

# Advisory Council 2019

## COUNCIL BIOGRAPHIES



The membership of the council is comprised of:

- Over a quarter of the Advisory Council have personal experience of the criminal justice system.
- Two thirds of the Advisory Council are female.
- Over a quarter of the Advisory Council identify as First Nations or come from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.
- 14 % of our Council members are based in Regional, Rural and Remote areas

### **African Australian Legal Network**

*“Criminalisation of African Australians in the media and in the law negatively impacts women and children in specific ways...”*

With a membership of over 100 African Australians in the legal profession, The African Australian Legal Network provides a platform for African Australians to contribute to, and advocate for, policy and law reform. Their membership has professional knowledge and experience in law and policy, representing a broad intersection of lived experiences as African Australians. Rutendo Muchinguri is the Solicitor Advocate at Office of Public Prosecutions, Victoria.

### **Andrew Yule**

Andrew is General Manager Strategic Communication and Engagement for Jesuit Social Services and has more than 16 years' experience working for social change organisations. Andrew is passionate about connecting the lived experience of vulnerable and marginalised Australians with sound policy and research to advocate for long term change. Andrew has taken a senior role in campaigns to improve youth justice, adult justice, child protection, mental health services and affordable housing. Most recently, Andrew has managed a multifaceted campaign (#WorthASecondChance) to shift the public narrative around youth justice in Victoria and build a groundswell of support for evidence-based and effective approaches to help children and young people get their lives back on track.

### **Betty Belay**

*“People who face significant barriers to health, education and community services do not deserve a justice system that exacerbates their further ostracization in the wider community...”* Betty is a community organiser in the Union movement with expertise in education, industrial relations and campaigning. She also has extensive professional experience working with marginalised communities. She collaborates with the Afro-Australian Student Organisation, Type One Melbourne and

is sitting on the Victorian Government's African Communities Action Plan. Betty is passionate about creating a fairer justice system.

**cohealth - Lyn  
Morgain**

*"A coalition of like-minded organisations is well placed to push for sustainable, positive change at the systems level..."*

cohealth is Victoria's largest community health service, and advocating for a fairer and more equitable community is integral to our DNA. We provide vital health and support services including medical, dental, allied health, mental health, aged care and counselling, and many specialist health services across Melbourne's CBD, northern and western suburbs. cohealth is committed to making a difference to health inequality at a population level by addressing the underlying systemic causes of ill-health in the communities we serve; in partnership with others whose values and objectives align with ours.

Lyn has been an executive leader in public policy, not for profit organisations and government over the past twenty-five years, holding community wellbeing, planning, governance and community service portfolios. She is passionate about strength-based approaches that engender community ownership and control over service design, development and delivery. She is a current member of the Justice Health Ministerial Advisory Committee.

**Colin Long**

*"The current justice system has become far too punitive, driven by a conservative law-and-order agenda that does not deliver long-term community safety but does exacerbate the victimisation of some of the most vulnerable people in our communities..."*

Colin Long is a Just Transitions Organiser at the The Victorian Trades Hall, which is the peak body for Victorian Trade Unions and has a long history of advocating for workers' rights, social justice, and democracy. The Hall has a long-term interest in improving the status and rights of women in work and in the community more broadly, and in transforming gender relations to reduce gendered violence.

**Debbie Kilroy  
OAM**

Debbie Kilroy OAM is one of Australia's leading advocates for protecting the human rights of women and children through decarceration - the process of moving away from using prisons and other systems of social control in response to crime and social issues.

Debbie's passion for justice is the result of her personal experience of the criminal (in)justice system and an unwavering belief that prison represents a failure of justice.

Debbie is the Chief Executive Officer of Sisters Inside, an independent community organisation that exists to advocate for the collective human rights of women and girls affected by the criminal legal system. She is a qualified solicitor, primarily practicing in criminal law with qualifications in social work, forensic mental health and gestalt therapy. She has completed a Churchill Fellowship on decarceration and innovative alternatives to imprisonment.

## **Djirra**

Established over 16 years ago, Djirra (formerly the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria) is an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation with state-wide reach specialising in family violence. Djirra is dedicated to assisting Aboriginal people who experience family violence and sexual assault – predominantly women and children. We provide culturally safe and holistic legal and non-legal support to Aboriginal women and Aboriginal victims/survivors of family violence, including sexual assault.

