



## **MEDIA ALERT**

**16 October 2014**

### **SHARING THE PATHWAYS OUT OF POVERTY HEADLINE CANBERRA EVENT FOR ANTI-POVERTY WEEK**

#### **What**

A panel discussion sharing real life Canberra stories of poverty, and what made a difference on the pathway out of poverty. This is a free event which includes a paper bag lunch.

#### **Who**

Panelists: Jayson Perrin, Anthony O'Hara and Kylie Ofiu (bios below)

Facilitator: Frances Crimmins, YWCA Canberra Executive Director and Co-Chair of Anti-Poverty Week ACT

#### **Why**

Anti-Poverty Week aims to highlight and overcome issues of poverty and hardship. This event will focus on three Canberrans who have experienced poverty and hardship but have since used those experiences to make a real and lasting contribution to the Canberra community. The focus will be on what helped each of them to move beyond poverty.

#### **Where**

Ann Harding Centre, Canberra University.

#### **When**

TODAY, 12.30pm – 1.30pm

#### **About Jayson Perrin:**

Jayson is currently a full-time Youth Worker at Melba Copland Secondary School, a job he loves. But in his mid 20s, Jayson's life spiraled out of control. Drugs, alcohol and violence all took their toll on his relationships, his job and his living conditions. He ended up on the streets, doing what he had to survive, and his child was taken away from him. But it was the desire to have his daughter back that forced Jayson to make positive changes in his life. With the support of Care and Protection, he entered rehab and found a job, and his life began to get back on track. He then decided to use his experiences to help others and became a youth worker, and an award-winning one at that. Last year Jayson won a YOGIE award for Staff Achievement.

**About Anthony O'Hara:**

Five years ago, life was good for Anthony O'Hara. He had a good job and lived in a nice house. But he'd had a private battle with mental illness since childhood and was struggling with acute anxiety, which was getting worse. He finally reached a point where he was no longer able to work. In the space of four weeks, Anthony became jobless, homeless, was surviving on unemployment benefits and had lodged for bankruptcy.

Since engaging with St Vincent de Paul's Samaritan Services in 2010, Anthony has made a substantial contribution as a volunteer. Anthony was recently recognised for his contributions to the mental health community by being named 2014 ACT Mental Health Volunteer of the Year.

**About Kylie Ofiu:**

Kylie Ofiu is a CEO, author, international speaker, award winning blogger and a finalist for the 2015 Young Australian of the Year award. She has overcome domestic violence, homelessness, rape and borderline personality disorder as a single mother. She shares her experiences to raise awareness and fund raise for the disadvantaged, especially here in Canberra.

**Interview opportunities:**

Each of the panelists and Frances Crimmins are available for interview.

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