

2009 ACT CHILDREN'S WEEK AWARDS

RECIPIENT

CITATION

<p>ANNA FOXCROFT Community for Children Award</p>	<p>Anna Foxcroft has been actively involved with the Weston Creek Playgroup Association in Chapman since 2003. She has served as Secretary, Convenor and President and her meetings are always a delight to attend.</p> <p>Anna has been involved in recruiting families through family fun days, local advertising and is always encouraging participation in playgroup committee work to ensure the tiny volunteer-run centre can continue year after year. Anna has worked tirelessly in the day to day running of the playgroup and has been instrumental in arranging working bees to maintain the garden, stocktakes of equipment, arranging Grants, upgrading facilities and coordinating clean up efforts after damage from vandals.</p> <p>The ACT Playgroups Association has often received feedback from parents who trusted Anna and loved working with her. She appears unaware that her welcoming smile, friendly and helpful attitude has endeared herself to so many. Anna has made strong friendships and will be greatly missed when her playgroup journey ends with her youngest daughter going to Primary school next year.</p> <p>Thank you Anna.</p>
<p>ADAM DUNCAN Child Development Award</p>	<p>Adam is studying to become an early childhood educator and is committed to make a real difference to the lives of both Australia's Indigenous and non-Indigenous children.</p> <p>Adam is working at the Wiradjuri Preschool Child Care Centre at the University of Canberra, where he also studies. He is one of several student teachers chosen to staff this innovative work integrated learning site because of his enthusiasm for working with very young children.</p> <p>Adam has integrated aspects of his cultural heritage into every aspect of Wiradjuri's learning program. The children have grown to love and respect him as an Indigenous educator and have also had the opportunity to learn and appreciate the richness of Indigenous culture through stories and rituals in an authentic and deeply meaningful way.</p> <p>This early positive exposure to genuine learning about Indigenous culture will, without doubt, position these children well to develop further positive and respectful relationships with Indigenous Australia.</p> <p>Adam's contribution to the lives of the children he teaches is extremely important, as we move towards realisation of true Reconciliation.</p>

<p>AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS & COMMUNITY NETWORK Significant Contribution Award</p> <p>Bankwest Commonwealth Bank Deloitte Ernst & Young Fuji Xerox Goldman Sachs JB Were IAG Jones Lang Lascelles KPMG Mallesons Medicate Australia Microsoft Minter Ellison Optus Price Waterhouse Coopers</p>	<p>Funded by its Business members, this network of 15 major ACT companies run a range of programs for young people. The mentors volunteer their time as part of their Company’s community engagement program.</p> <p>This year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 160 mentors from 13 companies are working with around 100 students to assist them with reading • 40 mentors from 9 companies work one-to-one with students in the GOALS mentoring program • 5 companies have opened their doors to around 100 students as part of the national Career Choice Day <p>These programs make a significant difference in the lives of students. Young people receive one-to-one reading sessions with mentors, improving their reading skills but also increasing self confidence, communication skills and motivation. The GOALS program for year 9 students provides students with a mentor, working with a range of life skills such as setting goals, communication, managing finances and preparation for the workforce. Students’ motivation for school, confidence, esteem and aspiration goals are all enhanced through participation in the program.</p> <p>These programs could not operate without the commitment and engagement of our ACT Australian Business & Community Network member companies and their staff. Their dedication is making a significant difference in our community.</p>
<p>BARBARA & DAVID RUGENDYKE Child Development Award</p>	<p>Barbara and David Rugendyke have been foster carers with Marymead since 1993. They recently adopted two of their foster children and another foster child is in the process of being adopted.</p> <p>Barbara and David currently have four more children and young people in long term foster care and currently have one child in short term care.</p> <p>Barbara and David have fostered over 80 infants, children and young people in short term care and have always been available at very short notice to provide a warm, caring and nurturing environment to a child or young person in need.</p> <p>Barbara and David have been nominated for this Child Development Award as they have contributed enormously to the physical, psychological, social and emotional development of the children and young people in their care and have assisted and supported each individual child and young person in reaching their potential.</p>

