Volunteers in South West Sydney win Volunteer of the Year Awards

Campbelltown’s Jossleen Crane won the State’s top volunteering award when she was named the region’s 2015 Volunteer of the Year at a ceremony at the Campbelltown Catholic Club today.

As a volunteer with Sector Connect and other local charities, Jossleen was joined by other category winners - Lakshmi Logathassan of Holsworthy, Julianne Johnson of Campbelltown, Shubam Grover of Padstow Heights and the Carrington Volunteer Bus Driver Team, Camden.

CEO of The Centre for Volunteering Gemma Rygate, who runs the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, said volunteers improve people’s lives by helping out and keeping people connected.

“New research on volunteering in Australia shows that people give more than 743 million hours of their time each year – they’re the backbone of our community,” Ms Rygate said.

Ms Rygate said Jossleen won the regional NSW 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award for her dedication to helping provide information and community services through Sector Connect.

“Jossleen has been volunteering weekly since 2011 and she makes a valuable contribution by updating websites, social media channels, taking meeting minutes and more,” Ms Rygate said.

“Jossleen also volunteers with other local community groups including Rough Threads, the St George Community Housing-Campbelltown Residents Group and the Obesity Support Council.”

The Winners of the 2015 South West Sydney NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Winner</td>
<td>Jossleen Crane of Campbelltown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer of the Year</td>
<td>Sector Connect and various other charities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Volunteer of the Year</td>
<td>Lakshmi Logathassan of Holsworthy University of Western Sydney</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth Volunteer of the Year (up to 24 years)</td>
<td>Shubam Grover of Padstow Heights Sydney Dogs and Cats Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Volunteer of the Year (25 – 64 years)</td>
<td>Jossleen Crane of Campbelltown Sector Connect and various other charities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Volunteer of the Year (65+ years)</td>
<td>Julianne Johnson of Minto PCYC Campbelltown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer Team of the Year</td>
<td>The Carrington Volunteer Bus Drivers Carrington Care, Camden</td>
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ClubsNSW CEO Anthony Ball said the industry was proud to sponsor the Awards Program in order to help recognise volunteers across the state.

“With almost 50,000 volunteers engaged in our industry, clubs across NSW know how vital and valuable volunteers are to their activities and operations,” he said.

“We appreciate the inspirational role volunteers play in our communities to help others.

“These Awards are an opportunity to put a spotlight on our volunteers and say thank you.”

NSW Minister for Multiculturalism Mr John Ajaka, who is responsible for volunteering, said the awards were an opportunity to uncover and celebrate the great achievements of volunteers across NSW.

“The NSW Government is proud to sponsor these awards because we understand the profound social and economic value of volunteering. Volunteers are remarkable people who deserve our recognition,” Mr Ajaka said.

Twenty regional Volunteer of the Year Awards ceremonies are being held around the state.

All regional winners will be in the running for the overall NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, which are announced at a gala event on Friday 4 December 2015 to coincide with International Volunteer Day.

The Volunteer of the Year Awards are generously supported by principal partners the NSW Department of Family and Community Services, and ClubsNSW, the industry body which represents the state’s 1400 not-for-profit clubs, as well as Bupa Aged Care.

For information visit www.volunteering.com.au

Media inquiries: Kylie Yates 0418 607 575

BACKGROUND

The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards is an annual program run by The Centre for Volunteering – the State’s peak body for volunteering - to recognise the outstanding work of volunteers in every region across NSW. Twenty one award ceremonies are held across NSW in September and October where nominees are recognised with certificates and winners announced. Regional winners will be entered into the overall State 2015 Volunteer of the Year

For more information go to www.volunteering.com.au