



March 11, 2010

Kate Thiele: Colour of success

Guide Dogs SA.NT CEO Kate Thiele has literally painted her world orange.

It's all about creating awareness of preventative health messages, and the services and programs Guide Dogs provides to the community from its Morphett Street head office.

Kate says while Guide Dogs is often only generally known for its dogs, they offer a host of other services for people with vision and/or hearing loss, and families of children living with autism.

"Nothing beats the end results we see here at Guide Dogs. Our services literally change people's lives."

"Imagine the freedom a Guide Dog can bring to someone who is vision impaired... or the joy of learning to lip-read after suffering the isolation of hearing loss... these are our major rewards."

However, funding is always a key issue.

"The community is always very supportive of us as they value the work we do. But we could do even more with greater support."

-- ENDS --

Background information

Kate Thiele worked in a number of senior roles in the commercial and not-for-profit sector both on a national and state level before taking on the role of Guide Dogs SA.NT CEO in August 2009.

She made a clear career move in 2005 to use her skills to "make a difference" to charitable causes.

Her appointment came at an exciting and crucial time at Guide Dogs SA.NT, taking on the responsibility of steering Guide Dogs SA.NT through the final stages of a major redevelopment of its Adelaide headquarters.

The building redevelopment has placed Guide Dogs SA.NT in a position to continue the provision and expansion of services and programs well into the future, catering for the growing numbers of people developing vision and hearing loss in line with Australia's ageing population.

Kate has already set in motion a number of strong marketing campaigns and strategic staffing appointments.

NORTHERN TERRITORY OFFICES

The organisation is also taking on a greater responsibility for educating people about preventable vision and hearing loss, with the opening of a Guide Dogs Discovery Centre, Australia's first interactive vision and hearing community health education facility which will be officially opened on International Guide Dog Day on April 28 by the Governor of South Australia, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce.

Research shows three quarters of vision loss is preventable or treatable. Noise injury is the leading cause of acquired hearing loss in the community and is completely preventable. Guide Dogs aims to reverse this trend for coming generations, as well as create a greater awareness and understanding of sensory loss.

The redevelopment of the building was funded through two generous bequests.

ENDS

Further information

Contact: Amanda Nes

Media and Communications Officer

Phone (08) 8203 8343 or 0420 939 649