



WE **W**ORK
WITHOUT
BIAS OR
JUDGEMENT



OUR PURPOSE

WAM exists to assist women in their early interaction with the justice system through the provision of a formal mentoring relationship. This will provide them with a pathway to develop and use positive life skills.



OUR VISION

A national, volunteer-based mentoring program for women to reduce female incarceration and recidivism and promote social inclusion.



OUR VALUES

Our guiding values underpin the way we work with women:

Integrity

We are reliable and trustworthy. Every woman who comes to us should feel safe, emotionally and physically, with our mentors. We optimise our resources to build early intervention strategies and offer them support.

Respect

We operate without judgement or bias. We approach each individual with open minds and hearts full of compassion, no matter who they are or their circumstances.

Belonging

We work closely with the community for support and referrals, in pursuit of social justice and a better, stronger community for all.

Empowerment

We don't tell women under mentorship what to do, but empower them to make the best decisions for themselves.

Social Justice

Ensuring that women in our community have a fair and just opportunity to thrive and live their lives as equally as others.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

THE YEAR 2018–2019 HAS SEEN A PERIOD OF GROWTH AND EXPANSION FOR WOMEN AND MENTORING. WE WELCOMED TO OUR BOARD TWO NEW DIRECTORS, AMANDA THORNTON AND TRIEU HUYNH. AMANDA BRINGS BROAD EXPERIENCE IN FUNDRAISING PARTICULARLY IN THE CHARITABLE SPACE AND TRIEU IS PROGRAM MANAGER OF INDICTABLE CRIME AT VICTORIA LEGAL AID. WE VALUE THEIR EXPERIENCE, EXPERTISE AND COMMITMENT TO WAM.

We completed our initial 3-year Strategic Plan on 30 June 2019. Most of our objectives for that period have been achieved. Our team participated in a robust and extremely productive full day strategic planning day in February 2019. All directors and staff workshopped many ideas and processes. After a great deal of fine tuning over the following months, we are proud to have our new Strategic Plan in operation for 2019–2022.

An ongoing challenge is the funding for programs such as WAM. Our aim is to secure WAM's future not only financially but also to be recognised as a thought leader and voice for women in the justice system. Vulnerable women across all metropolitan Melbourne courts should have access to our volunteer mentor program. We will look and advocate for innovative ways to keep women out of the justice system. WAM will continue to strengthen partnerships to enable us to grow our referrals, therefore expanding our reach. This will be achieved by identifying and engaging with strategic partners to enable us to take our place in the network of services. Our data collection is comprehensive, we can measure our success and we have an innovative program.

Our goals, plans and achievements can only come to fruition by having a team who are committed to, and believe in, our outstanding program. We are fortunate to have Tricia, Mary, Sarah, Sharlene and Gen who along with our volunteers provide their expertise and dedication to making Women and Mentoring a success.

Women and Mentoring will celebrate 10 years in 2020. We are extremely grateful to all of the philanthropic organisations, the donors via Facebook and our web page plus our supporters at our fundraising activities. This has enabled Women and Mentoring to continue providing valuable and much needed mentoring support to the women in our program.

Sam Payne Chair

“OUR AIM IS TO SECURE WAM'S FUTURE NOT ONLY FINANCIALLY BUT ALSO TO BE RECOGNISED AS A THOUGHT LEADER AND VOICE FOR WOMEN IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM.”





EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

With a recent Crime Statistics Agency report stating that the number of women entering prison in Victoria in 2018 was more than double the number in 2012, the majority of whom are on remand, it is clear that the unintended consequences of changing the Bail Act are causing significant harm to vulnerable women.

As a small for-purpose organisation working in this space, we have been fortunate to rely on philanthropy to help us keep women out of the justice system and connected to services to address the underlying causes behind their offending. With donations received at The Funding Network's pitch event, and grants from the Bank of Melbourne Foundation and Jack Brockhoff Foundation we have been able to successfully expand our program to Frankston. Funding from the Victorian Legal Services Board and Bennelong Foundation has also supported our reach to include Broadmeadows Magistrates Court.

