

25 October 2019

The Annual

YOGIE

Awards 2019

Celebrating 16 Years

Award Winners

presented by

Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA



youth
coalition
of the ACT



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The Youth Coalition of the ACT acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners and continuing custodians of the lands of the ACT and we pay our respects to the Elders, families and ancestors.

We acknowledge that the effect of forced removal of Indigenous children from their families as well as past racist policies and actions continues today.

We acknowledge that the Indigenous people hold distinctive rights as the original people of modern day Australia including the right to a distinct status and culture, self-determination and land. The Youth Coalition of the ACT celebrates Indigenous cultures and the invaluable contribution they make to our community.

A special thank you to Ngunnawal Elder Warren Daley who is welcoming us to Country at this year's Yogie Awards ceremony.

YOGIE AWARD WINNERS

PRESENTED BY
RACHEL STEPHEN-SMITH MLA

ABOUT THE ANNUAL YOGIE AWARDS 2019

AWARD CATEGORIES

ORGANISATION, SERVICE, PROGRAM AND PROJECT AWARDS

1. Outstanding Achievement in Youth Participation
2. Innovation in Service Delivery Award
3. Excellence in Implementation of Evidence Informed Practice

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

1. Outstanding Youth Worker
2. Youth Work Champion
3. Outstanding New Talent
4. Lifetime Achievement Award
5. Outstanding Contribution to Young People

The Annual Yogie Awards (the Yogies) recognise, celebrate, promote and reward outstanding practice in working with young people in the ACT and surrounding area. They also highlight the exceptional commitment, talent and innovation that exist in the youth sector. In 2019, we are celebrating sixteen years of the Yogies.

The 2019 Yogies will be presented by Rachel Stephen-Smith, MLA, Minister for Children, Youth and Families. Awards are presented in 8 categories that recognise the work of groups and individuals, with young people, workers, individuals, programs and services invited to provide nominations.

A judging panel, comprised of a representative from the Youth Coalition; a representative from the Community Services Directorate; and a representative from the youth and community sector, determines the Award winners, with the exclusion of the Staff Acknowledgement Award (which is identified by the Youth Coalition staff team).

A commendation may be awarded when a nomination has been received that the judging panel believe deserves recognition. We invite you to get involved in promoting the great work of the ACT Youth Sector by sharing your comments and congratulations using #YOGIES2019

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN YOUTH PARTICIPATION

This award recognises an organisation, service, program or project that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to developing meaningful partnerships with young people.

WINNER

YWCA CANBERRA YOUTH PROGRAMS SEXUALITY AND GENDER ALLIANCE CALWELL HIGH SCHOOL

Across Term 1 and 2, 2019 the YWCA Canberra Youth Engagement Team worked with Calwell High School to develop a weekly LGBTQIA psychosocial group within the school. The school and the ACT Health School Nurse identified and encouraged several young people to be part of the group.

YWCA Canberra worked with the young people to develop the foundations of the group – identifying their purpose, goals and establishing a safe space for the students to be their authentic selves. The young people had named their group SAGA – Sexuality and Gender Alliance, developed a shared understanding of their purpose. Through the term the young people developed a safe space and negotiated with the school to have non-gendered toilets available to students.

With the foundations in place YWCA Canberra consolidated the group through a project that would raise understanding and awareness of SAGA group for other students in the school, with a small budget. SAGA members were actively involved and took ownership of the project direction and outcomes. They brainstormed ideas and negotiated to develop SAGA hoodies to identify them as mentors to others in the school. The group developed a project proposal to present to the Principal and Executive team, which was accepted. Through the project the young people researched and learnt about ethical clothing, small business operation, financial management, group decision making, and Canberra clothing businesses. They organised and promoted several fundraising sausage sizzles to fully finance the project. The group worked together to create two designs: a SAGA logo incorporating the school mascot, the galah, and year specific design.

