



Media Release

27 June 2011

Report shows GFC impacted giving

Allan Williams, Chair of the new local philanthropic initiative, *Hands Across Canberra*, welcomes the latest report from Queensland University of Technology's Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies (ACPNS), which analyses the statistics on tax-deductible donations made by Australians in their individual 2008-2009 income tax returns to Deductible Gift Recipients.

"The report analyses tax returns in 2008-09 and shows that Canberrans were still very generous during challenging financial times. In 2008-09, we had the highest percentage of donating taxpayers to total taxpayers (47.16% compared to the national average of 37.83%). Over 105,000 individual ACT taxpayers made and claimed over \$49.93 million, with an average tax deductible donation of \$471 compared to the national average of \$450.

"However, on the whole, the report shows that for the first time on record, giving went down across the nation and the size of gifts were smaller, so there is no room for complacency," Allan said.

The total claimed as tax-deductible donations dropped by 11% from the previous year - \$2.09 billion, down from \$2.35 billion. The average tax-deductible amount claimed was \$450, compared to \$525 the year before and \$440 in 2006-07. High income earners gave a lot less – people with a taxable income over \$1 million claimed an average of \$48,700, which is less than half the figure for the previous year (\$102,550).

"The obvious explanation for the drop is the Global Financial Crisis, which was in full effect about the time these figures were recorded. It will be interesting to see next year's figures to determine if giving levels have recovered.

"For local community organisations, the report findings highlight the importance of making sure your organisation has an online presence and ability to receive donations in this competitive marketplace.

Hands Across Canberra was launched in November 2010 to help local community service organisations do exactly that. There are already 58 organisations profiled on the website that people can donate to.

"The Giving Portal is an easy, secure way for people and businesses to give to local causes. It is also a way that we here in the region can learn more about who is in need, who is helping them and how we can all get involved.

"I have seen firsthand, through my work with organisations like The Salvation Army, how creating awareness around particular needs in a community can lead to increased support to do more and better things for people who are suffering or struggling," said Allan.

"We are excited about the future of Canberra. We know that Canberrans are already generous and this initiative is simply a new way of growing the pie of generosity. I urge you to visit handsacrosscanberra.org.au, to learn about how you can help, and to get involved in whatever way you are able to," Allan said.

If you have any inquiries, please email info@handsacrosscanberra.org.au.

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