

Diversity Award Ceremony Finalists and Winners
14 September 2016 Strangers Dining Room NSW Parliament House
Sydney

Finalists for 'Empowers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women in a community or organisation in Australia Category

Coming in 3rd Place for the category Empowers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women in a community or organisation in Australia is Diversity Champion Amelia Telford from Victoria and Angel Owen from Qld as the Woman Benefiting.

Amelia Telford created Seed, Australia's first Indigenous Youth Climate Network aiming to build a movement of Indigenous young people to be leaders of a more just and sustainable future. Seed empowers young women and encourages them to take leadership roles in campaigns to protect the land, culture and communities from climate change and be a part of creating positive values change. Angel Owen is a Butchulla woman from Fraser Island who benefited from Seed as it enabled her to have a national voice. Through networking and public speaking she has role modelled for other indigenous women how to create change in their communities and continues to gain from Seed's strong support networks of indigenous women.

Coming in 2nd Place for this category is Diversity Champion Roxanne Smith from Queensland and Ljudan (pronounced Udan) Michaelis-Thorpe from NSW as the Woman Benefiting. Roxanne Smith has been instrumental in providing empowered outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women through her work and her directorship in Aboriginal community organisations. One example is the Jarjums on Country Initiative which set out to empower indigenous women to be strong in their culture, to pass it on to their children and to know that they deserve to be heard, to be seen, to sing to each other and to be leaders in their community. Another example is 'Planting the Seeds,' an early childhood development program for Indigenous families that led to the creation of the new Aboriginal Corporation 'Gan'na Aboriginal Corporation' that empowered the leadership of women in the Project who came on board as Directors. Udan Michaelis-Thorpe was the Program co-ordinator for Jarjums on Country who found this experience increasing her self-esteem and capacity to

financially support her family. Under Roxanne's guidance, Udan completed her University Degree, stepped into the business arena and became a successful entrepreneur and change-maker, giving back to her community and following in the footsteps of Roxanne.

The Winner of this category is Diversity Champion Marriette Cowley from WA and Nanala Winifred also from WA as the Woman Benefiting.

Beyond its basic mandate to provide family violence legal services, the Aboriginal Family Legal Services (AFLS) in Western Australia, under the guidance of Marriette Cowley has designed and implemented numerous innovative programs throughout regional WA to educate and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children. Marriette's holistic approach has ensured client assistance included emergency accommodation, financial support, assistance with transportation and referrals to other specialist services. As the former CEO, Marriette has strengthened and expanded AFLS within the State and challenged the governments to ensure that family and domestic violence is on their immediate agenda and that funding, leadership and advocacy is available to support services to vulnerable and disadvantaged people who may be subject to such. Winifred Nanala, an Aboriginal elder from Balgo a small Aboriginal community in Western Australia that is linked with both the Great Sandy Desert and the Tanami Desert, benefited from the support and assistance provided by AFLS to overcome the financial difficulties she faced as a result of her ex-partners actions. Being the sole provider for her family, Winifred's search for assistance was no longer met with disrespect and unfair restrictions when she articulated the challenges she faced to AFLS. Through their respectful support and assistance, Winifred has been able to take care of her children and her family and has grown in confidence in utilising their support when she needs it.

Finalists for the 'Empowers Women in a community or organisation' category

Coming in 3rd Place for this category is Diversity Champion The Gender Equity in Science Committee (GEiSC) at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research in Victoria and Associate Professor Marnie Blewitt from Victoria as the Woman Benefiting.

The Gender Equity in Science Committee (GEiSC) at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research (WEHI) was formed in early 2010 to learn what new strategies could be adopted and what barriers to advancement needed to be removed, to help female scientists realize their full potential. A major activity of the committee was the preparation of the case for obtaining a child-care centre on-site or nearby. This was approved in December 2015 as the Committee also lobbied to obtain family and lactation rooms, meeting and travel support for women, technical support while on maternity leave, additional time for contract

renewal, family-friendly meeting times, and more flexible working. As a result of all of the Committee's efforts, women have been encouraged and supported to combine research and family responsibilities and the number of female laboratory heads at WEHI has grown in response, from 10 in 2009 to 25 in 2016. Associate Professor Marnie Blewitt benefited from the child care subsidy for those with pre-school children in multiple ways over the past 6 years enabling her to attend several International and Interstate conferences to establish essential connections and collaborations with other scientists in her field. The child care subsidy allowed her to take her infant and pre-school age children and her husband to care for their children and also contributed to her day-to-day childcare costs. Marnie Blewitt has indicated that she values this incredible level of support which has positively influenced her outlook on having the dual roles of a laboratory head and a mother.

