

Emerging Leaders Program Graduation

In the lead up to tonight's Graduation event, we asked our participants to share their thoughts on the impact their participation in the program has had on them from either a personal or professional perspective or both as well as what their future plans are within the NFP sector.

JAMES JEGASOTHY

Though I have experience at both a management and governance levels in the NFP sector, the ELP has broadened my understanding of how boards operate and how they can better support and lead the agencies they govern.



My involvement in the program has ignited a genuine interest in the Aged Care sector and provided me with a new confidence to seek opportunities to contribute—both on new boards and more fully in boards I am already a part of. I leave the program with new skills, a greater understanding of the sector and a supportive network.

Having experience in fluctuating policy environments, I believe the NFP sector is an influential and essential part of society. It is well placed to drive innovation and produce genuine and broad social change. I want to be a part of this and will be looking for opportunities to use my skills and experience to promote, advocate for and contribute to, NFP organisations working for the vulnerable. I am also encouraged to learn from experienced board directors and executives working in this political but expanding space, and am keen to support and mentor other young leaders looking to contribute at a strategic level.

MARYAM KHAN



My participation in the ELP has reinforced strongly the importance of introspection. Self-reflection is something that keeps opening doors and windows into your own psyche and helps you recognise where you need development. I have come away with observations that help me paint a clearer picture of what a 'good' leader looks like. This image will help me develop the skills I need - most importantly, the value of relationships. I'm incorporating this learning into my personal and professional lives and I'm really excited about the possibilities.

My goal is to find a cause I'm passionate about and become involved in an organisation that champions that cause.

ALANA BERNSTEIN



Participating in the ELP has introduced me to a network of people who share the same interests, passions and commitment to the community. Through this network, I have been inspired and challenged and learnt a lot about myself, both personally and professionally. My eyes have been opened to a whole world of possibilities, which I look forward to exploring in the future!

My immediate goal is to take all that I have learnt from the ELP and continue to grow my knowledge base through practical experience. I hope to do this through participating in a board traineeship program, or by joining a not for profit board. The ELP has given me the confidence to take this next step.

MARK ZEN



The program has impacted me in so many ways, however two main things that I've really been struck by are the generosity and expertise of the facilitators, mentors and community partners and how willing they have all been to pay it forward to a new group of emerging leaders and share their knowledge. Often we view leaders as unapproachable, however everyone involved has been so supportive throughout the program and has inspired me to ensure I am the same. Secondly, the program has made me really understand the value of having young people on boards and the advantages that board diversity brings to help maximise impact in the community.

Having completed the program now, I would love to secure a board position with an organisation that aligns with my values of social justice and equality for marginalised communities. Often, these types of organisations are small and under-resourced yet enormously effective, making a real impact in society. Ideally, I would like to play a key role in building a smaller organisation's capacity to effect large-scale change.

LAURA KOH



This program has delivered all that I expected and then some. I now feel equipped to become a board director and have learned a great deal about myself as well. The training we have received has assisted my professional development, increased my confidence in the workplace, and improved my communication.

I would like to become more involved with an organisation that provides relationship and family services because I believe that healthy families are important. Marriage and having a family can be hard work and I believe that providing support to those in our community will build happier, healthier families and therefore, a better community.



GABRIEL LUBIENIECKI

Observing how the mission and values are the primary drivers of NFP organisation and the social, cultural, educational and religious impacts are the most imperative measure of success, rather than be driven by financial success, has been enlightening and has made me realise how much I wish to pursue a career in an organisation fostering positive change.

On completion, I hope to make the step toward a management position within the NFP sector.

TAMARA FINDLAY

The ELP encouraged me to take another look at my values, strengths and where I am heading. I found the program extremely rewarding, from bonding with my co-participants to embracing numerous opportunities for mentoring by community board chairs and CEOs. I extend my deepest gratitude to the community partners who have helped enable this program to continue during increasingly tough times.



