MEDIA RELEASE

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SMALL BUSINESS...BIG HEART: SMALL BUSINESSES ENCOURAGED TO VOLUNTEER

Small and medium-sized businesses were being encouraged to get involved in corporate volunteering at a forum held today in Sydney to celebrate National Volunteer Week (12-18 May).

More than 80 business representatives attended the forum, held at the Commonwealth Bank’s Sydney office, which featured a keynote speech by Andrew Penfold AM, NSW Human Rights Ambassador and CEO of the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation.

Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello said workplace volunteering was no longer just the domain of big business, with one-third of smaller organisations already supporting their local communities.

“The aim of today’s Corporate Volunteering Forum, hosted by the NSW Centre for Volunteering, was to discuss how volunteering can be good for the bottom line as well as to offer best practice examples of businesses supporting local communities.

“Organisations were invited to ‘bring a buddy’, a smaller company not yet engaged in employee volunteering, as a way of spreading the message that corporate volunteers have a tremendous capacity to effect change in their community.

“I was particularly pleased to see the focus on working together in Blacktown, an area which needs extra support, particularly for young people and new migrant communities,” Mr Dominello said.

Gemma Rygate, CEO of The Centre for Volunteering said the forum brought together organisations which had demonstrated a passion for volunteering as well as those considering getting involved.

“Today was about improving the impact of corporate volunteering by sharing resources and knowledge about what works.

“Volunteering has a significant impact on people’s lives and this forum aims to empower more small businesses to engage with their local communities to address areas of need,” she said.

National Volunteer Week is an annual event held to recognise and celebrate the contribution volunteers make to our society.

Minister Dominello said promoting corporate volunteering is a key tenet of the NSW Government’s Volunteering Strategy. More information on the Volunteering Strategy is available at: www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au.

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