Referrals are consistently increasing and the demand for our program is evident. We have received 65 referrals from Victoria Legal Aid, Corrections, Court workers (Drug Court, CISP, Court Network), as well as from several community support services. Our volunteer recruitment has been directed in areas of need, and we have trained 33 new volunteers. Having a pool of screened and trained mentors has enabled us to match and support 28 vulnerable women in a mentoring relationship this year.

Through the provision of a formal mentoring relationship, WAM program participants have avoided a custodial sentence, and have been supported to successfully engage with services to address their complex needs. Recidivism rates among participants are low (15%).

We have been able to embed our evaluation framework into the program that has enabled us to capture rich data about the women we work with and the impact of their mentoring relationship. As such 'The Women's Voices' project is a fundamental record that informs our ongoing work. I was able to share this at a presentation at the Sisters Inside Conference in November 2018, and we will continue to build on this information.

Our annual contribution to Law Week was a guest speaker presentation titled *Justice for All... Just not Women*. Professor Bronwyn Naylor (RMIT), Jill Prior (Law and Advocacy Centre for Women) and Magistrate Pauline Spencer, conveyed to the audience how important intervention and diversion programs are in addressing the underlying causes of women's offending. We cannot afford to keep locking up women who are often victims of crime in the first instance.

Our goal over the next 12 months is to continue working with disadvantaged women to keep them out of the justice system, stop them from being criminalised because of their vulnerability, and to support them to take steps to address the underlying causes of their offending behaviours. We are also looking to pilot a mentoring program targeting young women aged 15-18 years-old who are vulnerable to exploitation and engaging in risky behaviours.

We have had a successful year working towards achieving our objectives, and it would not be possible without the dedication and hard work of our small team. I am also thankful to our Board who provide enduring support and assistance.

"REFERRALS ARE CONSISTENTLY INCREASING AND THE DEMAND FOR OUR PROGRAM IS EVIDENT. WE HAVE RECEIVED 65 REFERRALS FROM VICTORIA LEGAL AID, CORRECTIONS, COURT WORKERS (DRUG COURT, CISP, COURT NETWORK), AS WELL AS FROM SEVERAL COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES".





OUR PEOPLE

WE WERE SAD TO SAY GOODBYE TO WAM FOUNDER ANN POLIS WHEN SHE RETIRED FROM THE BOARD IN NOVEMBER 2018. ANN CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO WAM DURING HER TIME ON THE BOARD. HOWEVER, WE'VE BEEN PLEASED TO WELCOME TWO NEW DIRECTORS, WHO BOTH BRING VALUABLE NEW SKILLS WHICH WILL HELP WAM IN ACHIEVING ITS MISSION.

During the year, the Board has set up three sub-committees to support its work: the Governance Committee, the Nominations Committee and the Fundraising & Marketing Committee. This continues the Board's ongoing work to expand and improve its governance structure.



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Sam Payne, Chair

Sam retired from a long career in business administration in 2005. She joined the WAM pilot program as a volunteer mentor in 2010, one of our first volunteers. Sam has mentored four women participants up to 2017. Sam joined the Board in 2014 and was elected to Chair in 2017. She is a member of the Fundraising & Marketing Committee.



Virginia Murdoch

Currently Product Manager at Culture Amp, Virginia works with a cross-functional team of engineers and designers, focused on turning large amounts of data into actionable insights. Virginia has previously worked in professional development, learning and distribution platforms, both in Australia and overseas. Virginia has previously been the Deputy Chair of the Writers Victoria board. Virginia joined the Board in 2017 and she is a member of the Fundraising & Marketing Committee.



Keren Murray, Company Secretary

Keren is an experienced lawyer, policy advisor and non-executive director. She is Principal of K Murray Consulting, a legal policy advisory service. Previously, Keren was Principal Lawyer at the Law Institute of Victoria and worked in criminal law reform at the Victorian Department of Justice, and law reform commissions in England and Victoria. Keren is currently a Board member and Secretary of The Stella Prize and was previously a board member of the YWCA Victoria. Keren joined the Board in 2014 and she chairs the Governance Committee and the Nominations Committee.



