









## **Celebrating volunteers**

This National Volunteer Week, Community College Gippsland (CCG) proudly celebrates 50 years of volunteer-driven education and community impact.

In 1975, a passionate group of teachers from the Warragul district came together to establish the West Gippsland and Latrobe Valley Community Education Centre.

With no funding for staffing, the Centre was built on voluntary labour and subscriptions, becoming a professional development hub for educators and the broader community. That legacy lives on.

Today, volunteers remain at the heart of CCG, supporting programs across our Warragul, Pakenham, Dandenong and Leongatha campuses. Whether assisting in classrooms or enhancing our learning spaces, our volunteers bring skills, dedication and heart to everything they do.

Our governance is also volunteer-led, with a Board made up of community-minded members and cadet directors who generously guide the CCG's mission.

Over the years, many have served in this capacity or contributed in countless other ways, helping maintain the vibrant spirit that defines CCG.

"Our volunteers are the heart and soul of CCG," said Dale Gemmell, CEO. "We owe much of our success and growth to their unwavering commitment and support.

Whether in the classroom or behind the scenes, their contributions are vital in ensuring that we continue to meet the needs of our students



Celebrating 50 Years of Volunteer-Powered Education: CCG 2024 2025 Board members

and the community."

As we mark our 50th anniversary in 2025, we extend our deepest thanks to every volunteer, past

and present, who has helped CCG.

From humble beginnings to a thriving regional education provider, CCG stands as a testament to

the power of community, purpose and passion.

Explore your future at https://ccg.asn.au/courses/or call 03 5622 6000.

## Art with purpose: Pakenham leading from the heart

Last week, I had the privilege of walking through the heart of Pakenham with the Leader of the Opposition, Brad Battin. From small businesses to frontline services, one thing stood out: the quiet strength of this community.

At WISE Employment, we met a team who work alongside volunteers to transform lives — helping people with disabilities, former offenders, and others doing it tough find meaningful work and stability. Their impact reminded me that dignity often starts with opportunity.

But perhaps the most moving moment this year has come from meeting April Whitelaw, the president of the White Ribbon Art Gallery committee

Now in its fifth year, this community-led initiative brings together artists, families, and survivors to confront one of our society's deepest wounds — family violence. The works displayed are not just art; they're acts of advocacy. Each brushstroke, sculpture, and installation speaks for someone who can't. It's a place where grief,

resilience, and hope are all given form — and where silence is replaced by courage.

The newly elected committee, led by April Whitelaw, and every artist involved, deserve our thanks. They are doing what politics alone cannot: creating space for dialogue, healing, and action.

Planning is already underway for the next exhibition in November 2025 — and I encourage artists and supporters across our region to get involved.

These are the kinds of efforts I'll always stand behind. Because change doesn't just come from Parliament — it begins in places like this.

Dr Renee Heath,

Member for Eastern Victoria Region Shadow Assistant Minister for Multicultural Affairs Shadow Assistant Minister for Victims of Family Violence



Brad Battin, Renee Heath and Mary Gyurcsik.



## 50 YEARS OF VOLUNTEER POWER

Since 1975, Community College Gippsland (CCG) has been powered by voluntary labour, community spirit, and a belief in accessible education.

50 years on, our volunteers continue to support our students across Warragul, Pakenham, Dandenong and Leongatha campuses.

This National Volunteer Week, we say thank you to every volunteer, past and present.

Looking to get involved?

Become a volunteer and h

Become a volunteer and help us shape the next 50 years.

**APPLY NOW** www.ccg.asn.au/volunteer CCG is a Child Safe organisation that has zero tolerance for child abuse

03 5622 6000

www.ccg.asn.au