

13th JULY
2015

CABRINI LINEN SERVICE

CORPORATE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

DANDENONG SOUTH

13th JULY
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Laundry offers lifeline to marginalised groups

A DANDENONG South business was lauded at the Victoria Day awards on July 1.

Cabrini Linen Service, a specialist division of Cabrini Health, was named corporate citizen of the year.

The business employs people who might otherwise struggle to find a job, including recently arrived migrants, long-term unemployed, homeless, at-risk youth and people who have suffered mental illness or addiction.

CLS general manager Kevin Duong, who comes from a refugee background himself, said winning the award was "humbling".

"It is an amazing thing for our staff to be recognised for all the work ... particularly since our transition to Dandenong," Mr Duong said.

Victoria Day council chairman Norman Kennedy said since moving to Dandenong, CLS had increased to more than 140 staff with 41 locals, representing 32 different cultural groups.

Dandenong provided the company with "a wealth of opportunities to give back to the community in terms of supporting the local community and newly arrived Australians" in line with Mother Cabrini's mission and values, Mr Duong said.

"Our staff feel even more



CLEANING UP

- The company has provided managed linen services to the healthcare and hospitality industries for more than 40 years
- Its 9000sq m purpose-designed facility was built in November 2013
- Dandenong South was specifically chosen because of the high unemployment in the local area, particularly among new migrants

rewarded to be a part of an organisation that strives to make a difference not just in the community but also in the individuals that we have brought into our folds," he said.

"We are the first laundry to receive such an award and recognition, making us another point of difference that distinguishes us from our friendly competitors."

Saintly touch brings soul to linen service

By CASEY NEILL

THE patron saint of immigrants inspires and shapes Dandenong South's Cabrini Linen Service (CLS).

The commercial laundry's efforts to support the community were rewarded on 1 July with the Victoria Day Award for Public and Community Service by a Good Corporate Citizen.

Not-for-profit Cabrini Health opened the CLS ECO Laundry in November 2013.

CLS general manager Kevin Duong said it selected the Logis Boulevard site because of the area's high unemployment, particularly among new migrants.

"When we started our search for a new home, we had two important and vital objectives," he said.

"The first is to find a sustainable site that will allow us to achieve our environmental sustainability projects.

"The second was to continue our founder Mother Cabrini's mission and values.

"Dandenong has provided us with a wealth of opportunities to give back to the community in terms of supporting the local community and newly arrived Australians.

"It has allowed us to provide them with the tools and support to once again take control of their futures.

"Mother Cabrini had such compassion and determination as the patron saint of immigrants.

"To be able to fulfil her vision is a core value of CLS and a significant part of what we do here



Managing director Ralf Pelz and general manager Kevin Duong with the Victoria Day Award. 141393

Pictures: STEWART CHAMBERS

CLS workers Francisco Da Costa Vougue, Carlos Nario, Ceta Orbiz, Elizabeth Jenkins and Kenny Ou. 141393

on a day to day basis." Mr Duong himself comes from a refugee background.

"Personally, working at Cabrini has been fulfilling as it has given me the unique ability to reflect on my journey and return the benefits that have been afforded to me to someone less fortunate, so that they too can have the opportunity to pave their own future," he said.

Mr Duong said CLS also supported the Lighthouse Foundation, Project Respect, Street

Kids and WISE Employment. It retires damaged linen to Sacred Heart Mission and provides a no-charge linen service to Sacred Heart Mission and Very Special Kids in Malvern.

"This award has been very humbling for Cabrini Linen Service," Mr Duong said.

"Although we did not begin this journey with being award recipients in mind, it is an amazing thing for our staff to be recognised for all the work they have put in over the years, par-

ticularly since our transition to Dandenong. "They have been instrumental in embracing all our mission projects and have wholeheartedly provided support to those in need.

"From their perspective, it is fulfilling and rewarding to help someone in a position they were similarly in.

"It is also great for our partnership programs and our clients who have over the years greatly contributed to our cause."

Mr Duong said CLS recently

partnered with business network provider SEBN through the City of Greater Dandenong.

"We will continue to become more embedded in the community and find opportunities to give back to a community that has welcomed us into their fold," he said.

"Here at CLS, we believe greatly that success is driven with social good and that each and every one of us have an obligation to bring this value to realisation."

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CABRINI LINEN SERVICE

GOOD CORPORATE CITIZEN

The work of a Greater Dandenong linen service has helped Cabrini earn recognition as a Good Corporate Citizen at the Victoria Day Council Awards.

Victoria Day Council chairman Norman Kennedy said Cabrini was a good corporate citizen because it supported and operated programs for disadvantaged people in the community, particularly through the Cabrini Linen Service (CLS) in Dandenong South.

He said CLS provided employment opportunities for people who might otherwise struggle to find employment, including recently arrived migrants, long term unemployed, homeless, at-risk youth and people who have suffered mental illness or addiction.

CLS currently employs 140 staff, representing 32 cultural groups. Since moving to Dandenong South two years ago, CLS has grown to further employ 41 local staff members, including 10 refugees from Catholic Care and 31 from Wise Employment and Hoban Agency.

CABRINI LINEN
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CLS managing director Ralf Pelz said 80 per cent of the local employees had been unemployed for over a year, with 48 per cent having been out of work for more than two years.

"When clients hear the story of CLS providing employment for the disenfranchised, our mission becomes their mission," Mr Pelz said.

"We are trying to balance mission and margin. Any surplus we make, we invest back into our company, our people and our community."