The designs were approved by Calwell High School and the hoodies are now accepted school uniform. The SAGA group has continued without the ongoing facilitation by YWCA Canberra, the group is held during lunchtime with a teacher and open to other students within the school.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

PARTY DOWN PRODUCTIONS

THE WODEN SCHOOL

Party Down Productions (PDP) is based at The Woden School (TWS) and is run by young people with disability aged 12 -18 years. PDP is the brain-child of TWS Youth Support Worker, Luke Ferguson, and was developed as a school-wide approach to using music and dance to build personal confidence, celebrate diversity and promote social inclusion of people with disability in the ACT. PDP empowers TWS's young people to be involved in all aspects of event planning and implementation, including using photoshop to make posters, setting playlists according to theme and/or target audience, technical set-up, pack-down and 'rockin' the mic' as DJ's. PDP's equitable rotation of student DJ's result in weekly dance parties at The Woden School, consistently attended by students and staff. Thursday disco's result in an energetic and vibrant atmosphere throughout the school, positively impacting everyone involved. PDP have worked hard to build and maintain partnerships in the wider Canberra community. Our student DJ's host dance party events at off-site locations including primary and high schools, sporting events such as 'Be The Best You Can Be', and even the Yogie Awards. Young people across the ACT have benefited from the positive and inclusive involvement a partnership with PDP brings to the community. PDP uses the power of music to break down barriers, remove stigma and enhance self esteem of young people with disability, shifting the focus to their innate ability to spark joy in the lives of those around them. There's nothing else like PDP in Canberra, and TWS students thrive on the positive attention they receive as a result!

INNOVATION IN SERVICE DELIVERY AWARD

This award recognises an organisation, service, program or project that has demonstrated exceptional “thinking outside the square” to create beneficial change for young people.

WINNER

GIRLS EMPOWERED TOGETHER PROGRAM WODEN COMMUNITY SERVICE

The GET program is an early intervention program which aims to help young women build positive self-esteem and self-image, foster resilience, improve emotional and physical wellbeing, maintain positive relationships, and increase the capacity for vulnerable young females to be safe and independent. This was done through providing education on topics surrounding health and wellbeing as well as service visits to show the girls the support services available for them to access in the ACT. They were also taught various techniques and tools to empower them to support themselves and each other when service intervention isn't necessary. Each week the group covered nine different topics, these topics were; positive self-talk and self-esteem, body image, healthy relationships, sexual Health, AOD, safety and self-defence, anxiety, stress management, destructive & constructive coping strategies and SMART goals. In week ten the girls engaged in reflective conversation and evaluation, and we had graduation ceremony.

The girls in the program were at risk young females, 13- 15 years of age, who reside or attend school in South Canberra. This particular age group enabled the program to be a form of early intervention for young females and attempt to prevent them from becoming disengaged due to matters faced in an education and social setting. The program focuses on educating the young females on issues and topics they face daily both in and out of a school environment, and how they can manage these issues in a way they feel supported and hopefully encouraged to stay in school.

This program was created based on the need for health and wellbeing support and education for young females. This need was demonstrated to YET through the daily interactions they have with vulnerable at risk young women in drop in and case management as well as schools reaching out for support.

EXCELLENCE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE INFORMED PRACTICE

This award recognises an organisation, service, program or project that has implemented practice or policies which have been informed by evidence and/or evaluation leading to the improvement of practice with young people.

WINNER

FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE

Every night, around 116,000 Australians sleep without a roof over their head, with ACT reporting the second-highest rate of homelessness in the country in recent years (ABS, 2016; AIHW, 2013). This is a long-standing issue, with ABS reporting a 4.6% rate of increased homelessness over recent years; giving particular light to homeless youths (aged 12-24), making up a substantial 25% of this homelessness figure (ABS, 2016).