<p>JANE BAILEY AND ESTELLE WENN Youth Commitment Award</p>	<p>Jane Bailey and Estelle Wenn have been nominated for this Award by the Campbell High School community for their efforts to support other young people in our school.</p> <p>Jane and Estelle are prominent amongst our school student leadership group as they are committed to the school environment and community, including being trained as student Mental Health Ambassadors.</p> <p>Jane and Estelle are currently organising a ‘Stress Down’ day in the lead up to the busy assessment period. They approached the Pastoral Care Coordinator with their initial plan and have since worked together in planning a selection of activities for all the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A guest speaker from Lifeline to speak to year 9 and 10 students • A stress down media package and games for year 7 and 8 students • A celebration BBQ lunch for the whole school <p>Jane and Estelle are excellent ambassadors for our school and the school community believes their work should be recognised and celebrated with this Children’s Week Award.</p>
<p>RHONDA FOLEY Community for Children Award</p>	<p>Rhonda Foley has dedicated her adult life to improving the community for children in the ACT, both at her workplace and during her free time.</p> <p>Rhonda first became a Youth Leader of Junior Girl Guides in 1978 and has continued as Leader for the last 31 years. She has been an inspirational Leader for many from all walks of life, including those with a disability.</p> <p>Rhonda’s expertise has been recognised at a Region and State level, leading to her appointment to the ACT Region’s Junior Guide Committee where she became the inaugural ACT Region Program Adviser. She has recently completed a five year term on the State Program Committee where she was the Editor of a magazine for Junior Guides. Rhonda has also shared her many talents with other Leaders and has been a mentor to many, willingly sharing her time and the magnificent resources she has created.</p> <p>In her professional life Rhonda works as a part-time Assistant in the ACT Government School System where her skills have been recognised, leading to her involvement in more than just office duties. Currently Rhonda has set up and maintains her school’s computer laboratory, has created the school’s Website and has successfully applied for IT Grants for the school.</p> <p>Rhonda’s great sense of humour and wonderful smile are always present. She is respected and appreciated wherever she goes and is certainly deserving of recognition for her contribution to the children in the ACT.</p>

<p>VINCE BALL Significant Contribution Award</p>	<p>Vince Ball has created links between the Construction Industry and Latham Primary School to support student learning. Vince developed a school project where students constructed environmentally sustainable house models and learnt about the concept of sustainability and the types of careers that can be found in the construction industry. He organised guest speakers and experts from the ACT Construction Industry Training Council, Strine Design Architecture and the Manteena construction company to support this project.</p> <p>Vince came to the school to judge students' presentations, offering encouragement and feedback. He arranged for the top designs to be presented to Senator Lundy at Parliament House and presented all participants with an Industry Award.</p> <p>The open project format allowed all students to experience success with high inclusivity of students from the Senior Autism Unit, students with identified learning difficulties and students with ESL backgrounds. The project involved family members and the community through career discussions and academic support. The linking with the community was passionate and brought many family members into the classroom to discuss their involvement with the industry. This led to respect, family bonding and a wider understanding of community values.</p> <p>Vince Ball and the ACT Construction Industry Training Council have helped our students connect learning to the real world, enabling students to develop deep knowledge and experience the many benefits that come with success and achievement - a significant contribution.</p>
<p>YVONNE McGUINNESS Child Development Award</p>	<p>Yvonne McGuinness has been a valued carer with Marymead for the past 9 years, caring for a child with special needs full time, whom she considers as part of her family. Yvonne has also been available to care for children in a crisis situation. She has never refused a child in need of a home, regardless if it meant that her plans had to change.</p> <p>Yvonne is considered the most selfless and caring person. She has made an obvious difference to her foster child's life by giving him a home, love and the nurturing his family were not able to provide. She manages well with the difficulties of his disability and she never complains. In fact, Yvonne always has a smile on her face and a very infectious laugh.</p> <p>Yvonne has also provided a loving home to the other children in her care by providing them with a safe haven before they move on. She is a wonderful role model not only to the children but also to everyone who knows her, young and old.</p> <p>Everyone who has had the pleasure to meet Yvonne will agree that she definitely deserves the recognition of this Award.</p>

