



2024 YEAR BOOK

LOCAL LEADERS, GLOBAL IMPACT



LEADERSHIP
Great South Coast Inc.

Ngatanwarr Welcome

LEADERSHIP GREAT SOUTH COAST INC.

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Gunditjmara Country

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Yearbook 2024

FIND US



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and pay respect to the people who hold custodianship for the land on which we gather and work and who continue to hold strong connections to the land, river and sea country. It is with deep appreciation that we acknowledge these connections and pay respect to their Elders, past and present, whose enduring bonds have protected the land, waters and sky for thousands of generations. We acknowledge sovereignty was never ceded.

About Leadership Great South Coast

Our Purpose:

Fostering regional leadership for community impact.



Leadership Great South Coast Inc. (LGSC) provides an annual Community Leadership Program (the program) for aspiring and emerging leaders drawn from all sectors of the Great South Coast region.

The program builds relationships and networks between the business, community and government sectors. Participants are drawn from these sectors, creating diverse experiences and perspectives when considering the nature of leadership, and the future of our community and its social and economic prosperity.

The program is intellectually stimulating and experiential, designed to develop the skills and knowledge of aspiring and emerging leaders through contact with diverse community leaders and exploring community issues.

Participants are encouraged to:

- develop a keener sense of leadership responsibility
- think laterally, examine problems systematically and find creative solutions
- establish a lasting set of personal and professional cross-sector links
- develop an understanding and appreciation of diversity
- work with and lead community groups
- commit and contribute to the LGSC Alumni network, offering expertise as a community resource.

Alongside the program, LGSC also offers other learning opportunities such as governance training.

Formal and informal connections with Alumni are fostered with links into program offerings and community opportunities.

LGSC Inc. Board Members

- **JESSICA FISHBURN**
Chair
Director Gen Health,
LGSC Alumni
- **TRUDY MARR**
Deputy Chair
Strategy & Projects, are-able
- **MELISSA MAHER**
Treasurer
Management
Accountant, Wannon Water
- **JACOB TAYLOR**
Director of Finance,
South West Healthcare,
LGSC Alumni
- **AILICHE GODDARD-CLEGG**
Communication & Engagement
Coordinator, Hycel
- **DARBY LEE**
Manager Economic
Development and Customer
Experience, Moyne Shire
- **RONDA HELD**
Board Director,
South West Healthcare.
Leadership Victoria Alumni
- **ANGELA HEWETT**
Employment Facilitator,
Workforce Australia Local Jobs
- **RACHAEL HOULIHAN**
Deputy Editor, The Standard -
Australian Community Media

2024 Retiring Board Members

Ashlee Scott

From Our Chair

The 2024 program year marks another successful chapter for LGSC, with participants embracing the opportunities provided by the flagship program.

In light of our funding challenges, primarily the loss of government funding, the LGSC team, led by the Executive Officer and Board, have worked tirelessly to secure financial support from philanthropic organisations, corporate groups, local businesses and local government. This backing highlights the strong value placed on local leadership development within the community. Our sincere gratitude is extended to partners, sponsors, supporters, and employers of the participants.

LGSC expanded its impact this year through governance training for local board members, offering well-attended short courses with additional sessions planned for the future. The Dare to Lead™ three-day course was a great addition to our suite of offerings this year.

Our heartfelt appreciation goes to Executive Officer, Kate Roache, and Program Manager, Catherine Darkin, for their dedication to delivering an exceptional program and consistently exploring ways to innovate and improve. This year also saw the valued addition of

Program Administrative Officer Jackson Bialobrzkeski, whose contributions have been instrumental.

I am grateful for the support of fellow Board members for their guidance and contribution to the governance of LGSC. Each gives freely of their time and expertise to ensure LGSC continues to provide leadership development opportunities.

This year, LGSC continued its cooperative efforts with the Regional Leadership Collective and Leadership Victoria, exploring creative, sustainable avenues to support all nine regional leadership programs across Victoria. LGSC looks forward to building on this collaboration in 2025 to further strengthen collective impact.

We congratulate our 2024 cohort with the confidence that their growth and insights as leaders will continue to benefit our south west community now and into the future.



Jessica Fishburn
Chair

Our Partners

We acknowledge and thank our principal and program partners, project supporters and in-kind contributors. Together, we are ‘fostering regional leadership for community impact’.

Through the generosity of our partners, we awarded scholarships to the value of \$54,784 in 2024.

We also received significant in-kind support throughout the year, for which we are grateful.

2024 Principal and Program Partners



2024 Participant Sponsorship



THANK-YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

In-kind Partners

- ACE Radio • Being Well Collective • Gwen & Edna Jones Foundation • Ray & Joyce Uebergang Foundation
- William & Lindsay Brodie Foundation • The Ern Hartley Foundation • Deakin University – Warrnambool Campus
- South West Community Foundation • Motif Brand & Design • Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority
- South West TAFE

In-kind Support - Program Days

- Deakin University • Corangamite Shire Council • Timboon Fine Ice Cream • South West Vic Alliance • o2 Advisory
- Angela Hewett • Warrnambool City Council • One Day Studios • Loved & Shared • Peter's Project • Noodledoof
- Warrnambool Men's Shed • South Mokanger Farm • Glenelg Hopkins CMA • Pepper Partnerships • LGSC Alumni
- Sustainable Plastic Solutions • Southern Grampians Shire Council • Glenelg Shire Council • South West TAFE
- Parliament of Victoria • SES-Warrnambool • WRAD Health • Wellways • Salvation Army • Hycel • WestVic Dairy
- Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West • Haberfield Farms • DemoDAIRY Foundation • Keppel Prince
- Port of Portland • Portland Aluminium • Regional Development Victoria • Portland Chip Transfer • DDEG
- Yumbah Aquaculture • Brophy Family and Youth Services

In-kind Support - Projects

- Country Fire Authority • Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria • Warrnambool College • Eastern Maar
- Department of Education • Warrnambool Men's Shed • Warrnambool City Council • Glenelg Shire Council
- Glenelg Southern Grampians LLEN • VicPol • Hands Up Casterton • United Way Glenelg • Live4Life
- Beyond the Bell • Southern Grampians Shire Council • Moyne Shire Council • Corangamite Shire Council
- Colac Otway Shire Council • Warrnambool Fire Brigade • Dunrobin and Nangeela Fire Brigade
- East Warrnambool Rotary • The Meat Barn • Aldi, Bunnings Warehouse Warrnambool • DPM Productions.