Djirra provides frontline legal assistance through our Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Service Program, wrap-around support through our Koori Women's Place, outreach and specialist support programs to women in prison, and a range of early intervention prevention programs, community education and wellbeing workshops. We also undertake policy and advocacy work to identify systemic issues for reform and strengthen Aboriginal women's access to justice, safety and equality. Protecting and promoting Aboriginal women's wellbeing and safety is our core business.

## **Dylan Goldsworthy**

*"Through organising for collective action, we can build power and capacity within our communities to bring agency to oppressed people and enfranchise them to challenge systems of power, like the criminal justice system..."*

Dylan is a senior organiser and lawyer at the Young Workers Centre (YWC), working to empower young people in their workplaces and in their community. YWC is a community legal centre and campaigning and outreach organisation. YWC provides legal advice, training opportunities, and develops young people's capacity to organise and campaign on issues important to them. YWC's philosophy is that individuals do not create change – collectives create change. Dylan is currently a board member for the Fitzroy Community Legal Service and has previously volunteered at the Darebin Community Legal Centre.

## **Elizabeth Kokolakis**

*"The current justice system just simply does not work..."*

Elizabeth is currently studying criminal justice and is passionate about fighting the stigma of being involved in the criminal justice system. She wants to change legislation to ensure that people with short offences

are not further marginalised from a life where they can thrive and is a member of the Women Transforming Justice Project. She has experienced first hand what it's like to have a criminal record, even without serving time in prison, and believes that giving people the ability to define their own future is crucial in order to create a pathway for success.

### **Emilie Cuinn**

*“What happened to me could happen to anyone else and that needs to change.”*

Emilie was 16 when she was assaulted and tried to take action. She says, “I was never asked if I was okay, or if I was hurt, but I was arrested and tried in the courts. I was painted as psychotic, angry and violent. The lawyers I was assigned had said to me, ‘Just plead guilty, it’ll be worse for you if you don’t.’ I had attended almost 10 court dates and all of them were adjourned due to the other party not showing up. Ten times a 16-year-old had to prove her innocence, never receiving the support she so desperately needed.” Emilie works for Berry Street supporting organisations to become more understanding of LGBTIQ+ issues and facilitates workshops and forums to challenge current mindsets and preconceived thought. Emilie also works as an NDIS Disability Carer. Her lived experience expertise enables her to bring emotional awareness to the room when working on projects.

### **Fitzroy Darebin Legal Service**

*“We are aware of how ill-equipped the justice system is in dealing with complexity, and how that produces compound adverse effects for people who have complex needs and lives, and for people whom the justice system does not accommodate.”*

Fitzroy Legal Service (FLS) is one of the longest running Community Legal Centres in Australia and delivers much needed legal assistance to Victorians experiencing systemic disadvantage. The strength of FLS has included providing widespread accessibility to the law, through the publication of the Law Handbook and the Activists’ Rights website, leadership in therapeutic justice and harm reduction movements, a specialised criminal law practice and a history of public interest litigation and systemic reform.

FLS has recently amalgamated with Darebin Community Legal Centre (DCLC). DCLC brings to the new amalgamated organisation expertise in legal advocacy for incarcerated people, leadership in decarceration movements and peer-led advocacy for women in prison, as well as a longstanding specialised practice in family violence.

**Gemma  
Caferella**

*"I feel very strongly about changing the 'tough on crime' dialogue to ensure that we are using evidence-based solutions to people's issues, and creating a more tolerant, inclusive, compassionate and safe Victoria.."*

Gemma is an Associate Public Defender (Civil Justice) with Victoria Legal Aid. She is an expert in tenancy and infringements law, is the Chair of the Government Regulation and Equality committee at Liberty Victoria. She has also worked in several Victorian community legal centres. Gemma is particularly concerned about the significant secondary impacts of involvement in the criminal justice system, including the loss of ability to work or study, loss of housing, and child protection and family court issues.

**Hayley  
Mansfield**

*"With united voices, we can create change. There are incredible initiatives/services/programs happening already and amazingly dedicated people working in the space. We have so much to build on..."*

ARC Justice provides legal and tenancy services cover a large part of central and northern Victoria, gathering evidence and community voices about key justice issues affecting central Victorians. Hayley is the Executive Officer at ARC Justice. She has over 10 years of experience working in the community sector including at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Baptcare Sanctuary and the Brotherhood of St Laurence. Hayley has seen how the justice system – a system that is supposedly unbiased and fair – can work against the very people it is designed to protect and further embed unequal power balances. Hayley is eager to be part of positive change.