Over the course of the program, amongst other things, I was exposed to much wisdom that comes with age and experience. This is not to say that young people should not be on boards but rather I was reminded that diversity is important for a reason. Everyone offers something different to the leadership team.

I hope to explore opportunities to complete a community board traineeship over the coming months. I am looking to broaden my awareness of the sector, assume new responsibilities and drive innovation.

TARA BURKE

Participating in the ELP has impacted on me in so many ways. The program is a fantastic initiative that is changing perceptions of Board membership and highlighting the need for Board diversity, thus creating opportunities for young people to participate on Boards and bring with them a fresh perspective and great energy. I have benefited greatly from the exposure to Board executives and leaders in the NFP sector through the Unconventions, networking events, Board Governance training, mentoring and observing a Board.



I have thoroughly enjoyed my time on the program and benefited greatly from the opportunity to network with key industry stakeholders and fellow participants. Participation in the program will further enable me to pursue my passion in the not-for-profit sector. I first realised my passion for the sector when I was working for a rape crisis and counselling centre back in Ireland. Since then, I continue to be driven by my desire to contribute to projects that enrich the development and well-being of the community. I would love to actively pursue my involvement in the community sector and secure a traineeship or Board position with an organisation that aligns with my values.

SHANNA CRISPIN



The program has been a valuable opportunity to explore my own professional development, specifically leadership skills, and gain governance experience relevant to the not for profit sector. Personally, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to learn alongside peers who are equally enthusiastic about progressing the community sector and to network with leaders in this area.

I'm hoping to further my professional development and supplement my experience with formal participation in the not for profit sector - whether that be on a board or in some other capacity.

DAVINA HUNTER



Participating in the ELP has encouraged me to be more self-confident in my ability to be able to make a genuine contribution to a community or aged care board, and has highlighted the opportunities for a fulfilling career in the not-for-profit sector. The program has also allowed me to explore and further consider different styles of leadership which has made me more aware of and focused on my personal leadership journey.

Over the next year I am looking to secure a board traineeship, board position and/or further formal governance training. While I have spent many years volunteering on different committees in different capacities, I feel I have more to offer and am looking to contribute to the not-for-profit sector in a different way. Now that I have completed my tertiary education and have a few years of professional work experience, I feel the skills I utilise on a daily basis, which include providing industrial and HR advice and advising on risk, position me well to be of benefit to a not-for-profit board.

TRAVIS THOMAS



Up to the start of the program I had not interacted with very many Not for Profits, let alone Aged and Community Care organisations. Having gained insight into this sector and how connected it is to the rest of society in ways I wasn't aware of has been very beneficial. In working with NFPs and even with non-NFPs I deal with in my day to day job, I now look at things from a different perspective with considerations for broader impacts.

I would like to take on a substantial NFP board position in either the aged care or a community related organisation. I feel that I can learn a lot from being on a substantial, established board and can also bring a lot to the table.



PHIL BECKETT

The program has helped to build my professional networks, inspire greater confidence in my leadership abilities and given me the opportunity to work with a team to speak to other inspiring young board members.

I would like to continue to strengthen my networks in the NFP sector and, eventually, take on a board position in a larger not-for-profit than I have previously served.



SEEMAR RIYAT

Having initiated my career in the corporate world and having worked in the community sector for a relatively short period of time, I have found this program to be very useful to get connected with some very inspiring leaders and passionate people, who converge to constantly improve this sector.

I initiated this program knowing that a cultural change is needed within the sector that is undergoing some vast environment changes and I knew that I do have something to contribute but I wasn't sure about how to influence the changes that are needed or how to contribute more. This program has helped me find this path and I am pleased that I am already exploring my first Board opportunity, not only just as a Board member but in the capacity of Treasurer. So whilst this program has concluded, my Board journey has just begun.