<p>GUNGAHLIN DAY VIEW CLUB Community for Children Award</p>	<p>The Gungahlin Day VIEW Club has been enthusiastic partners with the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre. Their community-oriented approach and understanding of the Gungahlin community have been crucial in their success and their delivery of essential services to those who would otherwise not have access to them.</p> <p>While the entire community benefits from the endeavours of the VIEW Club, children in particular are often the main recipients. The VIEW Club has made a significant contribution to children through the support they provide to local organizations and agencies. Their work endeavours to empower children with opportunities that they would otherwise very likely never experience.</p> <p>The Club make and donate blankets, clothes, beanies, scarfs and other necessities for the Centre, which are then distributed to families. They also support the Ngunnawal Homework Centre by making library bags for the children and donating the necessary stationery such as exercise books, textas, pencils, erasers, and activity books. They have also supported the Paint and Play Program and the Parents as Teachers Program.</p> <p>The VIEW Club is always available and ready and willing to do what they can to ensure children have equal access to toys, educational resources and basic needs. The VIEW Club is highly valued in our community, especially for their commitment and ability to better the lives of children and young people.</p>
<p>‘TINIES COACHING TEAM’ at Action Calisthenics Club Child Development Award</p>	<p>The coaching team is made up of coaches, cadets, team managers and costume managers - its prime aim is to coach girls between the ages of three and seven years. These amazing volunteers who are caring and motivated role models for the girls contribute substantial amounts of time.</p> <p>Important values are promoted: <i>Sportsmanship:</i> helping others and congratulating people who have done well <i>Caring for yourself:</i> helping the girls to learn to look after their bodies <i>Confidence:</i> to go on stage and perform <i>Teamwork:</i> working together to reach a shared goal</p> <p>Each year ACTION runs special events to raise money and train for specific events – all involving substantial commitment from members, parents/carers and coaches.</p> <p>The ACTION Callisthenics club provides powerful and positive role models for the girls in our community.</p>

<p>ROBINA JEFFS Child Development Award</p>	<p>Robina Jeffs spends a great deal of her own time to facilitate and implement the highly successful School Volunteer program, particularly at Latham Primary School.</p> <p>Robina takes the time with the volunteers to discover their particular skills and interests and then carefully moulds these to the particular educational and social needs of the students selected for the program. A retired historian was encouraged to organize a History extension course for the students. The students not only excelled in the presentation of their work but developed public speaking skills, leading to students presenting at the ‘Capital Kids Capital Leaders’ Conference in the ACT.</p> <p>Recently a new volunteer wanted to help the children learn through his skills in Wood Working and within a few weeks a Wood Working course emerged. Together with Robina’s teaching skills, enthusiasm and expertise, a group of students began to make beautiful wooden toys. Now there is a waiting list of schools wanting Wood Working at <i>their</i> school!</p> <p>Robina has created a model of how the School Volunteer Program can be effectively supported in a school. She has been invited to lead a workshop for teachers on achieving the maximum learning outcomes for the students exposed to this program.</p> <p>Through her patience, empathy and professionalism, Robina has created an environment in which volunteers are encouraged to share their wisdom and skills to enrich the learning of students. Parents and students alike appreciate Robina’s dedication to ‘making a difference’.</p>
<p>DANIEL CUMMINS Child Development Award</p>	<p>Daniel, almost single-handedly, developed the idea and organised a most successful and really enjoyable day for Heart Kids – children born with heart problems.</p> <p>Daniel’s young brother, William, died from congenital heart disease. William really loved cars. His collection of more than 200 toy cars is still kept in the family cabinet.</p> <p>The Event was held at the Time Trial Race Track at Fairburn Park and the children were able to have rides in the cars – they really loved that!</p> <p>As well as being fun, the event raised approximately \$4,000 for HeartKids – Australia’s sole charity focused on childhood heart disease. The Event was featured in all the local papers and on WIN TV.</p> <p>It would have been William’s 21st Birthday – Daniel hopes that this event will help to raise money for heart disease research so that other children with the illness can live to see theirs.</p>

KAREN WATSON
Child Development Award

Karen Watson is an Early Childhood Professional employed with the Department of Education for over 20 years, who advocates for the rights of all children. She has held a range of positions from Preschool teacher, Executive Officer for Preschool Services, Executive Officer for Early Years of Learning, Early Intervention teacher and Resource teacher.

Karen has carried out all her positions professionally. She has a warm affinity with parents, children, staff and community members. She desperately cares what happens to children and is able to create an environment to develop the best outcomes for children.

Karen and a colleague developed the Science and Play program, involving running workshops and supporting preschools to set up science environments for their Preschools.

Karen has the greatest respect for families and their right to make their own decisions about their children, especially families from the Koori Preschools.

