

Thursday 15th May 2014

For immediate release

Ten months of Inspirational Leadership Opportunities

After nearly two years of dedicated work by volunteers the Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program (RRCLP) Advisory committee are proud to announce that applications are now open for participants to experience one of the most transformational experiences of a lifetime – the Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program 2014.

Victoria has nine Community Leadership Programs (CLP's) which have delivered leadership programs for over ten years and contributed \$13 million per annum of volunteering activity in the regional areas. Collectively there is a graduate base of over 2,000 active leaders who have taken the journey. The RRCLP committee are committed to enabling this region to also experience these benefits.

Modelled on the successful Victorian programs Leadership Victoria, Fairley Leadership Program, Community Leadership Loddon Murray, and Alpine Valleys CLP, Rivers and Ranges Community Leadership Program is the tenth program to be developed.

Borne through the experience of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires and resulting leaders fatigue, the Program will work with community, organisations and business to build a connected leadership network across Mitchell, Murrindindi, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra Ranges. Ros Affleck, Secretary of Mitchell Community Resource and Advocacy Group (MCRAG), explains "Community leaders have been under enormous pressure over the last five years. They are exhausted and are in need of support and reinforcement by other experienced leaders." Ros, also the Chair of RRCLP, believes that the program will "develop leaders versed in our common issues that over time will create a foundation to build thriving and resilient communities. Local issues including interface council pressures, population growth, environmental issues and increasing cultural diversity will require innovative leaders to drive change to meet these challenges into the future."

RRCLP is a ten-month course running beginning in August. It gives participants the chance to meet a broad cross section of leaders with a range of experience and backgrounds. In doing so they explore opportunities for the region and consider different leadership styles. It will enable lifelong connections and give participants the opportunity to advance professionally and in community leadership roles. Experiential learning including program days, retreats, dinners and study tours are undertaken. Michael Nardella who is a 2013 program graduate describes every day as "being jam packed with either skills training or guest speakers of the highest calibre who are leaders in their field. "

The program is aimed at a diverse range of participants and the committee is looking for representatives across sectors, ages, backgrounds, culture, age and experience. "What they all will have in common is their commitment to making their communities vibrant, sustainable and resilient," imparts Ros.

The program has over 70 supporter organisations from across the region. Key funding support has been provided to date through Deutsche Bank, Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal, the Salvation Army, and Kinglake and MCRAG Foundations.

If you are interested in applying or becoming a sponsor organisation visit our website at www.rrclp.org.au or contact Program Manager Lisa Linton M: 0409 287 577 or E: pm@rrclp.org.au. You can also find us on Facebook.