

Girl Guides Australia has been empowering girls and young women for more than 100 years. Last month we launched a new program, Getting into Governance, aimed at empowering girls and young women aged 16–24 to grow their leadership and governance skills so they can be the next generation of boardroom leaders.

The Getting into Governance program, funded by the Australian Government, saw 24 young women from across Australia come together over a weekend to build their skills, confidence and networks. Each participant will work with a mentor over the next five months to explore their next steps into the boardroom. I am sure we will see a ripple effect of their impact as they begin to use their new skills and have their voices heard.

During the workshop we were fortunate to share the experience of Dr Kay Patterson, a long time Girl Guide, who is currently the Age Discrimination Commissioner. With an increased number of the population living to reach 100 years of age, Kay challenged us to consider what we need to do to ensure our journey to 100 is rich with friendships, experiences and opportunities, together with the importance of financial security.

It is wonderful to acknowledge the commitment of our adult volunteers. It was my privilege to visit Girl Guides Victoria to present the Red Kangaroo award to Robinette Emonson and a Grey Kangaroo award to Lynne Emblin. Congratulations Robinette and Lynne for your significant ongoing contribution to Girl Guiding in Australia.

This month we will celebrate International Women's Day. It is an ideal time for you to reflect on the contribution of Leaders you know. Have you reviewed the Adult Good Service Awards criteria in Guide Lines? Is there someone you know who is going above and beyond? If so— it is time to submit an application!

Many in Guiding circles around Australia were saddened to hear that Lady Angela Carrick had Gone Home. Angela who had a great passion for Girl Guiding, contributed significantly to Guiding in Australia and around the world. Angela was an inspiration to many who will all remember her warmth, her sparkle, her smile, her infectious enthusiasm and her passion for Girl Guiding. Angela sang the Ranger Song with great pride - *Firm be the bond that binds us fast ... and firm that bond will remain.*

The XXI Commonwealth Games will soon be on our doorstep. The Queen's Baton Relay is making its way around the country. Perhaps you were one of the lucky ones to carry the baton. Gold Coast Girl Guides had their own baton relay to launch the Commonwealth Games Challenge. Are you Embracing 2018 and completing the challenge in your Guide Unit?

Rosemary Derwin
Acting Chief Commissioner