Karen has been a fantastic mentor for her Early Childhood colleagues – she listens to their concerns, advises and supports them to make the right choices for children. Her colleagues sincerely appreciate Karen and her years of dedication and service to Early Childhood and to children.

SARAH WALSH
Endeavour Award

When Sarah joined the 1st Wanniasa Guide group over two years ago she walked with the aid of a frame, but would not let this stop her taking part in every activity, even tracking and games. We were enthralled when she played the flute for us and we Leaders soon came to appreciate her wicked sense of humour and unlimited enthusiasm.

Sarah has muscular dystrophy and since then she has reached a point where she is confined to a wheelchair. She can no longer hold her flute but must rest it on her chair – but the music she makes is lovely still.

Sarah still joins in all the activities of the Guide Unit, even using the handles of her trusty bush-basher motorised chair to carry rubbish when we did a clean-up walk. She may no longer be able to tie the knots but she has infinite patience in showing the younger Guides how to do this while keeping an eye on their work.

At the start of this year the other girls voted Sarah into the position of Patrol Leader. She never complains or expects help but quietly works out how SHE can achieve her goals.

Sarah leads by example, having gained more badges than any other girl in the Unit, but she also helps the other girls bring out the best in themselves.

Sarah is organised, kind and helpful to the younger Guides and a real asset to her Guide Leaders.

We know we can rely on Sarah...always.

<p>THE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM Child Development Award</p>	<p>Since 1973 the Instrumental Music Program has provided students in ACT Public Schools with the opportunity to learn musical instruments in a supportive and professionally resourced school context.</p> <p>Bands form in Years 5 and 6 in over 55 Primary Schools each year. These Bands also make a substantial contribution to their school through performance at school and in the wider community.</p> <p>Students receive instrument, music and tuition access at a fraction of the cost when compared with private arrangements.</p> <p>Students from Years 6 to 12 also have access to extension ensembles and a broad range of further performance opportunities. These include four Concert Bands, one Jazz Band and one Flute Ensemble. These Bands perform free of charge at Departmental, school and community events such as the RSL ANZAC Service and Floriade. They perform in the ACT, nationally and internationally, working together to share their joy of music.</p> <p>Since 1973 over 24,194 students have acquired musical skills and had the opportunity to learn valuable life skills through their involvement in this program. These opportunities have not only provided career paths for many students but also lifelong learning experience through music.</p> <p>The Instrumental Music Program has made a significant difference to the lives of so many children and young people in the ACT.</p>
--	---

<p>JENNIFER MUIR Community for Children, Child Development Award</p>	<p>Jennifer Muir has been actively involved in the ACT community and national volunteering activities for over twenty years.</p> <p>Jennifer’s role as the serving President of the School Volunteer Program - ACT Inc. is testament to her belief in providing enrichment opportunities that enhance the education experience for students. Jennifer is a considerate, passionate, articulate and a driven woman who continues to tirelessly volunteer and strive for excellence.</p> <p>The School Volunteer Program aims to harness Canberra’s considerable corporate, academic and government talent and channel this into ACT public schools through their mentoring program. The Governor-General of Australia launched the Program in 2005, which included little more than 10 volunteers, including the committee members. Just over four years later, through Jennifer’s commitment, the membership has increased to over 110 volunteers, 10 committee members, and 110 students from 24 participating schools.</p> <p>As President, Jennifer goes far beyond the day to day Presidential requirements of the School Volunteer Program. She has</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gained financial support from Government and obtained sponsorship • lifted the profile of the Program through proactively engaging the media • created the Communications Committee, allowing development of resources, publications and a website • created community partnerships with the ACT Department of Education and Training and the Australian Education Union – assisting many schools to become involved. <p>Jennifer recognises that time is a valuable resource and countless hours of her time have been donated in order to see the continuation of this program. On average she would donate over 15 hours per week - including mentoring, meeting with corporate organisations, meetings, correspondence etc.</p> <p>Jennifer Muir has given so much and is an inspiration to us all.</p>
---	---

