

STRENGTH BASED STRATEGIES 2006

PRESENTER PROFILES



Taiwo Adegboyega Adewole has a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography and a Master's degree in Environmental Resources Management from Lagos State University, Lagos State, Nigeria. Taiwo is a member of the Nigeria Institute of Management, Nigeria Environmental Society, Nigeria Conservation Foundation, Knowledge Learning Center The British Council, Lagos State Chapter, and Affiliate Member International Institute of Risk and Safety Management, U.K. He is currently the country coordinator of Develop Africa, a U.S Based NGO and also country coordinator of One World Foundation, a Nepal Based NGO. He is also the recipient of the R--Current Project World Wide. He has written a monograph, *Waste Management Practices and Sustainable Development in Nigeria: A Case study of Isolo Industrial Estate in Lagos state, Nigeria*, soon to be published by Atlantic Publisher of India. He is the President of TAIWO ADEWOLE AND ASSOCIATES which is established to deal mainly with environmental and sustainable development related matters.



Janki Andharia is Professor and Chairperson of the Jamsetji Tata Centre for Disaster Management, Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Dr. Andharia graduated with an M.A. (Social Work) from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and completed her PhD at the School of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia, UK. She conducts regular training programmes in collaboration with both government and non-governmental organisations, reaching out to people of different disciplines, particularly community-based health personnel, educationists, political workers, and trade unions. More recently, several training inputs have been provided on social impact assessment. Dr Andharia has undertaken projects with the Government of India, multilateral funding agencies such as the World Bank, the ADB, and the Government of Mauritius.



John Armstrong has a long involvement in the lives of people with disabilities, in both informal advocacy and friendship roles as well as the formal roles of service provider, teacher, adviser and service planner. John originally trained as a special education teacher (teacher of the deaf) and worked in Aboriginal Communities in the Northern Territory as well as school principal and educational adviser to schools for disabled children in Victoria. Having been exposed to Social Role Valorization training since 1983, he finally went in 1991 to train directly with Dr Wolfensberger and his associates at Syracuse University and has since been one of three Senior Social Role Valorisation and PASSING trainers in Australasia. John has also been involved with Citizen Advocacy for many years, as an advocate, Chairperson, Evaluator (utilising CAPE) and roving teacher. He is now President of Citizen Advocacy Australia, which raises money on behalf of Citizen Advocacy programs in Australia.



Shamini Atanayaka is lecturer in Social Work at the National Institute of Social Development. She holds a postgraduate degree in Sociology from the University of Colombo and a two year diploma in Professional Social Work. Shamini has directed research in mobility of women in low wage sector in urban employment and has involved herself in a number of research studies that include child labour and situation of the elderly in Sri Lanka. She is interested in shaping social work education in Sri Lanka and is currently involved in training of child protection officers offered by her institute in collaboration with the Child Protection Authority in Sri Lanka. Currently she is Field Work Coordinator for the student placements for social work students.



Divvyia Bajpai is a Ph.D. Research Scholar at the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, The M. S. University of Baroda. She has a BA in Clinical Psychology from M.S.U and after completing her Masters in Personnel Management from Indsearch, Pune University worked in the area of recruitment and headhunting. She completed her MA in Clinical Psychology this April'06 when she felt emotionally ready to work with survivors of multicategory abuse in the family. Her Ph.D. thesis is on Psychological Dysfunctionality and Maltreatment in Intimacy Relationships. Her interest and talent lies in preparing people's profiles of their personality, relationships with an intuitive understanding of one's strengths, vulnerabilities, problem areas and use this information as a psychologist assist in rehabilitating traumatized individuals. She has a keen interest in working with testing tools such as Rorschach, TAT, RPF and intelligence testing. Her research interest focuses on Attachment Styles, PTSD symptoms, the effect of Life Stressors on the social support network and quality of relationships one develops, Jungian Psychology, Trust and Jealousy in Relationships.



Jen Barron is the Youth Health Officer at the Dorset Council, which is a small regional area in North East Tasmania, Australia. The Australian Government through the Regional Health Services programme funds her job. As the sole youth service provider in the area the position of Youth Health Officer is exciting and varied. The part of the job that Jen enjoys the most is advocating and empowering young people to get involved in their community. Jen believes that the more young people are built up and have a sense of belonging and self worth in their community, the better it is for the health and well being of the whole community. Jen works with a very active youth advisory group called FEWCHA. The group has developed some exciting and innovative projects for which they have received state and national recognition but more importantly have built up their sense of well being and contributed to making Dorset a better place to be! Jen has both Teaching and Social Work qualifications.



Benita Bierzynski (BSW) graduated from The University of Queensland in 2002. She currently provides clinical social work practice in the neurosurgical team at the Royal Children's Hospital and has oncology experience. During her time here she has been required to provide social work services across all areas of paediatric social work practice. Benita has also been given the task of formally developing the social work role in both the juvenile arthritis team, and orthopaedics. Prior to joining the Psychosocial Services Department, Benita worked for three years with the Child and

Family Support Service at the Cerebral Palsy League. This multidisciplinary early intervention service required her to develop specialist skills for working with children aged 0 – 6yrs.



Fr. AXJ Bosco S.J. is a Jesuit Priest, belonging to Andhra Province. Besides his priestly studies, he has completed an M.A. in English from Nagarjuna University, specialized in Spirituality and NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) in U.S.A. Among his many offices he was the Principal of Jesuit Training Center in Guntur for 6 years, Provincial, head of the Jesuit institutions in Andhra Pradesh for 7 years, President of Conference of Religious of AP and Episcopal Vicar of Religious for the Archdiocese of Hyderabad for 3 years, Director of VRO (Village Reconstruction Organization) for 5

years and Secretary for Forum of Religious for Peace and Justice for 2 years. At the moment, he is the secretary of Andhra Pradesh Bishops Conference for SC. ST. and B.C. Commission, Director of CITRA, Jesuit Social Center and the Coordinator of UFDCR.(United Front for Dalit Christian Rights) Father Bosco has been working for the cause of Dalits and especially for that of Dalit Christians for many years. He had promoted Dalit Rights in National and International Conferences. He is also a member of the local organizing committee of the International Conference on Strength Based Strategies, 2006.



