

PSA CPSU NSW

WOMEN + WINNING TOGETHER

PSA/CPSU NSW WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 13-14 SEPTEMBER 2022

**SAFE
RESPECTED
EQUAL**

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SAFE, EQUAL, RESPECTED

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PROGRAM 2022

DAY ONE

Tuesday 13 September 2022

8.30am	Registration	11.45am	Retired Officers: Carmel McKeough
9.00am	Welcome to Country	12.00pm	Dementia Australia: Jenny Summerton & Cassandra Platts
9.10am	Welcome to Conference	12.45pm	Lunch: Sponsored by Australian Mutual Bank & McNally Jones Staff Solicitors
9.15am	Housekeeping	1:45pm	Kath Koschel: Kindness Factory
9.20am	Icebreaker and Introductions	2.30pm	Youth Climate Speaker: Frewoini Baume
9.30am	General Secretary: Stewart Little	3.15pm	Announcement of Kris Cruden Scholarship for mature-age women members
9.45am	President: Nicole Jess	3.30pm	Panel: Barriers women face in male-dominated industries
10.00am	Sponsors: Gidget Foundation Foundation House	4.15pm	Close day one
10.30am	Morning Tea: Sponsored by Union Shopper		
11.00am	Sponsors: Workers Health Centre, Union Shopper Maxxia	6.00pm	DINNER Dinner catered for by Primi Italian. Entertainment by DJ Ash Live entertainment from Denise Hanlon We look forward to celebrating a great conference and an evening networking.
11.30am	Jodie Harrison (Video) Shadow Minister for Women, Shadow Minister for Seniors & Shadow Minister for Prevention of Domestic Violence and Assault		

DAY TWO

Wednesday 14 September 2022

- 9.00am Welcome back
- 9.05am Recap video from day one
- 9.15am Alicia Pearce: Addressing workplace sexual harassment: the potential of EBAs and Awards
- 9.45am Rosemary Kariuki, NSW Police:
Advocate for migrant and refugee women
Australian of the Year, Local Hero 2021
- 10.15am Arden Cassie: Gender diversity activist
- 10.45am Jean Arnot Library opening
- 11.00am Morning tea: Sponsored by Maxxia**
- 11.30am Panel: Insecure work
- 12.30pm Close of Conference

Women's Council

- 1.00pm Women's Council:
Restricted to Women's Councillors
and Women Central Councillors

PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

As Conference returns after a long break, we should take a look back at what the pandemic taught us.

For too long, workplace flexibility was a tug-of-war between employers and employees, particularly women who had the most to benefit from a less-rigid approach to work.

It is women, after all, who are more likely to have caring responsibilities for children or older family members.

Despite the former Premier Mike Baird saying flexible work should be an “if not, why not” proposition, for too many members, getting flexible work arrangements in place was a struggle.

It took a statewide edict telling many of us to stay at home for employers to realise that our members are just as productive when given the chance to work under flexible arrangements.

The pandemic also showed that the Public Sector, long demonised by government and media, plays a vital role in society. The many women who work in frontline ‘soft skills’ roles got our state through a difficult period in our history.

Our welcome return to Conference gives us a chance to regroup and celebrate what we, as women, have achieved in the past few years.

The inclusion of stillbirth leave in the Fair Work Act is a result of the tireless work of women such as our new Women’s Council Chair, Leanne Smith.

Leanne used the tragedy of her own experience with stillbirth, and the subsequent push to rush her back into the workforce, to push for better treatment for women in the future.

As we will hear in the coming two days, there is still much to achieve. The gender pay gap is still

a huge issue for us. Bullying, sexual harassment and even assault is too common in workplaces and too often competent women are passed over for promotion for less-qualified men.

This year’s Conference theme is Safe, Equal, Respected. Let’s work together for a future where women work in environments that are safe, where they are treated equally and where they are respected at work.

Nicole Jess, President



GENERAL SECRETARY'S WELCOME

The gender pay gap is unfair enough without it continuing through to retirement.

The State Government's refusal to even discuss with your union the payment of superannuation on the unpaid portion of parental leave shows us there is still much to be done to ensure women are paid equally, and can retire with similar nest eggs.

Women typically retire with a superannuation payout that is a third of the amount for men - an average of \$37,000 compared with \$110,000.

It is little wonder women over the age of 50 are the fastest growing sector of homeless people in Australia.

The superannuation gap is partially the result of Australia's lingering wages gap, a gap that persists decades after the Federal Government first made efforts to level what men and women receive for the same work.

Diverse superannuation balances also result from the unequal amount of time spent outside full-time work caring for children or older relatives.

It is this issue your union hoped to address when it demanded the State Government include superannuation on unpaid leave for our members covered by the Crown Award.

