

changing lives
reducing crime

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To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Alison Churchill and I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Community Restorative Centre (CRC). CRC is a not for profit Charity providing a range of services to people affected by the criminal justice system; with a focus on prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families.

CRC is the largest dedicated organisation in NSW, providing direct services to this target group. Despite this however, we have only one specifically funded worker providing pre and post release support to Aboriginal men.

The NSW prison population is rapidly increasing, with over 10,000 individuals incarcerated. Aboriginal people are vastly over-represented within the criminal justice system, a decade after the Royal Commission. Aboriginal people currently make up more than 19% of the adult male prisoner population and over 30% of the female prison population. (Indigenous Inmates Statistics Report, NSW Dept. Corrective Services, 2002). Nearly 3 in every 4 (76%) of all Indigenous prisoners have been previously incarcerated.

The 2006 Department of Corrective Services Census records that over 10% of inmates recorded the Inner City of Sydney as their last known address (The highest level of offenders in NSW returning to one geographic area). This represents close to 1000 inmates on any given day in NSW Correctional Centres. We know, from working in the area, that the figure returning to live in the Inner City is far higher.

There is a paucity of specifically funded support services for Aboriginal people in this area providing support to Indigenous offenders post release.

The Gamarada Program is an initiative that seeks to enhance the lives of Aboriginal men. The Program recognises the value of social capital - 'the fabric that holds a community together' - and acknowledges that connections, and social networks have enormous value for individuals and communities.

Community Restorative Centre Inc.

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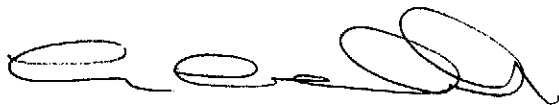
to legal services, anger management etc and the fostering of respect, support, spirituality and healing, Gamarada recognises that changes can occur and stronger safer communities can be developed. Trust and the sharing of knowledge and values is an intrinsic element of the Gamarad Program.

The Reverend Tim Costello stated that 'Social Capital is all about conversation, trust and doing things together. To nourish social capital begin with conversation. Bring people together to look at issues affecting them. Give people opportunities so they know that they matter.' The Gamarada Program has social capital and cultural safety as a corner stone of its work.

The Community Restorative Centres understands the aims and philosophies of the Gamarada Program. CRC looks forward to working in partnership with members of the Gamarada Program and supports their submission for funding.

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison Churchill', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

Alison Churchill
CEO
Community restorative Centre