LGSC Supported By



Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026

Our Purpose:

Fostering regional leadership for community impact



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



LEADERSHIP

- Provide opportunity to engage in community leadership and action learning through the flagship 'Community Leadership Program'.
- Provide new community leadership and action learning opportunities beyond the flagship program in response to regional need.
- Elevate leadership capability of alumni.



ALUMNI

- Foster opportunities for alumni to connect, engage and network.
- Encourage opportunities for alumni to contribute to community through volunteerism.



IMPACT

- Develop and implement effective mechanisms to measure impact of program/s on individuals, organisations and the region.
- Adapt and refine offerings and opportunities to enhance impact.

Our Values

AGILITY: responding to change and improvement

GROWTH: enhancing skill, knowledge and impact

LEADERSHIP: developing social influence to maximise the efforts of the community

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION: ensuring inclusion and accessibility across the region

COMMUNITY: listening, learning, connecting and engaging with community

Community Leadership Program

It is a program like no other. Participants learn in, and with, community, providing opportunities to strengthen community leadership capabilities and develop connections between local leaders and regional development initiatives.

We delivered themed program days covering a variety of topics and issues.

The program also has embedded topics, including leadership skills and knowledge, ethical leadership, emotional and social intelligence, change management, project management, cultural awareness, adaptive leadership, working with government and advocacy.

The supportive, personalised learning experience enables participants to reflect on current practices and determine areas for growth. We provided numerous opportunities throughout the program to challenge thinking and enhance skills, such as roles in the project teams.

2024 PROGRAM DAYS

- **29 FEB** Program Launch Warrnambool
- **1-2 MAR** Step-In Immersive Warrnambool
- **15 MAR** Strategy and Data - The Perfect Advocacy Tool Timboon
- **27 MAR** Community Volunteering Warrnambool
- **19 APR** Climate Mitigation and Adaptation Hamilton/Cavendish
- **10 MAY** Community Impact: Pitch Day Koroit
- **MAY-JUN** Local Government Council Meeting Field Trips
- **31 MAY** Community Impact: The 'How To' of Project Management Portland
- **18-19 JUN** Governance: Leading for Influence at Local and State Level Melbourne
- **19-20 JUL** Step-Up Immersive Port Campbell
- **9 AUG** Keeping Our Community Safe & Project Time Warrnambool
- **30 AUG** A Day on Country Budj Bim/Tyrendarra
- **13 SEPT** Innovation for the Future & Project Time Warrnambool/Mepunga
- **11 OCT** Taking an Industry Perspective Portland
- **1 NOV** Building Inclusive Communities Warrnambool
- **28-29 NOV** Step-Out Immersive Port Fairy
- **29 NOV** Graduation Port Fairy

OPTIONAL WORKSHOPS

- Writing a Successful Grant Application
- Working with Media

From the Leadership Team



Thank-you to the 2024 participants of the Community Leadership Program for stretching your 'elastic band' to discover, learn and embrace all things leading in community. Your openness and curiosity during immersions, program days, field trips, skill-building workshops and projects has enable you to fulfill your learning goals and discover ways of thinking and being that perhaps you never thought you had.

You have embraced vulnerability, clear and kind feedback and reassessed if you are living into your values. The flurry of project work was real! Friendships have been formed, community connections made, and many regional issues explored.

Congratulations and thank-you for committing time for yourself to build your community leadership capabilities. Our region is in great hands with your wonderful curiosity and generous spirits. Remember, 'take a chance'. You never know where it may lead.

A very big thank-you to Jackson, who was the program assistant for the first half of the year, attending to logistics to ensure smooth running of program days.

To our alumni, who have stepped up to the call to action to assist with the program and future planning, thank-you.

Thank-you to those who have connected in various ways throughout the year, you continue to enrich LGSC and all we offer the region.

Kate, Catherine and Helga



Kate Roache
Executive Officer



Catherine Darkin
Program Manager



Helga Svendsen
Facilitator



Take a chance

2024 Projects

Participants complete a community project with social, economic and/or environmental outcomes for the wider community. Project teams are formed for greatest impact.

Team members volunteer their time and talent towards active learning within the community. This allows them to learn in ways that may not be possible in their professional lives.

Thank-you to the project mentors and stakeholders who have volunteered time, connections, support, guidance, and advice.

Special thanks to the 2024 project sponsors.

Program Management Skills:

- Project scoping and planning
- Pitching and critical path mapping
- Team roles in a project, including lead GANTT and risk register
- Meetings – agenda, minutes, reports
- Stakeholder engagement planning
- Establishing a Community Reference Group
- Community collaboration and communication
- Budgeting
- Closure report and acquittal



Six Seasons Indigenous Art Project



CFA/VFBV State Firefighter Championships Great South Coast Masterplan



Warrnambool Men's Shed Strategic Plan



Thrive Youth Hub Scoping Project



Six Seasons Indigenous Art Project

Team Members

Jarrold Woolley, Sarah Bubb-Dempster, Rebecca Faris, Ryan Delony



Project Description

Fostering storytelling through a public artwork created by local Indigenous youth, showcasing their culture and ongoing connection to country, with the wider community.

