



Governor's Multicultural Awards 2017 Award Recipients

Outstanding Individual Achievement Award

Mr Keyvan Abak

Keyvan Abak left Iran at the age of 15. He came to Australia by himself to avoid persecution of both himself and his family for being members of the Sabian Mandaean community. While still at school Keyvan began his work with newly arrived refugees. He worked with young people, many of whom had lost parents and relatives. His own experience was invaluable in his role of helping other young refugees.

Keyvan's achievements are too numerous to detail in this recognition of him. He speaks five languages, which has enabled him to assist many refugees to navigate the bureaucracy which they face when they arrive in Australia.

Keyvan developed a program called the African and Middle Eastern Young People's Program. As a result, many young refugees who risked becoming disconnected from the community not only became connected, but became leaders assisting others. He has been active assisting indigenous young people who have experienced difficulties in their lives, and has become a major influence in advocating to Caucasian students and educating them in understanding the issues facing African students. He has been recognised for his extensive work, receiving numerous awards including the Leadership Excellence Award in 2012, the Premier's Reading Challenge Ambassadorship and the White Ribbon Ambassadorship.

In his spare time, Keyvan is a champion boxer, and a junior South Australian boxing champion.

Keyvan is an exceptional person, who exhibits selflessness, passion, and unbounded energy in his pursuit of assisting refugees and others, and is a worthy recipient of the Outstanding Individual Achievement Award.

Arts and Culture Award - Individual

Mr Fahim Hashimy

With a rich suite of community, film and television work promoting understanding of the Afghan culture in Australia, Fahim Hashimy impressed judges with his creativity and commitment to fostering harmony. Fahim has shown great drive as the director of the Ghan International Film Festival and also in producing a documentary on the Afghan cameleers and the Aboriginal women who became their wives.

Arts and Culture Award – Organisation

Indofest – Adelaide 2017

For the past ten years, Indofest has showcased and promoted the diversity of Indonesian culture. In recent years, the event has grown significantly, and now reaches out to deliver workshops and entertainment to South Australian schools with Indonesian programs. Judges commended Indofest's core aim of seeking out opportunities to foster peace, harmony and engagement.

Community Sector Award - Individual

Mr Deepak Bhardwaj

For the past 11 years, Deepak Bhardwaj has worked tirelessly promoting multiculturalism and increasing the understanding of the benefits of cultural diversity. Included among his long list of achievements are the establishment of a new Multicultural Sporting Hub, which promotes integration of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds into local Aussie rules and cricket clubs. Deepak is also president of the Taxi Drivers and Operators United Association, volunteers his time for several organisations, and is a mentor for newly arrived migrant groups.

Mr Kamal Dahal

The judges were moved by what Kamal Dahal has achieved in South Australia after living in a refugee camp in eastern Nepal for 18 years. Since arriving in Adelaide in 2008, Kamal has been a driving force in the Bhutanese Australian Association of SA – an organisation which now boasts nearly 3,000 members. He is also a passionate volunteer for Salisbury's New Arrival Support program and has been active in helping many migrant groups to establish themselves in South Australia.

Community Sector Award - Organisation

Ahmadiyya Muslim Association SA

Ahmadiyya exemplifies the spirit of community engagement by supporting initiatives such as Clean Up Australia Day, the Red Cross Appeal, donating food to the homeless, National Tree Day, the Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser, providing settlement support, and most recently, the Sierra Leone landslide appeal. The Association recently established a Coffee and Islam campaign to promote awareness of the Muslim faith and increase mutual understanding between communities.

Media Award

Ms Rhiannon Elston

As the South Australian correspondent for SBS, Rhiannon Elston has traveled the length and breadth of state to share news stories that inspire, provoke and challenge. Judges were impressed with her unique stories on the flood-stricken Vietnamese farmers of Virginia, a Hazara chef and volunteer from Naracoorte, and the remote Koonibba Football Club near Ceduna. Her stories have received much positive online feedback – a testament to her dedication and professionalism.