Coming in 2nd Place for this category is Diversity Champion Sonia McDonald from Queensland and Shelley-Anne Brace from Queensland as the Woman Benefiting.

While working in the mining and construction industries Sonia McDonald realised how few women held leadership roles, and that this was common across many other industries. Deciding to make sure that women knew they could be effective leaders, she designed and presented innovative leadership programs such as empowHER, which teach women to respect the innate leadership skills, they have and confidently use them to be strong leaders. Sonia's empowHER and Women Leadership Experience Programs focus on the individual leader as well as collective leadership as women, and promotes sustainable leadership by encouraging participants to apply their skills in the workplace which has resulted in the discovery and mentoring of emerging female leaders. Shelley-Anne Brace who is a senior legal professional was a participant in Sonia McDonald's course in late 2014. She benefited from Sonia's facilitation of the course as it encouraged her to appreciate her strengths as a person and as a professional. It also reinforced her understanding into how thoughts and feelings can influence behaviours.

The Winner of this category is Diversity Champion Cynthia Balogh from Victoria and Catherine Cervasio also from Victoria as the Woman Benefiting.

Cynthia Balogh established Women in Global Business (WIGB). WIGB aims to increase the proportion of Australian women-led businesses that export, as data indicates that women conduct international business at lower rates than the SME sector generally. WIGB is a national program that offers women a central source of information and resources, support and connection and advocates on their behalf. Programs and services include skills and capacity building workshops, mentoring, seminars designed to highlight selected international markets, showcasing experienced female exporters as role models to inspire the pipeline of the next generation of women exporters, encouraging women to attend trade missions and to apply for export awards. As a woman in business who began when there was little support, in 1994, Catherine Cervasio set out to find an environment where she felt comfortable to speak out about her experiences that could in turn help to empower other

women to understand some of the specific challenges women face and develop strategies to overcome these. Her involvement with WIGB for a number of years has provided her with a variety of opportunities to both network and share lessons and experiences with like-minded business women through a range of events including presenting her own story on stage across - Australia and in Jakarta. She values that WIGB has provided her with a supportive and personalised environment to empower other women.

Finalists for the 'Empowers CALD Women in a community or organisation' Category

Coming in 3rd Place for this category is Diversity Champion The Olivetree Women's Network from NSW and Indra Yanti from NSW as the Woman Benefiting.

The Olivetree Women's Network (OWN) aims to link women from CALD backgrounds to opportunities where they can realise their potential whether it be in employment, education, training or simply connecting to new social circles. Hundreds of young women have benefited from exposure to the network and the activities that OWN organises, including its mentoring and leadership camps, which have given participants the self-confidence and support to achieve their career and educational goals. Participants have gone on to becoming Girl Guides leaders, youth ambassadors, surfers, volunteers, and documentary makers. OWN has also helped participants to forge careers in areas including sports management, nursing, computer science, and youth development.

Indra Yanti's business entitled, "Indra's Creative Balloon" business began as a direct result of the support she gained from The Olive Tree Network's Founder, Fatima Kourouche who encouraged her to undertake a "How to start your own business" course as she knew that she could twist a balloon to entertain children. Indra has progressed from offering her balloon twisting service at parties to doing it at the season festival of Strathfield Council so I can offered my balloon twisting service at their seasonal festival. Indra is well on her way to reach her next goal to become a real entertainer for everyone, especially children.

Coming in 2nd Place for this category is Diversity Champion Tenneh Kpaka from NSW and Najeeba Wasefadost from NSW as the Woman Benefiting.

