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## **SNOW FOUNDATION CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF HELPING HANDS**

The Snow Foundation has celebrated 25 years of providing support, enabling individuals and organisations to introduce positive change.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation, Georgina Byron, said that the Foundation began with a contribution of \$1 million by her father, Terry Snow and his brother, George Snow, in 1991.

“Since then, the Foundation has donated \$18.4 million to 234 community organisations, including donations to 200 individuals”, Ms Byron said.

“Our annual giving in 2015/16 amounted to \$1.7 million, incorporating 16 new grants, 55 ongoing grants and 63 individuals”.

Speaking at a function at Canberra Airport to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Ms Byron said the Foundation had been a combined family commitment, involving her parents, brothers and sisters and the extended Snow family.

“We’ve supported small projects, with donations of a few thousand dollars, and larger ongoing operations, including YouthCARE Canberra, covering education and employment, health and social welfare ventures”.

“Today, we celebrated those achievements with over a hundred of those recipients, and their stories were uplifting”.

Speakers at the function included:

Alison Covington, founder and CEO of Good360, which connects manufacturers of excess new goods with charities who give them to individuals in need;

Steve Persson, CEO of The Big Issue and Homes for Homes, who talked about their work in raising funds to increase the supply of social and affordable housing; and

Zack Bryers, Street Outreach Worker with YouthCARE Canberra, which provides outreach support and services for at risk and homeless young people.

Ms Covington said Good360 had received \$12 million of excess goods, which would otherwise have gone into landfill, from their corporate partners. "One of our largest donations was five truckloads of goods from Woolworths. There are 2 million people living in poverty in Australia, and warehouses full of stuff they need".

Steve Persson told the function that the most significant social issue in Australia was the lack of affordable housing. "We're currently short by 250,000 properties, and that number will grow. The Homes for Homes mechanism allows everyone to make a tiny contribution - 0.1% - under a permissive caveat when they sell their house to go to a fund to build housing".

Mr Persson said Canberra was leading the rest of the country with the initiative, with a 97% retention rate.

The function also heard that YouthCARE Canberra operated 24 hours a day. Zack Bryers recounted two 16 year old clients, both of whom were homeless. One had found a home, a school and two jobs, and was planning a career as a professional soccer player.

" Then there's a 16 year old girl - she's an ice addict, aggressive to her parents, very violent. She is an ice dealer, she steals cars, but is an awesome kid choosing to use her talents the wrong way. She regularly disappears, but every time she needs someone to help she calls me. You've got to give these kids a piece of your heart".

The Snow Foundation has supported YouthCare since the Foundation started, 25 years ago.

The joint founder of the Snow Foundation, Terry Snow, said the 25th anniversary illustrated how little seeds grow.

"The Foundation today has a corpus of \$38 million and I'm very proud of that. We'd like to increase the size of it and our distributions".

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