violence Prevention Month and is a candle lighting ceremony to remember those who have died and the ones left behind due to domestic and family violence.

Our Centre remains committed to working collaboratively and responsively with others and to try and ensure that no door to help is the wrong door.





# Awards and Acknowledgments



## Safer Suburbs

In November 2017, the Centre was awarded the “2017 Safer Suburbs Award” in the Not-for-Profit category. This biennial award recognise those working in the community who make it safer.

The Centre received the award because of the work we do in assisting the Coast's most vulnerable and disadvantaged residents in a variety of areas of law, with particular focus on our work within the Southport Domestic Violence Court.



## Domestic Violence

The Mobile Services program was developed in consultation with the Gold Coast Integrated Response Network, which along with GCCLC and GCDVPC includes specialist DFV police, health and housing services and the Southport Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court.

Through these consultations a need was established for responsive and mobile legal services.

This flexibility has also provided for duty lawyer services for urgent DFV matters when Legal Aid lawyers are unavailable at the Southport Specialist DFV Court.

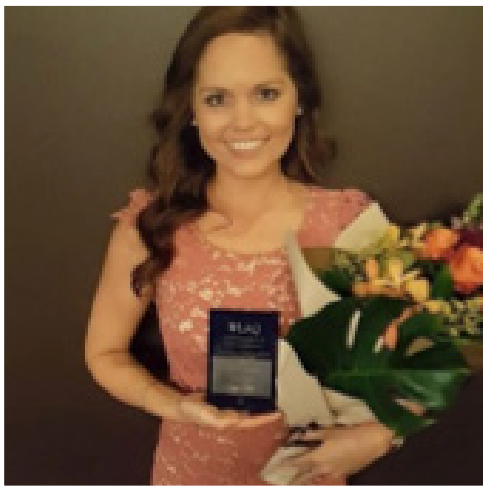
The ‘Mobile services in safe locations’ program was awarded a Domestic Violence Prevention Month Award in May for their ongoing commitment to collaboration and their contribution to the support and safety of women and children.



2017 Safer  
Suburbs Award

Domestic Violence  
Prevention Month Award

Tanya Diessel  
2017 Emergent Woman  
Lawyer of the Year  
Award



### Tanya Diessel: 2017 Emergent Woman Lawyer of the Year Award

In August 2017, Tanya was named Queensland's Emergent Woman Lawyer of the Year.

This award is judged by senior representatives of the legal profession in Queensland and recognises women who have been admitted as a legal practitioner for five years or less. It is conferred by the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland (WLAQ), recognising the professional achievements of outstanding young lawyers in Queensland.

The calibre of the shortlisted candidates was outstanding, with significant efforts and accomplishments by all. In this light, Tanya's achievements in her first 5 years of practice are recognised as extraordinary.

Additionally, the Women Lawyers Association of Queensland then also named Tanya in their "2018 Inspo List" which is a collection of women who inspire others, stating for Tanya "The current Emergent Woman Lawyer of the Year for WLAQ. She has achieved so much for such a young age. One to watch".



### Tanya Diessel: Batonbearer for the 2018 Commonwealth Games Queens Baton Relay

In April 2018, Tanya was a Batonbearer for the Queens Baton Relay as it passed through the Gold Coast leading up to the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Tanya was nominated by the City of Gold Coast in mid-2017 to be a batonbearer, based on her work in the community and role within the Centre. In late 2017 Tanya was identified as a successful nominee with her relay segment taking place on the 2nd April 2018.



# Community Volunteers

The Centre currently has around 20 community volunteers who each give at least 4 hours of their time at the Centre each week. Volunteers are critical to our Centre and their support and contribution is invaluable in helping us reach out and help as many Gold Coast residents in need as we can.

Volunteer name	Joined	Resigned
Rae Devlin	1990	
April Vincent	2002	
Susan Garrett	2002	
Barbara Price-Ellingham	2008	
Eve Baker	2008	
Chris Segovic	Re-Joined 2017	27.01.17
Helen Nunn	2012	30.06.18
Diane Smith	2014	
Sue Douglas	2015	
Patricija Nedeljko	2016	
Upoma Chowdhury	2016	30.06.18
Chris Davies	2017	
Christina Scott	2017	20.10.17
Fiona Kath	2017	19.03.18
Kate McLean	2017	31.12.17
Leanne Ryan	2017	
Liz Aldous	2017	
Maija Pekkanen	Re-Joined July 2017	31.12.17
Natalia Watson	2017	20.10.17
Rachel Davenport	2017	31.12.17
Tony Land	Re-Joined 2017	
Casey Roche	2018	
Jamie-Lee Carter	2018	30.06.18
Jayson Cooke	2018	
Lesley McCaw	Re-Joined 2017	
Lynn Kim	2018	
Marie Kelly	Re-Joined 2018	
Meg Farmer	Re-Joined 2018	
Mitch Scott	2018	
Monique Brown	2018	
Naz Pattison	2018	
Shacarra Bartolo	2018	
Siobhan Bishop	2018	

The roster of willing volunteers consists of a variety of people. Their ages vary, along with their lifestyles, personalities, backgrounds and experiences. Each volunteer brings something new to the Centre.