**Hilary Russell**

*"I do not accept inequality as inevitable, acceptable, or justifiable. I believe structures can and should be changed to reduce inequality..."*

Ballarat Grampians Legal Services is a not-for-profit organisation that provides free legal advice, information and community legal education to people who live, work or study in the Central Highlands and Wimmera regions of Victoria.

Hilary is the Principle Lawyer at Ballarat Grampians Legal Services.

She has over 25 years of experience in leadership roles in the public and non-government sector. As a Criminal Defence Lawyer Hilary has worked for the NSW/ ACT Aboriginal Legal Services, in private criminal practice and in the community legal sector. Along with advocating for clients in court she has contributed to a range of law reform initiatives in the ACT and New South Wales.

**Jasmine  
Crawford-  
Nobels**

*"It would have been far, far better to send me into rehab straightaway, but that's not what the court did."*

Jasmine is an Advisor for the Women Transforming Justice Project, arranging a peer support network for women coming out of prison, conducting evaluations and coordinating a network of support contacts. She is passionate about creating a social services sector which nurtures and supports women who have been in the criminal justice system. She is completing her counseling qualification. Jasmine was incarcerated three times, but believes it could have been much less if she had been given access to rehabilitation programs. She opted to remain in prison during her parole period until she had secured a place, entirely through her own efforts, in a rehabilitation program outside, which had a six-month waiting period. "I literally got the prison chaplain to drive me straight to rehab," she says, "and that, combined with plenty of other community support, has changed everything."

**Katharina Storey**

*"It is an honour to be somewhere I can use my past experience as a positive and help others alike..."*

Katharina is an Advisor for the Women Transforming Justice Project. Unlike many women in prison, Katharina had a stable house to return to, and this has been a key to her recovery. However, like many women in prison, Katharina was a mother who was separated from her child during her sentence. Family is very important to me, says Katharina. Also like many women in prison, Katharina was involved in drug related offences. One in five women in Victorian prisons have drug offences as their most serious charge, followed by assault offences and property offences. Katharina is passionate about reforming the criminal justice system.

**Kate Kornacki**

*"At times, justice favours those with deeper pockets rather than those with the better claim, and those people that are most marginalised often cannot access the support or resources they need..."*

Kate is a Senior Associate with Hall & Wilcox Lawyers with expertise in mediation, dispute resolution, and litigation in predominantly commercial matters. Previously, she Chaired the Community Council of the YMCA Bridge Project in a voluntary capacity, which provides support, training, mentoring, and employment opportunities for young ex-offenders at risk of being trapped in a recurring cycle of crime and imprisonment.

**Kirra-Alyssa  
Horley**

Kirra-Alyssa is a Lived Experience Consultant with the Berry Street Y-Change Team. A strong facilitator and speaker, she is passionate about ensuring that young women and girls have the skills and strength to challenge rape culture and keep themselves safe. Kirra also has a strong

interest in addressing the absence of children and young people in the family violence narrative. She is skilled at public speaking, workshop facilitation and developing educational workshops, informed by her personal insights. She is currently studying a Diploma of Community Services at Swinburne University.

**Michael  
Mckenna**

*"It is my hope that future conversations about justice will reflect the evidence: that de-incarceration, justice reinvestment and a safer Victoria can and will go hand in hand..."*

Justice Connect has a long history of connecting people and community groups with free legal help. Homeless Law works with clients who are either experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Michael is the senior criminal lawyer in the homeless law team with a depth of understanding about reality about the day to day operation of Victoria's criminal justice system. Prior to this role, he worked as a criminal solicitor at the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service. He has seen first hand how the justice system in Victoria could work against the most incarcerated people in the world.

**Morgan Cataldo**

*"If we're committed to solving complex and messy problems, we've got to be prepared to get uncomfortable and be open to adopting more unconventional methods and mindsets. This begins with ensuring those with a lived experience are partnered with as equals in the fight for social justice."*

Morgan Cataldo has worked within the for purpose sector for the past ten years in a range of policy, advocacy and service development roles. Her current focus is on supporting organisations draw on the depth of knowledge of those with lived experience expertise. She is currently the Project Officer Youth Engagement at Berry Street supporting Y-Change, a team of young people with lived experiences of economic disadvantage who work to inform, advise and challenge social and systemic structures. Previously, she was the Lived Experience Service Development Worker at Launch Housing, working to educate the organisation about the value of lived experience and partnering with people with experiences of homelessness for advocacy, policy and service design and delivery. Morgan also sits as a Board Member for Women's Information, Support and Housing in the North (WISHIN), an organisation that specialises in homelessness and family violence support for women.