A permanent installation replicating the ‘Six Seasons’ artwork, created by Indigenous students at Warrnambool College, in Swan Reserve, Warrnambool.

Project Aims

- To increase recognition of Indigenous culture and heritage in the south-west community.
- To share alternative interpretations of our region’s environment, based on thousands of years of observation - the Peek Whurrong people’s knowledge of the “six seasons”.
- To acknowledge and celebrate young Indigenous leaders and artists.
- To offer an attraction that connects tourists with local Indigenous culture.

Community Outcomes

- Installation of the Six Seasons artwork in a public space for all to engage with, learn from and enjoy.





CFA/VFBV State Firefighter Championships Great South Coast Masterplan

Team Members

Rebecca Campbell, Aylish Tobin-Salzman, Brit Watts, Will Kerr



Project Description

Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteer numbers are declining, the average age of volunteers is increasing, and regional towns are more at risk to extreme climatic events. Assisting local CFA brigades to attract volunteers is vital to keep communities safe now and into the future.

The development of a master plan for hosting the CFA/Volunteer Fire Brigade Victoria (VFBV) Firefighter State Championships will assist local volunteer brigades to attract the Championships to the south-west region, encourage increased CFA volunteerism and bring economic benefits to the hosting communities.

Project Aims

Develop a master plan for local community and fire brigades to reference and advocate, specifically:

- To examine how the Championships can contribute to the health and wellbeing aims of the Great South Coast community.
- To provide an assessment of the regional centres' capacity to accommodate the Championships.
- To serve as a reference to determine the suitability and priority of any proposed projects at the regional sites.
- To support the application process for grant funding as required.

Community Outcomes

- Existing conditions report completed.
- Master Plan completed and handed over to local CFA brigades across south-west Victoria and to the VFBV.



Warrnambool Men's Shed Strategic Plan

Team Members

Ashleigh Pruys, Rhianna Burns, Mark Robson, Barbara Moll



Project Description

A Legacy of Achievement, A Future of Connection: Crafting a Strategy for Tomorrow's Men's Shed.

Strengthen and support the sustainability of the Men's Shed in Warrnambool by partnering with members of the Men's Shed and the community in co-design of a strategic plan, including plans for future growth, leadership, communication and engagement.

Project Aims

- Co-design a five-year Strategic plan encompassing leadership, engagement and communication to enhance the Warrnambool Men's Shed's sustainability and connection with its members and the community. The strategy will define the goals and focus for the next five years and set out action plans to achieve the objectives.

The project undertook a series of activities to:

- Understand the experience of Shedders and the community.
- Consult with community on the opportunities and potential for diversification/growth/networks for the Men's Shed to support a broader range of stakeholders across the age spectrum
- Seek opportunities to increase inclusivity, diversity and accessibility to the Men's Shed
- Expand the community's understanding of the role and value of Men's Sheds

Community Outcomes

- Strategic plan completed
- Open day held at the Men's Shed to launch the new five-year strategic plan – attended by approximately 100 community members
- Increased interest in the Men's Shed & Women's Shed



Thrive Youth Hub Scoping Project

Team Members

Janine Marra, Kim Ayling, Tonia Wilcox, Damien Mason



Project Description

To explore the need for a youth space in Portland where young people are supported and celebrated.

Project Aims

- Engage with community (phase 1) to assess the need for a youth hub in Portland.
- Deliver a scoping report that includes background, context, insights from community members and a recommended governance structure for a Steering Committee to take the project to the next phase post LGSC involvement (phase 2).

Community Outcomes

- 214 survey engagements.
- Scoping report completed.
- Hand-over of report to the community steering committee for phase 2.

Where Are We From?



2024 Community Leadership Program Snapshot



16 participants
in a 10-month
intensive program



12 program days
including
20 field trips



3 immersives
and 1 immersive
facilitator



53 speakers



2 skill building
workshops and
1 individual
coaching session



Program
Launch and
Graduation



4 community
projects
planned/
delivered



5 LGAs
Corangamite,
Glenelg, Moyne,
Southern Grampians,
Warrnambool



1,638 total
volunteer hours
for projects



\$80,116 value of
volunteer hours
(average \$45/hr) for
community projects



Cross-sector
representation
community, business
& government



'Fostering regional leadership for community impact'



Rebecca Faris

TITLE: Veterinarian, Warrnambool Veterinary (Apiam Animal Health)

PROJECT: Six Seasons Indigenous Art Project

SPONSOR: Gardiner Foundation



Key learnings

Communities need big picture thinkers and big ideas need brave teams.

I've learned political decisions can impact communities for better or worse, and many challenges can stem from one core problem. This means that good community leadership needs a holistic approach to decision making. It's not just executives who sit on boards, but ordinary people who achieve extraordinary things - with the right support. The community project I pitched turned out to be more complex than anticipated. Having an amazing team who believed in me and the project, allowed us to persevere through roadblocks, and, hopefully, towards success.

Most significant change

Asking for what I want and not taking things personally.

My personal program goal was to be brave and "follow through," and there has been plenty of opportunity to practise. From networking opportunities to stakeholder engagement for our project, I've learned to ask for what I need/want and not to take outcomes personally. I've developed empathy and perspective for busy leaders, and an understanding that delays in communication are not personal or deliberate. When challenged, assume positive intent. This fosters strong relationships that ultimately helps get things done.

What comes next

I will seek opportunities to contribute my strengths of curiosity, teaching and systems thinking. So far, I have reached the matching phase for the 2025 South West Board Observership Program and been accepted to speak about strengths-based feedback at the 2025 Australian Veterinary Association conference. Thank you to my generous sponsor, the Gardiner Foundation, and my employer Apiam Animal Health for the opportunity to complete the Community Leadership program. I look forward to exploring ideas that support sustainable rural veterinary careers, as a team.



