



2006 Award Winners

**Presented by
Deputy Chief Minister Katy Gallagher, MLA**

A Youth Coalition of the ACT Initiative

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

21 December 2006



ORGANISATION, SERVICE AND PROGRAM AWARDS

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN YOUTH PARTICIPATION AWARD

This award recognises an organisation, service or program that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to developing partnerships with young people so that young people play a valued role within the service, enabling the service or community as a whole to benefit from their contribution, ideas and energies.

Winner: **Mental Illness Education ACT**
The Body Image Body Scrimmage Project

Body Image Body Scrimmage is a book about body image and self-esteem with a difference. It was written by young people (10-14 years old) and uses creative writing to explore this issue of major concern to young people, resulting in a vibrant, highly accessible and diverse collection of 22 stories, poems and cartoons reflecting humour, wisdom and some very talented writing. Body Scrimmage was a collaborative project between Mental Illness Education ACT and Canberra Youth Theatre with funding from Healthpact. It has broad appeal as a good read for young people and an invaluable resource for adults who are working with young people on body image and self-esteem issues.

This Project demonstrated outstanding achievement in youth participation by recognising that body image and self-esteem is a key issue for young people and that young people are experts in this area. Partnerships with three schools, and then a total of 22 story-telling workshops were conducted that were highly interactive, fun, engaging and safe. With the combination of drama and individual tutoring, young people were supported and encouraged to develop their stories. Youth participation is also reflected in the editorial committee, the book cover design, and the book launch in April 2006.

Commendation: **Gungahlin Youth Centre**
BLOCK PARTY

On November 18th Gungahlin Youth Centre (GYC) hosted the first of what will become the annual GYC BLOCK PARTY. The Block Party aimed to showcase the qualities of the youth centre and the young people in the Gungahlin region. The purpose was both to hold an open day for the youth centre, and to host a free outdoor youth event on a Saturday night when normally young people would need to travel out of area.

The Block Party was a huge success with approximately 1500 young people, parents and community members attending the event. The Youth Centre was open with pool, dance machine and sing star competitions, bands and games going on in the back yard. The event utilised the new community walkway/space recently built out the front of the Youth Centre which allowed the showcase of some of the amazing art work young people have developed with GYC. The GYC Block Party demonstrated excellent youth participation by involving young people in all the stages of the event, including planning, development, and implementation. As an example of how powerful this practice can be, without needing to be asked, approximately 15-20 young people stayed behind after the event and did the packing and clean up.

INNOVATION IN PRACTICE AWARD

The Innovation in Practice Award recognises an organisation, service, or program that has demonstrated exceptional "thinking outside the square" effecting change, improvements in service delivery and outcomes for young people.

Winner: **Restorative Justice Unit, Department of Justice and Community Safety**
"Doin' RJ" Comic

Restorative justice is a process where all the stakeholders affected by an injustice have an opportunity to discuss its consequences and what is to be done to right the wrong. In the ACT this process is facilitated by the Restorative Justice Unit. A restorative justice process cannot take place without the informed consent of the victim and the young person responsible for the offence. Ensuring that young people give informed consent is a challenge due to their age, history, marginalisation, literacy and previous experience with police and the judicial system.

The Restorative Justice (RJ) Unit partnered with the Youth Coalition to conduct a focus group with young people to identify their views about the existing RJ pamphlets and brochures that explained restorative justice. The result is "Doin' RJ", an accessible eight page comic explaining restorative justice to young people. The practice was innovative as it is a demonstration of a government service actively seeking creative solutions to engage with marginalised young people, and developing a high quality resource that is accurate, informative and practical.

COLLABORATION FOR CHANGE AWARD

The Collaboration for Change Award recognises an organisation, service, or program that has demonstrated an outstanding and effective commitment to working collaboratively and/or in partnership with other organisations towards positive outcomes for young people.

Joint Winner: Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT (SHFPACT) & Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) SoSAFE Program

SHFPACT is a not-for-profit, non-government organisation whose purpose is improved sexual and reproductive health for the Canberra community. Canberra Rape Crisis Centre is a not-for-profit, non-government organisation that provides support and education on sexual assault issues for women, men and children.

SoSAFE! is a set of visual and conceptual tools (developed by SHFPACT and Educational Edicts) designed to promote social safety to clients with an intellectual disability (moderate to severe range) (MSID) and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). SoSAFE!'s framework of symbols and concepts are designed on the basis of best special education practice to reduce vulnerability to sexual abuse, and improve the quality of social life and sexual health for people with MSID and/or ASD.

