

Thorne Harbour to establish Victoria's first LGBTI Community Volunteer Hub

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday 30 January 2020 - Today Thorne Harbour Health has announced the establishment of a LGBTI Community Volunteer Hub to connect volunteers with opportunities to support LGBTI communities across Victoria.

Volunteers have made up the majority of the workforce at Thorne Harbour Health for its entire 37-year history. During that time, many of the organisation's volunteers have gone on to win multiple awards including the Premier Volunteer Champions Award, GLOBE Volunteer of the Year, and the Minister for Health Volunteer Award.

The organisation currently works with over 700 trained volunteers across its programs and services. As a result, Thorne Harbour regularly receives requests for volunteer support from smaller groups and events including AIDS 2014, Better Together Conference, Australian GLTBIQ Multicultural Council, and the upcoming 2020 International Gay and Lesbian Aquatics Championships.

"We are incredibly fortunate to have been supported by countless volunteers since the day we were founded in 1983. We understand the value of volunteers, and we're so grateful to be in a position where we can help smaller organisations that don't have that same infrastructure," said Thorne Harbour Health CEO Simon Ruth.

"We've been seeking funders interest in developing this resource for the LGBTI community since 2014, but it hasn't been until receiving a generous bequest from the Quinlan Estate that we're now able to make that dream a reality."

The LGBTI Community Volunteer Hub will aim to help LGBTI organisations across Victoria identify volunteer requirements, develop job specifications, match skills and expertise, and recruit volunteers accordingly. The hub will also provide a pathway for the growing number of corporate volunteers interested in opportunities to donate their time and skills.

For over 20 years, Thorne Harbour Health has been a member of Volunteering Victoria. While there are volunteer resource centres across the state, Volunteering Victoria CEO Scott Miller supports the establishment of a targeted hub for LGBTI communities.

"Connection with community is a key motivation for volunteers, and many volunteers are seeking opportunities that allow them to give back to LGBTI communities. A community-led solution like the LGBTI Volunteer Hub is a great initiative to connect volunteers with opportunities that they might otherwise struggle to find."

Charlotte Johnson has been volunteering with Thorne Harbour for the past four years and a recent recipient of the organisation's Special Service Award. She said, "Volunteering has been a fantastic vehicle for me to get out there as a young trans woman and make a meaningful impact on the community I'm so proud to be a part of. I want every member of our LGBTI communities to be able to have that opportunity. It's incredibly rewarding, but it can be a bit daunting at first if you don't know where to look."

Melbourne Queer Film Festival is one of the organisations that will benefit from the LGBTI Community Volunteer Hub.

CEO Maxwell Gratton said, "We love our MQFF volunteers. The Volunteer Hub would be a fantastic resource for connecting our volunteers with additional opportunities throughout the year as well as quickly allow us to recruit new volunteers when needed."

Thorne Harbour hopes to officially launch the hub in May 2020 in the lead up to National Volunteer Week and the organisation's fourth annual LGBTI Organisations Volunteers Event (L.O.V.E.) in partnership with JOY 94.9, Switchboard, Transgender Victoria, and the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives.

Thorne Harbour Health
Level 5, 615 St Kilda Road
Melbourne VIC 3004
P 61 3 9865 6700
F 61 3 9826 2700
Toll Free 1800 134 840

Positive Living Centre
51 Commercial Road
South Yarra VIC 3141
P 61 3 9863 0444
F 61 3 9820 3166
Toll Free 1800 622 795

Centre Clinic
Rear of 77 Fitzroy Street
St Kilda VIC 3182
P 61 3 9525 5866
F 61 3 9525 3673

PRONTO! / Equinox
175 Rose Street
Fitzroy VIC 3065
P 61 3 9416 2889

SAMESH
57 Hyde Street
Adelaide SA 5000
P 61 8 7099 5300

Thorne Harbour Country
496 Hargreaves Street
Bendigo VIC 3550
P 61 3 4400 9000

thorneharbour.org

ABN: 52 907 644 835

ENDS

Media enquiries: Caleb Hawk, Communications Manager, caleb.hawk@thorneharbour.org, 0419 213 542