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Community recognised for Action on Alcohol

Winners of the 2015 Action on Alcohol Awards have been acknowledged for their efforts to reduce alcohol harm in young people in WA.

The awards were presented by the Honourable Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC and Mrs Tonya McCusker during the fifth anniversary celebration of the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth at Curtin University today.

McCusker Centre Executive Officer Julia Stafford congratulated the finalists and winners and commended their continued efforts to prevent alcohol-related harm and violence in the community.

“It is important to recognise that so many people are doing tremendous work to reduce the harms caused by alcohol, and especially to make a difference for WA’s youth,” Ms Stafford said.

“The awards acknowledge positive action at all levels, from creative initiatives by school students, to community-led approaches to address local problems, as well as important work by researchers, governments and the media.”

Mrs McCusker also highlighted the different backgrounds of the finalists and winners.

“The diversity of individuals and groups taking a stance against young people and alcohol abuse is extremely encouraging. As a community, we are recognising and taking positive action against excessive alcohol consumption,” Mrs McCusker said.

The Chief Justice of WA, the Honourable Wayne Martin AC QC spoke at the conclusion of the event.

The award winners were:

- Albany Alta-1 middle and senior students (Young People in Action)
- Save Swan View Fruit and Veg Shop (Community in Action – Individual)
- St John Ambulance WA (Community in Action – Organisation)
- Paupiyala Tjarutja Aboriginal Corporation Community Council and Kalgoorlie Local Drug Action Group (joint winners, Regional Communities in Action)
- Professor Tanya Chikritzhs, National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University (Research)
- WA Liquor Control Act Independent Review Committee (Government in Action)
- Anthony DeCeglie and Gary Adshead (joint winners, Media in Action)

Photos from the event are available to media.

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2015 Action on Alcohol Awards results:

Young People in Action

Winner:

Albany Alta-1 middle and senior students

Albany Alta-1 middle and senior students collaborated on a project calling on parents who provide alcohol to young people to “Be a parent”. The project addressed secondary supply of alcohol, which is a priority issue in WA.

Finalist:

Dominic Brain

Dominic Brain is a young man from Albany who has shown a sustained personal commitment to preventing alcohol-related harm among young people. Dominic has been a key member of the Albany Local Drug Action Group, having been a Chairperson since 2012, and has recently become the youngest person to sit on the state Local Drug Action Groups Board.

Community in Action – Individual

Winner:

Save Swan View Fruit and Veg Shop

The Save Swan View Fruit and Veg Shop group members mobilised the local community to oppose plans to replace an independent fruit and veg store with a major liquor retailer. The group was successful in preventing the liquor outlet from going ahead and is a great example of what’s possible for active community champions to achieve.

Finalist:

No Alcohol Near Schools Group

No Alcohol Near Schools is an important, ongoing campaign by a small group of mums from South Perth to prevent new liquor outlets from opening near schools. They started a petition calling for no new alcohol outlets near schools and have collected over 1,000 signatures. The petition was tabled in Parliament in May 2015.

Community in Action – Organisation

Winner:

St John Ambulance WA

St John Ambulance have taken a proactive role in addressing alcohol-related harm among young people by drawing public attention to the burden of alcohol harm on paramedics and ambulance service resources.

Finalists:

Western Australian Cricket Association

The Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA) made a historic decision to stop the promotion of alcohol through its partnership with Healthway and the “Alcohol. Think Again” campaign. WACA was the first cricket body in Australia to drop alcohol sponsorship and this was the first time in over 100 years that cricket did not promote alcohol.

Charlesworth Ballet College

Charlesworth Ballet College is a professional dance training programme designed to nurture and develop young dancers to enable them to achieve a career in dance. In producing well-rounded highly skilled dancers, the College recognises the need to provide evidence-based drug and alcohol education to its students.

Regional Communities in Action

Joint Winners:

Kalgoorlie Local Drug Action Group

The Kalgoorlie Local Drug Action Group is a proactive, evidence-based, community-driven group. The group is made up of volunteers who work together to take action to prevent or reduce alcohol- and drug-related harm in their local community.

Paupiyala Tjarutja Aboriginal Corporation Community Council

Tjuntjuntjara is arguably one of the most remote places in Australia. The local community has taken positive actions over the past two years to set up an alcohol-free space and to increase information about the harm that alcohol causes on the community, families and individuals.

Finalist:

Denmark-Walpole Football Club

The Denmark-Walpole Football Club is a great example of how sports clubs can take action to prevent harm from alcohol among young people. The club has advocated for change in the region, promoted good role models, committed to strict policies, such as not receiving alcohol sponsorship, provided information to young players, and engaged members and young people in decision making.

Research

Winner:

Professor Tanya Chikritzhs

Professor Tanya Chikritzhs leads the Alcohol Policy Research Team at the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University. Tanya's research has covered very important areas of alcohol policy, and is extremely relevant to young people and the whole community. Tanya has used the valuable tool of epidemiology to inform the community and decision makers and she regularly engages in public debate on alcohol policy issues.

Finalist:

THRIVE Research Team

The THRIVE alcohol study is a practical tool to address alcohol use among young people. THRIVE involves electronic screening and brief intervention for young university students. THRIVE has significant ability to be used in other sites and could be widely implemented, and has already been replicated in various places around the world.

Government in Action

Winner:

WA Liquor Control Act Independent Review Committee

The WA Liquor Control Act Independent Review Committee undertook a comprehensive review of WA's liquor laws and produced a report and set of recommendations. The report achieved a balanced view, encompassing a wide range of perspectives.

Finalists:

Department of Education and WA Police, Jigalong

Department of Education and WA Police in Jigalong uniquely work together to prevent alcohol-related harm among young people in the local community. Local high school teacher Greg Grant and Jigalong Multi-Function Police Facility officer Neil Gordon implemented the Keys for Life program in the community to improve road safety.

City of Fremantle

The City of Fremantle are a finalist due to their action to minimise price-focussed alcohol advertising in the Fremantle area. The City opposed the introduction of a major liquor retailer and while they were unable to stop them from opening, they ensured that price-focussed advertising was not allowed on the outside of the premise.

Media in Action

Joint Winners:

Anthony DeCeglie

Anthony DeCeglie is a journalist at The Sunday Times newspapers who started a campaign called Real Men Don't Binge. The campaign's aim was to break down the idea that getting drunk was simply a rite of passage for young males. The campaign used young and powerful women as ambassadors to spread the message and gained significant media attention.

Gary Adshead

Gary Adshead is a morning radio presenter at 6PR. He has consistently highlighted issues around alcohol and its impact on young people on air. During his time at 6PR, Gary has interviewed a wide range of people on the issue, including key experts in the area as well as community members.