



QAWC HIGHLIGHTS

OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2019



International Volunteers Day

Thursday 5th December is International Volunteer Day, with the theme of 2019 being Volunteer for an Inclusive Future. QAWC is an Association which has been built and continues to be sustained by the contribution of volunteers. Through funds generously received by the Australian Volunteers Program, QAWC was able to host an event to recognise our past and present volunteers and celebrate the contributions made by these individuals.

A short event ceremony was held and MC'd by our Vice Chairperson Casper Erasmus. Casper spoke of the importance of volunteering and how it is essential to ensuring an inclusive future for all persons with

disabilities. Zara Talmarkes then spoke on the value volunteers had added to the Work Readiness



Programme and reflected on her journey to permanent

employment. Anthony Ghillino reflected on the contribution of volunteers past and present and Glenn Millen, QAWC Chairperson, spoke about the continued value of QAWC's Board Members who are all volunteers. Lowri Williams, our Australian Volunteer then had the opportunity to speak about her time as a volunteer and thank the QAWC Staff and Board for the collaborative work which has been achieved over the past two years.

The event ended with a spit braai lunch from the Spit Braai King. The day was well enjoyed by all, and was an excellent opportunity to recognise the contribution of so many individuals who through their positive contribution to QAWC have impacted the lives of so many of our Members.

We would like to thank our volunteers who were present on the day: Danny and Alta Retief, Kirsten Broadbent, Cookoo Moodley, Lowri Williams and past and present Members of the QAWC Board.



Additionally, three Australian Volunteers from the Australian Volunteers Program James Hamlet, Julien Tran and Ashly Hope were also present and we recognise the positive contribution these volunteers are making towards the economic and social development in South Africa.

RAF & QAWC Caregiver Appreciation Event

Both QAWC and the Road Accident Fund (RAF) are aware of the vital role played by caregivers in the lives of wheelchair users on a daily basis. RAF decided to take the opportunity to show their appreciation to some of the caregivers of their claimants at an event organised and hosted by QAWC at the beautiful Klein Joostenberg. There was a serious aspect to the day as well, with Dr Erasmus, a specialist in spinal cord injuries, addressing those present about pressure sores and Anthony Ghillino, QAWC's General Manager, presenting on what makes a good caregiver/patient relationship. All present were treated to a delicious lunch, a motivational speech and entertainment by a live band before awards were handed out to specially chosen caregivers in recognition of their outstanding service. A goodie bag full of special gifts and treats were given to all, with the caregivers going home fully aware of just how appreciated they are for the awesome work that they do.



DSD Somerset West drop off Bread Tags for Wheelchairs

On 3 December, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, representatives from the Somerset West Department of Social Development office visited QAWC to hand over the bread tags that they had been collecting since 6 September. The Somerset West DSD office made contact with their partners in their



community and encouraged them participating in this initiative by collecting bread tags. There was obviously tremendous support within the community as the QAWC team were overwhelmed by the huge amount of bread tags that were delivered to us. These bread tags will be taken to the official Bread Tags for Wheelchairs premises where they be recycled, with the funds raised by recycling the bread tags going towards purchasing wheelchairs for people in need in our community. We are so proud of the awesome work done by DSD Somerset West, Thank You!

Driving Ambitions Rural

Thanks to our driving ambitions rural project, we are making dreams come true. Not too long-ago Carlo Klink passed his driver's licence test. After 4 unsuccessful attempts, Carlo succeeded at his 5th attempt, securing his driver's licence. Carlo has proven that with perseverance and a positive attitude the possibilities of what one can achieve are endless. Being able to drive is a dream come true and having a license is the cherry on top. Carlo hopes to motivate other wheelchair users in turning their dreams into reality. These days Carlo is out and about enjoying his independence. We wish Carlo a wonderful end to 2019, and all the best in 2020.



The Work Readiness Program

As we reach the end of 2019, we reflect on our flagship project the QASA Work Readiness Program. The QASA and QAWC vision is that all quadriplegics and paraplegics will live their lives to their full potential and assisting members to find employment is just one of the ways to achieve this. Finding gainful employment is probably the most effective way to change



one's life. Since the project launched in April, we had 22 candidates partaking over a course of 4 intakes. Twelve of those candidates have been employed, one started his own business, and three others are furthering their studies. QAWC are relentless in the pursuit of finding permanent employment for our remaining candidates and are building numerous networks with companies to achieve this. Realistically it may be "impossible" to find employment for each and every candidate, but the word "impossible" is not in our vocabulary. The above statistics shows how successful the Work Readiness Program is. 2020 here we come!!

Farewell and Bon Voyage Lowri

In October 2017 the QAWC team was joined by Lowri Williams, a young Australian lady who volunteered at QAWC through the Australian Volunteer Program. Lowri's initial assignment was for a year, however everything worked so well that both parties grabbed the opportunity to extend her deployment at QAWC for an additional year. Over the last 2 years Lowri has become an integral part of the QAWC team and Lowri's contribution and impact has been far larger than anyone could ever have imagined or hoped for. Lowri has a positive attitude that is infectious and has tackled all her tasks over the last 2 years with professionalism and enthusiasm, always giving 110% in an attempt to do what is best for QAWC's members. Lowri can look back on her achievements with real pride. These include redrafting the QAWC constitution, launching the Work Readiness Program, managing The Buckle Up Rural & Driving Ambitions Rural programs, managing social media and much much more. Lowri was always eager to assist and proved to be extremely popular with QAWC members, staff and the Board. Lowri leaves us on 19 December to continue with her career in Australia. To say that she will be missed is an understatement, the void that she leaves behind is big, but her legacy at QAWC is even bigger. We all wish Lowri everything of the best for her future endeavours, we know that with her spirit, work ethic, determination, professionalism and character she will be a massive success wherever she goes. Lowri, Baie Dankie, we will miss you, please stay in touch.



Farewell from Lowri

I would like to take this opportunity to thank QAWC for hosting me as a volunteer for the last two years. Working in South Africa has been even more incredible than I imagined it to be and I have had the opportunity to work with some very special people.



I would like to say a big thank you to each Board member who has served over the last two years, to the QASA team and management and of course to the wonderful QAWC staff Esme, Anthony, Charmaine, Edward, Nazeem, Chad and ex colleagues Anda and Babalo. It has been a privilege and an honour to work alongside you all. Our Members can feel confident that they have all the support they need from this excellent team in the Western Cape who will go above and beyond to ensure that Quadriplegics and Paraplegics live their lives to their fullest.

Finally, I would like to say a big thank you to each and every Member that I have had the pleasure of meeting. I have been lucky enough to travel far and wide in the Western Cape and South Africa- and blessed to meet so many friendly people along the way. Each Member I have met- whether it be through the Work

Readiness Programme, Buckle Up, Driving Ambitions, VoQoL, my visits to the George OCC, or at another event has inspired me to keep working hard for QAWC because our Members have so much potential!

Being a wheelchair user is a unique attribute which when given the right opportunities becomes an incredibly powerful asset! Never forget that. Wishing everyone of our Members a wonderful end to 2019, and all the best in 2020. Farewell to you all and thank you again for all the joy you have brought to my life.

Seasons Greetings & Office Closure

The QAWC Board & Staff would like to take this opportunity to wish all our members everything of the very best over the festive season as well as a happy and healthy 2020. The QAWC office will be closing on 20 December 2019 so that our staff members can enjoy a well deserved and much-needed break. The office will reopen on the 13 January 2020 when we will once again strive to improve the lives of you, the QAWC members.