Dr. Shankariah Chamala worked as Faculty Member (Communication) at the National Institute of Small Industry Extension Training (NISIET) Hyderabad. In 1972 he was invited by The University of Queensland to work as a Visiting Scientist for two years. Since 1974 he has joined the faculty. Dr. Chamala has taught several postgraduate courses including Community Development, Group

dynamics, Research Methodology and Extension & Management. He has also conducted research into the ways the community and farmers can participate in technology development and its use in natural resource management. He has supervised more than 120 postgraduate (Masters and Ph. D.) scholars who came from several countries and was commissioned to write three books on Landcare. Based on his experience in teaching and research he has developed a generic Participative Action Management (PAM) Model to actively engage stakeholder participation in sustainable development. Dr. Chamala has published 6 books and more than 100 papers in national and international journals. He has been a visiting Professor at several Universities in the USA, European countries, Brazil and several countries in Asia. He has also conducted several training programs in many countries for personnel involved in development projects funded by AusAID, World Bank etc. In 1999, he established Shankar Rural Development Foundation (www.srdf.in) in Hyderabad and adopted his village as a base for development of surrounding villages. He has used PAM model in this project to involve stakeholders in development. He has been a Rotarian for the last 18 years and was awarded Paul Harris Fellowship in 2003. Since 2001 he has been the Honorary Reader at The University of Queensland, Australia.



Lesley Chenoweth BSocWk, MSocWk, PhD is Professor of Social Work at Griffith University in Queensland, Australia. She has more than 30 years experience as a social work practitioner and academic, 20 of these in the disability area. Her current research interests span disability issues, human services and rural communities and welfare reform. Lesley has conducted research on disability policy analysis, deinstitutionalisation, families, violence and abuse and delivering human

services to people in rural communities. She is a regular consultant to government and community organisations and has served on numerous boards and committees for disability, legal and family welfare agencies. Lesley is a regular invited speaker at conferences both in Australia and overseas.



Michael D. Clark (MSW, LMSW) is a Consultant, Trainer and an Addictions Therapist. Currently the Director of the Center for Strength-Based Strategies, United States, Michael is a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT). He has provided training and/or onsite technical assistance to mental health, criminal justice and child welfare organisations throughout the United States, as well as Europe, Canada, the Caribbean and Micronesia. With over 20 publications on Strengths work to his credit, Michael has important information to share about motivating

challenging clients.



William D Dar, Ph.D. is a man on a mission and a champion of the poor. Director General of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) near Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh, India, since January 2000, he has had a long and distinguished career as an agricultural scientist and humanitarian in his native Philippines and abroad in Africa, Australia and the Asia Pacific region. Dr Dar held the distinction of being the first Filipino and Asian to be Chair of the Alliance Executive of the Alliance of Future Harvest Centres in 2005, a collegial body that

facilitates collective action among the 15 CGIAR Centres. Dr Dar has also been a member of the UN Millennium Task Force on Hunger. Prior to joining ICRISAT, he served as Presidential Adviser for Rural Development, and Secretary of Agriculture in the Philippines (equivalent to Minister of Agriculture), the first ever alumnus of the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) to become one. Before this, he was Executive Director of the Philippine Council for Agriculture, Forestry, and Natural Resources Research and Development (PCARRD) and Director of the Bureau of Agricultural Research (BAR) of the Philippine Department of Agriculture (DA). Dr. Dar has received a number of awards and honours, including the Ten Outstanding Young Men (TOYM) of the

Philippines, Outstanding Young Scientist of the Year, and Crop Science Society of the Philippines' Achievement Award for Research Management and Outstanding Science Administrator given by the Philippines Department of Science and Technology. He was also awarded as Distinguished Alumnus of UPLB and Most Outstanding Alumnus of BSU and the Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College (ISPSC). In November 2002, PCARRD honoured him with its highest and most prestigious award, the Symbol of Excellence in R&D Management. In 2003 he was awarded both an honorary doctorate in the Philippines and in Vietnam the "For the Sake of Agriculture and Rural Development in Vietnam Award". Dr. Dar's passion is to help alleviate the conditions of the poor people living in the semi-arid tropics of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.



Dr. Jacinta D'Souza is currently the Principal of School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore. The School is a pioneer institute in social work education in Karnataka offering Ph.D in Social Work, Masters in Social Work, Bachelors of Social Work and Bachelors of Arts (Criminology, Computer Applications, Secretarial Practice, Psychology, Rural Development and English and Kannada Literature). Additionally Dr.D'Souza is the Director of CHILDLINE, a 24 hour National toll free emergency telephone helpline – an outreach service for children in need of care and protection.

She is a member of the advisory board of Nehru Yuvak Kendra, Central Board for Worker's Education, Vijaya Rural Development Foundation and is on the Community Advisory Panel of BASF, Mangalore. She has undergone training of trainers by National AIDS Control Organisation for HIV/AIDS counselors. She has travelled widely in India and Europe and has undertaken evaluation of Government funded projects. Last year she was invited by Volda University College, Volda, Norway to present papers on 'Poverty – Strategies and Empowerment' and 'Evolution of the Profession of Social Work'.



Bernadette Edmanson has a wealth of experience working across the community services sector. Bernadette has worked with children and young people, in disability services, teaching, the criminal division of the children's court and managed a Community Legal Service, Child Contact Service as well as early intervention services. Bernadette is a Mallee woman who enjoys living by the Murray River, Australia.



Sandeep Kumar Ganji is a final year Biomedical Engineering student at the Department of Biomedical Engineering, University College of Engineering (Autonomous), Osmania University, Hyderabad. He has published two papers in journals of Cognitive Processing and Applied Informatics. Sandeep's interest in econo-physics and group dynamics provides a fascinating perspective to the conference. Sandeep will be presenting his research papers at International conferences in Lisbon and Rome just prior to Strength Based Strategies 2006.



Paige Garland is the Founder and Director of Plan-it Life Pty Ltd. Paige is a qualified teacher having completed her Diploma of Teaching in 1987 through the now, University of Southern Queensland. She is currently completing a Bachelor of Business and Commerce (Management) and a Bachelor of Arts (Mass Communication) through Monash University. Paige is a member of the Australian Institute of Management, the Project Management Institute, the Queensland Centre for Photography and the Queensland Writers Centre. "I love helping people make their dreams come true....having a life

worth living....a life full of love, passion, inspiration and challenge. I incorporate strengths-based practice in a diverse range of ways when developing Life Plans and Business Plans with people."



