

Civil justice expert issues challenge to community lawyers

Elizabeth Arledge from the US Voices for Civil Justice will challenge community lawyers to find their voice and tell people about the value of their work. She will do this at the Community Legal Centres Queensland state conference which is taking place on the Gold Coast, 8 to 9 May 2017.

The Community Legal Centres Queensland conference will be the first time that Elizabeth has spoken in Australia. Arledge commented, "Justice, fairness, safety, and security are universal values. Yet the role of civil legal aid in ensuring those values is a best-kept secret that needs telling. I am honoured and excited to share what Voices has learned about communicating to build support for this vital service."

Elizabeth is currently the Deputy Director of Voices for Civil Justice, a national communications initiative in which uses the power of media to highlight the important role that civil legal aid plays in assuring fairness for all in the American justice system.

Elizabeth's role at Voices has given her the opportunity to manage and build JusticeVoices network of more than 1000 individuals and cultivate story ideas for pitching at local, state and national levels. With Elizabeth's extensive experience and skills, Community Legal Centres Queensland is excited by this exclusive opportunity to speak at this year's conference.

Elizabeth began her career as a reporter and columnist for an independent daily newspaper in North Carolina, and has since gained over 26 years of professional training experience in communications, with a deep understanding of civil legal aid.

As the director of Training & Conventions at the National Women's Political Caucus in 1991 to 1996, Elizabeth built and directed national campaign skills programs that trained more than 5,000 women candidates and campaign managers across the United States.

The Community Legal Centres Queensland conference is taking place 8 to 9 May 2017 at the Mantra Legends Hotel at Surfers Paradise. The conference gives delegates the chance to meet with a diverse range of people that are involved in the community legal centres.

With panel discussions, guest speakers, presentations and a Conference Dinner held at the Surfers Paradise Life Saving Club, there will be many opportunities for delegates to network and broaden their skills and knowledge.

Other speakers at the Community Legal Centres Queensland conference include Dave Copeman, Lead Organiser with Queensland Community Alliance; Philip Green, Privacy Commissioner for the Office of the Information Commissioner; Ellen Roberts, Coordinator, Get UP; Justice Colin Forrest from the Federal Court of Australia and a number of community legal centres will showcasing their work.

James Farrell, Director of Community Legal Centres Queensland commented, 'The conference gives people working in the community legal sector a chance to touch base with colleagues and find out about the great work everyone has done over the past year. We can exchange ideas and discuss issues and ways to progress with our community work.'

Civil justice expert issues challenge to community lawyers**page 2**

'I'm particularly looking forward to learning more about how community legal centres can share our successes from international expert Elizabeth Arledge. Telling our story is important as we continue to face funding pressures that mean we turn away half of the Queenslanders reaching out for legal help each year,' Mr Farrell said.

Ends**NOTES:**

1. Community Legal Centres Queensland Inc (formerly QAILS) is the state-wide peak body representing community legal centres in Queensland. Queensland community legal centres have 40 years of service delivery experience providing free information, advice and referral, casework and representation to the community.
www.communitylegalqld.org.au
2. For further information about the conference go to: <http://communitylegalqld.org.au/event/community-legal-centres-queensland-conference>

MEDIA CONTACT:

Catherine Baker, Communications Manager, Community Legal Centres Queensland

Email: Communications@communitylegalqld.org.au / Phone: (07) 3392 0092 / 0432 105 415