Through her work with the Australian National Committee on Refugee Women (ANCORW) Tenneh Kpaka has spearheaded a number of projects designed to empower women from

CALD backgrounds to participate in communities at a leadership level. She identified an under-representation of female leaders and decided to bring about change by training young women to take up leadership roles with ANCORW using workshops and a mentoring program that encouraged young women to take ownership of their direction and develop their own ideas. Her initiatives have primarily focused on cultivating leadership skills and human rights awareness in young women through organised activities and mentorship. Najeeba Wasefadost benefited through the training provided by ANCORW enhancing her capacity to represent the refugee community and lead CALD women in NSW, gain training in the area of Domestic violence in a refugee context and undertake a University degree. ANCORW sponsored her to represent the organisation in UNHCR in Geneva from 2006 – 2014. In 2016 Najeeba opened the stage in UNHCR Geneva for refugee women to tell their stories.

The winner of the category, 'Empowers Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Women in a Community or Organisation in Australia' is Diversity Champion Hazara Women of Australia from NSW and Ansia Muradi from NSW as the Woman Benefiting. Hazara Women of Australia (HWA) is a not-for-profit organisation with the fundamental objective of creating a healthy, peaceful atmosphere and safe environment for the Afghan community, particularly for women who have experienced war and persecution. Initially founded by a group of high school friends who wanted to help their mothers, HWA runs regular activities and initiative that aim to empower Afghan women, with the eventual goal of increasing their access to employment and educational opportunities and reducing social isolation. Najeeba Wasefadost is also the President of Hazara Women of Australia. An Afghan refugee herself, Najeeba and her family fled the Taliban's genocidal massacres of the Hazara ethnic minority when she was 12. She arrived in Australia by boat with her parents, four siblings and two uncles in September 2000. Ansia Muradi has benefited from joining Hazara Women of Australia. When she came to Australia as an Afghan refugee woman, she had experienced torture and trauma in her country. She had 2 children and her husband had passed away in the war. Not being able to speak English, she felt lonely and isolated. Hazara Women of Australia enabled her to socialise with people and gave her the encouragement and skills to set goals. Her English skills improved and she started studying a diploma of early childhood and education through Hazara Women of Australia. She also started her own home catering business. Soon she will get her learners drivers license.

Finalists for the 'Empowers Women with a Disability in a community or organisation' Category

Coming in 3rd Place for this category is Diversity Champion Dagmar Jenkins from Victoria and a woman with a disability whose name cannot be released as the Woman Benefiting. For people to disclose sexual assault they need to have the capacity to communicate and also a person to tell what has happened to them. Under the leadership of Dagmar Jenkins, the Making Rights Reality (MRR) program set out to assist people with cognitive impairment and communication difficulties, report sexual assault. The program has increased referrals to the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (SECASA). In 2014, the initiative was evaluated by La Trobe University, School of Allied Health which recommended that the Making Rights Reality program be rolled out across Victoria and that the Program continue at (SECASA) and Springvale Monash Legal Service with continued funding. Dagmar Jenkins has enabled SECASA to provide an enhanced accessible service and receive referrals. As clients in the Making Rights Reality Program all have cognitive impairments and come to SECASA for sexual assault counselling, this is not an area where clients want their names released publicly. As such, the name and details of the Woman Benefiting is being withheld.

Coming in 2nd Place for this category is Diversity Champion Carly Findlay from Victoria and Kyrie Fuss from South Australia as the Woman Benefiting.

Ichthyosis is a chronic and rare skin condition. Carly Findlay organised Australia's inaugural Ichthyosis meeting in Melbourne in May 2015 - bringing together 75 people affected by this condition to share in discussions, education, information and enjoyment. People for the first time met with other affected individuals who could understand each other's stories. Families with affected individuals across Australia and New Zealand are now connected as one big family. Carly's tenacity, prodigious work ethic and passion for life has seen her demonstrate that diversity is to be celebrated and people who appear to have some limitations should be recognised for what they contribute. Kyrie Fuss had attended Carly Findlay's inaugural Ichthyosis meeting. As a result of the event, she gained confidence in speaking to others about the condition. She wanted to be a part of this community instead of living her life isolated from others with ichthyosis. Kyrie now speaks to children growing up with the condition and encourages their parents who are learning about the type of ichthyosis their child has. Following Carly's example, Kyrie continues to give to the community what she herself was unable to access as a child, and is proud of her achievements.

