

In recognition of volunteers

Volunteers come from all walks of life. We are accustomed to seeing celebrities, like Bono, Madonna, and Angelina Jolie volunteering their time to various charitable organisations, but these people are visibly recognised for their efforts. Most volunteers don't have a public profile and give of their time 'invisibly' to serve our community.

Every year hundreds of members of our local community dedicate their time to helping our society, economy and ecology on a voluntary basis. It could be said that these are our 'invisible heroes'.

Peninsula Community Legal Centre recognises and pays tribute to their magnificent volunteers, especially on 5 December – International Volunteer Day. Without these volunteer efforts there would be a substantial reduction in accessibility of legal services within our community. It is estimated that the in-kind assistance provided by volunteers at PCLC is equivalent to monetary contributions of around \$200,000.00 each year.

Manager of Volunteer and Education Programs, Andrea Florance, says: 'For more than 30 years, Peninsula Community Legal Centre has provided much needed free legal services in Frankston and nearby municipalities. Throughout that time, the Centre has relied on – and received – the generosity and support of volunteer lawyers, paralegals and administrative workers, who have donated their time to help others. In 2008-9 alone, volunteers provided free legal advice to 1,605 clients'.

'Greg Russo, a volunteer of 15 years to the Centre, was this year shortlisted for the Law Institute of Victoria President's Awards, Mentor category. We are exceptionally proud of Greg and grateful for his long term commitment to the Centre', said Ms. Florance.

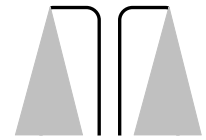
Mr Russo says: 'I was honoured to be nominated by the Peninsula Community Legal Centre for the Law Institute of Victoria President's Award.

Peninsula Community Legal Centre and other legal centres provide an invaluable resource to private practitioners. Through volunteering, ties with the community are fostered and maintained and areas of law which may otherwise fall outside the scope of private practice are capable of being undertaken. In my experience, the rewards of committing to volunteering are significant both professionally and personally.'

All volunteers with PCLC were thanked at a special end of year function, held at Manyung Gallery on 4 December for International Volunteer Day, in recognition of the contributions of volunteers to PCLC for the year. Volunteer Encouragement awards, sponsored by Slater and Gordon, were also awarded on this evening to Rod Callaghan, Zheng He, James Davaris and Rebecca Fritsch.

International Volunteer Day was adopted by The United Nations General Assembly by resolution in 1985 to give volunteer organizations and individual volunteers the opportunity to highlight their contributions to society, and to encourage others to follow.

Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust,



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**Donations over \$2.00
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*Service to the
Community
since 1977*





Peninsula Community
Legal Centre Inc

solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation.

For more information about free legal services, contact Peninsula Community Legal Centre on 9783 3600 or visit www.pclc.org.au.

END.

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