



# 2005 Award Winners



## **A Youth Coalition of the ACT initiative**

Proudly sponsored by the Department of Disability, Housing and  
Community Services

8 December 2005

## **OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

*This award recognises a service, program or organisation that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to developing partnerships between young people and the service/organisation in all areas so that young people can take a valued position within the service, where the service or community as a whole can benefit from their contribution, ideas and energies.*

### **Winner: The Connection**

The Connection is a youth support service, based at the Griffin Centre, run by Indigenous young people for Indigenous young people. The Connection grew out of a one-off \$10,000 grant 18 months ago into a service which now employs over 7 young people. Young people provide their peers and families with various types of information, programs and support. The Connection has won other awards including the Sydney Peace Prize and a National Crime Prevention Award. The Connection is auspiced by the Australian Illicit and Injecting Drug Users League.

## **INNOVATION IN PRACTICE AWARD**

*The Innovation in Practice Award recognizes a service/organisation or program that has demonstrated exceptional 'thinking outside the square' effecting change and improvements in service delivery to and outcomes for young people.*

### **Winner: Centrelink Community Unit, Area Southwest**

Centrelink Community Unit, Area Southwest, began in March 2005, the initiative has two workers dedicated to providing equitable access to Centrelink services out in the community and assisting customers to find accommodation and treatment programs as needed. They are always available on-call to help young people at risk of homelessness. Their mobile Unit is able to interview young people for payments and grant, if eligible, within 30 minutes of the interview thus allowing faster access to income support.

## **COLLABORATION FOR CHANGE AWARD**

*The Collaboration for Change award recognises programs, services or organisations that have demonstrated an outstanding and effective commitment to working collaboratively towards positive outcomes for young people.*

### **Winner: The Messengers Program, Tuggeranong Arts Centre**

The Messengers Program is a youth program initiative which utilises arts as a means of building resilience in young people. Messengers Program collaborates with 42 schools (both government and non-government), youth services and community organisations. Collaboration is integral to their success with every government secondary school and a significant number of non-government schools and alternative education programs participating in the program.

### **Winner: The Co-Morbidity Project, ACT Health – Community Health and Mental Health ACT**

The Co-Morbidity Project aims to and has improved service provision, strengthened partnerships, built capacity and streamlined treatment outcomes for people who have co-existing problematic substance use and mental health. The success in establishing new networks and maintaining existing ones, and in facilitating communication across the Alcohol and Other Drugs, Mental Health and Youth sectors, has been integral to the continued progress of the project under the three pillars of Resource Development, Education and Training, and Service Integration. A major aspect of the project is to ensure stakeholder input and sharing of information, enabled through the coordination of regular meetings and committees for staff, carers, community groups and health practitioners, as well as a monthly newsletter.

## **INNOVATION IN EVALUATION AWARD**

*The Innovation in Evaluation Award recognises an organisation or service that has conceived or implemented a new or improved method for evaluating services delivered to young people.*

### **Winners: Peer Research Model, Youth Coalition of the ACT and Morgan Disney and Associates**

The Youth Coalition of the ACT and Morgan Disney and Associates developed a peer research model where young people were trained in research, conducted interviews and analysed findings. The peer researcher model is an example of best practice in youth participation. Two notable examples include: *Telling it how it is: Listening to Young People about Youth Homelessness in the ACT and the Services that Support them* and the Young Carers Research Project. Both projects have had significant impact on policy and service delivery in the ACT.

## **EXCELLENCE IN INVESTMENT IN STAFF AWARD**

*This award recognises an organisation or service that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the professional development and support of its staff team.*

### **Winner: Office of Children Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services**

Office of Children Youth and Family Support, Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services has demonstrated its commitment to investing in staff and the sector by working with tertiary institutions to roll out, and support staff to participate in, the Masters in Youth Work, the Bachelor of Justice Studies and the Post-Graduate Certificate in Child Welfare.

## **EXCELLENCE IN INCLUSIVE PRACTICE**

*The Excellence in Inclusive Practice Award recognises a service or organisation which has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to participative practice and improving access for young people.*

### **Winner: The Ted Noffs Foundation – ACT (GLBTI registered Safe Place) YWCA Mura Lanyon Youth Centre (GLBTI registered Safe Place) U-Turn Youth Services (GLBTI registered Safe Place) Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (GLBTI registered Safe Place)**

Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT, U-Turn Youth Services, YWCA Mura Lanyon Youth Centre, and the Ted Noffs Foundation ACT jointly win the excellence in inclusive practice award for being the *only* 4 services in the ACT to be registered Safe Places. The Safe Place program is a community program promoting safety within gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer communities. As a Safe Place the services have participated in AIDS Council of NSW's certification processes.