Stacey Zuluaga

Stacey is an accountant with over 12 years' experience as an accountant in public practice. She is a CPA, holds a Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Accounting and Management) and a Diploma of Financial Planning. Stacey also volunteers in various capacities at CPA Australia including sitting on the Victoria CPA Public Practice Committee, helping other accounting firms. Stacey brings to the board accounting experience across a range of industries, a broad understanding of the issues women can face, especially financial, and a passion for empowering others. Stacey joined the Board in 2016.



Sally Dobell

Sally operates her own creative design business, Playground. She was previously the CEO of Cornwell, a creative agency renowned as one of Australia's most innovative and respected brand experts. With nearly 20 years' experience, Sally is a passionate and dedicated business leader who also sits on the board of Open House Melbourne. Sally joined the Board in 2016 and she is a member of the Fundraising & Marketing Committee.



Amanda Thornton

Amanda coordinates grant funding at Sacred Heart Mission and volunteers with the Melbourne Women's Fund Grants Committee. She is experienced in fundraising and non-profit administration in the charitable and arts sectors, and has formal qualifications in Social Investment and Philanthropy, Museum Studies and the Arts. Amanda joined the board in 2019 and she chairs the Fundraising & Marketing Committee.



Anne Rudd

Anne is a serving member of Victoria Police and over the past 17 years she has performed duties within the Bayside area, Prosecutions Division, Family Violence Command and more recently, the North West Metro Region in Melbourne and Yarra. Anne is a lawyer and an experienced prosecutor within the Magistrates' Court and Children's Court where she specialised in prosecuting sexual offences and family violence matters. Anne was previously a member of the Therapeutic Treatment Board and is a current Director of Court Network. Anne joined the Board in 2018 and she is a member of the Governance Committee and the Nominations Committee.



Trieu Huynh

Trieu is an experienced criminal lawyer having worked in both Prosecution and Defence. Currently, he is the Program Manager of Indictable Crime at Victoria Legal Aid, working with sector partners to ensure the delivery of high-quality legal services as well as a fair and efficient justice system. He is a Law Institute of Victoria (LIV) Accredited Criminal Law Specialist and a member of the LIV Criminal Law Section Executive Committee. Trieu joined the board in 2019.

OUR TEAM



Tricia Ciampa, Executive Officer

With over twenty years in the not-for-profit sector, Tricia has expertise on program design, social impact evaluation and forging collaborative partnerships to deliver positive and life changing outcomes for vulnerable people in our community. Tricia has very relevant experience in mentoring and the Victorian criminal justice system, including volunteering as an Independent Person providing support to young people during police interviews under the Youth Referral and Independent Persons Program.



Gen Anderson, Intake Coordinator

Commencing with WAM in 2016, Gen holds a Diploma Community Services (Alcohol, Other Drugs, and Mental Health), Bachelor of Criminology and Criminal Justice, and Master of Social Work. Through her role as Intake Coordinator, Gen is able to combine her passion for direct practice work and seeing the outcomes of women getting together to support one another.



Mary Latham, Operations Manager

Mary has been with WAM since 2014. She is a chartered accountant who has experience in both corporate and not-for-profit roles; including professional accounting firms, financial services, disability and youth mental health. Mary has strong experience in finance, governance, project management, reporting and budget control.



Sarah Nyssen, Frankston Coordinator

Sarah has a strong background of working in the early intervention and prevention space, with extensive experience including working in the women's health sector and coordinating a youth mentoring program in the south east. Sarah is driven to create supportive relationships to achieve better outcomes for vulnerable people in our community.



Sharlene Farrugia, Mentor Coordinator

Sharlene joined the WAM team in 2015 and is responsible for the successful expansion of WAM into the Western Suburbs. Sharlene's qualifications in Social Policy-Social Inclusion and Masters in Human Rights complement her specialised understanding of structural discrimination, advocacy, application of feminist and human rights frameworks and critical thinking skills.