SoSAFE! Tools and training facilitate the consistency of instructional strategies and materials, which is essential for the acquisition and maintenance of skills and concepts by people with MSID and/or ASD.

These tools are essential given that research indicates that almost 9 out of 10 people with an intellectual disability will experience sexual assault before they reach the age of 18 years. SoSAFE! has been rolled out to special schools, learning support units, sexual assault support workers, and CRCC counsellors and educators, reducing barriers in reporting sexual abuse and accessing support.

Commendation: Communities@Work Youth Services, Woden Youth Centre & Community Connections Blast Youth Festival

Communities@Work Youth Services provide social, recreational and educational programs, as well as information, referral, entertainment and support to individuals aged between 11 and 25 through youth centres located in Tuggeranong and Weston Creek. Woden Youth Centre is a multi-purpose centre and youth service for young people aged 12 - 25. Community Connections Inc (CCI) is a community organisation that supports people with disabilities to promote and develop their role as valued, participating and contributing members of society.

Communities@Work Youth Services was proud to partner with Community Connections and Woden Youth Centre, New Creation Ministries, Skate Australia, Backbone BMX, SP Productions, and Erindale College to host an all ages inclusive event. The Blast Youth Festival, which was held at Tuggeranong Skate Park on Saturday 25 November 2006, had over 1000 young people participate throughout the day. This year had a specific focus on inclusive activities for young people with a disability. Young people were represented at all levels of planning, implementation and evaluation.

The event featured an extreme games competition, live bands, DJ dance ten, adult jumping castle, chill zone, graffiti art, street performers, dancers, artists, games and lots more. Young people with a diagnosed disability were able to fully participate in all aspects of the event, which worked to create an atmosphere of acceptance, inclusion and fun.

EXCELLENCE IN EVALUATION AWARD

The Excellence in Evaluation Award recognises an organisation, service, program that has conceived or implemented a new or improved method for evaluating services delivered to young people, or has demonstrated their commitment to best practice evaluation as a means to improve these services.

**Winner: Menslink
Project Oriented School Mentoring (POSM)**

POSM- Project Oriented School Mentoring is an early intervention youth development model. Children, particularly boys are identified as “at risk”, yet the intervention is done in such a way as to affirm the boys and reconnect them with their school community. Boys and girls work with mentors and the school community to build things for the school.

A “blitz team” is formed and their job is to build, construct or design something that will benefit their school community. Examples have been school gardens, ferneries, compost systems and worm farms. By intervening at primary schools, Menslink has extended its practice to provide a positive strengths-based early intervention pathway prior to entry into high school. This program has been identified by one Principal as the ‘best early intervention primary school program ever developed for boys.

Evaluation practices are engaging and involving, for example the children take a photo of their work, transform it into a postcard and sent it to their parents who are asked to return the postcard to Menslink staff with any comments they might have on the POSM activities. Menslink has implemented an extensive evaluation model designed by Glenn Cullen with assistance from the UC Centre for Sustainability. This tracks change along qualitative measures, including the use of journal writing, focus sessions and barbecues where parents have provided significant feedback that indicates substantial progress.

EXCELLENCE IN ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICE

This award recognises an organisation, service, program that has demonstrated excellence in one or all of the following areas:

- *Professional development and support of its staff;*
- *Participative practice and improving access for young people;*
- *Governance that supports staff and/or the organisation to achieve positive outcomes for young people.*

**Winner: Tuggeranong Arts Centre
Messengers Program**

The *Messengers Program*, based at Tuggeranong Arts Centre (TAC), builds the resilience and supports personal change of vulnerable high school students through drama, visual arts and writing. Next year, about 150 students from up to 30 high schools throughout Canberra will spend two hours a week during school time attending *Messengers* activities across Canberra. Through the *Outreach Program*, College students devise and present drama and art projects to other young people through schools and youth centres. Themes include family breakdown, bullying, isolation and “party safe” behaviours. The *Outreach Program* is expected to reach an audience of about 1,800 next year including Indigenous and Sudanese youth groups.

The *Messengers Program* also provided professional development in the form of internal staff induction, external training in drama facilitation from NIDA, mental health education from Mindmatters and Lifeline, Outreach actors learned stagecraft through a series of workshops facilitated by the Artistic Director of TAC. The *Program* demonstrated excellent participative practice by involving young people throughout all stages of the program, including the development, delivery, and evaluation of programs. The *Program* also displayed excellence in governance by utilising an active board that offers advice, support, and networking and professional development opportunities to staff, and by regularly reviewing Operating Procedures and Protocols.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

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 2006) that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the well-being of young people.