Dr. Sebanti Ghosh is a Community Health & Gender specialist working for over 10 years in the development sector in West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa, South India and in neighbouring Bangladesh. Subsequent to completing her graduation from Medical College, Kolkata she did her specialisation in Community Health and later on in Gender & Social Development in institutes in India as well as abroad. Sebanti is a founding member (currently Secretary) of the Association for

Social and Health Advancement (ASHA), NGO based in Kolkata, West Bengal implementing development initiatives in socio-economic and health sector as well as providing technical resource support to other organisations and institutions (training, action research and evaluation) and has been working in close relation with UNICEF, Action aid, CASA DIAKONIA, Erikshjalpen, Christian Children's Fund (CCF), Family Health International, GTZ. Moreover she is currently working as Public Health Consultant with Technical Assistance Support Team for Health Systems Development Initiative – Government of West Bengal, supported by the Department for International Development (DFID), UK. She had also earlier worked with World Health Organization (WHO) and had been associated with some leading NGOs in West Bengal and India. She has participated in various state & national level conferences/workshops as well as international conferences and presented papers based on her work and experiences.



Coralie J Graham has worked as a Registered Nurse the majority of the past 20 years in the domain of community based aged care and services for war veterans. She has since completed 2 undergraduate degrees in Science majoring in Psychology at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), and works part time as a Psychologist in a private hospital in Toowoomba. This study forms part of her PhD which she is currently undertaking at USQ and combines her interest in health and positive psychology.



Dr. Jatinder Gulati is a Child Development specialist engaged in research and teaching for the last 24 years at Punjab Agricultural University Ludhiana, the world-renowned institute aimed at empowerment of the rural masses. Now working as an Associate Professor, Jatinder obtained her Doctorate from Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, focussing her research on the mechanism of

vulnerability and resilience among children at-risk, and the individual, family and social conditions involved in the framework. She had worked as a Scientist for 15 years in All India Coordinated Research Project in Home Science: Child Development, a National Level Project running in nine universities. During this time she also undertook assiduous work in slum and rural areas of Punjab conducting longitudinal and cross sectional researches on physical, cognitive and psycho-social development and nutritional status assessment of children and adolescents between birth to 20 years, selected from the entire state. Through teamwork she developed region specific physical growth norms for children. Jatinder is widely published and has participated in 33 national / international conferences. She is associated with many professional societies as a life member or an executive. Her paper was accepted at the 9th International Family Violence Research Conference at Portsmouth, University of New Hampshire.



Terry Hannon experienced a period of incarceration more than 10 years ago as the mother of a very young child. After completing a Psychology degree begun in prison, she worked as a senior therapist at Odyssey House Victoria (Australia). In 2001 she joined the volunteer management body of Flat Out Inc., a supported accommodation service for women exiting prison. In 2004 Terry began full time work on the project 'Children: Unintended Victims of Legal Process'. 2006 has seen the publication of a Discussion Paper of the same name which is available, along with an Executive Summary, in PDF format at www.vacro.org.au Terry is currently employed by the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO), overseeing a collaborative consultation process aimed at developing recommendations for legislative change to protect children of prisoners.



Meaghan Harris is a social worker from the Mallee District of Victoria, Australia and is a Family Services Coordinator of an Indigenous community based organisation. Meaghan has worked in a variety of areas, including direct practice counselling, family services, programme and community development, and management. Meaghan feels privileged to have many years of experience working with the local Indigenous community, and is committed to capacity building, and culturally competent social work. Meaghan has Bachelor and Masters degrees in Social Work, and is a current PhD Candidate with Monash University.



Christina Hully qualified as a counselling psychologist after completing a B.Sc (Psychology) from The University of Queensland and a Graduate Dip Psychology (Counselling) in 1981 from Western Australia Institute of Technology. Her employment experiences have seen her working in telephone counselling and face to face situations in both metropolitan and remote areas of Queensland with homeless youth, pregnant women, families who had experienced the death of a child, victims of mining accidents and anyone else who required her assistance. For the last 7 years she has worked in a girls' secondary school in Brisbane where she has been responsible for the learning assessment, personal counselling and post-school transition for students. Chris has recently completed her Masters in Education (School Guidance and Counselling) from Queensland University of Technology and utilizing strength-based practices assists her to work towards the mission of the college school she represents: Educating principled young women with a passion for life.



Archana Jetti originally from India, did a double Masters in Intercultural Studies and Education at BIOLA University, California. She won the thesis of the year award for M.A.Education at Biola in 2004. Her research interests are in the area of social work and social policy with special focus on the rights of women and children. Her internship with VELUGU project (undertaken by Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty in collaboration with the State Government of Andhra Pradesh) in Mahabubnagar District of Andhra Pradesh reinforced the desire in her to further pursue social research. She coordinated an event on "Elimination of Child Labor and Role of the Civil Society" at the World Social Forum held in Mumbai, 2004. Recently, she completed course work for Ph.D. in social work at Bryn Mawr College, Philadelphia and she is currently researching the concept of social capital and its applicability to poverty related issues in the Global South.



Ladda Jitwatanapataya is Director of the HIV/AIDS program with the Planned Parenthood Association of Thailand. Miss Jitwatanapataya has extensive experience in managing HIV/AIDS projects, formerly managing a community based HIV/AIDS prevention program to the fishing community in Cha-am, Petchburi province. The project was successful in reducing stigmatization against PLWAs and mobilized community members to provide HIV/AIDS prevention and care.



Ekta K. Kalra is the Managing Director of EK MedExperts Services Pvt. Ltd. She is an orator, medical writer, poetess, philosopher, pharmacist, psychologist and researcher. She is also working as an educational agent of Cornell Institute of Business and Technology, Sydney. She has completed a Masters degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences and is at present in the final year of her post-graduation in Psychotherapy and Counselling. She has been recognised for her writings in scientific and artistic fields of thought and imagination.



Rita Kugler is a Chartered Accountant with nearly 20 years experience in the private, public and community sectors. Early in her career Rita joined the international firm KPMG where she gained valuable experience and training in auditing, systems assessment and process improvement both in Australia and USA. Managerial roles awakened in Rita the desire to increase her skills in understanding human behaviour. To this end Rita has completed Master practitioner level in Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) and other personal and group development processes. Rita is

passionate about self-development and the importance of values based studies/programs in understanding and shaping behaviour. She is also passionate about raising awareness about the environmental and sustainability issues faced by our planet today. Rita was born in Argentina and migrated to Australia with her parents and sister in 1977. Rita resides in Brisbane, Queensland and is one of the founding members of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice.



Dr Stephen Lamar has worked for the last 14 years in both the public and private sector as a teacher, counsellor and educational consultant. He is currently working as an academic with the School of Human Services, Griffith University, Australia, where he teaches introductory counselling and psychology and works in an advisory capacity with first year students in the Bachelor of Human Services and Bachelor of Social Work degree programs. Stephen has published and presented widely, both in Australia and internationally and has in the last year centred his research focus on early intervention and prevention strategies to assist children and families at-risk of challenging behaviours. His more recent work has emphasised the significance of developing strength-based intervention frameworks that draw on children's capacities, competencies and resources. In 2005 Stephen completed a PhD in child psychology. The focus of his PhD research centred upon early intervention and prevention strategies for children and families at-risk of challenging behaviours.