Community leadership is collaborating to help people to be the best they can be."



Jarrod Woolley

TITLE: Quality and Compliance Officer
Community Care, Moyne Shire Council

PROJECT: Six Seasons Indigenous Art Project



Key learnings

Leaders aren't just public figures, with recognisable faces you see in the news. They are small business people finding solutions to global problems, they are farmers voluntarily adapting to sustainable practices, or emergency service volunteers giving up their time to keep the community safe.

The program has given me the opportunity to explore what being a leader means, along with new tools to become a better leader. It has also helped me grow, both personally and professionally.

Most significant change

The program has pushed me to challenge and stretch myself beyond my comfort zone. I feel I am now more self-aware, open and ready to look at the bigger picture.

The learnings from the various program days and immersive sessions gave me the courage to take a step completely out of my comfort zone and apply for a secondment within Council in a role I never would have considered. I'm learning to use my existing skills in new ways and am learning new skills and knowledge I never would have.

My sincere thanks to Moyne Shire Council's executive leadership team and to my colleagues for allowing me the time to participate in the program, and for their support and advice across the year.

What comes next

I have recently joined the board of Western District Foodshare, and will continue to seek out opportunities to use my skills to contribute to other organisations, groups and events across the region as well as look for new professional challenges.



Vulnerability is not weakness; it's our greatest measure of courage."

Brené Brown



Sarah Bubb-Dempster

TITLE: Procurement Coordinator, Warrnambool City Council

PROJECT: Six Seasons Indigenous Art Project



Key learnings

Participating in the program has provided invaluable learning opportunities about the diverse and unique region we live in.

Program days have provided me an opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and challenge myself, along with new knowledge and skills to become a better leader and community representative.

A significant key learning has been focusing on the concept of 'with community, not for community'. By taking on a project team lead role, I have collaborated with community and my project team to work on delivering an exciting community project.

I have embraced the challenges of project management and learned to be adaptable when the plan changes.

Most significant change

The most significant change has been the network I have been able to create from the program. This has also highlighted the importance of connection, both personally and professionally. I have been inspired by the resilience, innovation and adaptability of many people within our community. I have gained new perspectives and have also recognised a shift in my own perspective to be more open to questioning the status quo.

What comes next

I will continue to challenge myself to learn more about the region and to use strategic thinking on my leadership journey. In the future, I hope to grow my skillset further and look for board opportunities within the community. I'd also like to use my knowledge and skills to make a meaningful impact within my community.

Thank you to Warrnambool City Council for their support and encouragement while I have completed the program.



Community leadership is collaborating with, and learning from, community to bring positive change and impact."



Ryan Delony

TITLE: Shift Manager, Qube Ports; Captain Portland Fire Brigade, Country Fire Authority

PROJECT: Six Seasons Indigenous Art Project

SPONSOR: Country Fire Authority



Key learnings

The program has most definitely opened my eyes to the disadvantage felt among our local government areas. In my own ‘backyard’, Glenelg Shire Council is one of the most impacted Local Government Areas in regard to education, unemployment and workforce participation. I’ll be more conscientious with the issues faced in my community, and the impact I can personally have through my career and volunteering roles.

Most significant change

The personal branding portion of the Step-Up Immersive has had a major impact. While I strive to conduct myself professionally and courteously amongst peers, clients and community members; seeing the results from a blind review of my fellow course participants was humbling and empowering. It confirmed to me that the way I conduct and carry myself can reflect both positively and negatively upon me.

What comes next

With the program coming to a close, I have learnt that having an impact on issues within the community is a realistic and attainable goal. It has been empowering to have had this demonstrated to us over and over again throughout the program. While I may be a small cog in a larger machine, I am confident I can make change within my community. I have been inspired by the impact of Sustainable Plastic Solutions which directly reflects the ‘think global, act local’ ethos.



Community leadership is knowing that whatever your efforts are, that it will make a difference and impact beyond your expectations.”



Will Kerr

TITLE: Construction Engineer, Glenelg Shire Council

PROJECT: CFA/VFBV State Firefighter Championships
Great South Coast Masterplan

SPONSOR: Country Fire Authority



Key learnings

The main key learning from the program, has been to expect good intentions when dealing with others, either through an initial introduction, or subsequent feedback.

This ties into the conscious and unconscious biases which tend to cloud our judgement before we have the chance to get to know someone.

Another lesson has been understanding the thinking and behavioural styles which affect how individuals and groups think, act, and respond to situations. I appreciate that the program gave me both the understanding

of what leadership means, and the resources to enable me to get the best out of myself, and others. I also saw firsthand how powerful the South West is, in terms of agriculture, innovation, and industry. From considerable output in the dairy industry, to the leading edge of innovation in the hydrogen field. Leaders across the South West are always looking to drive progress and stay ahead to ensure long term sustainability.

Most significant change

My most significant change has been the confidence in myself to be a leader. I now feel more empowered to provide my input,

experience and knowledge to situations where I may not previously have felt confident or capable to do so. This applies to roles with leadership titles, as well as the day-to-day actions which show leadership.

What comes next

I am keen to apply what I've learnt and use the resources I've discovered to improve as a leader. I would also like to share what I've learnt with others to build capacity in the organisations I'm involved in.



Community leadership is leading in a way that benefits others now, and, more importantly, in the future."



Brit Watts

TITLE: Young Peer Facilitator,
Youth Affairs Council Victoria

PROJECT: CFA/VFBV State Firefighter Championships
Great South Coast Masterplan

SPONSOR: Wannon Water



Key learnings

I am much more aware of the scope of what makes someone a leader, post-program, having learnt from a wide range of community leaders and my fellow program participants. I am more aware of my unconscious biases, how I show up for myself and others, and the impact an individual can have on community and beyond. The quote “the behaviour you walk past is the behaviour you accept” reaffirmed for me the need to continue to show up, and advocate for, the communities I’m in.

