

ANTI-POVERTY AWARDS – RECOGNISING YOUNG AUSTRALIANS WORKING TO REDUCE POVERTY

Applications are now open for the Connections UnitingCare Anti-Poverty Awards. The Awards recognise young Australians between the ages of 16 and 30 who are making a contribution to the eradication of poverty, locally, nationally or internationally.

‘For the first time, this year we are opening the Awards to the whole country – previously they were only open to residents of Victoria and Tasmania. We’re very excited to see the growth of these Awards and to be able to recognise the contribution made by young people across the country to reduce poverty,’ said Matt Clear, Manager of Communications and Fundraising with Connections UnitingCare.

Established in 2004, the Awards aim to recognise, encourage and link young people who are working towards eradicating poverty by providing one recipient with a grant of up to \$4,000 to continue their work. Encouragement Awards up to the value of \$1000 are also available.

‘This is a great opportunity for young people to come forward and be recognised for their work to eradicate poverty – we know there’s a lot of people out there doing inspirational work in this area, we just need to hear from them,’ Mr Clear said.

In 2009, two Gippsland residents Sarah Elston and Caitlin Grigsby were announced as the main recipients of the Award in recognition of their efforts in overcoming poverty and supporting local women through their organisation, the Blue Stockings Association Inc.

‘[We] are incredibly humbled to be among the alumni of this amazing award, and the recipients of the runners-up awards are incredible themselves. To the panel, the board and the sponsors of this award, I would like to highlight what an injection of faith this has been for us...’ Caitlin said upon receiving the Award.

The 2008 Anti-Poverty Award was presented to a Somali refugee Abdulkadir Osman Muse. Thanks to the Connections UnitingCare Anti-Poverty Award, Abdul was able to continue campaigning for the rights of children in his homeland, maintain his community involvement and pursue university studies in human rights.

‘I want to thank Connections UnitingCare for giving me the opportunity to continue the work that I believe in on the fundamental rights of the child...’ Abdul said.

Connections works with marginalised and disadvantaged members of the community, providing intense family support for families (often with children) who are in crisis due to difficulties including drug and alcohol addiction, mental illness, experience of family violence and poverty. The organisation works to support clients to overcome social isolation and gain self-confidence and a sense of worth, working in partnership with clients to achieve positive outcomes and more broadly in the community to raise awareness about the issues associated with disadvantage and poverty.

‘These Awards would not be possible without the support we have received over the years from other community organisations who have publicised the Awards and by our supporters who recognise the importance of looking at the background cause for a number of important social issues. Poverty is a key and reoccurring issue that emerges for so many community organisations – it is a factor in the lives of so many people,’ said Mr Clear.

‘We would like to make specific mention of our supporters for the 2010 Awards. We are delighted to welcome UCA Funds Management and UnitingCare Victoria and Tasmania as key supporters and to have the ongoing support as key supporters from our friends at SHARE and the Commission for Mission, Uniting Church in Australia Synod of Victoria and Tasmania. We are also grateful for the on-going support of the Centre for Multicultural Youth and the City of Melbourne.’

The Connections UnitingCare Anti-Poverty Awards are supported by:

 <p>UCA FUNDS MANAGEMENT</p>	
	
	

More information on the Anti-Poverty Awards: www.connections.org.au/anti-poverty

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