Private Sector Award

Spotless

The authentic commitment shown by Spotless to the proactive employment of refugees stands out as a national example of a measure that is making a difference in overcoming racism and discrimination. With almost 50 refugees placed in jobs, supported and mentored, Spotless is a trailblazer in building a workforce that is truly representative of Australia's diversity.

Public Sector Award

Department for Child Protection

The Multicultural Community Engagement Team within the Department for Child Protection has for the past 7 years built important bonds with culturally and linguistically diverse individuals, families and communities, and provided expert advice on cultural issues to the Department for Child Protection, Department of Health and South Australia Police. The Team's determination to continually improve its performance in a challenging sector, and its advocacy of ongoing legislative and policy change reflects its dedication and professionalism.

Volunteer Award

Dr Nayana Parange

A recipient of the 2015 Winnovation Award for her exemplary volunteering efforts, Dr Nayana Parange works in the field of ante-natal ultrasound and is passionate about improving the pregnancy outcomes in remote Aboriginal communities. Her volunteering efforts include leading ultrasound outreach programs in developing countries such as India, Ghana, Indonesia, PNG, Samoa and Cambodia. Judges were impressed by Nayana's cross-cultural generosity of spirit.

Senior Volunteer Award

Mr Kruno Batrac

Mr Kruno Batrac has supported the Croatian Community for more than 25 years. He has been pivotal in the leadership of the Croatian Club Management Committee, and involved in a range of fundraising drives during the Croatian Homeland War, to aid refugees coming to Australia. He is a deeply valued and respected member of the Croatian community, and well deserving of the Senior Volunteer Award.

Senior Volunteer, Highly Commended

Mr Vladas Lazauskas

The Judges highly commended Mr Vladas Lazauskas' 25 years of volunteering at Amber Aged Care. Vladas has thrown his heart and soul into supporting the Lithuanian residents to feel very much at home. He provides one on one support for residents, along with acting as the resident fix-it man for the Centre.

Youth Award

Mr Jemal Mussa

As a volunteer soccer coach for the Oromo community and mentor for young homeless people, Jemal Mussa has shown great initiative in harnessing sport to steer people onto a positive path. He is also providing hope and purpose to refugees in camps in Africa by fundraising to buy soccer equipment and host a tournament. Jemal's dedication has seen him offered a role as a community constable, where he continues to foster community spirit.

Aged Care Award - Individual

Dr Meera Goel

For the past 24 years Dr Meera Goel has devotedly cared for the elderly, and remains passionate about understanding the cultural and religious needs of individuals at a time when they are vulnerable, physically limited, and are trying to re-experience their original culture. Her desire to embrace cultural diversity is evidenced by the variety of cross cultural initiatives and cultural competency training she provides her nursing and caring staff.

Aged Care Award - Organisation

Helping Hand Aged Care / The Centre for Languages, University of South Australia / Southern Cross Care SA/NT

Aged care is changing with a significant increase in cultural and linguistic diversity amongst the elderly, and also the work force caring for them. This has increased the complexity of communicating about safety and care. Judges praised the work of this three-way partnership between Helping Hand, UniSA and Southern Cross which has developed a new intercultural approach to training in aged care.

Family Safety Award - Individual

Ms Nagita Maureen Kaggwa

Outstanding personal commitment to the safety and wellbeing of other distinguishes Nagita Kaggwa. In addition to her role within the Department for Child Protection where, amongst many things, she provides cultural training for her peers, Nagita volunteers with a range of refugee support organisations, and has helped develop a policy tool to support children of diverse cultural backgrounds in state care, in response to the Nyland Royal Commission. Nagita's exceptional dedication makes her a worthy winner in this category.

Economic Development Award - Organisation

Community Corporate Pty Ltd

Community Corporate's belief that "the core of human dignity is work" is reflected in its commitment to culturally and linguistically diverse workforce recruitment strategies.

In addition to establishing and running the SA Small Business Expo, it provides information to support migrants in their small business endeavours, and has developed pre-employment training programs for people from diverse backgrounds.