Most significant change

Personally, the most significant change I have experienced is the belief in myself that I have now. Speaking about our personal brands at our Step-In Immersive was pivotal for me, and demonstrated how leadership styles can positively differ. The concept of a community leader can look 100 different ways, and my 2024 LGSC program group proved that. I will take away strong connections to an amazing group of people.

What comes next

Passion, vulnerability and authenticity are my biggest strengths, which will continue to drive my work, now with more confidence. I aim to seek community volunteer opportunities, to further my education, with a future goal of sitting on a community organisation’s board. I will continue to challenge and question the status quo and lead with a person-focused approach.



Community leadership is impassioned people to create environments and opportunities for everyone to thrive.”





Aylish Tobin-Salzman

TITLE: Communications Coordinator, WestVic Dairy

PROJECT: CFA/VFBV State Firefighter Championships
Great South Coast Masterplan

SPONSOR: Gardiner Foundation



Key learnings

The opportunity to meet and get to know the wonderful group of people in the program, as well as the community leaders we have heard from as guest speakers, has been invaluable.

These leaders share common traits that illustrate what effective leadership looks like. These leaders are vulnerable, they embrace candid and difficult conversations for progress and accept failure as part of growth. They have shown me that leading with accountability, integrity and kindness are crucial to fostering a culture where work for positive change can occur.

Most significant change

The most significant change I have experienced through this program is an increase in confidence in my skills and perspectives. Focusing on my strengths has lessened my self-doubt and I have been more willing to volunteer my ideas and voice my questions. It is gratifying to see that this is leading to better outcomes in my workplace and community. My strengths—infectious energy, positivity, empathy, and curiosity—can generate positive change.

What comes next

This is just the beginning. I am committed to seeking opportunities which will enable me to positively contribute to the communities I live and work in. I am dedicated to staying curious and continuing to learn. I am deeply thankful to my employer for granting me the time to participate in this program, and my thanks also go to the Gardiner Foundation for their generous support. The leadership lessons and qualities I've cultivated throughout the program will empower me to be a better community leader.



Leadership takes brave work,
tough conversations and whole hearts.”
Brené Brown





Rebecca Campbell

TITLE: Chief Finance Officer, Glenelg Shire Council

PROJECT: CFA/VFBV State Firefighter Championships
Great South Coast Masterplan



Key learnings

My key learning from the program is how important a healthy, vibrant and co-operative community is to the success of a community as a whole.

At present, many statistics indicate that people in our community are lonely and becoming increasingly disadvantaged and disengaged. It is really important that everyone in our community digs a little deeper. We should all contribute towards building a vibrant and engaging community that we are proud of, which lifts those in need of support and kindness. Communities give individuals purpose and belonging.

Most significant change

The most significant change that I have experienced throughout the program has been the value that I now place on making connections and networking. I have learnt that in order to increase connection, knowledge and diversity, it is important to ask curious questions.

This understanding has enabled me to build my confidence when talking to people that I don't really know. Having conversations with people different to me, builds my knowledge of how other people in my community view things. This knowledge

is important as it informs my input into decision making, with an aim of improving outcomes for the wider community.

What comes next

Working for Glenelg Shire Council means that my work directly impacts the community. I will continue to work hard to have a positive impact in this role, and contribute towards a vibrant and healthy community. I also aim to continue developing my community leadership skills through further professional development and volunteering roles.



Good community leadership is powerful. It fosters happy, healthy and thriving communities, gives individuals purpose, and creates amazing opportunities for individuals and communities as a whole."







Rhianna Burns

TITLE: Acting Senior Project Officer,
Child Protection Team,
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

PROJECT: Warrnambool Men's Shed Strategic Plan



Key learnings

The program has provided me with a great opportunity to learn and develop my leadership skills. I particularly enjoyed the program days we spent in the community, hearing from our wonderful guest speakers. Especially how vulnerability can create connections and high performing teams. Other key lessons have included the power of radical candour, the importance of being clear to be kind, and being accountable to provide a safe and inclusive space for everyone.

Most significant change

The biggest impact this program had on me personally has been my increased confidence and

improved public speaking. Like anything, the more you practice, the better you become. Taking the opportunity to practice at each program day had a profound effect on me. Taking on the role of project lead for the Warrnambool Men's Shed Strategic Plan also allowed me to strengthen this skill by facilitating a workshop with my team, and speaking at our community open day event.

At our Port Campbell step-up immersive we spoke about taking a chance. I would encourage everyone to take a chance when an opportunity presents that makes you feel uncomfortable. Step into it, and remember that taking action

cures fear. Growth comes from discomfort, and courageous leaders are in the arena.

What comes next

I will keep implementing the valuable leadership tools I have learnt in this program and continue to explore my Life Styles Inventory (LSI) as I grow. As I keep evolving on my leadership journey I will shed what no longer serves me, stay curious, keep asking questions and spend more time on the dance floor in the community. I am extremely appreciative for my employer DFFH for presenting this opportunity to me, and allowing me to be a program participant this year.



Community leadership is being in the arena and taking action to make a positive difference."



Mark Robson

TITLE: Senior People and Culture Advisor,
South West TAFE

PROJECT: Warrnambool Men's Shed Strategic Plan



Key learnings

The opportunity to learn more about the Great South Coast has given me a broader understanding of the challenges and opportunities that exist in our region.

The group conversations have improved my strategic thinking; a critical skill in community leadership settings. Framing of situations has been another useful takeaway. The concept of being “in the dance and on the balcony” resonated with me. It’s important to be able to play both roles, knowing when it’s the right time to step onto the dance floor and get involved and move away from spectating. There have been opportunities to do

both in 2024, which has been beneficial to my development. Respectfully giving and receiving constructive feedback has been another lesson this year.

