

Blacktown on show Bridges

The Western Weekender -
Blacktown City Guardian
14 June 2002, pg 2

by **Katrina Moutia**



"Bridges believes that drug issues are complex and there are no simple solutions," ...Bridges Coordinator Tirrania Suhood recently addressed a full day forum at UTS

The team behind the unique Blacktown Bridges Drug Project last week had a chance to showcase its initiatives for the first time to over 100 workers from across NSW and Queensland.

This was the first Bridges forum addressing people across two states, with the work and success of those involved in the project being utilised by community and business groups to develop methods of addressing drug issues in their own areas.

The full day forum was held at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS)

and was presented by Bridges Coordinator Tirrania Suhood. She shared with the forum her belief that drug issues are complex and there are no simple solutions.

"Strengthening relationships between young people, parents, the community and agencies is a major part of the solution," said Ms Suhood.

She added that the main objective of Bridges is to 'bridge the gap' and bring people from all sectors of the community together to combat drug related issues.

A main part of bringing the youth of the community together has involved working with six local schools in order to promote the cause. Doonside Technology High were involved in the presentation at UTS

and they communicated Bridges objectives and ideas through drama.

"Many of the Blacktown organisations that have supported Bridges also told the audience how Bridges has made a difference to their work in addressing drug issues," Ms Suhood said.

"People liked Bridges' approach to working on drug issues because it is inclusive and allows everyone to share their ideas on what the reasons are behind drug use."

The initial two year funding of the Blacktown Bridges Drug Project is due to finish at the end of this month. The Bridges team welcome any further support as the new focus is developing a network of young people to influence the direction of the project.