During their busy shift they deal with the community through constant phone calls and also people who walk into the office seeking advice. The volunteers book appointments for clients manage the solicitors' diaries and also provide general community advice and referrals to other community legal centres, departments and organisations.

All volunteers participate in professional development sessions on a regular basis to ensure they are kept up-to-date with administrative changes, law reforms and community updates. Since the volunteers are the first contact the public has with the Centre, they must ensure they are up-to-date with the Gold Coast.

Each volunteer is greatly appreciated and constantly praised for their time and efforts into helping the Centre operate to the best of its ability.

## Volunteer of the Month 2017-2018

Volunteer name	month
Lachlan Robb	August 2017
Upoma Chowdhury	September 2017
Sarah Higon	October 2017
Dennis Nettlefold	November 2017
Fiona Kath	December 2017
Joe Whitehead	January 2018
William Teao	February 2018
Lydia Ross	March 2018
Nicholas Rossi	April 2018
Leanne Ryan	May 2018
Sunil Dutt	June 2018
Joe Ranieri	July 2018



# Volunteer Solicitors

To assist in the running of the Tuesday evening walk-in clinic, we have volunteer solicitors come provide advice and assistance to clients attending the Centre. These solicitors all work during the day at their own place of employment, and volunteer their time at the Centre as a way of giving back to the community.

The solicitors who volunteered with the Centre during the evening walk in clinic during 2017/2018 year were:

**Sarah Highton**

Solicitor at Evolution Legal Pty Ltd  
Commenced volunteering June 2016

**Corey Harrison**

Solicitor at Legend Legal Group  
Commenced volunteering November 2016

**Dennis Nettlefold**

Retired Solicitor / Volunteer Solicitor  
Commenced volunteering May 2017

**Joe Whitehead**

Volunteer Solicitor  
Commenced volunteering June 2017

**Stephen Thompson**

Solicitor at Oncore Legal Services  
Commenced volunteering October 2017

**Cherrie Ludemann**

Principal Solicitor at BDG Legal  
Commenced volunteering October 2017

**Michael McDonald**

Consultant at BDG Legal  
Commenced volunteering October 2017

**Chris Barron**

Solicitor at Collas Moro Ross  
Commenced volunteering January 2018

**Jo-Anne Knight**

Court Coordinator at the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre  
Commenced volunteering May 2018

**Jeremy Brown**

Associate at Mathews Hunt Legal  
Commenced volunteering June 2018

"I enjoyed having exposure to clients and the feeling of making a real difference to people's lives with the advice (however limited) that I could provide. It was nice to hear people's stories (albeit long at times) and get feedback that we had done a good job."

**Past volunteer solicitor**

"Lawyers who volunteer at CLCs do so because they want to give back and feel good about helping, but it also expands your horizons to be exposed to new areas of law. By volunteering at a CLC you can learn about everyday areas of law that you wouldn't usually deal with like car accidents and neighbourhood disputes, and help yourself or a friend."

**Past volunteer solicitor**



# Volunteer Law Students

Throughout the year, our Centre facilitates law students who seek to gain further experience in the practical side of the law whilst they are still completing their university degree. One of our solicitors Tanya Diessel co ordinates, recruits and supervises the students across the various programs.



## Bond University

The Centre continues to have a relationship with Bond University where students are placed at the Centre during their academic semesters. The Centre currently has two (2) programs available for Bond University law students to participate in.

### Clinical Placement Subject

As with previous years, the Centre continues to accept law students enrolled in a clinic legal placement subject run by the Bond Faculty of Law staff member, Lindsey Stevenson-Graf.

Bond University provides 5-6 students from this subject who attend the Centre for a 5 day placement. Bond students are placed at the Centre twice a year – during February to March and also October to November. These students are assessed on their performance at the Centre and this significantly contributes to their overall grade for the subject.

### Bond Community Law Clinic

This clinic commenced in June 2015 and is organised through Maria Nicolae from Bond University in liaison with Tanya Diessel. This clinic allows for 4 students to volunteer one day a week at the Centre and isn't part of their studies but on a voluntary basis. This clinic was established to be able to provide further opportunities for Bond University law students to volunteer and gain practical experiences, as well as to be able to create a greater service available to our clients which can be provided during the clinic.

The Centre has various programs and placement opportunities for law students. The Centre works closely with local universities to ensure there are opportunities for students to gain practical experience whilst undertaking their studies.

Students who attend the Centre participate in a range of activities such as:

- Sitting in on legal appointments;
- Conducting client intakes;
- Creating fact sheets and self-help kits to be made available to clients;
- Conducting research for solicitors;
- Assisting in reception;
- Drafting letters and documents for clients;
- Assisting in the completion of forms;
- Any other task a solicitor deems appropriate based on a student's capabilities.