ACHIEVEMENTS

OUTCOMES

1 WOMEN IN THE PROGRAM INDICATE FEELING BETTER RESOURCED TO MANAGE THEIR ISSUES; ARE LINKED IN WITH APPROPRIATE SERVICES.

83% of participants indicate improvement in life areas linked to protective factors and reducing criminogenic risks

86% of program participants are linked in with other agencies, through the WAM Coordinator or with support from the mentor to seek out specialist services.

One participant spoke of being pushed outside of her comfort zone doing things she wouldn't ordinarily do, such as going to 'Fitted for Work' or meeting with the Coordinator for a review meeting in a new area. Having a mentor by her side gave her more confidence.

2 WOMEN ARE BETTER RESOURCED, MORE CONFIDENT, AND HAVE A MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE AND APPROACH TO THEIR LEGAL MATTERS

86% of women indicate improvement in addressing their legal issues. Most women identified the importance of "having someone next to me" as they go to court. For some women having to complete a Community Corrections Order can cause anxiety and stress, particularly if they have other appointments and caring responsibilities.

Lee expressed feeling that the program has changed her life and for the first time in a long time she feels like the person she was 10 years ago. She has been enjoying the school holidays with her child and her friends, her anxiety levels have dropped dramatically, and she feels more in control.*

Terry stated that she feels human again after meeting her mentor Cheryl. She really takes a lot from being able to talk to someone and bounce ideas off.*

When asked what she liked about her mentor, Jade appreciates the advice that she gets "she doesn't tell me what to do, but listens, validates me and does not judge me."*

3 WOMEN IN THE PROGRAM REDUCE/CEASE THEIR OFFENDING (IE, NO NEW CHARGES) WHILST ENGAGED IN THE PROGRAM

85% of women indicate they have no new charges brought against them whilst engaged in the program; women identify a shift in their attitude to offending behaviours and instead successfully work towards completing their Community Corrections Orders.

Magistrate Tim Gattuso: "The stability and guidance provided by a WAM mentor led to the accused making such progress in her rehabilitation that I was ultimately persuaded to impose a sentence different to which I would have otherwise contemplated. I have confidence that the Accused had overcome a significant drug addiction largely as a result of WAM's assistance and is not likely to reoffend. She presented in court as a healthy and employable person with a bright future."



ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

THIS YEAR WAS THE FINAL YEAR OF OUR THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN AND WE'RE PLEASED TO REPORT GOOD PROGRESS AGAINST OUR SIX STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES.

Improved and expanded program

We expanded from two courts in 2016 to a total of five; adding Heidelberg, Melbourne and Frankston Magistrates' Courts. This allows us to engage with many more of the vulnerable women who need our help across Melbourne and surrounds. We've reviewed and strengthened our program documentation, making it more robust. The external evaluation of our work is well underway.

Funding

We've expanded from predominantly philanthropic funding in the past, to now having around half of our funding coming from government sources. We've expanded our individual donor program, and we've started holding fundraising events. We continue to seek more sources of revenue, and we strive to make the organisation more sustainable into the future.

Brand awareness

We reviewed and refreshed our branding, ensuring it remains relevant for the work that we do and the women we work with. We upgraded our website and refreshed all of our documentation to reflect the new branding. Plus, we continue to raise awareness of WAM, the women we help and the issues that they are facing. Our flagship annual event of a discussion panel in Law Week ran for the fifth year in 2019 and it continues to expose us to new audiences.

Good governance

We've introduced a formal Governance Charter, and we now recruit new Board members in accordance with a skills matrix to ensure that we have the right mix of skills and expertise. We have established formal Board committees to support the work of the board. The next stage is to have an evaluation of the Board's performance and a more structured approach to future Board succession.

Research and advocacy

We produced and published our own important report on the factors that are criminalising the women we work with: Discover Why Women Are Committing Crime. Our current project 'The Women's Voices' is giving our program participants the opportunity to tell their own stories, in their own voices, rather than having others speak about them. The powerful stories we're collating in this project will inform our advocacy work, and we'll use them to advise and influence decision-makers.