Dr. Bob Lonne, PhD, has extensive practice, managerial and research experience of statutory child protection and welfare, and juvenile justice, particularly in rural and remote communities in Australia. He has presented widely on the benefits and limitations of the contemporary approaches to child protection adopted in many Western countries. Bob is a senior lecturer with the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences, University of Queensland, Brisbane Australia and is the current National President of the Australian Association of Social Workers a 6000 member professional membership organisation.



Nira Manghrani is a research Scholar in Human Development and Family Studies, Faculty of Home Science, M.S. University of Braoda, Vadodara, India. She has a Masters in Industrial Psychology, and a post graduate Diploma in Guidance and Counseling from Baroda. Nira worked in the area of Emotional Intelligence and Spiritual Intelligence (S.Q.) and developed assessment tools to measure Spiritual Intelligence. Her on-going work is to combine qualitative and quantitative methods for reliable assessment of spiritual intelligence. Nira is currently researching in the field of death and dying.



SR. M. Lourthu Mary Fmm has been involved in building people's power since 1988. She has worked as Project Director to the National Child Labour Project, and ILO-IPEC project (International Labour Organisation) - Integrated Programme on Elimination of Child Labour in Tamil Nadu. Since 2002, she has been teaching in the department of social work, Stella Maris College, Chennai. Sr Lourthu Mary is also a trainer, evaluator, consultant and counsellor. Her doctoral work is focused on "The impact of globalisation on women entrepreneurs", using qualitative methods in her study.



Wayne McCashen is author of the books *The Strengths Approach: A strengths-based resource for sharing power and creating change* and *Communities of hope: A strengths-based resource for building community*; and co-author of the card-based resource *Name the Frame: Reminders for building respectful socially just decisions*. Presently he is Education and Training Coordinator for Family and Community Services in the Northern Territory, Australia, and was until recently the principal trainer and consultant for St Lukes Anglicare (Bendigo, Australia) in strengths-based practice to a diverse range of organisations throughout Australia and New Zealand. He is a leader in the articulation and development of the strengths approach to working in the human services. He has written material on strengths-based ways of working with individuals, families, groups, communities and organisations that is used nationally and internationally. Wayne has 30 years experience in the human services including youth work, family work, community development, training and professional development, staff supervision, and management. His qualifications are in the fields of social work and community development. He was part of the original team at St Lukes, Bendigo, which initiated work to develop the strengths approach. He has carried this work forward with others at St Lukes and elsewhere in Australia and New Zealand through a range of innovations such as 'client-owned recording' and the development of a range of practices.



Qudsia Mehmood holds a Bachelor of Arts in journalism and a Masters degree in clinical psychology. She has worked extensively in radio and print journalism and with a number of non-government organisations including an organisation that provided legal aid and counseling at the Central Prison for Women. Since then Qudsia has tirelessly worked for the rights of women in her role as journalist, producing a number of radio programs for the series Meri Awaz Sunno (Hear My Voice), and various other series that focused on issues affecting the welfare of women. Topics under discussion have included water issues, the impact of recent earthquakes, dowry, domestic workers, sexual exploitation and domestic violence, rape, menopause, political involvement of women, trafficking and commercial sex workers. Qudsia currently works as a media trainer on HIV/AIDS for the UKS Research Centre.



Shri G.C. Mohanta holds a Bachelors Degree in Mechanical Engineering and Masters Degrees in Space Engineering & Rocketry and Business Administration. He is currently working as a scientist in the Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad, where he holds the position of Director, Safety & Environmental Engineering. He has presented a number of papers at National

& International Seminars and Symposiums.



Pratap C. Mohanty is a doctoral fellow at the Centre for International Trade and Development (CITD), School of International Studies (SIS) of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi; and a Course Lecturer St Dyal Singh College of University of Delhi. Pratap researched and wrote on 'Environmental Concerns and Poverty Alleviation in Developing Countries: The Role of Non-Market Institutions' for his M.Phil degree. Pratap was recently invited to present his research papers at the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology in collaboration with the National Council for Forest Research and Development (COFORD) and Teagasc - Irish Agriculture and Food Development Authority's Small-scale Forestry and Rural Development: The Intersection of Ecosystems, Economics and Society, in Ireland.



Chris Montgomery has worked in the field of intellectual disability for the last 17 years. For the last 9 of these years he has become known and respected both nationally and internationally for his work convening the annual *Sharing the Road* conference for disability support workers in Queensland. Currently he is volunteering with the Ethnic Community Councils of Queensland to assist with the development of strategies to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS amongst men from CALD backgrounds. Chris has worked as a direct support worker, a manager of support work and most recently in the development of statewide reporting systems. He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his role as Secretary of the Strength Based Strategies Conference 2006.



Gopala Krishna Murthy is the Director, Academy of Gandhian Studies located in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. He has his Master's degree from TATA Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai, India and has been a development practitioner for nearly two and half decades. As a development practitioner G.G.K. Murthy held positions in various outfits with an intention to professionalize the sector. During the tenure he had been coordinator, Gandhi Peace Centre till 1994. Apart from Monitoring NGOs and Management of Project cycles he was also in charge of the human potential at the National level for Gandhi Peace Centre. In the last decade he led studies being conducted on trafficking and the impact of occupational migration amongst fisher folk in Andhra Pradesh. The key strength has been in networking of NGOs spread over different districts to work together on Child Trafficking and HIV/AIDS, Disaster Management and Natural Resource Management, and Migration. Gopala Krishna Murthy also initiated a grass root effort in 1984 under the name of 'Jagruti'. A team approach is practiced and the organization had been brought to the fore in the district.



Prof. Rita Noronha has been attached to the School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore since 1971. She completed her M.S.W. from the College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai and her pre-doctoral programme from the Tata Institute of Social Science, Mumbai. Rita completed her Rural Social Leadership at SEARSOLIN, Philippines and acquired her Certificate in Social Development at the Coady International Institute, Canada. Rita has undertaken short term programmes on structural analysis of Indian Society, Human Relations Training, Production of Indigenous materials for social work education and gender sensitization. Rita is engaged in the practice of facilitating organizations of marginalized women and social action interventions that ensure their rights.