"It has been a privilege to watch the lawyers in the way they handle clients and see a side of law that actually gives back to the community rather than the mis-perception that they are only there to take."

**Sophie Gorrick, Community  
Lawyering Clinic student**





## Griffith University

The Centre and Griffith University have had a successful relationship for some years now where Griffith University law students can be part of the Centre to gain experience whilst completing their studies.

### Community Lawyering Clinic

Tanya continues to work Griffith Law School staff to run a subject through Griffith University where 6 students are placed at the Centre one day a week, for the duration of a semester (13 weeks). The first clinic commenced in July 2015 and has successfully been running each semester thereafter. Professor Fiona Fitzpatrick and Zoe Rathus work with Tanya to enable this clinic to operate each semester.

### Reception Volunteers

Tanya communicates with Griffith University Law School staff at the beginning of the year and mid-year, seeking expressions of interest from law students who are interested in joining the reception roster for reception duties, on a permanent or fill in basis.

These students are selected and a determination is made whether they would be suited to volunteer at our Centre. Those successful students are then offered the opportunity to be on the reception roster where they are trained and orientated and added to the mix of reception volunteers. The roster is changed every 6 months, where new expressions of interest are sought.

## Night Clinic Volunteers

To assist in the running of the Tuesday evening walk-in clinic, law students are placed in reception to be the first point of contact for clients attending the clinic.

Students are placed on a 6 month basis, where they assist in setting up the office for the night clinic and then deal with the clients once the clinic commences.

The students greet clients, briefly discuss their matter and if appropriate for the clinic, conduct a conflict check and progress the client through the intake process to be seen by a solicitor.

"My experience at the Gold Coast Community Legal Centre has been extremely rewarding and has provided me with learning opportunities beyond those that I would have received in my university course".

**Hayley Schmalkuche, Griffith Community Lawyering Clinic student**



# Volunteer Law Students

## *continued*

### 2017/2018 Law Student Placements

#### Bond University: Clinical Placement Subject

Ashna Prakash	October – November 2017
Rikisha Brown	October – November 2017
Martika Palmer	October – November 2017
Moir McAvoy	October – November 2017
Sam Bishop	October – November 2017
Jo Brown	October – November 2017
Alexandra Coyle	February – March 2018
Amanda Fayad	February – March 2018
Eleanor Meany	February – March 2018
Lois Bullen	February – March 2018
Jesse Phegan	February – March 2018
Justine Booth	February – March 2018
Manuel Soares	February – March 2018

#### Bond University: Community Lawyering Clinic

Anita Kissi	November 2017
Craig van der Hoven	November 2017
Jenny Ng	November 2017
Shivleen Sidhu	November 2017
Antonia Ghattas	March 2018
Harry Freeman	March 2018
Krista Kennedy	March 2018
Vincent Pignalosa	March 2018
Henri Sheridan	June – July 2018
Cassandra Ironside	June – July 2018
Laura Elliott	June – July 2018
Lauren McDonald	June – July 2018

#### Reception volunteers

Dale Maden	June – December 2017
Ebony Blacksell	June – December 2017
Mitchell Scott	June – December 2017
Vassili Syzranov	June – December 2017
Isaac Avery	June – December 2017
Rachel Davenport	June – December 2017
Callum Neal	January – June 2018
Monique Brown	January – June 2018
Ebony Vejrazka	January – June 2018
Siobhan Bishop	January – June 2018
Lynn Kim	January – June 2018
Narayan (Naz) Pattison	January – June 2018
Shacarra Bartolo	January – June 2018
Jayson Cooke	January – June 2018

#### Griffith University: Community Lawyering Clinic

Agnieszka Krzyzaniak	July – November 2017
Bruce Efron	July – November 2017
Daniel Jung	July – November 2017
Isa Martin	July – November 2017
Jason Estival	July – November 2017
Teri Yeo	July – November 2017
Ashley Anand	February – June 2018
Hayley Schmalkuche	February – June 2018
Joshua Sanders	February – June 2018
Mitchell Anderson	February – June 2018
Paige Lambert	February – June 2018
Sophie Gorrick	February – June 2018

#### Griffith University: Night Clinic volunteers

Lachlan Robb	June – December 2017
Lydia Ross	June – December 2017
Maree Racki	June – December 2017
Nicholas Rossi	June – December 2017
Tara Byrne	June – December 2017
Sian Lord	June – December 2017
Shontelle Samuel	June – December 2017
William Teao	June – December 2017
Aleksandra Milic	January – June 2018
Brandon Shiel-Butera	January – June 2018
Lachlan Robb	January – June 2018
Lydia Ross	January – June 2018
Maree Racki	January – June 2018
Nicholas Rossi	January – June 2018
Olivia Woods	January – June 2018
Tara Byrne	January – June 2018
William Teao	January – June 2018

#### Practical Legal Training

Nicholas Rossi	June 2018
William Teao	June 2018





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& Advice Bureau Inc.



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