Most significant change

My ability to consider issues in more detail has improved by asking more about the “why” and taking a more curious approach to my work and conversations with others. My professional background does entail a high level of people engagement, and I have taken on board the importance of considering various perspectives to assist in the decision making process. From here, having the confidence to make

the decision and to take responsibility and ownership has been a big step.

What comes next

The program has been an amazing experience with so many highlights. I will be continuing in the role of vice-president with the Warrnambool and District Football Umpires Association in 2025. Continuing WDFUA projects including developing an Indigenous themed umpiring shirt, and working towards greater female participation in umpiring at all ages.

In the future, I will also actively consider the potential for other volunteer opportunities, including board related roles.



Community leadership is an essential ingredient for regional communities to prosper through positive and collaborative engagement.”



Barbara Moll

TITLE: Leadership Program Manager,
South West Healthcare

PROJECT: Warrnambool Men's Shed Strategic Plan



Key learnings

It has been a privilege to explore the topic of leadership while supporting the growth of others, and I am grateful to South West Healthcare for their support and faith in me.

I was especially moved by how the program day presenters trusted themselves and leaned on their communities. This has taught me to place greater trust in my own leadership abilities and embrace collaboration more fully. It has also prompted me to examine my own principles, biases, and motivations.

Through my community project, I have gained an understanding of governance and leadership

through working with a wonderful community organisation. I value the opportunity to apply my transferable leadership skills with support and guidance.

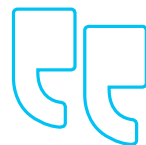
Most significant change

A year ago, stepping outside of my comfort zone felt daunting. Now, I feel ready and excited to seize community leadership opportunities, knowing I can make a valuable contribution. I've recognised my broad skill set, and am proud of the trust, open communication, and perseverance that has made our team project a success. Vulnerability has been a recurring theme in my journey.

Honest reflection is also helping me refine my leadership style, find balance, and remain open to challenges.

What comes next

The strong connections forged with other participants have created a lasting network of support. I intend to continue raising my profile, building connections, and am committed to ongoing self-reflection and growth. I also aim to deepen my expertise in governance and seek out a community role where I can challenge myself further, possibly as a board director.



Community leadership is creating a better, fairer, and happier society for everyone through meaningful change."



Ashleigh Pruys

TITLE: Founder, The Toolong Classroom

PROJECT: Warrnambool Men's Shed Strategic Plan

SPONSOR: Community Bank Port Fairy & District - Bendigo Bank



Key learnings

Creating connections is invaluable to the success of any individual or group. The program has highlighted the importance of knowing your team on a personal level. Being exposed to a vast range of speakers, businesses and community members has helped me to embrace curiosity and seek a greater understanding for things I don't know or understand.

Most significant change

The program has given me the tools to remain grounded, while having open and honest conversations. With empathy and compassion at the

forefront, I feel confident to discuss hard topics or accept a difference of opinion without taking it personally.

The program demonstrates how leadership comes in many forms, and how I can be empowered by what I bring to the table. I've had to learn how to continually pivot -- which has allowed me to let go of my perfectionism and stand on the balcony to refine my next step.

When I picture an effective leader, I see someone who can remain composed in any situation, yet do so authentically. I received feedback on my personal brand and it was confirmation that my 'go-getter' work ethic

and genuine care for others is noticed externally. These words were a turning point in considering myself as a leader.

What comes next

Stepping out of the program feels like a fresh start. With the foundation already established, I feel I now have the skillset to hit the ground running. To lead by example and demonstrate the importance of volunteering in our local area and across the great South Coast. I am also motivated to seek out the gaps in our community, and create more opportunities for myself and others to connect.



Community leadership is leaning in and listening, while turning words into action."



Janine Marra

TITLE: Administration Manager/EA to CEO,
Port of Portland Pty Ltd

PROJECT: Thrive Youth Hub Scoping Project



Key learnings

Through the program, I have gained a deeper understanding of my personal leadership approach, and have developed invaluable skills.

My key learnings include an enhanced self-awareness and self-confidence, while opening my eyes to the power of diverse perspectives. Listening to a range of viewpoints has helped refine my approach to leadership, and fostered an environment where every team member feels valued and empowered to contribute.

I've also recognised the significant impact of feedback and mentoring. By actively incorporating constructive feedback and prioritising mentorship, I am working to

support my team members' development, to strengthen trust and encourage continuous improvement within our team culture.

Most significant change

One of the most transformative changes for me has been in my communication skills. As someone who once found large group settings intimidating, I've grown more comfortable with sharing my ideas openly, engaging others in conversation and challenging ideas.

Through consistent practice and constructive feedback, I've developed strategies to manage nerves and connect effectively with my audience. This has not only strengthened my public speaking skills, but has also enhanced my confidence

in management interactions, making it easier to initiate conversations, build connections, and respond thoughtfully to questions.

What comes next

Looking ahead, I plan to deepen my community involvement by taking on roles where I can contribute meaningfully, lending my strengths and insights to make a positive impact. My goal is to continue applying these learned leadership qualities -- authenticity, inclusivity, and strategic thinking -- to create value and drive positive change wherever I go. I am extremely grateful to the Port of Portland for the opportunity to undertake the 2024 Community Leadership Program.



With determination and courage, comes great reward"

Brené Brown



Kim Ayling

TITLE: Coordinator Education and Care,
Moyne Shire Council

PROJECT: Thrive Youth Hub Scoping Project



Key learnings

Throughout the program, I've come to realise the power of trust and empowerment, especially during challenging times. Learning to let go and trust my team has shown me that real leadership is about lifting others up, even when it feels uncomfortable. During these moments, I've seen firsthand how others rise to meet the challenges, allowing us all to grow and succeed together.