The winner of the Empowers Women with a Disability in a Community or Organisation in Australia category is Diversity Champion, Women with Disabilities Victoria (WDV) and Samantha Winch as the Woman Benefiting.

Women with Disabilities Victoria (WDV) has raised the status of women with disabilities, providing a voice for their representation in inquiries, research, policies and legislation; empowering women with disabilities to be leaders; and providing professional education for

violence prevention. WDV programs uphold the rights of women with disabilities, and address their social and economic exclusion and violence. As such WDV programs have effected organisational and personal change, increasing opportunities for employment and community participation of women with disabilities. WDV's systemic advocacy has gone further in influencing foundational state policies on Violence Against Women, making Victoria a leader. Women with disabilities drive WDV, in governance, design, development and delivery. It's statewide membership of over 300 women are informed of opportunities such as leadership programs and representation roles. WDV plans to scale up the Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program and expand its Enabling Women Leadership Program. Samantha Winch has been involved with the Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program and has found that having a job as a Co-facilitator for the Program has given her a purpose and the chance to grow and help others. As a woman who has experienced violence and lives with disabilities, she values this Program as she was not aware of the systemic violence she had experienced as part of her care and blamed herself for it. She has learnt as a result of WDV's program that it was not her fault and that she was targeted because of her disabilities. Gaining skills and the confidence for self-advocacy and an understanding of her rights, and working as the Program's Co-Facilitator, Samantha Winch aims to help others so that they do not experience violence and if they do, are able to identify it as violence, and seek services they need to help them feel safe again.

Finalists for the 'Empowers Older Women in a community or organisation' Category

The Winner of the Category, Empowers Older Women in a Community or Organisation in Australia Category is Diversity Champion, Fay Hair and Kath Nelson as the Woman Benefiting, both from NSW.

Fay Hair is being recognised for her initiative to build a connection with asylum seekers and the community. Fay has offered the community of the Parish of Saint John Bosco in Engadine, concrete simple ways to connect with asylum seekers. She organised the Sydney Alliance Assylum Seeker Table Talks program to Change the Conversation about Asylum Seekers in May 2015. This led to the community forming relationships with people seeking asylum through initiatives such as Community Kitchens and hosting picnics in the Royal National Park. Through Fay's leadership, older women of the community have been empowered to lead by making a real difference to the lives of people seeking asylum and have learnt to appreciate and value different cultures. Fay is now Co-chair of the People Seeking Asylum Team and facilitates the program in many different organisations throughout Sydney. Kath Nelson was a participant in the The Asylum Seeker Table Talks. As

such, she not only became aware of the range of activities Fay Hair had initiated to assist asylum seekers, but also began to see that although she couldn't change the world, she needed to do something positive to make all people feel welcome. Kath Nelson has since taken on a leadership role in organising a succession of picnics for Assylum Seekers with a team of other individuals and a list of growing community sponsors.

Winner of the 'Empowers LGBTIQ women in a community or organisation in Australia'

The Winner of the Category, Empowers LGBTIQ Women in a Community or Organisation in Australia Category is Diversity Champion, Rachel Nicolson from Victoria and Regan Barker from Victoria as the Woman Benefiting.