However, so far the State Government has refused to do its bit to level the appalling difference in savings men and women have when they retire.

WOMEN OVER 50 ARE THE FASTEST GROWING SECTOR OF HOMELESS PEOPLE IN AUSTRALIA

Paying superannuation on the unpaid portion of parental leave is not a radical idea. Plenty of private companies, including some of the employers our members work for, give this benefit to their workers. If it is good enough for Ausgrid and Woolworths, it should be good enough for the NSW Government.

The PSA/CPSU NSW is all about fairness. We want our members to receive fair pay and conditions for the work they do for the people of NSW.

And we want the 65 per cent of our membership who are women to know, when they go to work, that they will be safe, will receive equal treatment and will be respected in the workplace.

I am proud to lead a union that works hard for the women who do so much for our state. And I vow to keep fighting to ensure our employers do the same for the women they employ.

Stewart Little, General Secretary





CHAIR'S WELCOME

Women in male-dominated industries face particular issues.

One of our panels this year will discuss an issue close to my heart: women in male-dominated industries.

The majority of Australian employees continue to work in industries dominated by one gender. Fewer than 50 per cent of employed Australians work in gender-mixed organisations, that is ones that employ 41-59 per cent women.

I work for Ausgrid, which has a workforce that is 84 per cent male. Women make up only two per cent of staff in the field.

The hardest part of working in such a male-dominated industry for me has been during enterprise agreement negotiations. At a meeting when the PSA/CPSU NSW spoke about our wins for female entitlements a male employee seated near me laughed, as if it was irrelevant and unnecessary.

Male-dominated employers too often find it difficult to accommodate part-time work and flexible hours, which are important for many women juggling work and family responsibilities.

I had a team leader tell me for years that I wasn't a real employee as I was only part-time. That same woman refused to allow me a promotion based on the fact I was part-time. The team leader even said she would rather have someone in the position full-time who was incompetent, than me in the role part-time.

Other issues include being treated like an outsider, feeling like you have to prove yourself and struggling to make your voice heard. Too often even well-qualified women staff in male-dominated areas are given less-technical, less-valued roles and responsibilities.

As we proved a few years back with the pay equity case, there is a systematic discrimination against so-called 'women's industries'. Therefore, it is in women's best

interests to break into occupations that are dominated by men, simply because too often they pay better.

Women entering male-dominated industries are blazing the trail for others to follow in their paths. They need all the support they can get.

This is my first Conference as Chair of Women's Council. I hope you find it a rewarding two days and leave here filled with ideas for making our workplaces even better.

**Leanne Smith,
Chair of Women's Council**

CHALLENGES STILL FACING US

A report from the NSW Parliament shows how far we have to go.

Yet again, a report into how people are treated at work makes for sobering reading.

The Broderick Report into workplace bullying and harassment in the NSW Parliament included reports of five sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults.

In addition, more than a third of the approximately 450 respondents replied they had been bullied or sexually harassed over the past five years.

The findings show that, despite much progress, Australian workplaces still have so far to go in minimising unacceptable behaviour such as sexual harassment.

The report makes a number of recommendations, but it is up to organisations such as ours to ensure they are implemented.

The PSA/CPSU NSW is working on a model clause and best-practice framework on bullying and harassment to be included in Awards



and Enterprise Agreements, as the present system that puts the onus on employees to make a complaint is obviously not working.

Hopefully this clause and framework will, alongside family and domestic violence leave, be seen as lasting achievements from our union to do more to protect women at home and in the workplace.

RECENT FIGURES REVEAL THE WAGE GAP HAS ACTUALLY WIDENED

The findings about NSW Parliament by the report's author, former Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick, are among the many reminders we have that there is so much more to be done on behalf of women in the workplace. Despite the Federal Government passing rules on equal pay for equal work in 1969, the gender pay gap persists. In fact, the most recent figures released by the Workplace

Gender Equality Agency have revealed that the gap has actually widened.

Average weekly earnings data, released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, show that men are earning an average of \$263.90 more than women a week: nearly \$14,000 a year.

It is telling that in areas with high union membership, such as Corrective Services, the wage gap is not as pronounced.

With the wage gap comes an unforgiveable imbalance in superannuation. Women are retiring with less, and are more likely to end up homeless as a result. It is here the PSA/CPSU NSW has again come to the fore, pushing for super on the unpaid portion of parental leave in Awards and Enterprise Agreements.

Flexibility is another area that our employers have yet to live up to their 'if not, why not?' promises. Hopefully the lessons from the pandemic will leave employers more open to the flexible working arrangements that suit women in the workplace so well. ●

SPEAKERS



Jodie Harrison

The first woman to be mayor of Lake Macquarie, Jodie has represented the state seat of Charlestown since winning the seat back for the Labor Party in a 2014 by-election.