Currently, although shortfalls in youth housing/accommodation and available services only heighten the complexity of this problem, early intervention has been proven as the best strategy in preventing this issue for young people. Early intervention "...holds the promise of avoiding or reducing the significant costs associated with homelessness" (Johnson and Chamberlain 2008). Recognising this, CRS implemented its innovated Family Support Program. A preventative program that uniquely puts focus on the whole family unit, rather than one individual young person, through; facilitated family mediation and informal supported conversations, allowing young people to comfortably open up about their home life.

It is this holistic approach, that actualises this long-needed success story for some of Canberra's most vulnerable youths. In 2018, CRS received 461 referrals to the Family Support Program, with a 92% success rate being witnessed across addressed cases. Teaching families to resolve issues through organised mediation sessions, has improved participant health and wellbeing, allowing family members to reconnect and stay engaged. The program has improved school attendance for students aged 8-15, while reducing workplace absenteeism for parents. Participants also demonstrated improved self-esteem, reduction in anti-social behaviours, drug/alcohol and criminal activity. In suit, the Family Support Program hence reduced the need for young people to seek homelessness services in the ACT, with many young participants choosing to stay at home.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS **OUTSTANDING NEW TALENT**

This award recognises an individual youth worker, youth work trainee or volunteer who is new to the ACT Youth Sector, but has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to improving the wellbeing of young people.

WINNER

GEOFFREY SIMA

YMCA CANBERRA YOUTH SPACE

Geoff is new to the youth sector and in particular working in a drop-in centre environment. Geoff has been a youth worker with YMCA Canberra since February 2019. Since then, Geoff has taken time to develop his skills, through mentoring with his coordinator, and by asking questions, doing research and taking the time to talk to young people.

Geoff has shown his commitment to his role as a youth worker by putting his hand up to participate in various activities, taking the opportunity to attend training and information sessions, occasionally in his own time to ensure that he is continuously upskilling himself. Over the last 4 months Geoff has demonstrated confidence in dealing with difficult situations and taking the time to engage with all young people who come to the Youth Space, not just those he has built a rapport with.

In particular, Geoff has recently taken on the role of mentoring a young person who has been having some difficulties. Through this mentoring, the young person has shown a lot more confidence and has started to develop some really positive friendships.

Geoff always brings a lot of energy to the Youth Space and while working with the young people, and has helped create an atmosphere of warmth and inclusion for the young people.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

TARA MCCLELLAND **OASIS YOUTH SERVICES**

Tara began casual work in the ACT Youth Sector in November 2017, then took up a full time role after graduating in June 2018. Since then Tara has demonstrated her commitment to young people, and her own individual learning, professional development and self-improvement in many ways. While being a full time Youth Worker at Oasis Youth Services, working shift work including evenings, weekends and overnights, Tara also volunteers extensively within the sector - the Headspace Youth Reference Group, Canberra Youth Theatre (CYT) Young Artists Advisory Panel and Youth Worker Practice Network. Tara uses these groups and networks to expand her knowledge and skillset, giving back to the community and liaising with likeminded others. At Headspace, Tara successfully wrote a grant application for a Mental Health Month event and is currently planning it for October. She also MC'd the Headspace Canberra 10th Birthday Party earlier this year. Tara also represents Headspace at community awareness activities/events and advocates for youth mental health. At the CYT Young Artists Advisory Panel Tara has been influential in ensuring CYT reaches those young people who may not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in Theatre, as Tara knows Theatre can be greatly beneficial to a young person's confidence, mental health and wellbeing. CYT has collaborated with local organisations to offer low or no cost referrals and partnerships and Tara has been involved in establishing these. Tara has also completed work based training as well as individual training this year in a number of areas including, Trans and Gender Diverse housing, borderline personality disorder, youth mental health and trauma informed care which has benefitted her individual learning, professional development and self-improvement. Tara's energy and enthusiasm for young people and the youth sector can be seen in the range of external commitments, as well as her daily work with youth homelessness. Tara is excited to see where the sector takes her in the future, as young people is her true passion.

OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO YOUNG PEOPLE AWARD

This award recognises an outstanding individual who works hard, often 'behind the scenes', to support young people or the youth sector.

WINNER

JANINE BRISSETT

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE

Janine has been involved in the industry for over 5 years, both studying and in the workforce. Janine brings a lifetime of knowledge to her important role at CRS, mediating in the community, as well as public and private sectors. Janine's efforts and passion for transforming the lives of young Canberrans and their families have recently further increased, as an exemplar contributor and pinnacle member of CRS' Family Support Program.

There are limited services available for young people, either experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Canberra and the need for experienced practitioners and leading early intervention advocates, just like Janine, is greater than ever.

In 2018, Janine worked for countless struggling families, with a 92% success rate. Janine played and continues to play, a key role in helping young people reconnect to their home base; by facilitating a range of family dispute resolution, mediation and community outreach initiatives. As well as helping youths stay in school, develop heightened self-esteem and open what may have otherwise been closed doors in their future.

Although she is often behind the scenes, her mediation principles and practice ensure young people are heard, feel seen and have a voice.

OUTSTANDING YOUTH WORKER

This award recognises an individual youth worker who has demonstrated their exceptional commitment to supporting young people through their ethical, participatory, and strength-based practice

WINNER

CINDYLEE YOUNG

WODEN COMMUNITY SERVICE

Cindylee embodies and demonstrates the characteristic qualities of an Outstanding Youth Worker.

Cindylee demonstrates time and time again of her passion and commitment to young people through the many school groups she has facilitated whereby she teaches the importance of self-care and respect to countless young women, meanwhile building incredible rapport with both teachers, youth workers and department heads throughout the school. Each school group that Cindylee facilitates is guaranteed to have positive feedback from young people and teachers alike, making Cindylee a highly sought after group facilitator. When Cindylee is not rostered on Drop In it is now expected that a young person will come in to the Woden Youth Centre at some point and ask if Cindylee is available to speak with. Whether it is just to say hi, have a laugh with, or to have a more serious conversation.

Cindylee shows her Innovative qualities and passion for Mental Health with her development of now two successful Mental Health Week events and the creation and delivery of the GET (Girls Empowered Together) program. These events and programs create an environment that empower young people with the tools and strategies for coping with stress and anxiety, as well as providing and showing the young people the wide range of support services available to them. The GET Program in particular has received extremely positive feedback from the young women who attend the program, parents of the participants and local government MP's.

Cindylee is a phenomenal Youth worker, team player and agent of change. She is a strong and respected voice on the Youth Engagement Team and community sector. YET are extremely proud of Cindylee and privileged to have her apart of the Team.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

ZAKIA PATEL

YMCA YOUTH SPACE

Zakia has created a thriving Youth Space (opened 28 Feb), with more than 900 visits to date (only open on two days per week), from a diverse mix of young people. She has also established an effective Case Management Practice.

Zakia set out to develop a culture that supports safety, self-expression, inclusion, accountability, and opportunity. This approach facilitates youth work practice that is ethical, participatory and strengths-based.

Key elements and examples of this approach include:

- “Values” and “Expectations” not rules has influenced the behaviour of participants. They do their own dishes, clean-up, and hold each other accountable.
- Creating opportunities to engage with the Space according to their own preferences. To maximise engagement, Zakia created a space where participants can do lots of things, but are not required to do any one thing. This allows participants to shape their own experience and build relationships with youth workers at their own pace.
- Creating opportunities for young people to shine. The “Official” opening of the Space (attended by a diverse range of stakeholders) allowed young people to demonstrate their strengths and feel valued in a different setting. Young people fulfilled important roles on the night, including meeting dignitaries, facilitating an art project, and being the MC. These roles challenged the young people, but Zakia made sure they were supported.

YOUTH WORK CHAMPION

This award recognises an individual youth worker who excels in three areas of youth work - excellence in supporting young people, commitment to developing and improving their individual practice, and supporting and advancing the work of the youth sector.