In 2011, Allens created the ALLin network, an internal network that provides opportunities for Allens' LGBTIQ partners, employees and allies to build relationships with each other, their clients and the wider community. Rachel Nicolson was integral in the establishment of ALLin and is central to its continuing success supporting Allens to become the first major Australian law firm to publicly support marriage equality. Rachel was also integral to Allens' assistance of the Australian Marriage Equality organisation's intervention in the Federal Government's High Court challenge against the ACT's Marriage Equality Act, through which the High Court recognised the Federal Government's Constitutional power to legislate on same-sex marriage. ALLin enables Allens to assist in providing an inclusive workplace where diversity, including identifying as LGBTIQ, is celebrated. Since joining Allens, Regan Barker has thrived in this organisation as she feels that she has a safe, empowering and inclusive environment to be her 'authentic self.' Through Rachel's encouragement to lead by example to reinforce the importance of ALLin's strategy, Regan Barker has participated in and driven many of ALLin's initiatives including client engagement, promoting LGBTIQ awareness and conducting research in identifying charity partnership opportunities. Regan also mentors LGBTIQ university students and has joined a LGBTIQ philanthropic group to address barriers such as homelessness.

Finalists for the 'Empowers Women Experiencing Disadvantage in a community or organisation' Category'

Coming in 3rd Place for this category is Diversity Champion Natalie Scanlon from Victoria and Aarch Parekh also from Victoria as the Woman Benefiting.

Natalie Scanlon is the Director of Written Communications which aims to help vulnerable women within low socio-economic areas obtain employment, and gain self-confidence through the implementation of one-on-one Communication Mentoring Sessions. The mentoring sessions involve drafting, editing and executing letters, resumes and employment related documents to help build confidence, and help women gain employment. On average, Written Communications helps 8 women per month by providing one-on-one Employment related, Communication Mentoring sessions at the Balla Balla Community Centre. Aarch Parekh benefited from Natalie's mentorship and assistance in gaining self-confidence and learning the tools and techniques for applying for different jobs and managing job interviews. Aarch has expressed in her application that Natalie Scanlon has quote "helped me with my inner self esteem and made me realise my own skills, value and expertise."

We have a tie in 2nd Place for this category, Empowering Women Experiencing Disadvantage. Diversity Champion DVNSW and Woman Benefiting, Kay Schubach from NSW secure 2nd place in this Category.

Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW) works to empower women and their children to live their lives safe and free from violence, and specialises in providing a comprehensive range of support and advocacy services including, but not limited to: outreach, safety planning and support, case management support, advocacy, court assistance, housing and legal assistance, information, training and referrals. DVNSW recognised in Kay the ability to change the DV dialogue. She was articulate and educated and presented a chilling story which testified that DV can happen in any demographic. She was willing to tell her story to help other women recognise the covert symptoms of abuse and to realise there was no shame. Kay has brought amazing, inspiring, empowering change to many women's lives throughout Australia sharing her experiences in media and in public forums. She is an Ambassador and Patron for two women's shelters or family services groups, a Champion for White Ribbon and last year was Top 10 in Social Development and NFP in the Westpac/Fairfax Women of Influence 2015. Kay Schubach works with the sector to influence change across corporations, politics and judiciary.

Also coming 2nd in this category are Diversity Champion, Merredith Hillebrand and Peggy Maxwell as Woman Benefiting. Both are from Victoria.

The Transition to Work (TTW) Program was developed and managed by Merredith Hillebrand in 2010 for Fitted for Work. TTW is a 6 month integrated pre-employment training program enabling unemployed women who are experiencing disadvantage and multiple

barriers to transition into sustainable employment. The Program consists of Life Skills Training, Mentor Support and practical workplace opportunities. Since its inception in 2010, more than 560 women have completed TTW. Results show that 97% of participants who complete the Program report increased self-confidence, social inclusion and job readiness and 98% of community referral agents say they would continue to refer women to Fitted For Work. 50% of women go on to get work within 3 months. Peggy Maxwell completed the Transition to Work Program and found that the course built her confidence and capacity to take control and move forward. She now has a permanent position as National Administration Assistant/Receptionist at Fitted for Work after a series of volunteering work opportunities in Fitted for Work which confirmed her belief and commitment to the organisation.

The Winner of the category, Empowering Women Experiencing Disadvantage in communities and Organisations in Australia is Diversity Champion, Women and Mentoring (WAM) in Victoria and Juli Gansberg from Victoria.

