MEDIA RELEASE
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TIMEBANKING CONCEPT SET TO TAKE NSW BY STORM

Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello today announced the expansion to 30 new communities of an innovative program allowing NSW volunteers to earn and exchange ‘time credits’ following the success of an Australian-first trial last year.

“The expansion of Timebanking comes after the 4,300 volunteers who registered to participate in a regional trial across the Hunter, Central Coast, Newcastle and Lake Macquarie contributed and exchanged more than 10,300 hours of service.

“It will give over half of the NSW population access to a Timebanking program in their community, encouraging greater participation in volunteering,” Mr Dominello said.

Mr Dominello, joined by Member for Kiama Gareth Ward, announced the communities selected through a Registration of Interest process at the North Kiama Neighbourhood Centre:

Albury/Wodonga, Auburn, Bega, Blue Mountains, Burwood, Cumberland/Prospect, Eastern Beaches, Sydney, Fairfield, Foster/Tuncurry, Hawkesbury, Hurstville, Kempsey, Kiama, Lower North Shore, Macarthur, Nepean/Penrith, Northern Beaches, Rockdale, Ryde, Shellharbour, South Eastern Sydney, Sutherland, Sydney, Tamworth/North West, The Hills, Northern Rivers, Wagga Wagga, Walcha, West Wyalong, and Wollongong.

“Timebanking is a community program which allows for the voluntary exchange of services between members. In essence the ‘Timebank’ is a brokering service which connects like-minded volunteers and facilitates mutual benefit.

“It enables people to earn and exchange time credits which are registered through a website – it is a simple as give an hour receive an hour.

“Just one example of someone involved in the trial was Kate, who suffers from an illness and lives by herself. She joined Timebanking in January 2013 and earned 10 hours of credits by offering travel advice and tour details to other Timebank members.

“In return she has received support from other volunteers who have assisted her with gardening, cleaning and home maintenance.

“People interested in joining can visit www.timebanking.com.au to register their details and become enrolled as a member. I also encourage those organisations which benefit from the work of volunteers to join,” Mr Dominello said.

Member for Kiama Gareth Ward said the introduction of Timebanking was recognition of a strong volunteering ethos among his local community.
“This is a great innovation based on a simple concept – it enables people to play to their strengths.

“You might have a gentleman who is fantastic at mowing lawns but woeful at playing the piano. Timebanking allows him to get piano lessons from a teacher down the street in exchange for volunteering his time to help someone with lawn mowing and gardening.

“Many locals will already know of the great work of the North Kiama Neighbourhood Centre and I encourage them to get in touch with its staff to discuss how Timebanking might work for them and register online,” Mr Ward said.

Mr Dominello said newly redeveloped Timebanking software was now in use and the first Timebanking host organisations like North Kiama Neighbourhood Centre had begun rolling out the program in new communities.

“It makes sense for organisations with strong community affiliations and local volunteer networks to have access to Timebanking.

“These host organisations will support recruitment of volunteers and help broker support for those people who need it from local volunteers offering assistance.

“Further Timebanking host organisations will come online in coming months and all new sites will be operational by mid-June.

“I am delighted to see something grow from a ‘good idea’ and rapidly develop into a force for positive recognition and support in so many communities. Volunteers in our state deserve it,” Mr Dominello said.


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