WINNER

CIARA DUGGAN

YWCA

Ciara continually strives to see the best in every situation, they are silver lining royalty! If only 3 young people turn up to a program or event, Ciara will find the success for those young people and see it as an opportunity for the program to change and practices grow. Ciara does not seek the spotlight, it finds to them because of their genuine personality, passion and drive for wanting the best for young people. It is this genuineness that young people see and appreciate, and why Ciara is able to achieve some amazing outcomes.

Ciara has especially excelled at supporting young people from within the LGBTQIA community. During their time at YWCA Canberra they have started the A to Z social support group, collaborated with others to hold IADHOBIT Day events, provided supports to schools and young people and been the driving force behind three successful LGBTQIA+ Allies Proms (Prom). The 2019 Prom which will be bigger and better due to the successful Capital of Equality Grant. YWCA Canberra successfully applied for a Chief Ministers Office Grant to provide a work skills program for young people from the LGBTQIA community. This is a program that Ciara is passionate getting started about after receiving feedback from young people. Ciara has developed a partnership with CIT so that young people involved will received accredited training.

Ciara is constantly sharing and improving their knowledge and skills, be it through staff supervision, chats around the office or facilitating workshops. Ciara has facilitated at the Canberra Together - LGBTIQ+ Community Symposium 2019; to ANU Computer Science students working on a Rainbow App; at YWCA Canberra She Lead's events; and will MC the 2019 She Leads High Conference. Ciara an Our Watch Endorsed Trainer for Primary Prevention of Violence Programs: Change the Story & Workplace Equality and Respect and Youth Coalition of the ACT Board member.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

This award recognises an outstanding individual who has consistently demonstrated a commitment to supporting and improving the wellbeing of young people in the ACT, over a number of years.

WINNER

ANET MARINOV **THE JUNCTION**

Anet has been working in the sector for 26 years, yet remains humble, passionate and empathetic in her work. Anet's passion for supporting young people has taken her through jobs with Bernardo's, Canteen, Northside, Our Place, and The Junction, working with young people in homelessness, case work, health and health education. Anet has been in the game long enough to watch 15 year olds in desperate circumstances grow into 25 year olds ageing out of our services with qualifications, families, homes and employment. There are many clients Anet still works with at The Junction that she has built relationships with over decades of different support and services. She is able to help young people navigate this sector with the wisdom of many years watching it grow and change. Anet's experience is invaluable at The Junction, where she is able to connect young people and staff with a range of services to provide wrap-around support. Most impressively, after 26 years in the field, Anet still approaches each day and each new young person with an incredible attitude and energy.

YOUTH COALITION STAFF ACKNOWLEDGMENT AWARD

This award is selected by the Youth Coalition staff team, and acknowledges an individual or group who have significantly contributed to young people in the ACT, the youth sector, and the work of the Youth Coalition of the ACT.

WINNER

GUGAN GULWAN YOUTH ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Gugan Gulwan is an Aboriginal youth centre located in the ACT suburb of Wanniasa. It works with its clients through a range of programs that go well beyond the services provided by most youth centres. They include a Drug and Alcohol/Mental Health program, a Child, Youth, Family Support Program, and a Reconnect Program to support young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Gugan Gulwan gives support to parents and the family unit, focusing on skills development for young people.

In 2019, the Youth Coalition has worked with Gugan Gulwan through the services improvement project, as well as other programs. Their exemplar practice and process to support young people and families has shone through. The Gugan Gulwan team are highly committed and dedicated to their work, and we particularly acknowledge the leadership of Kim Davison who received a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005 and is still in this important role 14 years later.

The Youth Coalition has chosen to acknowledge Gugan Gulwan with this award for their significant contribution to young people and their families in the ACT.

The Annual YOGIE Awards are a Youth Coalition of the ACT initiative, proudly supported by the ACT Government Community Services Directorate.

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