

MEDIA RELEASE

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Local Griffith woman inspired at 2013 National Rural Women's Conference

As part of an ongoing commitment to youth leadership across the Riverina, Regional Development Australia (RDA) Riverina recently sponsored local Griffith woman Ms. Tanya Kassman to attend the 2013 National Rural Women's Conference (NRWC), held in Canberra 18 – 20 February.

Ms. Kassman was sponsored to attend the NRWC along with two other young women from Wagga Wagga and Lockhart, and joined 380 participants from across the country, including more than 35 representatives from the Riverina. The aim of the RDA-Riverina sponsorship offering was to provide a unique opportunity for young women to be inspired and build networks with other rural women who are doing wonderful things to build vibrant rural communities.

Ms. Kassman, originally from Papua New Guinea, recently relocated to Griffith and is employed as the Compliance Officer at Patricks Portlink; she is also currently studying Project Management through Swinburne University.

A strong sense of community has always been a way of life for Ms. Kassman, having been heavily involved in volunteering activities, church, charity and community projects in PNG. A major personal achievement of Ms. Kassman's has been the establishment of the "A Smile for One, A Smile for All" project which involves providing assistance to children in need at Port Moresby General Hospital Children's Ward and the Cheshire Home in PNG.

The opportunity to attend the NRWC allowed Ms. Kassman to share her stories and experiences in relation to the wide range of issues discussed at the conference, and most importantly build networks both locally and across Australia.

"The highlight for me was Elizabeth Broderick's presentation about sex discrimination, it was inspirational and also extremely emotional for me. It made me realise how much more work women have to do to be heard," said Ms. Kassman.

"I've always wanted to take leadership on this fight and look for better solutions to these issues. After the panel discussion and following session presented by Julie Oberin on domestic violence against women, I now know what I can do to help."

Ms. Kassman acknowledged that solutions to these issues will not happen overnight, but rural women have to take a stance together – it cannot be done alone.

"I have only recently moved to Griffith, but I have been motivated by the NRWC to work towards bettering the lives of Griffith women. In particular I would like to explore the issues that multi-cultural women who have migrated to the Riverina face, and see if together we can identify solutions to these issues.

"I will be encouraging young women to attend the NRWC in the future and get involved with RDA-Riverina sponsorship opportunities. This has been an empowering experience which



will have a lasting impact on my life and the way I live, and most importantly my goals and my approach to achieving them.”

ENDS

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More information regarding the key-note speakers at the NRWC can be found at:

<http://www.cvent.com/events/national-rural-women-s-conference-2013/custom-17-d9ae31a0c5f048eca10cf8ed829840ef.aspx>