

**RECEPTION TO CELEBRATE 26TEN WEEK 2021**  
**REMARKS BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**  
**BALLROOM, GOVERNMENT HOUSE**  
**WEDNESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2021**

Good evening everyone. I warmly welcome you all to this reception to mark 26TEN Week 2021, with the theme: *'Small steps, big changes'*. My husband, Don, and I are very pleased to be hosting this reception and thereby continue a strong tradition of support from the Office of the Governor to 26TEN over the years.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

I would also like to acknowledge amongst us

- 26TEN manager, Trish Scholwin;
- Coordinators, Kate Bond, Taylor Bouvy, Terri Maher and Lucy Whitehead;
- Premier's Literacy Advisory Panel member, Courtney Dunabbin;
- Staff, supporters, community members and clients;
- And also a special mention to welcome Dick Warner, notoriously and formerly called the Governor's handbag, who must give Don a few tips!

I am pleased to say that every year since 2015 there has been a reception held at Government House to celebrate those who are working to improve their own literacy and numeracy skills and those who are supporting that learning. Don and I are especially interested in furthering the educational attainment of all Tasmanians, being well aware that a good education and high literacy are crucial to a fulfilling life.

Attending the reception this evening are some of those people who are working towards greater mastery of reading, writing and maths, as well as community representatives from four host organisations, including 26TEN Community Coordinators. We also have representatives of the four 26 TEN communities, including adult learners, volunteers and those from community organisations such as Libraries Tasmania and Child and Family Centres.

26TEN communities are locally based groups that have been very successful in securing funding for your programs. Your local literacy for work and life program was launched in November 2020 as part of the Tasmanian Adult Learning Strategy. Coordinators based in Glenorchy, Hobart, Launceston and Geeveston will officially launch their communities in November and early December. I congratulate all of you on gaining your funding and wish you all the very best in your endeavours.

26TEN week is a week when we can highlight the value of breaking the challenge of improving reading, writing and maths skills into small steps. The theme of 26TEN week this year is focused very much on these small steps that can make big and significant changes to people's lives. When people discover they can learn, they gain confidence. This leads to larger steps and that leads to big changes.

We all know that there are too many Tasmanian adults who do not have fundamental skills in reading, writing and oral communication. These skills are essential for life and work in our modern world. In Tasmania, less than half of all adults have literacy skills to fully engage with work. Only around 40% have the maths skills. We know that these adults may have trouble filling in forms, reading safety signs, or applying for and obtaining a driver's licence. Significantly, these adults may not understand medical instructions.

Commendably, 26TEN brings together businesses, government organisations and individuals with a commitment to raising literacy and numeracy levels in Tasmania. I believe that all Tasmanians join with 26TEN in wanting a State where everyone appreciates adult literacy and numeracy, where everyone is supported to improve their skills and to help others, and where everyone is able to communicate clearly.

I am now looking forward to meeting members of the new program 26TEN Communities: local literacy for work and life. May I invite everyone to mix and enjoy the reception.

Thank you