Joint Winner: Tia Eaglesome
LASA Youth Refuge

Tia has shown a commitment to working with young people and despite initial setbacks has begun to forge a career in youth work after completing her Diploma in Youth Studies. Her love of her new career has caused her to give up permanent work to remain as a casual at LASA Youth Refuge, to allow her to take as many shifts as possible. She enlightens the young people with experiences from her Maori cultural background, is keen to learn new skills and brings a fresh enthusiasm and spirit to her work supporting “at-risk” young people.

Joint Winner: Adut Atem
Multicultural Youth Service

Adut is 22 years of age and is originally from the Sudan, having come to Canberra as a refugee in February 2003. Adut is a medical student, a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees young ambassador and a regular public speaker on refugee issues and Sudanese culture. She is also a youth worker at Multicultural Youth Services in the ACT, and supports migrant and refugee young people as a caseworker, a bi-cultural worker and a community development worker.

Adut is a great advocate for her clients – ensuring wherever possible that clients are treated with equity and respect by schools and service providers throughout Canberra. She ensures that all programs and activities are culturally appropriate, accessible, and relevant to clients’ lives and needs. She also encourages those who would normally not seek help – such as Sudanese young women - to use the service and ask for support when they need it.

THE UNSUNG HERO AWARD

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

Joint Winner: Kim Hopper

Kim is a talented young woman whose passion and energy are appreciated wherever she goes. She has worked at Canberra Youth Refuge for 5 years. She has a passion for working with young people in a range of areas; her main focus is youth homelessness. She sits on two boards, and is has also taken on the role of National Youth Coalition for Housing (NYCH) representative. She is a member of the working party for in National Youth Homelessness Matters Day 2007. As a part of her NYCH role she has another board role on the Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations.

Kim also works on a casual basis for SCOPE YWCA where she is involved in mentoring young artists towards an art exhibition ‘Up Your Art’ which will be part of National Youth Week 2007. She co-ordinated the first ‘Up Your Art’ in 2006 where over 60 young people participated with over 70 artworks. The art came from a range of young people from different cultural and socio economic backgrounds.

Joint Winner: Greg Ryan
Volunteer with Youth in the City & Northside Community Service

Greg Ryan is an Indigenous young man who has shown remarkable commitment and dedication to improve his own life and the lives of other young people. As a peer leader he has shown great maturity and compassion in his support of other young men, and his voluntary work recently has been extensive. He is a motivated and driven person who, when

he starts a program, will see it through till the end. Greg was nominated due to his characteristics of leadership, commitment and humility, characteristics that will stand him well in his future work in the youth sector. Greg is a committed and humble young person with a great deal to offer.

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: **Bill Collins**
***Gugan Gulwan Youth Aboriginal Corporation and Winnunga Nimmityjah
Aboriginal Health Service***

Bill Collins has worked tirelessly to develop and establish a holistic program to address the specific issues that effect young male Indigenous youth, assisting alienated young people by providing a stable foundation and offering them the opportunity to make positive life choices in a supported environment. He is developing a holistic program for young indigenous men that will address a range of issues including education and training, physical and mental health, cultural connections and education, self-responsibility, self-esteem, values and social skills.

He is a dedicated worker who has worked collaboratively with community and government services including Community Youth Justice, to provide a much-needed service for Indigenous young men. He has identified a gap in service provision and has initiated and developed a response to address this need. He has provided an opportunity for indigenous and non-indigenous services to work collaboratively in the best interests of the client and their families. This award is an acknowledgement of his dedication to a vision for improved services for indigenous young men and of the positive impact his vision and hard work has had on his current clients.

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: **Dave Corby**

Dave Corby is an outstanding individual who has been working for years with young people and to improve the systems in place that support them in Canberra. He is a quiet, consistent man who gets the job done while always making time for those who need it. Dave's work is rarely recognised. Despite this he is a committed person who expresses his social and political beliefs throughout various aspects of his life. He is a staunch (but understated) humanist who lives by his beliefs.

He is a great resource for the youth sector and has worked in a variety of roles in both government and non-government services, including Canberra Youth Refuge, Streetlink, Child Protection, and the Youth Coalition. He is known by many young people, workers and community organisations.

A man of integrity, and high ethical standards he is a mentor who is happy to support people to learn and make their own decisions. He has helped his colleagues learn about life, work ethics, the importance of laughs, and how to see the strengths in everyone and everything. Dave's enthusiasm is tireless; he is always full of humour and always makes an extra effort to make people feel welcome. He is a rare person with openness of mind – one who has merited much but received little recognition.