

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.



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 Based Practice.



Dr. 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.



Jeroninio (Jerry) Almeida believes there is a purpose to life which is not just about creating wealth for oneself and our near and dear. Rather, it is to leave behind a legacy of a better world. At 21 Jerry started working on various ideas for fundraising and bridging the gap between people who have and communities who deserve attention. In 2002 at the age of 31 he became Director, International Fundraising and Chief Executive of ActionAid India Society after giving up a successful corporate career which included the role as Founder and Chief Executive of a media and entertainment start-up "Lucky Star Entertainment Ltd". Over time he has created a supporter base of individuals that gives and get involved with the cause by taking a stand for a life of dignity for the impoverished and marginalised communities. He believes that a true democracy can be achieved only by getting people involved to understand social issues that are

plaguing their country. Today at 35 years of age, he has completed a full circle working in the corporate and media sector, development sector and now in the government sector with the British High Commission.



Dr. Anuradha komanduri is currently working as Associate Professor on Social Work in Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visvavidyalayam, (Women's University) Tirupati , Andhra Pradesh. Anuradha has specialized in Medical and Psychiatric Social Work, and took her Masters from School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore and her clinical experience in NIMHANS, Bangalore. She obtained Ph.D in the area of child mental health from Sri. Padmavathi Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati. Anuradha is trained in Staff Development from Loughborough University, and in family counselling from RELATE, United Kingdom. She held consulting in areas such as women management in higher education for the national

Universities Grants Commission, UGC, New Delhi, World Bank sponsored Poverty Alleviation projects, and PLAN (international) funded projects on child trafficking and HIV/AIDS, she is actively involved in research, training and community outreach activities.