

UNDERCOVER NEWS

SPRING 2019



30 years
& building

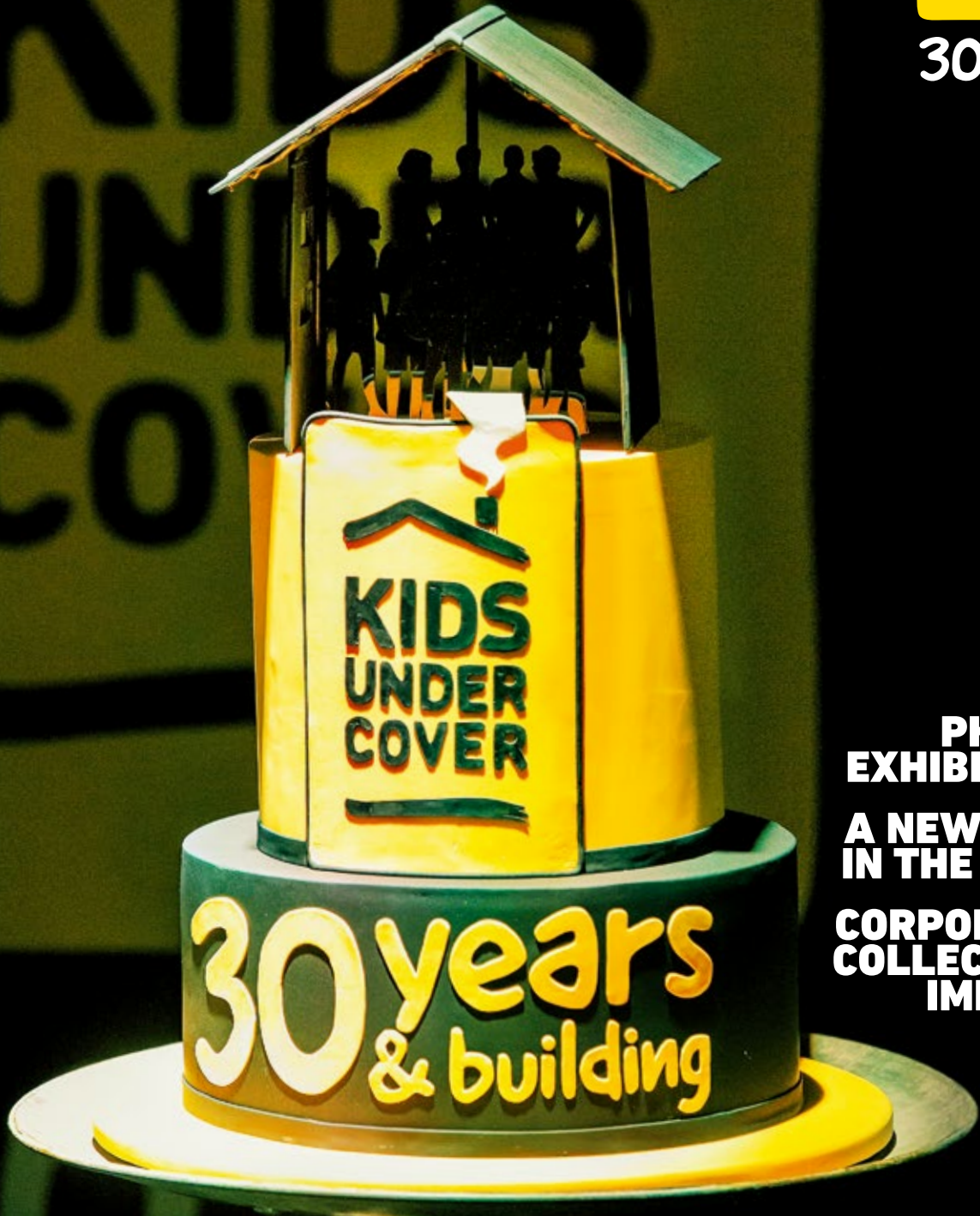


PHOTO
EXHIBITION

A NEW LIFE
IN THE LAW

CORPORATE
COLLECTIVE
IMPACT



30 YEARS

WALK FOR COVER

to prevent youth homelessness.

22nd to 25th November
Rosebud to Richmond

#PREVENTIONISTHECURE
#WALKFORCOVER

WALK FOR COVER

2019 marks 30 years of Kids Under Cover. This milestone was only possible with the generous support of people like you. Your help has enabled Kids Under Cover to support more than 3,200 at-risk young people, preventing them from entering a pathway to homelessness. This is a tremendous effort, but there's more to be done. In November, Kids Under Cover will be launching an all-new and exclusive fundraising event, Walk for Cover.