Most significant change

The most profound transformation in my journey has been overcoming my lifelong apprehension around engaging in group settings, even among strangers. Thanks to the program, I now find myself stepping into spaces with a newfound confidence. Each time I leave a meeting, workshop, or event, I'm struck with the thought: "Who was that person?!" It's been a journey of embracing a bolder version of myself.

What comes next

With the completion of the program, I'm excited to be launching phase two of the Thrive Youth Space Project, which will involve hosting an event early next year. This gathering will allow us to share the Thrive Youth Space Recommendation Report, connect with those who have shown interest, and invite passionate individuals to join the project's steering committee. It's a step toward building something meaningful with and for the Portland community.



Community leadership is consistency, curiosity, and the courage to lead change. Above all, it's about bringing community along with you on the journey."



Damien Mason

TITLE: Self-Employed Carpenter

PROJECT: Thrive Youth Hub Scoping Project

SPONSOR: The A.L. Lane Foundation



Key learnings

The program has allowed me to see how effective community leadership and inclusivity can be achieved through the application of intelligence, kindness and deep listening. We have heard from many strong and effective leaders who have demonstrated how to create lasting legacies with community support.

The value of data and strategy in identifying such opportunities cannot be over emphasised. It also takes leaders who aren't afraid to be brave, vulnerable, trusting and curious.

The two-day visit to Victorian Parliament, the industry-led program days and visits to Local Government Areas showed

me the benefits of looking beyond my own community to find solutions. I also found the workshops which helped us to understand personality/ leadership styles and group feedback/coaching sessions to be beneficial.

I am grateful to my sponsor, The A.L. Lane Foundation, for making all this program possible for me and my community.

Most significant change

I now better understand how to engage more widely with community. I have a greater respect for the hours of personal time volunteers put into community projects and organisations.

What comes next

My intention is to continue my volunteerism with CFA and Surf Life Saving Australia. The promise of a new surf club house and a new fire station will enable me to use my new strategic thinking and community engagement skills, especially in Macarthur, which faces the challenge of an aging community.



Community leadership is creating cheerful, and energized community involvement to achieve positive community outcomes."





Tonia Wilcox

TITLE: Warehouse Manager and Volunteer Coordinator, Western District Foodshare

PROJECT: Thrive Youth Hub Scoping Project

SPONSOR: Felicity Melican & Gerard Barker



Key learnings

Since joining the program, I've embarked on a year of meaningful growth, both personally and in my commitment to community leadership.

This journey has deepened my appreciation for the power of collaboration in building strong, resilient communities. I've experienced immense satisfaction this year in helping support others to reach their potential.

Most significant change

One of the biggest changes this year has been building confidence in my personal approach to leadership. I've come to see that effective leadership often requires adaptability and openness to pathways with a shared purpose. From helping to create 'Local Vocal,' a community choir that supports mental well-being, to working with my project team to explore the need for a youth space in Portland, I've pursued paths which have brought both joy and meaning.

What comes next

Looking ahead, I plan to continue my part-time role at Western District Foodshare. I love working with and supporting our incredible volunteers to make a positive impact in the community.

I'm also excited to join the Warrnambool Community Garden Committee, and plan to continue my involvement with community singing initiatives that bring people together and nurture connections.

A heartfelt thank you to my sponsors, Felicity Melican and Gerard Barker, and to Amanda Hennessy at Foodshare for her invaluable guidance.



Leadership is not about being in charge. It is about taking care of those in your charge."

Simon Sinek

Buddies



At different stages in our leadership journey we may require varying levels and types of support.

During the program each participant is allocated a buddy. The buddy's role is to catch up and debrief on the various topics covered, give and

receive regular and constructive feedback, support and challenge ideas and thinking and learn from different insights and perspectives.

Like any relationship, being a buddy is both a privilege and a responsibility.





Thank-you to our Presenters and Facilitators



- Helga Svendsen

- Dr Emma Shortis
- Tim Marwood
- Aaron Moyne
- Cr Kate Makin

- Dr Bernadette Northeast
- Angela Hewett
- Cr Karen Foster
- Gareth Colliton
- Cr Vicki Jellie
- Phil Pettingill
- Tyson Jakitsch
- Chrissie Duncan
- Jacob Dunne

- Johnny Gardner
- Marty Gent
- Jamie Pepper
- Elisha Nettleton
- Juan Donis

- Sam Rudolph

- Troy Lovett
- Cathryn Walder

- Andrew Lomp
- Keir Delaney
- Kieran Rooney
- Roma Britnell MP
- Sam McColl
- Juliana Addison MP
- Martin Cameron MP
- John Fothergill
- Hon. Maree Edwards, MP

- Chris Kendall
- Renee Killen
- Lindsay Stow
- Jodie Hill

- Jakobe Walker

- Alistair McCosh
- Loren Tuck
- Lindsay Ferguson
- Will McDonald
- Chloe Brown
- David Haberfield

- Mark Riley
- Dan McKinna
- Britt Butler
- Rowena Punton
- Shannon Curran
- Darren Shelden
- Andy Bell

- Jacinta Lenehan
- Maree Wyse
- Lyn Eales
- Ethan Bloom
- Emily Falla

Thank you to the Mayors, CEOs or delegates from the Shire Councils of Corangamite, Moyne, Southern Grampians, Glenelg, and Warrnambool City Council, who joined us for lunch during a program day in their local government area and the MPs who joined us for lunch at Parliament House.

LGSC History

LGSC is an example of an inspiring community organisation, that develops and supports our future leaders.

In 2008, work began to establish a community leadership program for the Great South Coast region.

Led by Josie Black, OAM, passionate regional leaders joined forces to assess our region's appetite for a community leadership development program, research program models and instigate state funding discussions.