Effective and sustainable operations

We changed our staffing structure in order to accommodate our expanded operations in the best possible way. We continue to introduce new policies and procedures to guide our work, and we monitor and review them on an ongoing basis to ensure that they remain relevant. We've been pleased to take on two student interns, as well as having other students assist us with one-off research pieces.

Mary Latham Operations Manager

"OUR CURRENT PROJECT 'THE WOMEN'S VOICES' IS GIVING OUR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL THEIR OWN STORIES, IN THEIR OWN VOICES, RATHER THAN HAVING OTHERS SPEAK ABOUT THEM".





THE WOMEN'S VOICES

AS THE MENTOR COORDINATOR, I HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF MEETING WOMEN ON THE PROGRAM AS THEY BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR MENTORS. AT REGULAR INTERVALS AND THROUGH SPECIFIC TARGETED CONSULTATION, I AM PROVIDED WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPACTS THAT MENTORING HAS FOR WOMEN IN THE PROGRAM, AND THE POSITIVE OUTCOMES THESE IMPACTS HAVE.

The WAM program understands that when women are:

- listened to and respected,
- supported at their pace, and
- unconditionally regarded, not judged or made to feel ashamed to share their experiences, then they are better able to make choices that match their values, address their personal circumstances and evolve in a time frame which they can manage.

'THE WOMEN'S VOICES' PROJECT IS STAGED IN TWO PARTS.

Over the past year, data collection at WAM has strengthened. The data collected considers outcomes based upon the 'domains of change' framework, collected at regular intervals throughout the mentoring relationship. This provides a snapshot of quite specific outcomes at a point in time, which throughout the relationship can change and do not only reflect the impact of mentoring as such, but of the context which women live within (housing crisis, violence in the community and home, poverty and trauma for example). WAM has also collected data through more specific focused consultations that demonstrate the impacts that the relational nature of mentoring had for individuals in the program. The consultations also identified themes that indicate an enhanced quality of life as a result of engaging within a mentoring relationship.

In these consultations, women spoke to five themes which reflected the impact of the mentoring relationship, and the overall service provided by WAM as a support for women in the criminal justice system. **These themes are: social connection, emotional regulation, advocacy, mentor quality, and financial relief.**

Social isolation reflects the experiences of many women on the program, who often describe having fractured social relationships and familial connections. Often, if participants are still in contact with family members, their relationships can be difficult and do not often offer the support of positive interactions.

Having a non-biased consistent person to speak with, and being validated through listening, was a strong theme in the consultations, often because of the feeling of connection it inspired. Other discussions about social isolation and connection highlighted the gap of 'role model' filled by the mentor, which many participants felt they were not afforded throughout their childhood or adolescence. They believe that, at times, this gap had led to maladaptive behaviours and approaches when addressing issues that arise within their lives.

Social connection also related to the theme of emotional growth and regulation in participant responses. Participants spoke about how their ability to process experiences, events, situations and choices had improved by engaging with someone who used the skill of active listening. One participant noted 'I have developed skills by talking through things with Rose*. This has helped me process experiences in the past and what is going on now, but I have been also better able to manage my emotions'. In addition, the assertive communicative approach, led by mentors, offered women the ability to observe and practice these skills when interacting outside the mentoring relationship. One participant spoke about using this skill with family members, which in turn led to more positive interactions, and a sense of being in control. Employing boundary-setting with her parents (who have been a constant source of angst and significantly impacted her mental health) has now encouraged more positive relations with her parents, less personal angst for her and a feeling of empowerment and being in control.

The theme of emotional growth and regulation also had connections for women in the program as they described the ability to 'advocate', as a practical skill that led to empowerment, when they self-advocated. They also had the feeling of being supported when they experienced peer advocacy through mentoring. One participant stated 'Lily* showed me how to deal with the housing agency; that is what got me a new house and moved me away from the drug dealers in the flats'

Overall, robust mentoring relationships in the WAM program have a positive impact for women. They offer a consistent, reliable, stable relationship that often counteracts, or stabilises, the social elements of life that often enhance the likelihood of women being criminalised by the justice system.