Following the 2019 NSW election, Jodie was returned to the Opposition front bench as Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education. In a 2021 reshuffle, Jodie was appointed Shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Shadow Minister for Seniors and Shadow Minister for Women.

Before politics, Jodie worked for the United Services Union and subsequently United Voice, which is now the United Workers Union. While there, she organised early childhood educators to fight for proper recognition and wages for the very important work they do.



Rosemary Kariuki

Rosemary Kariuki is the multicultural community liaison officer for the Parramatta Police. She specialises in helping migrants who are facing domestic violence, language barriers and financial distress.

Fleeing Kenya alone in 1999 to escape family abuse and tribal clashes, her early years in Australia were terribly lonely. This experience helped Rosemary recognise that isolation is a huge issue for many migrant women. Many aren't used to going out alone, have no transport and speak little or no English. So Rosemary devised ways to help women leave their house and meet women in similar circumstances.

In partnership with the African Women's Group, she helped start the African Women's Dinner Dance. Now in its 14th year, more than 400 women attend the annual event. She also started the African Village Market – a program to help migrants and refugees start their own businesses.



Kath Koschel

Kath Koschel is the founder of Kindness Factory, a global not-for-profit organisation and movement which inspires ordinary people to do extra ordinary things.

A former professional cricketer and Iron Man competitor, Kath has defied all medical prognoses by teaching herself to walk on three separate occasions. Despite facing other serious personal, mental and physical setbacks, her resilience allowed her not only to overcome these challenges, but also see the good in the world when most others couldn't.

In November 2015, she founded Kindness Factory, with a goal of encouraging and inspiring 1 million acts of kindness. To date, she has raised close to \$500,000 for various charity organisations and was the recipient of the 2016 Pride of Australia Medal for showing courage in the face of extreme adversity.

In January 2017, Kath was awarded the Young Australian Medal and the people's choice of Australia award.



Alicia Pearce

Alicia is an expert in gender workplace policy and practice and a current PhD candidate and Quentin Bryce Scholar in the Faculty of Law at University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

Her doctoral research "How can we make freedom from sexual harassment a core workplace condition?" investigates structural workplace sexual harassment law reform options, using evidence from the Australian higher education sector.

From 2016-2020 Alicia project managed the set up and delivery of a pilot for gender equity in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) at UTS. She has also held roles in the union movement managing policy and legislative reform projects in gender equity, leading research into gendered experience in STEM workplaces and managing industrial research and strategy for a national equal pay test case in early childhood education.



Arden Cassie

After affirming her gender in 2018 Arden quickly found her voice as an advocate for the transgender community working with Hunter Gender Alliance and Camp Out. She is now an advocate for the community as she feels she can talk about this painful yet liberating road to a more authentic life.

Returning to her passion of working with young people, she currently works as a mathematics teacher. Outside the classroom she enjoys hiking, running and roller skating.



Frewoini Baume

Frewoini is a 21-year-old apiarist based in the Northern Rivers of NSW.

Since finishing high school, she has been working for the inventors of a revolution honey harvesting system, Flow Hive, facilitating their Club Support Program.

She runs her own hive servicing/ consultancy business in the Northern Rivers and became a regular contractor to the NSW Department of Primary Industries on Plan Bee, which is Australia's National Honeybee Genetic Improvement Program.

She believes engaging with her community, bees and agriculture is her way of contributing towards a more socially and environmentally equitable world.



Jenny Summerton

Jenny is a Regional Manager with Dementia Support Australia (DSA). Jenny has a clinical background in pathology and also is a registered nurse with over 10 years' experience working with people living with dementia.

Jenny realises navigating changes in behaviour related to dementia can be challenging.

Her employer, DSA, brings together expertise in complex dementia care across the community and aged care sector to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia and the people who care for them.



Cassandra Platt

Cassandra has been working in aged care for more than 13 years in various roles. She has supported both residential and community programs in aspects of management, frontline care, and allied health support.

Cassandra currently supports those living with dementia as a Dementia Consultant with Dementia Support Australia.

Her focus is supporting those living with dementia in the community and their carers around changed behaviours due to their diagnoses.

PARTNERS

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR PARTNERS



Accommodation and Private Rental Assistance
DCJ Housing NSW
1800 422 322

Homelessness/Temporary Accommodation
1800 152 152

Legal Aid
1300 888 529

Centrelink
132 468

Domestic Violence Line
1800 656 463

Emergency
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Police Assistance Line
131 444

Crime Stoppers
1800 333 000



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