Individuals and teams, all existing supporters of Kids Under Cover, will join CEO Jo Swift for part or all of a four-day trek. Starting from Rosebud and walking to Kids Under Cover's head office in Richmond. Walk for Cover is an opportunity to celebrate how much we've accomplished together in the last 30 years, as

well as a chance to raise awareness for what must be done to reach our vision for a community where no young person experiences homelessness.

Our goal is to raise \$120,000. Enough to build two one-bedroom studios to take two young people off our waiting list.



ALISON TAIT – TREASURER



JO SWIFT – CEO



COLIN RADFORD – CHAIR



NATHANIEL POPELIANSKI – VICE CHAIR



GEORGE LIACOS – DIRECTOR



SARAH DAVIES – DIRECTOR



DEB TSORBARIS – DIRECTOR



RENUKA KIMBER – DIRECTOR

BOARD AND CEO MESSAGE

In early August, we had the pleasure of officially marking 30 years of Kids Under Cover at our supporter function and launch of our portrait exhibition. It was an immense privilege to have so many longstanding supporters celebrating their collective impact. 30 years ago, Professor Brian Burdekin AO was instrumental in producing the landmark report 'Our Homeless Children', which was to be the catalyst for the creation of Kids Under Cover.

In his captivating speech at the 30th Anniversary celebration, Professor Burdekin personally saluted Ken Morgan's achievements since the report was produced in 1989.

"Without his vision, commitment and generosity, and without the generous support of all of you my report would have been a dead letter."

30 years of Kids Under Cover has seen Ken Morgan's vision shared with a diverse and committed community

of supporters who have each proven that real impact is possible. This is what we celebrate in our Portrait Photo Exhibition. Each individual, board member, staff member, organisation, patron, community and young person has helped to mould the organisation into the change-making force it is today.

Thank you to everyone who has joined us on the journey so far and is supporting us towards our vision of a community where no young person experiences homelessness.

KEN MORGAN OAM

FOUNDING PATRON

Experiencing his own struggles at home and a bout of homelessness as a teenager, Melbourne identity and Kids Under Cover Founder Ken Morgan OAM knew firsthand the plight of vulnerable young people. The disturbing findings of "Our Homeless Children" report by Professor Brian Burdekin AO, coupled with Ken's passion to increase the support offered to young people facing homelessness instigated the birth of Kids Under Cover. Ken is a familiar face to many, and his vision remains at the heart of everything we do.



PROFESSOR BRIAN BURDEKIN AO

Professor Brian Burdekin AO was Australia's first Federal Human Rights Commissioner and Chairman of the National Inquiry into Youth Homelessness and the landmark report 'Our Homeless Children'. This ground-breaking inquiry revealed shocking rates of homelessness which is the reason Ken Morgan OAM founded Kids Under Cover.



CEOS PAST & PRESENT

Jo Swift and Petrina Dorrington represent the handful of individuals who have been the leaders of Kids Under Cover since inception, playing critical roles in shaping Kids Under Cover into the thriving organisation it is today. Petrina and Jo have been instrumental in the organisation and in ensuring its long-term viability.



30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

PHOTO CREDIT: CAPTURE POINT MEDIA



PHOTO EXHIBITION SET UP FOR THE EVENING



IMAGE CREDIT: THE BENDIGO ADVERTISER

When organisations with a shared passion collaborate, life-changing impact is possible. This is exactly what happened when Kids Under Cover, Choice Hotels and South East Water joined forces to build a studio for two teenage boys in desperate need of their own space to thrive.

Thanks to the generosity of the two organisations, the studio provides secure, stable accommodation and allows the two eldest boys in the family to move from sharing with three other siblings to having a room of their own.

The boys were thrilled with their now home, saying “I get my own space for the first time. I have responsibility and I can choose to let my siblings in on my terms.”

To make the studio a reality, Choice Hotels raised the funds for the project from a \$2 contribution at all Choice Hotel properties per night per stay nationwide during National Homelessness Week last August. The build itself was a collective effort with many Choice Hotels staff volunteering their time to help construct it.

Adding to this collective impact, South East Water generously donated the funds for the water tank required for the studio.



AN EVENING OF CELEBRATION



SANDI TAYLOR SHARING HER EXPERIENCE WITH KIDS UNDER COVER



SABINA READ AND SHAYNNA BLAZE, KIDS UNDER COVER AMBASSADORS

A NEW LIFE IN THE LAW

In 2001, Ali and his family fled Iraq and arrived in Australia as refugees. After some time spent in detention and moving between different cities throughout Australia in order to settle, Ali had to learn a new way of life and a new language.