Sharlene Farrugia Mentor Coordinator

ONE PARTICIPANT NOTED 'I HAVE DEVELOPED SKILLS BY TALKING THROUGH THINGS WITH ROSE*. THIS HAS HELPED ME PROCESS EXPERIENCES IN THE PAST AND WHAT IS GOING ON NOW, BUT I HAVE BEEN ALSO BETTER ABLE TO MANAGE MY EMOTIONS'



WAM MENTORS

WHY DO VOLUNTEERS BECOME INVOLVED WITH WAM?

Overwhelmingly, the reason why women come forward to volunteer through WAM is their genuine belief in other women, the strong desire to support other women in their community and an acknowledgment that many women need greater social support. The structured, supported and bounded nature of our program is also appealing to women who would like to volunteer.

'I wanted to give to my local Community. I wanted it to be female-focused as I believe it's the women that help hold the community together. I think there is a very special bond we share that crosses colour, race, religion and age. Women are able to feel what women feel.'

'I wanted to mentor to help women be happy and healthy. I was interested to gain an understanding of others and their situation and help where I can.'

WHAT MENTORS DISCOVER

Once matched, many mentors discover their participant has had an extremely complex and traumatic life. They are socially isolated and have many issues to deal with, past and present. This relational role requires great listening skills, empathy, consistency, patience and time.

Mentors attend court, often as the only support person, with the participant. They also provide role modelling and an alternative perspective on life, as many women from complex backgrounds may have experienced entrenched and inter-generational poverty, disadvantage and trauma.

'I've learnt, despite what you've learnt or know, you really don't fully know what's going on in another person's life. You need to sit and really listen to comprehend. It takes time for the story to unfold. You need patience and when I get perplexed or frustrated at the one step forward and a long time between the next one, I have to remind myself it takes time, any step forward, no matter how small, is great.'

'The most important thing I will take from this experience is the understanding that people's lives can be full of despair and tragedy. There is no easy fix and small things like a supportive mentor can and do make a difference.'

WHAT CHANGES FOR OUR MENTORS

Feedback from our mentors suggests they change quite drastically as a result of their mentoring experience.

'My life is very different because of my involvement in the WAM program. The changes I have noticed about myself are that I take a more humanitarian approach to people that become involved in the criminal justice system. It has helped me relate my Criminology degree to real life and convinced me to enrol in my law degree.'

'WAM is such a sincere strong support to those who have limited friends, help or resources to tackle what life has given them to deal with.'

'I have learnt so much about myself from volunteering as a mentor at WAM. WAM has given me motivation, inspiration, purpose, confidence and an increase in self-esteem and self-belief. I have learnt so much about the complex nature of people's life.'



ONGOING CHANGE

Ongoing changes mentors are seeing in their role include: women engaging in pro social activities such as mentoring, linking into community services, fulfilling their criminal justice system requirements, taking positive steps towards their goals, an improvement in family relationships and an increase in overall health and wellbeing.

'I'm so proud of the woman I mentor. She has worked really hard to attend detox and rehab, and did everything she could leading up to her court date. She had a good outcome in court due to receiving support and all the hard work she put in.'

'I have been proud of my participant and our progress this year towards meeting her goals. I look forward to our catch ups and we share problems and a laugh.'

'We have a wonderful group of really interesting women volunteering with Frankston WAM. I love our monthly catch ups where I learn so much from guest speakers, other Volunteers and our fabulous Coordinator Sarah. There have been some challenges starting in the volunteer role: getting to know my participant, working out the best way to catch up, understanding the criminal justice system and what is going on for my participant and feeling like I'm able to make a difference.'

'I attended court with one of my participants where there was a good outcome. And while I didn't feel as though I had done much, I received some 'heart-felt' thanks from her the next day - just being there and helping her to advocate had made all the difference!'