Humira Noorestani graduated with a BA in International Relations from the American University in Washington DC. Following her first visit to Afghanistan where she witnessed 25 years of brutality in the streets of Kabul, Humira started Ariana Outreach which aims to provide programs that improve the living conditions in rural areas of Afghanistan, shed light on the beautiful culture of Afghanistan and build partnerships between Afghans and Americans. Humira also created The Afghan and American Sisterhood Award. Ariana Outreach has also brought together 50 Afghans and non-Afghans whose essays will be published in a book on Afghanistan.



Moyia O'Brien is an Occupational Therapist who, together with her twin sister Dorothy, worked for almost 60 years in the field of disability. In the early seventies they realised there was a great need to provide a place for people who were not catered for by another organisation as they were deemed unsuitable because of their complex problems. So they decided to set up a place where these people could come on a daily basis to experience more fulfilment in their lives by providing programmes that would help them to grow and achieve their full potential in an atmosphere of love and security. This presented many problems, but with dedication, enthusiasm, divine help and the care and co-operation of many people it was achieved, and S.W.A.R.A has continued to grow and develop into the wonderful organisation it is today, admired and respected not only in Australia but throughout the world. They believed that "If your mind can conceive it and your heart can believe it, you will achieve it." Moyia has received many awards from the government and other organisations in recognition of her work. She is happy to still be personally involved with S.W.A.R.A's activities and is President of the S.W.A.R.A committee. She is invited to many countries each year to give talks on love and service and endeavours to make life better, not only for people with disabilities, but for everyone with whom she comes in contact.



Rev Dr Sebastian Ousepparampil is Director of The Catholic Health Association of India. He is assigned to Kohima, Nagaland, India. He has a doctorate from the Pune University on 'Integrated Medicine', a Post Graduate-Diploma in Social Development, St F.X. University, N.S., Canada and a Masters in Public Health from New York Medical College, New York. In the last two decades, he has held several administrative positions that include administrator St Johns Medical College and Administrative Resident for Vincent de Paul Hospital in New York.



Nduka Ozor holds mass communication qualifications from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Nduka coordinates the Mgbala Agwa Youths Forum, a HIV/AIDS community based service organisation that came into being in response to the growing incidence of “unexplained” deaths in the community of Mgbala Agwa, (a community of about 100,000 people). Nduka leapt into community education on HIV through the collaboration of United Nation Volunteer services, which helped him source resources with which he began his community enlightenment campaign programme. That idea paid-off when from over 450,000 miles away in Istanbul Turkey, Miss Gunay assisted the organisation to source over 20,000 books on HIV/AIDS in prints and CD, which today accounts for over 40 percent of the resources in the community library and its extended services in Lagos, Nigeria. Nduka and his friends founded an NGO called the Centre for HIV/Aids and STD Research, (CHISTRE). Today CHRISTE fills the gap crated by other polity mass media organisations in the dissemination of HIV/AIDS information in Nigeria. CHRISTE also came up with a magazine called ‘Positive Nation’. Positive Nation today is Nigeria’s first and only HIV and sexual health magazine distributed free of charge to over 5000, nationwide.



Apurva Pandya is a clinical Psychologist working as a counsellor with Lakshya Trust, Vadodara the first and only community-based organization working on the issues of HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention among the homosexual and bisexual male population in Vadodara, Surat and Rajkot. Apurva is also a Resource person for HIV/AIDS counselling to Project Support Unit and Gujarat State AIDS Control Society, Ahmedabad. He has recently begun working as a Research Assistant at the Population & Health Innovative Programme, Population Council of India, New Delhi. Apurva has been awarded sponsorship from the Resource Centre for Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS, New Delhi to facilitate participation in “International training institute on HIV/AIDS Counselling and Psychosocial Intervention” organized by Cell for AIDS Research Action and Training, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.



John Pettit is currently a Team Leader of the Basic Education Development Project – an AusAID funded development project supporting the Papua New Guinea Education sector. He previously was Deputy Team Leader of the Curriculum Reform Education Project in PNG, a project he had helped design. John has also worked on World Bank projects in the Solomon Islands. Prior to this, John had extensive experience in the NSW, Australia school education sector, with a focus on teacher professional development, faculty and school leadership development and parental and community engagement. John’s interests lie in collaborative and collegial approaches to development strategies, with a strong focus on evidence-based decision making and participatory approaches to monitoring and evaluation.



Dr. Prasanna Poornachandra holds a doctorate in Criminology from the University of Madras, Chennai. She is the founder trustee and presently the Chief Executive Officer of the International Foundation for Crime Prevention and Victim Care (PCVC). PCVC is a registered non profit trust working for victims of violence, especially interpersonal violence. The organisation was started in 2001 and has since grown to provide multiple support services to women victims of violence at home. Prasanna has travelled widely and presented papers at national and international conferences. She gives guest lectures at various colleges and also the Police Training College, Chennai.



Dr. S. Parasuraman is Director, Tata Institute of Social Sciences with 25 years of experience as a teacher, trainer, activist, administrator and development worker. Dr. Parasuraman has a Master’s Degree in Anthropology from the University of Poona, Pune and a Ph.D. in Demography from Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. He has held key positions in international organisations as Asia Regional Policy Coordinator, ActionAid Asia; Senior Advisor to the Commission, and Team Leader of the Secretariat; World Commission on Dams; and as Programme Director, Oxfam GB, India Programme. Dr. Parasuraman has been associated with the Narmada Movement from 1987 and was a member of the Indian Prime Minister’s Committee to review the Tehri Hydroelectric Project. He has also been a Key member of the ‘Practioners Forum on Human Rights in Development’ (facilitated by the UNHCHR), involving UN agencies, bilateral and multilateral agencies, and NGOs with Asia regional offices based in Bangkok; and Key member of an NGO network engaged in advocacy with the Asian Development Bank. Dr. Parasuraman has over 50 publications in the form of articles in international and national journals, books and research reports.



Dr Venkat Pulla is Principal, Social Work and Capacity Development Consulting and President, Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice. He is also the National Nominee of the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) for Accreditation of Departments of Social Work and Human Services of Australian Universities (2005-2008) and Convenor of the International Social Work Special Interest Group, AASW Queensland.

Venkat is a Tata Institute of Social Sciences social worker from India. A Tata Dorabji Scholar, he has a Doctorate in the field of Community Development obtained In India. His work life includes positions as Head of the Social Work Department in the Northern Territory University Darwin, for three years, and 15 years in India in Teaching and Training at the College of Social Work, Hyderabad, and Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies, Osmania University. He has recognition in areas of training for performance measures, quality, change management, strength based child protection, family directed practice, trauma torture counselling and refugee resettlement. His policy consulting included health policy, urbanisation, poverty alleviation, social infrastructures, disability and aged care, wage reform, employee strategies, and industrialisation.