## **EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNANCE**

*The Excellence in Governance Award recognises outstanding Boards of Management, Reference Groups or Steering Committees that have supported staff or organisations to achieve positive outcomes for young people.*

### **Winner: Board Traineeship Program, YWCA of Canberra**

YWCA of Canberra Board Traineeship Program has been running for several years and is aimed at women who, to date, have no or little Board experience. The trainees participate in Board processes in an observer capacity and are provided the opportunity to be matched to a mentor and receive training in governance and Director's responsibilities. The program's benefits include: 30% of Board positions have been filled by young women for 30 years, increased diversity and stability of the Board, and has been successful in succession planning.

### **COMMITMENT AWARD**

*This award recognises an outstanding, long-standing and on-going commitment by an organisation to advance the rights, interests and well being of young people in the ACT.*

**Winner: St. Nicholas Young Carers Camps, St. Vincent de Paul Society**

St. Nicholas Young Carers Camps, St. Vincent de Paul Society have been running for 8 years on a shoestring. Many volunteers, who are committed to supporting young carers in the region, run 2 camps a year, monthly activities and support groups, and provide leadership and development training. The St. Vincent de Paul Society is committed and dedicated to supporting and advocating for young carers and their volunteers. The initiative is now moving towards a position where it will be run by young carers for young carers.

### **OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE YOUTH SECTOR AWARD**

*This award recognises an individual youth worker that has made an outstanding contribution to the ACT Youth Sector as a whole.*

**Winner: Andy Miles**

Andy has been working with young people and the youth sector for too many years to count. He is always striving to do that little bit more for young people and the sector than he is expected to do. He has a personality that is humbling to others. He is always questioning whether he has done enough when in fact he always does more than his share. To watch him work with young people is inspiring. He is modest, kind and knowledgeable. His laughter and heart are boundless. He is a great asset, advocate and mentor for young people and his colleagues across the sector.

**Winner: Dr. Helen Watchirs**

Dr. Watchirs is the ACT Human Rights and Discrimination Commissioner who sits at the helm of the ACT Human Rights Office. She oversees the first jurisdiction in Australia to have an explicit statutory basis for respecting, protecting, fulfilling and promoting civil and political rights enshrined in the *Human Rights ACT (2004)*. This year the ACT Human Rights Office conducted the *Human Rights Audit of Quamby Youth Detention Centre* which has made significant impacts to improve the lives of young people and the systems set up to support them.

### **OUTSTANDING NEW TALENT IN THE SECTOR AWARD**

*This award recognises an individual youth worker, youth work trainee or volunteer (new to the ACT Youth Sector in 2005) that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the well-being of young people.*

**Winner: Max Barker**

Max is a young carer who was an actor with Hidden Corners Theatre where he is now assistant Director. He also works as a Theatre tutor with the Messengers Program and the Canberra Youth Theatre. Max has been slowly emerging as a force to be reckoned with who has fully flowered in 2005. His contribution to youth arts in the ACT is considerable, he has mentored individual young people, initiated projects and has been an inspiration to many young people.

### **LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

*This award recognises an individual who has consistently demonstrated a commitment to supporting and improving the well being of young people in the ACT.*

**Winner: Kim Davison**

Kim manages the only Indigenous Youth Centre in the ACT. She has spent many years successfully lobbying and tendering for services. Kim was nominated by her peers because of

her strengths as an Aboriginal woman in the community and her many achievements. She carries many of the concerns of the Indigenous young people and families on her shoulders. Not only is she the CEO of Gugan Gulwan Aboriginal Youth Corporation she is as a mentor and mother of her own children - she is also this to many young people.

**Winner: Michael Marriott**

Michael has been working with young people and in the youth sector in Canberra for sixteen years. During this time Michael has never lost his good humour, patience and belief in young people. So marked is his pleasant disposition that the Transition Program staff have given him the computer password "cheerful". Michael asked for this to be changed. Michael has stuck around, hung in there and been a rock for many, many young people who have no-one else. Michael is an inspiration for the entire sector.