ANNA'S* STORY

ANNA* IS A SINGLE PARENT WHO HAD WORKED PART TIME WITH THREE PRIMARY AGE CHILDREN.

Recently they have been taken by child protection to live with their maternal grandmother due to her ex-partner's violence and her drug use. Anna has been using drugs on and off since her teens to self-medicate the emotional pain she feels from her traumatic experiences. Anna states her offending has occurred for the first time in her life due to financial strain, childhood trauma, and intimate partner violence. She is anxious, on high alert and doesn't feel free from her ex-partner's violence.

Six months ago, she went to jail for drug offences for four months. After being released she was given a community corrections order for twelve months which included attending monthly appointments with several workers, and twice-weekly supervised access visits to see her children. She described feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, and worried about how she would financially be able to afford to travel to all these appointments as she doesn't have a car or a driver's licence. Due to her children not living with her, her Centrelink payments have reduced significantly.

Her four siblings offer limited support and blame her for what has happened. She has experienced childhood trauma due to her father being an alcoholic and violent. Occasionally she experiences flashbacks when her ex-partner is violent towards her. Anna feels anxious about

socialising and feels others will be judgemental. She has a goal to finish her studies and gain some employment in the future so she can provide for her children and have them return to live with her.

Anna's barriers include not feeling heard or believed about the violence she has experienced. Anna experiences limited concentration, financial strain, social isolation, grief and loss due to her children being removed from her care. Anna is trying to juggle her appointments with limited time to study. She also has limited positive support from family or friends, and with her experience of past and recent trauma, she is scared she may relapse and use drugs to reduce her emotional pain.

When Anna was referred to WAM, she indicated she would benefit from having someone in her life who would listen to her and believe her story. A mentoring relationship is an opportunity to build a trustworthy relationship with a positive person who will provide encouragement, motivation to attend appointments, and non-judgemental support, and will encourage self-advocacy. Catching up with her mentor means Anna can build her self-esteem and confidence, and regularly catch up with someone who sees the whole person, not just the charges brought against her. It can also help her develop a connection to community.



EVENTS & FUNDRAISING

LAW WEEK

Justice For All... Just Not Women

Each year for the past five years, WAM has been involved in the Victoria Law Foundation's Law Week events. This year's presentation was focused on how changes to bail and sentencing laws have adversely impacted women, with an increasing number being refused access to bail and parole. We are also observing more women in the justice system who are victims of domestic violence but regularly misidentified as perpetrators of violence, with no regards for the complexity and traumatic challenges they are experiencing.

The implications for a woman on remand can be quite dire – losing access to social housing, Centrelink payments cut-off and their children can also become thrust into State interventions such as the Child Protection system. We know that children whose parents are in conflict with the justice system are six times more likely to have future contact with the justice system as well.

There is little evidence to suggest that locking people up is an effective deterrent, and yet we continue to punish rather than prevent criminal behaviour. Crime prevention initiatives can produce long-term social and economic benefits – preventing future offending, addressing risk factors and enhancing protective factors.

We thank our guest panellists, Professor Bronwyn Naylor, Jill Prior and Magistrate Pauline Spencer for sharing their knowledge and stories with us, and acknowledge the support of Victoria Law Foundation and the Law Institute of Victoria.

We look forward to welcoming you all again to another interesting and topical presentation at our next Law Week event in May 2020.

WE ARE ALSO OBSERVING MORE WOMEN IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM WHO ARE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BUT REGULARLY MISIDENTIFIED AS PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE...

MOVIE NIGHTS

We have continued our 6-monthly movie nights at Cinema Nova as a social gathering for the Friends of WAM. Its always wonderful to have the support of a wider group of people who may not have the time to become a volunteer mentor, but still want to show their support for our work.