<p>KATHERINE GAMACK Endeavour Award</p>	<p>Katherine Gamack, a Year 12 at Melba Copland Secondary School, is a dedicated student who demonstrates maturity, responsibility and commitment and has been nominated for this Award for her outstanding contribution to the school community.</p> <p>Katherine is a humble young lady who shoulders her responsibilities without question, provides support to other students and is admired by staff and students alike. She has shown great skill to adapt to any circumstance. Other than her fulltime Year 12 study responsibilities Katherine has a part time job in a supervisory role at the workplace where she now trains other colleagues.</p> <p>In conjunction with her official role on the Student Representative Council, where Katherine has coordinated many charity events, she has offered her own time to assist students in the Life Skills Course. This Course includes students with a disability, refugee students, students with English as a second language and students from non-English speaking backgrounds. Katherine has demonstrated a passion and commitment to helping these students.</p> <p>Katherine has contributed endless hours of voluntary work, planning, organising and delivering a range of activities within the International Baccalaureate Program – support for RSPCA, Relay for Life, St Vincent de Paul, Salvation Army, Brain Injury Foundation, Cancer and Hospital Foundations, to name a few.</p> <p>Katherine is a generous, caring, responsible young lady who is an inspiration to others and deserves recognition for her voluntary work, advocacy and being a role model for other young people.</p>
--	--

<p>MICHAEL POTTINGER Child Development Award</p>	<p>Michael was one of the first members of the Dads Together Playgroup. He felt it was important to have a group that men would feel comfortable attending with their children. When the group began in 2006 it was support by ACT Playgroups staff, but even then Michael was very proactive in making the group the success it is today.</p> <p>Michael does a fantastic job of making new dads feel welcome. He is very good at encouraging development and socialisation of young children and supporting and assisting other dads. He encourages the dads and their children to get involved with physical activities, often using home made resources, craft and music – he has been known to bring his guitar to playgroup for music time!</p> <p>Michael is supportive of ACT Playgroups need to promote playgroups and is often happy to help by being interviewed by government agencies. He was happy to be interviewed and questioned about his role in the success of the Dads Together Playgroup and about how he felt it was important for Dads to have a group of their own.</p> <p>Michael has put a lot of effort into sustaining this group so that it now has twelve regular families and 15 children. The success of the Dads Together Playgroup is due to Michael’s hard work and dedication. For many dads in the Canberra community it is a lifesaver and the highlight of the week for the children who attend each session.</p>
<p>IAN BOPFT AND TREVOR PARKINSON Community for Children Award</p>	<p>Latham Primary School has nominated Ian Bopft and Trevor Parkinson for their significant contribution to the children of the School, in particular, the children in the Autism Unit. Following invitations from the teacher, both Ian and Trevor responded to being involved with the school’s activities.</p> <p>Ian Bopft, a bus driver for ACTION Buses, brings students with Autism to the school. He has displayed a commitment to the students beyond that which could be expected. Ian is a positive male influence in the lives of the students. In his own time he has attended the classroom to support a particular student.</p> <p>Trevor Parkinson is an attendant on the ACTION bus which brings children with Autism to the school. Along with Ian, Trevor has been a very positive male role model for the students. In his own time he has attended an Open Day in the classroom and also a Father’s Day Breakfast.</p> <p>The school feels very lucky to have Ian and Trevor as part of Latham Primary School community.</p> <p>We join with the school in thanking them both for their exceptional contribution.</p>

KEENAN LARKMAN
Outstanding Courage
and Endeavour Award

Keenan Larkman is a Year 12 student at Melba Copland Secondary School. He is a dedicated student who demonstrates maturity, responsibility and commitment.

Seventeen years ago Keenan's father became a quadriplegic. Keenan plays an integral part in his father's care and support for the family, beyond what would be expected of any person his age.

Other than his caring and fulltime Year 12 studies, Keenan holds down two part time jobs and has been promoted to a supervisory role at each workplace where he now trains other colleagues. He is also involved in his own business which operates on weekends and holidays.

Keenan is an unassuming young man who shoulders his responsibilities without question, provides support to other students and is admired by staff and students alike.

In spite of his enormous responsibilities, Keenan has many achievements, including:

- ACT Representative at Australian National Young Carer's Action Team for the last 2 years – meeting with a selected group of other carers from across Australia to discuss policies and issues affecting young carers
- Achieving high results in his Year 12 studies in a diverse range of subjects
- Commitment to the Student Representative Council
- Attending a Carers Summit Conference as a guest at Parliament House

Keenan is committed to supporting the Young Carers Association and attends camps and outings as the leader of 'Young Oldie'. He mentors younger carers who are experiencing similar issues and is greatly admired by his peers and management.

Keenan is an inspiration to others and a fine example of what one can achieve in spite of life's challenges.