

Thursday, 30 January 2020

LGBTIQA+ Pride Event for Community Health

Northern District Community Health and Quambatook Silo Cinemas are to partner on a film event that celebrates LGBTIQA+ communities, diversity and inclusion. NDCH's recent application for funding through the State Government's Pride Events and Festivals Fund was successful. Minister for Equality Martin Foley announced more than \$150,000 in funding for 45 community events and festivals.

"By supporting these pride events and festivals," Mr Foley said, "we're sending a loud message that in Victoria who you are is not only good enough, it is worth celebrating."

Planning for the NDCH & Quambatook Silo Cinemas event will begin very soon with the event to include an Australian film that celebrates diversity and be open to everyone to attend. Community members will be invited to participate in the planning to ensure the event includes the people it is celebrating. The hope is to increase community support and awareness, celebrate diversity, build resilience, and break down stigma that leads to discrimination. The film event will be in addition to upcoming Quambatook Silo Cinema events, which have been running successfully for several years now.

"We have marriage equality now," NDCH CEO Mandy Hutchinson said, "but we still have a lot to do to remove discrimination. Supporting and celebrating our gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender, intersex, queer and asexual communities is an important part of our work in community health. Rural areas are home for LGBTIQA+ people and we want current and future generations to feel safe and included, and whilst there has been a shift in the right direction there's still a way to go. Everybody deserves to feel safe in their community, family, sporting clubs, workplaces, and townships."

Other successful events across Victoria include Minus 18's ground-breaking Queer Formal, the Geelong Pride Film Festival, Gippsland Pride's Initiative 2020 Pride Gala, and the Ballarat Frolic Festival. "To be successful among some pretty amazing events and festivals across the state, is very exciting," NDCH CEO Mandy Hutchinson said.

"We know from listening to LGBTIQA+ people in rural and regional Victoria that these events are a sign of hope for those experiencing discrimination and isolation," Mr Foley said. "And we're proud to support them."

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