**Murray Mallee  
Community  
Legal Service  
Ann Killen &  
Blessing  
Keabilwe**

*"We ensure that vulnerable rural people's concerns are represented, heard and addressed..."*

Murray Mallee Community Legal Service provides legal services to people who live, work or study in the Murray Mallee region of north western Victoria and South western NSW. They provide a regional, rural and remote voice, working extensively with survivors of family violence.

Blessing is a Solicitor at Murray Mallee Community Legal Service. She has been a driving force of the development of the Free Our Sisters, Free Our Kids Campaign. She has

Ann Killen is the General Manager at Murray Mallee Community Legal Service. She has a background in community development, having worked extensively to promote female empowerment including extensive work with aboriginal women.

**Dr Nesam  
McMillan**

*"Neither society, nor the people involved with the justice system and their families and communities, are served by an approach that does not adequately respond to the full range of complex factors involved in any experience of both criminalisation and victimisation..."*

Nesam McMillan is a Senior Lecturer in Global Criminology and Director of the Master of Criminology at the University of Melbourne. Her research and teaching focuses on social, legal and political understandings of harm and crime, structural injustice and structural justice, international crime and justice and legal and social change. She is a co-founder of *the Global Network on Justice. Conflict. Responsibility*, a public platform for engagement between academics, government and community organisations and activists regarding justice issues in Australia and elsewhere. Nesam was also a Chief Investigator on the 'Minutes of Evidence' project which brought together researchers, educators, government and community agencies and performing artists to spark new modes of engaging with structural injustice and explore the possibility of structural justice ([www.minutesofevidence.com.au](http://www.minutesofevidence.com.au))

**Rei Alphonso**

*"Eventually prisons will be viewed as antiquated, cruel and ineffective institutions"* Flat Out Mission Statement

Flat Out is a state-wide homelessness support and advocacy service for women who have had contact with the criminal justice and/or prison system in Victoria. Flat Out leads and participates in research and community education, seeking to inform the wider community about the harms that occur for women in the criminal justice system. Flat Out works directly with women who have experienced criminalisation and/or incarceration and to improve the rights and conditions of women in

prison. Rei Alphonso is a Family Violence Justice Project Worker at Flat Out.

### **Sarah Santana**

Sarah Santana has a wealth of experience supporting the people around her and influencing her communities to take part in advocacy. She is currently part of the Y-Change team at Berry Street as a Lived Experience Consultant, where she utilises personal experiences to inform, advise and challenge social and systemic structures. She has also volunteered for the past three years at the youth drug and alcohol service, Youth Support and Advocacy Service (YSAS).

### **Sara-Michelle Stilianos**

*“When I was in jail the second time, I already knew that the life I was living wasn’t the life that I wanted to live, but I didn’t know anything else...”*

Sara is training to be a Support Worker, committed to ensuring that other women have the support to ensure they can thrive, rather than getting caught in the criminal justice system. She has years of experience working in customer relations and administration, and is deeply committed to ensuring that our system promotes justice for all, not just for the few who can afford it. Sara is also an Advisor for the Women Transforming Justice Project, helping to ensure that others don’t have to experience what she has been through.

### **Sue Pennicuik**

*“A truly progressive society is one where our sisters and kids are offered love, healing and support – not prisons and abuse...”*

Sue has over 12 years of experience as a Member of Parliament including serving as the Greens Party spokesperson for justice, police and corrections. She was elected to state parliament in 2006, 2010 and 2014, representing the Southern Metropolitan region of Melbourne where she has lived for almost 30 years. Throughout her extensive career she has advocated for evidence based policies and practice in the justice and corrections systems. She has seen the impact that providing more sentencing options and support for people in prison and post release has, instead of custodial imprisonment, which is ultimately harmful.

Before entering parliament, Sue was involved in local community groups and worked for the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), where she coordinated national occupational health and safety (OHS) campaigns including tackling stress and bullying at work, safer working hours and banning asbestos.

### **Tiffany Overall**

*“All too often we see children and young people coming into contact with the system because of poverty, exclusion from school, racism, family*

*breakdown, being “different” etc. Nothing will improve unless we can change the system...”*

Youthlaw works to address the legal issues facing young people through legal services, advocacy, law reform and preventative education programs, within a human rights and social justice framework.

Tiffany Overall is a policy officer at Youthlaw and she coordinates Smart Justice for Young People which advocates to improve outcomes for young people in at risk of having contact with the criminal justice system.