KAREN WELLINGTON

The ELP has had a huge impact for me, both professionally and personally. In terms of professional growth, I have been able to learn about effective board governance and leadership, as well as gaining a deeper understanding of the not-for-profit and community sector.



On a personal level, the ELP has helped me better understand my strengths and the value that I could provide as a Board Director in future. I have also enjoyed getting to know the program participants and community sector leaders. Meeting and getting to know these new connections have been a highlight of the ELP.

At the moment I am working as a Program Manager at a not-for-profit charitable foundation. In future, I aim to continue developing my leadership and management skills and take on increasing levels of responsibility so that I can effect greater social positive change in the community.

In my professional life I am primarily motivated by the wish to "give back", and therefore I tend to only become involved with organisations, causes and projects that support and deliver clear positive social outcomes. Whether it is through employment, consulting, volunteering or board representation I am certain that I will have a life-long connection to the NFP sector.



NICOLE BROWN

The ELP has improved my awareness of the challenges faced by the community and aged care sector, and strengthened my desire to help solve these challenges at a strategic level. ELP has expanded my professional networks and experience and the practical tools I've acquired from the program have made me feel empowered to demonstrate what I can offer to prospective boards.

When I return to Sydney I would like to secure a Board traineeship in a small health-related advocacy organisation, and work towards joining a health professional peak body board.

MIGUEL GOMEZ



The ELP has been one of the better learning experiences I've participated in and has made a tremendous impact on my personal and professional life. Coming into the program with relatively little experience in the not-for-profit sector and no experience with the aged and community care sector has opened up new doors to me and has shown me where and how I can be a part of something that provides outstanding community work.

With the program ending, I am more comfortable in taking on a future leadership role due to the breadth of information I have been exposed to as part of the program. My goal is to now take the knowledge acquired along with my prior business experience and work with other organisations that can benefit from my knowledge and understanding of the issues facing the aged and community care sector.

STEFANIE JOHNSTON



This program has impacted on my professional goals more than I had anticipated. I knew I enjoyed working in the aged care sector, however I now know this is where I want to end up. The mentoring session with Chris How from Bethanie, solidified my desire to work in the management and/or governance areas of an aged care organisation to achieve the best possible care and choice for consumers. Not only do I know where I want to be, I now have a plan for achieving the steps to get there.

Moving forward, I will strive to secure either a governance position in the Aged Care Sector. To contribute through sharing my skills and experience in innovation, governance, inclusion and client centred care. I am passionate about working to provide choice and excellence in the sector.

VICTORIA LONG



Participation in the ELP has put the NFP sector in a whole new perspective for me, helping me see and understand the real issues being faced by the sector and highlighting the importance of a strong and cohesive Board. Additionally the program has prompted me to take a step back to assess myself and my abilities as a leader, highlighting the importance of self-reflection.

The program has re-affirmed my desire to be part of the NFP sector. I look forward to the opportunity of joining a NFP board, either as a trainee or fully fledged board member. My interest has particularly been sparked in relation to organisations involved in the provision of aged care services, I am keen to explore future career opportunities within this sector.

DANE ETHERIDGE



The most significant impact the ELP has had on my professional development is the introduction I've had to many inspirational leaders and future leaders in the Aged Care and Community sector. These introductions are uniquely valuable because they have been nurtured over several months, so are much more substantial than those made at typical networking events. I believe that by helping each other and under the guidance of the mentors we've been introduced to, many of the ELP participants (myself included!) will go on to make valuable contributions to the sector.

The Aged Care and Community sectors are undergoing multiple fundamental changes, from the aging community which effects both the size of the market and the average age of the industry's leaders to changes in funding and legislation effecting the level of competition and the basis of competition. I believe that young people from different backgrounds to the incumbent leaders in the sectors can contribute to the dynamism required for Boards and management teams to most effectively deal with this challenging environment. My passion about the Aged Care and Community sector has grown during the ELP and I will be looking for opportunities to take on a Board position in the sector and within five years get even more involved by assuming a management role.