

PATHWAYS INTO OUR SECTOR

Growing the domestic and family violence, sexual assault, women's health and wellbeing workforce.



Georgina Binjuda, Manager
Lena Passi Women's Shelter, Thursday Island
Certificate III in Business Administration,
Diploma of Community Services

From a receptionist to shelter manager—Georgina follows her passion to live and work in her community.

Georgina has always had a passion for working for her own people, influenced by extremely strong role models. While growing up, her mother worked and supported NGOs, in particular women's organisations, so Georgina learnt a lot about the issues facing families in her community and recalls participating in street marches and community work with her mother. Georgina attributes her father with influencing her approach to hard work and commitment from a young age. With him as a role model, "I have moved from helping my people to empowering my people," Georgina said.

Georgina feels that her experiences and eagerness to support families helped her achieve an administration role within the Mura Kosker Sorority that she held for two years before accepting the role of manager for the service. During the eight years at Mura Kosker, she was also a board member for Lena Passi Women's Shelter. Then, when a vacancy arose at Lena Passi Women's

"I have moved from helping my people to empowering my people."

Shelter, Georgina was successful in gaining the manager role—a position she has been in for nearly 12 years.

Georgina identified several challenges facing workers in the Torres Strait region. While she acknowledges that she learnt a lot of her skills and knowledge by being thrown in at the deep end, she identified that staff have difficulty accessing appropriate study and training options that fit with their obligations to family and community. She says that while Lena Passi is fortunate to have maintained most of their long term skilled staff, recruiting new qualified staff is difficult. Another challenge is the lack of available referral options for women accessing her service due to isolation of their location.

As a manager, Georgina leads by example and encourages staff in their development.

A key piece of advice she gives is to always expect the unexpected. Georgina reminds staff the importance of their work and that there is a narrow window of opportunity to help women in times of crisis.

My career has been built on obtaining skills and knowledge via working in community attending numerous workshops, conferences and summits, as well as advocating and representing social issues and indigenous affairs in particular Torres Strait Islanders on local, state and national levels.

During her years of work Georgina obtained her Diploma of Community Services and has aspirations to achieve her social work degree, eventually moving into private consultancy work. However she said that every time she considers leaving, she feels she has so much unfinished business, which prevents her making a move.

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