His life has been an incredible journey. It has savoured vignettes at the coal face in human services as well as offered him stints of consulting to India’s National Commission on Urbanisation, set up by Rajeev Gandhi, a

visionary Prime Minister. It threw open a Travelling Lectureship around the US, Europe and Asia and brought in consulting opportunities with federal and state departments and international non government organisations such as ICCO, Memisa and HIVOS from the Netherlands, BFW and EZE from Germany, OXFAM and ODA from the United Kingdom and UNICEF amongst others. As one of the pioneers in strength based practice, he offers professional supervision, process facilitation for managing change and wide ranging assistance to not-for-profit sector and organisational development. This conference and the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice (Inc) are Venkat's initiatives. Venkat can be reached at Dr.Venkat.Pulla@gmail.com



Simin Raheal (Simi) is an actor model anchor documentary maker and a teacher of tertiary course work in mass communications from Pakistan. She is the only mainstream media professional who interfaces entertainment media and development. Simi Raheal's diversity is what sets her apart from most other development professionals. She holds a degree from National College of Arts in textile design and numerous certificates on gender, media, reproductive health and human rights. She was awarded the FATIMA JINNAH medal for media and development 2006, named after the wife of the founding father of Pakistan. Her extensive research on media and development has led her to design mainstream programmes for television incorporating development language and ideology. Her mission is to integrate development especially development of women through the media and to create a marriage between development and media.



Chris Radke has worked as a support professional and manager in the field of intellectual disability support for over 20 years and has been actively involved in welfare and community support for more years than she can remember. Chris is passionate about the positive impact that the practice of Social Role Valorisation (SRV) theory can have in the lives of people with an intellectual disability and has been a champion of SRV education for all support workers and their managers. In this regard she has worked closely with John Armstrong, Australia's senior SRV trainer, in the development of training packages and the delivery of training. Together, Chris and John Armstrong bring a breadth of knowledge and practical experience in the implementation of SRV in Australia that has little parallel. Chris is a Member of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths based Practice.



Amarawansa Ranaweera is working as the Director, Sri Lanka School of Social Work, the only institute which provides social work education in Sri Lanka. He has more than 24 years of service as a social work educator. He started his carrier as a teacher at the university after obtaining his first degree in Sociology from the University of Colombo in 1979. He obtained the Masters Degree in Social Work from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in 1984 in the field of Community Organization. He worked hard to develop the School of Social Work and was able to make it a higher education institute in Sri Lanka.



Aarti Rangan has done her Masters in Medical and Psychiatric Social Work from Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai and has completed her M.Phil in Psychiatric Social Work from National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore. She has field experience working with mentally challenged children, adults and geriatric populations (case work, family psycho-education and rehabilitation). Her research interests include Psycho-oncology and Mental Health Policy and Advocacy. She has presented papers at national and international conferences mainly on topics related to 'Human Rights of the Mentally Ill', 'Psychosocial aspects of Cancer' and 'Caregiver training in Dementia'.



Kantha Rao is an OD consultant with 20 years of experience in organizational development, and HRD. His current work includes business houses such as TATA's group of companies, Asian Paints, Escorts, Sandivik Asia, GE, Time of India News group and not to profit sector such as Action aid, and UNICEF Times of India. Kant specializes in preparing organizations to cope with business challenges and competing interests; developing organisational climates that sustain change initiatives. His self managed teams accomplish business critical results, trigger motivation and lead to competency development. For the last three years he has been engaged in 'Creating climate of excellence' in large chemical and facilitating corporate in seamlessly integrating leadership teams of newly acquired cross cultural businesses. Kanth started with social work and is currently a doctoral fellow at Jamia Milia University, New Delhi. Kanth also trained in person centred 'personal counselling with world renowned Fr Joachim Fuster SJ - A dedicated Spanish priest at Xavier's Bombay. Kanth acquired certified user and trainer qualifications in Achievement motivation; National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development. He is a professional member & certified trainer in T-group methodology Indian Society for Applied Behavioural Science, a certified user/trainer of Myers Briggs, MBTI Personality Test: Understanding Your MBTI or Myers Briggs, American Psychological Types Institute. He is a certified trainer /facilitator of 'Search Conference' a methodology for large scale interventions, by Merwin Weisboard. Kanth can be reached at vnkroa@hotmail



Dr. T V Rao is Chairman, TV Rao Learning Systems Pvt. Ltd. a company committed to HRD and Behaviour Systems. Formerly Professor at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and L & T Professor of HRD at XLRI, Jamshedpur 1983-85 and is the founder President of the National HRD Network and was President of the Indian Society for Behavioural Science (ISABS). Widely published in the areas of HRD, education, entrepreneurship, health, population and management training. These include: Performance Appraisal: Theory and Practice; HRD in the New Economic Environment; Designing and Managing HR systems; The HRD Missionary, Handbook of Training for Education

Management and others. One of his publications, *The Power of 360 Degree Feedback: Maximizing Managerial and leadership effectiveness* is an award winning book which won two prizes in 2005. Dr.Rao worked as a short-term consultant to UNESCO, Ministry of Health, Indonesia, National Entrepreneurial Development Association, Malaysia and the Commonwealth Secretariat, London. Dr.Rao has designed and assisted in implementing performance appraisal and other Human Resource Development systems for a number of organisation both in India and abroad.



Uma Reddy is the Chief Executive, M/S Hitech Magnetics, Bangalore. Uma is a first generation woman entrepreneur running a business manufacturing coils and transformers. Uma's company won the Best Performance award from GE Medical Systems, South Asia in 2001, and from Kirloskar: the best supplier award in 2005. In 1990, Uma received an appreciation award as Technocrat Entrepreneur from AWAKE - Association of Women Entrepreneurs in Karnataka. (AWAKE) Then began her association with AWAKE and entrepreneurship development among women and has been serving AWAKE in various capacities for the past 16 years. She is presently the Chairperson Training & formerly Past President of AWAKE. Uma is a member of the Prime Minister of India's advisory committee – The National Manufacturing Competitive Council, and a number of other agencies. Uma is the Regional focal point for the Commonwealth Business Women Leaders Network. She has presented many papers in entrepreneurship development both nationally and in international forums at OECD, Paris, CIPE USA, CDG, Johannesburg, China, and has been a resource person for program of APO, - Asian Productivity Organisation, Tokyo. She been a member of industrial delegation to China. She has been a member of evaluation missions of UNDP, and other agencies and has been trained in Logical Framework Analysis. She has organised many programs and seminars for women entrepreneurship development. Some of the key concepts brought about have been the virtual trade mission, business directory of women entrepreneurs, e commerce as tools for enterprise growth, Asia Pacific Convention for Entrepreneurial Women, and Mix n Match 04.