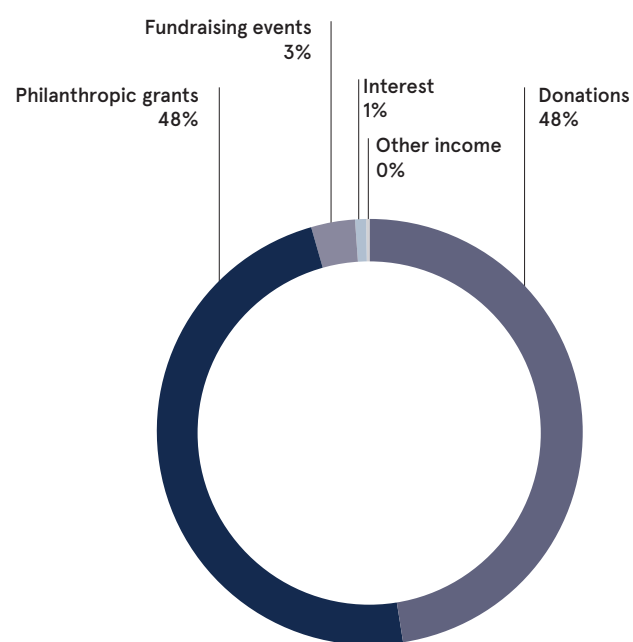
Thank you to everyone who attended a movie night this year and helped us raise a little over \$1000. These funds contribute to our material aid purchases for mentors and participants, such as grocery vouchers, MYKI top-ups, phone credit and fuel vouchers. These items help our matches stay connected as well as provide some additional financial assistance to families in need.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

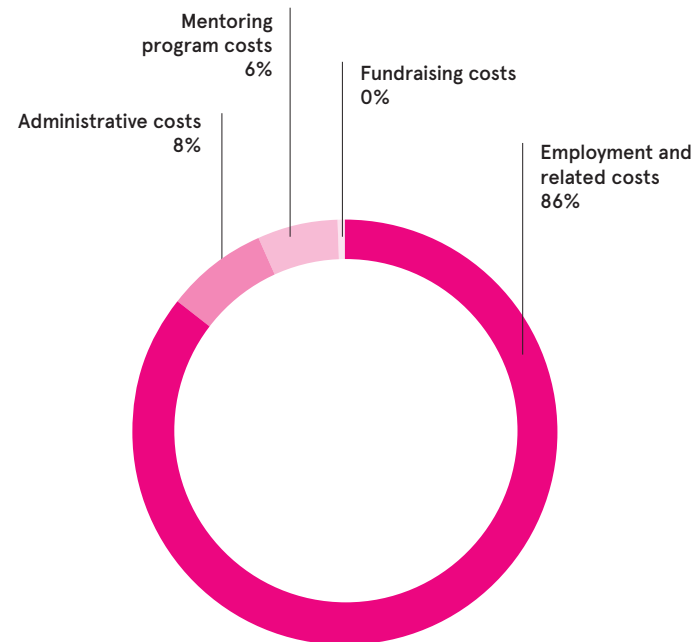
OUR FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR 2018/19 WERE STEADY AND INCLUDED GENEROUS REVENUE FROM NEW PHILANTHROPIC DONORS.

While the result for the year was a deficit of \$45k, this reflects the surplus of unspent funds carried forward from the previous year. Our increased expenditure reflects our expansion into new courts, and is in line with our revenue. We continue to seek more revenue from ongoing sources, in order to make WAM more sustainable into the future, but this remains a challenge for us.



OUR REVENUE

Philanthropic grants	\$132,249
Donations	\$133,753
Fundraising events	\$9,742
Interest	\$2,073
Other income	\$392



OUR EXPENDITURE

Employment & related costs	\$276,792
Administrative costs	\$29,944
Mentoring program costs	\$20,100
Fundraising costs	\$1,399



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

SUPPORTERS, FUNDERS & DONORS

We are fortunate to have the support of not just our wonderful mentors but also several skilled volunteers who provide professional services such as HR, bookkeeping, social media and IT. Thank you to Mandy, Lachlan, Leah, Bianca, Tracy and Adam.

PROGRAM FUNDERS



And thank you to our generous individual donors

