

Kirby Institute Community Scholarship will support leadership development among people living with HIV

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA (Tuesday 1 September 2015) The Kirby Institute, in partnership with the Positive Leadership Development Institute (PLDI™ Australia) has today launched the inaugural Kirby Institute Community Scholarship, which will support people living with HIV to attend resilience and leadership capacity building workshops run by the Institute. PLDI™ Australia, which was launched at AIDS 2014, focuses on placing people living with HIV as central and vital in the role towards ending HIV.

The first recipient of the Kirby Institute Community Scholarship, Dean Beck, producer and broadcaster at Joy 94.9, is a tireless advocate for people living with HIV and an ENUF Ambassador.

“One of the tragic legacies of HIV in this country is that there are so few leaders, role models and individuals willing to publicly educate, whilst breaking down the stigma of HIV, ” said Mr Beck. “I have seen the personal growth and impact that the PLDI has had on a number of my friends and colleagues living with HIV. Thanks to the Kirby Institute's scholarship I am looking forward to joining their ranks so that together we can continue to educate and inform, lead and guide and ultimately ensure an end to the epidemic globally.”

The Kirby Institute Community Scholarship will support participants wishing to attend the program by covering course and travel costs.

“People living with HIV in Australia continue to face significant stigma from society,” says Professor David Cooper, Director of the Kirby Institute. “Drawing from the Canadian experience of the program, the PLDI is a proven method to increase resilience skills and to empower HIV positive people to become leaders, in both the HIV sector and in other fields. It's a real privilege to be able to support the program through our Kirby Institute Community Scholarship.”

Living Positive Victoria is a collaborating partner of PLDI™ Australia. Executive Officer Brent Allan sees the program as essential for tapping into the growing role of HIV positive people in the community, connecting a new generation of leaders with those already engaged with the HIV sector.

“We have already seen some fantastic results from PLDI™ Australia graduates demonstrating the positive impact of the training on individual resilience levels and this is going to have a massive impact on our ability to build a stronger community of positive people,” says Allan.

PLDI™ Australia is an international collaboration between Australia and Canada. In Australia the program has multi-agency cross sector support from 22 agencies and six collaborating partners. Early results show increased and sustained levels of resilience capacity and numerous examples of how individuals living with HIV are utilising what they have learnt in their personal, professional and community lives.

Individuals and organisations wanting to get involved in the program, through participation or sponsorship should contact pldi@pldiaustralia.org.au



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