Women and Mentoring (WAM) undertook research in response to the steady increase in women being processed by the criminal justice system in Victoria and identified a gap that existed between the time of a woman being charged and the time of her court appearance. Seeing this as a window of opportunity for a program that could help to overcome women's isolation and vulnerability, with seed funding, WAM developed a pilot program in inner-city Melbourne and connected with community and justice organisations to refer women to the program and also offer services. WAM aimed to help women avoid prison, stop re-offending, tackle issues underlying their offending and get their lives back on track. To date, results show that 97% of WAM's participants have avoided prison and 94% have avoided re-offending. The pilot program has been expanded in the Western suburbs of Melbourne and WAM is negotiating with the State Government to fund the program on a recurrent basis and expand it into other Magistrate Courts across Victoria. Juli Gansberg was referred to the WAM program and with the support and assistance of her mentor from WAM, Prue Gill, Juli has gained self-confidence and managed to deal with day-to-day challenges and overcome personal barriers to take control of her life.

Finalists for the 'Empowers Rural, Remote and Regional Women in a community or organisation' Category

Coming in 3rd Place for this category is Diversity Champion Energy Skills Queensland and Koorine Walker & Malvena Walker also from Queensland as the Women Benefiting.

Energy Skills Queensland has facilitated training and employment to participants in the Indigenous Funding Pool Programme, the Queensland Workforce Skilling Strategy, the Indigenous Employment Project and the Vocational Training and Employment Centres programme. Energy Skills Queensland partnered with industry, community based organisations and developed relationships with Indigenous organisations as well as with Traditional Owner Groups in each region including the Western WakaWaka, Western Downs Group and Mandandanji. Energy Skills Queensland is reminded on a daily basis through good news stories that this program has provided well needed employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Encouraging employment success rates of 63% in these programmes confirms the effectiveness of Energy Skills Queensland in this area. Sisters Koorine and Malvena Walker completed the Certificate II in Oil and Gas through the Queensland Workforce Skilling Strategy programme, giving them a start to commence a full time Traineeship with Curragh Queensland Mining Pty Ltd in 2015. Koorine Walker's Traineeship is in Coal Handling Operations and Malvena Walker's is in Resource Processing.

Coming in 2ⁿ^d Place for this category is Diversity Champion Robyn Bull from Queensland and Natalie McKirdy also from Qld as the Woman Benefiting.

Robyn Bull established the strategic plan for Wonder of Science program to break down the gender bias that exists in 'traditional science' and science education, and to directly target the inequities in educational achievements between Australian girls and boys and between students in metropolitan areas and those living in rural and remote areas, particularly amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Evaluation of The Wonder of Science program shows that the program is building a more inclusive STEM culture in regional, rural and remote Queensland schools and is positively impacting student achievement in science, and changing traditional perceptions about science, and the role of females in science. Natalie McKirdy is a Wonder of Science Young Science Ambassador who has built her capacity through this program and Robyn Bull's training to share her passion for Science with under-resourced and geographically isolated teachers and students in rural, remote and regional Queensland. She now has the role of Lead Ambassador, assisting in selection and training of new Ambassadors and facilitates professional development for rural educators. As a confident woman pursuing a career in Science communication, Natalie McKirdy has been recognised by STEM state level competitions.

The Winner of this category is Diversity Champion Lisa Kennewell from South Australia and Dr Nayana Parange also from South Australia as the Woman Benefiting.

Lisa Kennewell created the inaugural Winnovation Awards during her time as President of the Board of Women in Innovation SA (WINN). The Winnovation Awards were created to showcase and honour the successes of female innovators dedicated to challenging the known or solving the unknown in South Australia. Their fields of endeavour range from art to zoos; diving into the ocean; scanning the stars above; or caring for the land in between. The Awards have empowered women intrapreneuers and entrepreneurs making a difference in rural, regional and remote communities in SA and has also recognised businesses who support the state's innovative women. Dr Nayana Parange won a Winnovation Award in 2015 for leading the development of an innovative education and training model for primary healthcare providers to improve pregnancy outcomes in rural and remote aboriginal communities. Winning this award raised awareness of maternal and child health in rural, regional and remote communities and also raised Dr Parange's academic, clinical and professional standing in South Australia. She is currently working on grants to develop the volunteering outreach further.