Satyajeet Sahoo has been working with dam displaced populations for the last 12 years. The experience has been a mixed one. He has seen economies shatter, communities dis-integrate and people struggle for two meals a day. He has also seen communities coming together to plan for themselves, execute projects for themselves and ultimately reconstructing their own livelihood. Such a mixed experience has given him enough wisdom to be careful against the risk factors in a community struggling for their home and hearth and livelihood. With these experiences his continuous endeavors have been to make the resettlement and rehabilitation experience for a displaced community the least traumatic as possible. Satyajeet is a Commonwealth Scholar and has completed a Masters degree in Psychology and Population Studies.



Miriam Samuel is the Head of the Department of Social Work, Madras Christian College, Chennai, India. She has been teaching Social Work since 1989, and prior to this worked for two years as a counsellor in T.T.K. Hospital, Chennai - a highly reputed de-addiction treatment centre in Asia. She is presently pursuing her doctoral studies in the area of gender and strength perspectives in mental health. The department of social work at Madras Christian College is well recognised today and Miriam has been responsible for putting it on the global scenario by initiating a number of international collaborations and programmes. Further to this, she is a member on board of studies of various universities and also consultant and trainer in gender related issues.



Lakshmi Sankaran is currently a research scholar at NIMHANS, Bangalore, Department of Psychiatric Social Work. Her area of research is about protective family factors in adult children of alcoholics. She has worked on research projects at NIMHANS - evaluating efficacy of addiction policies at the workplace in organizations; study of women and alcohol; and the efficacy of biofeedback on children of alcoholics. She has previously worked in Chennai as a Counsellor at addiction treatment centres and has also been involved in training and documentation. Lakshmi is a consultant in HIV/AIDS and counselling related issues. In this capacity she regularly visits the faculties of organizations concerning the above areas. Somewhere along the way whilst in Chennai, Lakshmi trained as a yoga teacher after many years of practice, and now teaches at a local centre in Bangalore. Lakshmi completed her M.A in Psychiatric Social Work (Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai) and M.Phil (National Institute of Health and Neuro Sciences - NIMHANS, Bangalore).



Bharati Shah completed her MPhil in Psychiatric Social Work and an MA in Sociology (with specialization in Criminology). Presently she is involved in the field of training and capacity building of organizations in India on HIV/AIDS, sexuality, mental health and rehabilitation issues. Beside that she is volunteering with NIMH and Vidya Sagar University in Kolkata, India to teach DMR and MSW students respectively. Her research interests include issues related to Mental Health, Rehabilitation, HIV/AIDS and Homosexuality. Bharati is currently living in Kolkata, pursuing her second Master's degree in Population Studies (with a special paper on urban and regional planning) from IIPS, Mumbai, Maharashtra. She has presented papers in both National and International Conferences on Mental Health, HIV/AIDS and Homosexuality issues.



Prof. Uma Sreedhar is a Psychologist with an M.A. in Clinical Psychology from M.S. University of Baroda and an M.Phil and Ph. D in Industrial Psychology from Bangalore University. She has 12 years experience in teaching various subjects related to Psychology, Organizational Behaviour (OB) and Human Resources Management. Uma's area of expertise lies in the area of OB, Performance

Management System, OD Intervention, Psychometric Testing and soft skills. She has trained thousands of corporate executives in the areas of her expertise in sectors ranging from Services (IT, ITES, Hospitality, Retail), Manufacturing, Pharmaceutical and Transportation. She has also taught and trained faculty and students of various academic institutions. She is currently working at Alliance Business Academy as a professor and head of the HR department. She is actively involved with Alliance Corporate Education (ACE) in activities of Executive Education, Consultancy Services and research. She is associated with professional bodies like NHRD, AIMA, HR in India and HR related organizations.



Trupti Sreedharan holds a Bachelors Degree in Psychology and is currently pursuing her Masters in Criminology at the University of Madras, Chennai. Trupti holds the position of Director, Projects, at the International Foundation of Crime Prevention and Victim Care, a non profit organisation working for victims of violence, especially women and children. She also holds the additional charge of Project Director, Oxfam's 'We Can End Violence Against Women Campaign'.



B. Sudhakar is Head of Human Resource Development, Tata Chemicals Bombay.



Silina Tagagau is employed as the Community Engagement Adviser on the Basic Education Development Project in Papua New Guinea. She was previously a Programme Director for an Indigenous Environmental and Community Development NGO. As a PNG National, Silina has had extensive experience in Community Development, particularly in the non-government sector in PNG. She has worked at various levels within different community groups in PNG using a range of community approaches. Thus her engagement with the project and the utilisation of the Strengths

Based Approaches in her line of duties has given her a totally new direction to positive community development in PNG.



Dr Frank Tesoriero Senior Lecturer University of South Australia became a professional social worker in 1974. His interest is in primary health care, community health and community and social development stemming from his peasant Italian background. Frank espouses and works for social justice and human rights that underpin social work. In Australia, his work includes Indigenous and Indo Chinese refugee communities and disadvantaged urban communities in Adelaide, South Australia. Frank worked in Fiji and South Africa. He is a member of the People's Health Assembly.

He currently works in South India in a local community development project based on the WHO Healthy Districts approach and also teaches the MSW program at Madras Christian College.



Pamela Trotman is a private practitioner and consultant living in Darwin, Northern Territory. In 1965, aged 17, Pam left home to begin her social work education as part of the first intake of students to a newly created course. Thus began a career which, without planning, often placed her at the forefront of new initiatives or thinking. A penchant for exploring new and foreign territories, matched with a capacity for reflective practice, has resulted in an ever present search for paths to take Pam beyond the confines of everyday thinking. Pam is committed to rural social work practice and more recently

to accessing one's inner strengths through connecting to the 'inner spiritual guide'. Pam is committed to exploring ways to become part of the global force to promote and achieve a peaceful, just and equitable human society.



Metaxia Tsoukatos is a rural practitioner from North West Victoria, Australia, who has worked for the last 16 as a social worker in both the public and non government sector. Metaxia is currently working with Mallee Family Care as a Manager of their Family Relationship Services. Over the years Metaxia has gained invaluable skills and understanding working with families and individuals across a broad range of sectors including child protection, accommodation and support services, intellectual disability services, family support, out of home care and psychiatric disability, rehabilitation and

support services. Metaxia has been a direct provider of services as well as providing staff supervision and service management.