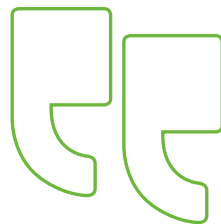
This original work was informed by Josie's research, which highlighted the need for a regional community fund and the growing need for developing our community leaders' skills, knowledge and abilities.

In 2009, to help develop our aspiring community leaders, and following community consultation, a steering committee was established.

The committee's goal was to create a program (based on the Williamson Leadership Program model) which allowed leadership development to occur via a supportive, structured, experiential program tailored to our region's needs.

Later in 2009, a business plan was established, and a lobbying strategy initiated to attract state government funding. Thanks to the passion and determination of the original steering committee, initial funding was secured in 2012.

The inaugural LGSC program began in May 2012 and now runs annually from February to December, attracting up to 20 aspiring leaders. With 179 alumni, we are growing in numbers, strength and reputation.



**Possibilities, not
obstacles or hurdles**





2024 LGSC Initiatives

During 2024 LGSC offered new leadership learning opportunities beyond the flagship program. These included the 'From Fundamentals to Advanced Practice' and

'Financials' governance training, and a three-day 'Dare to Lead™' course. We also began scoping new initiatives for delivery in 2025.



Thank-you to the Alumni...

who connected, engaged & networked in 2024



LGSC is proud to support the Great South Coast region with a diverse group of community leaders who have the community leadership skills, knowledge, networks and passion to positively contribute to the opportunities and challenges our region faces.

Alumni

Congratulations to our 179 LGSC Alumni for their ongoing contribution to the social and economic growth of our community via volunteerism across a range of sectors, including a diversity of place-based community projects, emergency services, strategic committees, governance positions, and local and state government roles.

2023

- Alexandra Stoupas • Cate Corbet • Cathryn Walder • Claudia Klunker • Courtney Mathew
- Emma Shortis • Jane Hinds • Jo-Anne O'Brien • Mark Barling • Michaela Meade • Mitchell Spencer

2022

- Alison Kemp • Anna Sanderson • Claire Dagley • Daniel Knight • Daniel Pearson • Diana Dixon
- Jennifer Thomas • Justin Harzmeyer • Kaye McDowall • Lachlan Farrington • Leesa ClausenBrown
- Matine Tondkar • Raymon Barber • Sarah Irving

2021

- Aaron Leddin • Ashleigh Glennon • Ben Marsden • Brendan Hyland • Carl Joyce
- Craig McLeod • Ella Credlin • Heather Smillie • Jamie Pepper • Kylie McIntyre • Kylie Moroney
- Lynden Brown • Oonagh Kilpatrick • Paul Dunn • Peter McLauchlan • Tania Penny

2020

- Billy Edis • Catherine Darkin • Catherine Fitzgerald • Craig Kelson • Dominic Conheady • Emily Falla
- Jason Van Der Heyden • Jerram Wurlod • Joe Sinnott • Joy Coulson • Kara Winderlich • Liam Arnott
- Mandy Cohen • Michelle Badenhorst • Tim McPherson • Troy Lovett

2019

- Adam Kent • Amy Silvester • Andrew Povey • Anthony Dufty • Ashlee Scott • Ben Fraser
- Bradley Collins • Brendan Donahoo • Jan Mackenzie • Jason Cay • Jason Eats • Juan Donis
- Kate Roache • Kelly Barnes • Nikki Edwards • Rachael James • Sophie Baulch • Tafadzwa Chitava

2018

- Alison Quade • Andre Barr • Blessing Furusa • Julie Neeson • Julie Perry • Kate Haberfield
- Lauren Peterson • Mark Brennan • Melanie Bennett • Penny MacDonald • Peter Gaffy
- Phil Dennis • Richard Wade • Tony Harrison • Trevor Carr

2017

- Alison Kennedy • Amanda Wearne • Brendan Hawkins • Delna Plathottam • Garry Peterson
- Jacinta Lenehan • Jordan Smith • Juanita Dickinson • Leon Carey • Leon Senchenko
- Rhonda Henry • Shane Stenhouse • Teremayi Manozho • Vicki Askew Thornton

2016

- Andrew Cameron • Angela Gowans • Angela Runganga • Carly Jordan • Daniel Meade
- Emma Dart • Jackie Jeffrey • Jarrod Clarke • Jessica Fishburn • Michael Absalom
- Paul McNamara • Paul Ross • Robbie Frawley • Samuel Rudolph • Sue Cassidy • Wayne Robertson

2015

- Adam Taylor • Alison Read • Ann Cunningham • Billy Greenham • Brendan Rea • Chris Hansford
- Claire Holt • Craig Dettling • Emma Mahony • Gareth Colliton • Jason Thomas • Philip Hose
- Sharnie McKenna • Sally Slater

2014

- Allan Miller • Angela Alexander • Carolyn Woods • Ellen Lyne • Glenn Britnell • Helen Chenoweth
- Jacob Taylor • Dr Jacquie Cotton • Jarrod Woff • Jon Goodall • Kelly Edwards • Kelly McNaughton
- Marcus Clarke • Megan Jackson • Paul Loughheed • Tammy Young

2013

- Alex Reardon • Belinda Bennett • Carol Weise • Clint Larkins • David Maher
- David O'Connell • Emma Fitzgibbon • Janet Sloan • Janice Harris • Johanna Hansen
- Lynda Smith • Nathan Anderson • Ronan Corcoran • Dr Sally Obst • Sharon Linke

2012 (Inaugural Program)

- Aaron Moyne • Damien Teal • Fran Fogarty • Jason Hoy • Jessica Howe • Lisette Mill
- Melissa Mitchell • Merran Fyfe • Michelle Sweeney • Rachel Munro • Roger Wilkinson
- Ryan Weissel • Dr Tim Tutt • Tom Newton








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