

PRESENTER PROFILE

Ged Kearney **President - ACTU**

Gerardine (Ged) Kearney commenced as ACTU President on 1 July 2010, and is the third woman to hold the position following the departure of Sharan Burrow to the Brussels-based position of General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation.

Ged believes that unions should not just be concerned with the experience of people at work but they should be advocates for change to improve all aspects of Australians lives. She wants to ensure that unions continue to be at the forefront of public debate in Australia.

Ged's ambition as ACTU President is to build respect from political leaders and the broad community for the values of fairness and role played by unions in delivering social change so that people feel the need to join.

Ged was elected the Federal Secretary of the Australian Nursing Federation in April 2008. The ANF represents more than 250,000 nurses and midwives, and is one of Australia's fastest growing unions. She had been an elected official with the ANF since 1997, also serving as Assistant Federal Secretary, Federal President and Victorian Branch President.

Ged became a registered nurse in 1985, and has worked in many settings across the public and private acute sectors, predominantly in Melbourne, and has also been a nursing educator, including manager of the Clinical Nursing Education Department at Austin Health. She has a Bachelor in Education.

The year after qualifying as a registered nurse, she took part in the famous Victorian nurses' strike of 1986 which resulted in substantial improvements to pay and conditions.

As Federal Secretary, Ged saw substantial membership growth of the ANF and the first national combined strategic growth campaign in the private sector aged care industry. Her background in nursing and industrial experience advanced the profession and industrial rights of ANF members.

In collaboration with ANF branches in every state and territory, Ged has worked to improve the working lives and conditions of dedicated nurses, midwives and assistants in nursing throughout Australia.

As ACTU President, Ged now strives to improve the working lives and conditions for all Australian workers.