Professor V. Uma is a Social Work educator teaching masters students of social work for nearly two and a half decades. Currently she is a professor of social work at the Sri Padmavathi Mahila University, located in the temple town of Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh, India. Uma has a doctorate in rural development from the University of East Anglia, Norwich, England, under the commonwealth academic scholarship. She obtained her masters degree in social work from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India. As a teacher of social work, Uma is engaged in research guidance

leading to MPhil and PhD, student support and counseling and extension work in addition to the regular teaching. Uma has been instrumental in promoting a network of NGOs spread over 10 districts, currently working on child trafficking and HIV/AIDS, Disaster Management, NRM, Livelihoods, Migration, all of which impact rural poverty. During the 23 years of her work life, Uma worked full time for four years on a rural poverty reduction project (APDPIP) of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, funded by the World Bank. Her assignment related to Monitoring and Learning, and Process monitoring to be specific. She worked as Consultant for the Government of Andhra Pradesh and organizations like UNICEF, CARE, ITAD-England. Her key areas of interest include rural

poverty and livelihoods, monitoring and learning, methodologies for development research and practice, HIV/AIDS, trafficking of women and girls and counseling.



Fr John Vattamattom has a Masters in social work from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He was the Founder Director of Andhra Pradesh Social Service Society, a position he held for three years prior to taking over the Directorship of the Catholic Health Association of India (CHAI) - an Association of more than 3000 catholic health care institutions in India and perhaps the largest health care network in the world. It was Fr John who introduced the concept of community health in and through the Member Institutions thereby bringing about a change in the thinking of health care services in India. He continued as the Director of CHAI for nearly 16 years. After which, he was made the Central Mission Secretary for the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) in India for 3 years. Fr John is Member of a number of organizations in the country, Convenor of the Strength based strategies 2006 conference, Secretary, Sanghamitra and its Chief Executive Officer of the Society. Contact: frjohnv@rediffmail.com



Dr.P.Madurai Veeran is Selection Grade Lecturer and Head, Department of Public Administration, Presidency College (Autonomous), Chennai, Tamil Nadu. He did his M.Phil and Ph.D in Political Science at Institute of Advanced Study, CSS University, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. He has 20 years of teaching and research experience. Presently he is engaged in UGC Major Research Project entitled "Social Engineering and NGOs: A Study of SHG Movement in Tamil Nadu". He is an Executive Member in the Indian Political Science Association, and working as Associate Editor of Indian Journal of Public Affairs and Policy Research, Academy of Public Affairs, University of Madras. Currently he is guiding 10 Ph.D. Scholars. His area of research interest is Administrative Reforms, Social Movement and Empowerment Strategies of Marginalised Sections of Society i.e. Women, Dalit and Tribal.



Amanda Vos graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work from The University of Queensland (Brisbane, Australia) in 2001 and has since spent her professional life exploring and celebrating the diverse pathways a social work career can offer. She has worked as a Social Worker with Centrelink (Australia's social security delivery agency), developed curriculum for life coaches and counselors, tutored undergraduate students at UQ, and just finished a two year position as the Executive Officer of the Australian Association of Social Workers (Queensland Branch), in order to develop a National Employment Service for the Association upon her return from India. Amanda's passion for creating and/or tapping into positive networks, has provided her with the opportunity to present throughout Australia and the USA, develop film and photography projects, fulfill elected roles with the Social Work and Applied Human Sciences Alumni (Immediate Past President), become a founding member of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths Based Practice and member of the *Strength Based Strategies 2006* organizing committee.



Larissa Walker, an Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman has worked in the community services field in Cape York since completing studies at James Cook University, Cairns Campus. Larissa is currently Senior Engagement Officer at Cape York/Gulf RAATSICC Advisory Association Inc, based in Cairns, responsible for support and assistance to non-government remote area Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and family support services. Larissa will present information on Cape York/Gulf RAATSICC and ways in which community strengths have been incorporated in the design, development and implementation of various programs. RAATSICC embraces a wide range of local community approaches to childcare and its success relies upon community participation and decision-making. RAATSICC's philosophy views child care in a holistic way and includes programs that encourages the personal, social, developmental, recreational and cultural well being of children and encompasses child protection as well as child care.



Sydney Weaver MSW, RSW, has worked in child welfare and addictions services for over 15 years. She is currently the social worker at Fir Square, BC Women's Hospital, a strengths-based, harm reduction model maternity unit. She has developed and conducted strengths-based training for child protection social workers based on her research findings. Sydney has contributed chapters, currently in press, for two upcoming Canadian edited books relating to women and substance use and is a Registered Social Worker with the Board of Registration for Social Workers in British Columbia, Canada.



Duncan Williams identifies himself as an aboriginal person. 'Mura Ama Wakaana' literally means 'people working together'. Duncan has put together this wonderful training package that sensitises public servants in Queensland to the history of the aboriginal communities in Australia. Duncan's mother was instrumental in seeing that Duncan kept his contact with his nativity, culture and his people from his father's side. Duncan's maternal heritage is part Scottish. Duncan has gifted to this Conference, a challenging presentation that also raises some very personal questions for him: his identity, his meaning of reconciliation and his methodology of strengthening his own community and strengthening and developing a proactive culture that respects traditional land owners, and traditional culture. Duncan is employed as a Senior Programs Officer in the Indigenous Employment and Training Directorate, which is part of the Department of Employment and Training. Duncan is one of the founding Members of the Brisbane Institute of Strengths.



Irena Yashin-Shaw is an accomplished and award winning professional speaker, entrepreneur and academic. She empowers people, teams and organisations to think creatively and present themselves professionally and persuasively. With a PhD in Creative Thinking and a Masters Degree in Adult Education, Irena knows how to propel people beyond existing possibilities. She is someone who enjoys pushing the boundaries of the comfort zone and helps others to do the same so they can unlock their potential. She practices what she preaches being equally at home delivering a university

lecture, a keynote speech, seminars, executive workshops or stand up comedy. As a conference speaker Irena has addressed international academic audiences in Europe, the UK, Russia, China and Australia. She currently combines her work in private enterprise with her academic position as *Senior Research Fellow Adjunct in the Centre for Learning Research at Griffith University*. Being the experienced adult educator that she is, Irena understands that learning is facilitated when people have fun! She specialises in a unique brand of edutainment which creates an enjoyable and relaxed atmosphere where people feel comfortable about participating and contributing. She guarantees a high quality, pleasurable learning experience that will motivate, entertain and inform.