"I often had to miss school in order to work and help my mum around the house. It was also very difficult to study and focus when there were 10 of us living in a three-bedroom, one-bathroom home."

2013 saw Ali and his brother Mohammed receive a two-bedroom Kids Under Cover studio and four Kids Under Cover Scholarships.

With the support of Kids Under Cover, Ali has excelled. Ali always wanted to be a lawyer when he grew up, however, his teacher had told him his English skills might not be strong enough for such an ambition... boy was he wrong!



Today, Ali is a student in the Juris Doctor course at The University of Melbourne and in Ali's words is "pursuing a dream of becoming a well-rounded and successful commercial lawyer".

Ali was awarded the 2019 Ken & Lenka Morgan Scholarship to support the costs associated with his studies. Ali plans to use the generous scholarship on several textbooks he has been unable to purchase due to his family's financial difficulties.

When Ali was asked what achievement he is most proud of he said, "being accepted as a Juris Doctor Student at the University of Melbourne in 2017, this was the pinnacle; all of my studies up until that point were working to achieve this".



JO SWIFT, KIDS UNDER COVER CEO, ADDRESSING THE GUESTS



MERCURY MEGALLOUDIS, PHOTOGRAPHER OF OUR PORTRAIT EXHIBITION



TRANG DO

REPRESENTING THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN THE KIDS UNDER COVER HOUSES

When Trang was 11 years old, she was living in a two-bedroom house with six people. Due to repeated abuse, she was placed in foster care and became a ward of the state. At 15, Trang moved into a Kids Under Cover house, a secure and stable environment which allowed her to finish high school, go onto tertiary study and build her career and life today.



BRITTNE

REPRESENTING THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE RECEIVED A KIDS UNDER COVER SCHOLARSHIP

Brittne was the recipient of a Kids Under Cover studio and was announced the winner of the 2014 Ken & Lenka Morgan Scholarship. Before this, life was tough. She was living in overcrowded accommodation and was the primary carer for her brother Jesse, who needed 24-hour care. However, receiving the studio and scholarships meant Brittne could follow her dreams and she is now a nurse and loving it!



ALIESHA NEWMAN

AFLW PLAYER AND FORMER STUDIO RESIDENT

After her mum became the carer for three more young people, Aliesha's life as a teenager was turned upside down. Living in an overcrowded house with young children and teenagers, life became extremely difficult and unbearable. Receiving a Kids Under Cover studio allowed the whole family to thrive. Aliesha debuted in the inaugural season of the AFLW with Melbourne Football Club and continues to play for the team today.



JO SWIFT, KEN MORGAN OAM AND SANDI TAYLOR CUTTING THE CAKE



GUESTS VIEWING THE PHOTO EXHIBITION

WONDER WALLS

How four walls can prevent youth homelessness

For many young people, the privacy of four walls to themselves is a luxury they don't have.

Australia is facing a youth homelessness crisis. Over 40% of our homeless are under 25 years old.

Our CEO Jo Swift says, "When your family is in turmoil or crisis, there is overcrowding, there's a lot of conflict in the family home; it's a cocktail that can lead to a catastrophic event for a young person." Like becoming homeless.

However, Australia's homeless youth are largely invisible. Many homeless young people bounce between friends' couches or cram into overcrowded accommodation. All while trying to juggle study and the challenges of homelessness.

Paul Stolz, a researcher completing his PhD in overcrowding and youth homelessness at Swinburne University of Technology, describes it as a pathway.

"It's not from one night to the next where [they become] homeless, there's a gradual progression." Paul says.

A studio does more than provide space. It gives young people a sense of control, independence, identity and does wonders for their education and study.

Unfortunately, overcrowding is the norm for many families, and a major trigger for youth homelessness.

According to psychologist, Sabina Read, this can be what starts many on the path to homelessness. "Without a space of their own, teenagers may choose to spend more time away from home," she says. "They may also seek other ways to numb out, including drugs or alcohol, when they feel out of control or unsafe." Substance abuse is just one of the many symptoms of youth homelessness.

According to research, the annual cost of health and justice services for homeless youth in Australia is \$626 million.

This is why prevention is so important. A studio does more than provide space. It gives young people a sense of control, independence, identity and does wonders for their education and study.



30 years & building

There's a lot we can do right now to tackle youth homelessness, like shifting our focus from cure to prevention. Ken Morgan OAM says it takes one simple act. Reaching out to someone in trouble to show them they're not alone. "Never ever give up the idea, that you can't save a kid," he says. "Because you can."