

Club Red Coordinator Spotlight

By Bettina Rogers, Community Relations Officer, Strathpine Territory

Every now and then you come across someone very special whose passion and enthusiasm is inspiring. At the Blood Service we are fortunate to be exposed to special people all of the time – not just with our donors but also with our dedicated Club Red Coordinators.

Anna Timings, from Arup goes above and beyond to get her organisation to come and donate on each visit. She recently organised a great morning tea and almost 60 staff members turned up which was a great effort.

Name: Anna Timings

Organisation: Arup Brisbane

How did you first hear about the Blood Service?

I remember when I was in high school my parents used to go regularly to donate blood and I couldn't wait until I was old enough to go with them; it seemed like such a 'grown up' thing to do! Though I don't think I understood then how many people will need a blood donation in their lives. In high school my teachers organised to take a group of us regularly to donate. At that age I didn't really have any money to give, so blood donation was a different way I could help those who needed it.

When I started working full-time, I saw that by being part of a large business, I could increase my contribution by encouraging others to donate as well.

What is it that motivated you to become a supporter of the Blood Service?

I think it's a combination of how important this community service is (in that it can help such a wide range of people in life-saving situations) and how easy the Blood Service make it to donate. I hope that my family and friends will never be on the receiving end of a blood donation but really anyone could one day need this life-saving gift. It's amazing how such a small donation can have such a significant impact on so many lives.

How long have you been a Club Red Coordinator?

In 2012 I contacted the Blood Service to see if they could provide any promotional material that I could share within my office; we're very lucky to have a

Donormobile come to our local area regularly so I wanted to encourage our staff to call and book in to donate by providing all the details in advance. I was put in contact with Bettina Rogers who let me know about Club Red. As it was around the NRL State of Origin time, we decided to promote the club using state vs. state as a motivator – the aim was to beat the number of donations by our colleagues in the southern states! Since then we've managed to encourage some new donors and get previously regular donors back into the habit.

What do you think is the biggest motivator for people at your work place to donate?

I think there is a sense of being able to give something that literally, money cannot buy. Arup is a socially-minded firm and employees get involved and support our local community in any way we can. We find that causes that ask for something other than a financial donation are very well-received. We also find that any sort of competition, whether it's within the firm or against other organisations, is a really great motivator – so Club Red is perfect for us!

At our launch I was really pleased by how many of our young graduates signed up to donate and encouraged their peers to do the same. Being able to show our staff how many lives they have saved online has been an excellent tool in increasing our donations as a company; the statistics generated by being a member of Club Red enables staff to see that they have made a significant contribution. As many of our staff members are engineers, numbers are an important motivator!

Is management supportive of the Club Red program?

Most definitely – both in terms of providing staff with time to donate and donating themselves. It does help that the Donormobile comes right outside our door so it doesn't require very much time away from work to donate. Arup has a strong culture of community engagement so we're lucky that it's not a 'hard sell'! When we held our launch morning tea, we got a great picture of one of our senior leaders giving Billy the Blood Drop a great big hug in front of his whole team which was great.

Are there any handy tips that you could share with other Club Red Coordinators to increase interest and group donations within their organisation/group?

We have many staff who are unable to donate for a variety of reasons (being a global firm we have a significant number of staff who have lived in the UK for example), so this limits the impact our promotion can have, and some staff felt frustrated because they wanted to help but couldn't. I tried to think of a way they could help even if they couldn't donate themselves, and came up with 'Get a Mate to Donate'. This means finding someone who can donate, and asking them to do so on your behalf...this may of course involve bribery! Such as driving them to and from their appointment, baking yummy treats, fetching their coffee for a week... whatever it is, it then gives them the ability to contribute to the cause.



Anna Timings with Billy the Blood drop at Arup in Fortitude Valley.