**THE UNSUNG HERO AWARD**

*This award recognises an outstanding individual who works behind the scenes to improve the well being of young people in the ACT.*

**Winner: Sindy Pearson**

We, the young people of Woden Youth Centre, wish to nominate Sindy Pearson. She has endured a lot over the years. To many of us Sindy is our surrogate mother, giving us much needed "motherly" support, nagging and with the occasional kick up the butt. She may not agree on our decisions but rarely says "I told you so!". We're not the only ones who believe Sindy's pretty special. In her office she has a collection of photos of children given to her by past and present young people. Even though these people and many others have moved on with their lives they always find time to come and see Sindy or call for a quick chat.

We could write a book on how much Sindy means to us and many others that have crossed her path. None of us could show how thankful we are for the guidance, support and care she has shown us over the years, which is why we have nominated her for this award, to say thank you for her dedication to supporting young people and staff over the last seven years.

**Winner: Berenice Christummeum,**

Berenice is indeed an "Unsung Hero" who never asks for anything in return. It is her lifetime mission to help young people. She consistently brings food and clothing to U-Turn Youth Services and other youth services in the ACT on food up to 3 times a week. She pushes her trolley around onto buses and occasionally is harassed by bus drivers who claim she is not allowed on the bus because her trolley is too big and has too much stuff piled on it. Recently her long lasting trusty trolley finally passed away and Berenice is unable to find a trolley as big as the old one. She has now resorted to pushing two smaller trolleys on her mission – this makes life that much more complicated, but no complaints from Berenice.

**THE HANGING IN AWARD**

*This award recognises exceptional resilience and staying power shown by a worker faced with stressful environments, funding cuts, staff resignations and other hurdles that make would make many others seek alternate employment.*

**Winner: Peter Schwarz**

Pete is a street outreach worker who is on 24hour call. He is a constant, reliable, understanding, caring and self-sacrificing man who gets the job done. Pete spent 5 months this year on this own carrying the service after the other worker left. Even with two workers his job is stressful and constantly demanding, let alone being sold as the last resort worker. The job is really hard work and Pete stuck at it because he believes in young people. He really makes a difference to young people's lives.

**Winner: Rhonda Fuzzard**

Rhonda has been the coordinator of the Canberra Youth Refuge, on and off, for over 23 years. She has hung in through all the changes to the way in which youth work is practiced. She has a passion for disadvantaged young people, her service and the youth sector. She has an outstanding knowledge of the youth sector and says it like it is. She has been an inspiration to youth workers for her tireless and diligent advocacy for young people's rights. She has participated in countless forums and committees and contributed in positive ways to the face of youth work in today's world.

**THE OVERACHIEVERS AWARD**

*This award recognises an individual über-worker in the sector who consistently achieves more than is expected of them.*

**Winner: Lisa Kelly**

Lisa is a long standing member of the ACT youth sector having worked in Queanbeyan, Tuggeranong and Weston Creek Youth Centres. She set up the Bay at Canberra College and as part of the team at Lifeline. Lisa is also a volunteer for St. Vincent de Paul and other organisations and sits on a number of national and ACT boards. Lisa has a wealth of knowledge that makes us all better workers. She is fun-loving, caring, supportive, hardworking and passionate. She fights for the rights of youth workers and the youth sector. She is committed to building resilience for young people and bettering the quality of life for all.

**Winner: Luisa Latukefu**

Luisa is a Maternal and Child Health Nurse with ACT Community Health. She has delivered papers in Australia and overseas. Luisa contributes greatly to the community, particularly the Tongan community, and she is the President of the Pan Pacific & South East Asian Women's Association. Luisa keeps trying to do less – but we just can't let her go! She is a breath of fresh air who is loved by everyone. She is a delightful person with a happy soul who brings happiness with her wherever she goes.

**THE AWARD FORMERLY KNOWN AS 'THE NICE GUY' AWARD**

*This award recognises an all-round 'nice' worker in the ACT Youth Sector.*

**Winner: Tom Zinkel**

Tom is an all round funny nice guy – even at report writing time. Tom has worked with young people in Australia and overseas. He is dedicated to youth participation and best practice. He is dedicated to the "cause" and reminds us all that the work may be hard but we can smile while we're doing it.

The 2005 Yogie Awards were presented by Meredith Hunter, Executive Officer, Youth Coalition of the ACT and Karin McDonald MLA on behalf of Katy Gallagher MLA, Minister for Youth.

[www.youthcoalition.net](http://www.youthcoalition.net)  
[www.makingcontact.net.au](http://www.makingcontact.net.au)