

NSW Women



2006 Year of the Community

NSW members of the United Nations Association of Australia (UNAA) have declared 2006 as the National Year of the Community. Mr Lindsay Mell, President of the Association said it was an opportunity for people all over Australia 'to celebrate living in their local, regional, state and national communities'.

To celebrate the National Year of the Community, this issue of *NSW Women* reports on some of the dynamic women around the State making a difference in their communities. We feature stories on: the women in the mid-north coast village of Kendall, who amongst other things, host a biennial writer's 'muster'; women promoting sustainability in Sydney and on the north coast; an entrepreneur in Wee Waa; and, the small town behind the impressive *Nymagee Outback Music Festival*.

It's not hard to find positive stories about people trying to make a difference in their communities. The NSW Government's communitybuilders web site is a good place to start. It was set up in 1998 to help local communities

across the State learn about what other communities have done to make their community safer, healthier, more vibrant, inclusive and enterprising.

The web site depends on people around the State sharing their stories and tips on project development and implementation on-line. People of all ages have contributed case studies, as well as community organisations, community workers, and all levels of government and business.

One of the best features of the site is a guide to all the funding sources available in the State and their timetables.

To find out more about UNAA events for the year contact UNAA NSW at unaansw@hotmail.net.au or telephone (02) 9212 0998.

Visit the communitybuilders web site at
<http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au>

Message from the Minister

Welcome to the latest edition of *NSW Women*. In this issue we highlight what's happening around the State to celebrate International Women's Day, and we also profile some very capable women doing the best for their communities.

It's worth considering the meaning of the word 'community'. Is it our experience of being 'connected' to those around us? Is it where we live or our social networks and associations? Perhaps it's all of these things.

What characterises healthy communities is that people have a mutual respect for each other and they behave responsibly. In these communities, violence and assault are less likely.

The Office for Women has worked in partnership with many organisations over the past twelve months on some important projects where we have been able to exchange ideas, learn from different

experiences and hopefully, in doing so, strengthen communities.

As Minister for Women, I am fortunate to meet many exceptional young women, whose leadership skills and involvement in community activities are very impressive. It encourages me that the future is in good hands. We profile a number of these young women in the newsletter.

I hope that reading these stories will inspire many of you to look afresh at what's happening in your community. Perhaps you can make a start by participating in one of our International Women's Day events!



The Hon. Sandra Nori MP
Minister for Women



Message from the Director

As the new Director of the Office for Women, I hope this will be the first of many *NSW Women* newsletters I have the pleasure of managing.

I started working as the Director of the Office for Women in November 2005 and have been privileged to continue the diverse range of projects that were already being implemented, or planned, by the previous Director and staff. These include International Women's Day activities, such as the Premier's Reception, where the Premier, the Hon Morris Iemma MP, will announce the *2006 NSW Woman of the Year*. There's a wonderful mix of activities planned for International Women's Day - have a look at pages 6 and 7 to find out more.

The Office has a busy program - I hope to keep you up to date with our projects in upcoming newsletters.

Prior to joining the Office for Women, I worked in the NSW Department of Housing as the Director, Housing Assistance Policy. I've always had a strong interest in strategic policy and in how governments can work with individuals and families, businesses,

and community organisations, to make life better for us all. I have a particular interest in improving the status of women and this has been a feature of my previous work in planning, health and social policy in the public sector, my work in the private sector, and my active participation in community activities ranging from local council precinct committees and Zonta International, to women's sport.

For all these reasons I am delighted to be here!

Enjoy the newsletter and don't forget to check our website www.women.nsw.gov.au for up-to date information on issues and activities for and about women.



Kerrie Bigsworth
Director, Office for Women
NSW Premier's Department



FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW

A small community brings music to the outback

The only major hiccup in running the four *Nymagee Outback Music Festivals* for Jay Dunne was the three inches of rain that fell the night before the last one in 2004.

'Attendance had been growing after each festival so we were confident of a good turnout. The 2002 festival attracted 1000 people but in 2004 the rain blocked some of the roads and only 500 people made it through,' she said.

All things considered, it's not too bad for a community that only has about 40 residents with about 200 in the surrounding 50 kms.

'Nymagee' is an indigenous word for 'small plain surrounded by hills'. It's in the centre of a triangle of three major towns: Cobar (100 km NW), Nyngan (120 km NE) and Condobolin (160 km SE). It was Jay's idea to introduce a music festival, after she moved to Nymagee in 1992. She had strong family connections to the town.

'There aren't a lot of cultural activities in the bush,' she says. Inspired by the music festivals of Melaney/Woodford she thought a music festival would work.

The first festival was in 1999. Since then there have been another three festivals, each on the first weekend in October. The theme for 2006 is Hard Times Mining Phoenix Rising. In its heyday, Nymagee was a mining town with a population of 4500.

The program features bush, country, rock'n'roll and hill billy music, but all music, especially original work is fine, as well as dance, theatre and poetry. Musicians from as far away as the Netherlands and Canada have performed.

The event has had both Federal and State government funding assistance and a lot of support from the communities surrounding the town.

Jay says the success of the event surprised the locals. It has been a great boost to the community, generating income and tourism. Over two-thirds of the audience comes from Sydney, Newcastle, Melbourne and country NSW, Victoria and Queensland.

What it shows is that a good idea and some committed people can really make a difference to their community.



Toe Sucking Cowgirls @ Nymagee Outback Music Festival 2004

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Drivers of change

Meet the winner and the finalists in the **2006 Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) Rural Women's Award**, who are passionate about making a difference in their community.

The RIRDC Rural Women's Award recognises women with strong leadership skills, a positive vision for the future of agriculture and the potential to make a difference in their chosen field.

Kate Schwager is the winner of this year's award. Kate and her husband run a successful cotton share farming enterprise near Wee Waa in northern NSW. In 1998, Kate set up the weewaa.com web site as a way of promoting her community and exploring an off-farm income opportunity. Since then Kate has developed a Rural Towns Package (based on the weewaa.com web site) which she hopes will encourage other women in rural communities to take up as a business opportunity. 'The package can be used by towns to promote themselves to potential new residents and for tourism purposes,' she says. The income is derived by selling advertising on the site to local businesses. Community groups get free pages on the site.

Kate wants to use her prize money of \$10 000 to further develop and promote the Rural Towns Package and run training courses for women who are interested in setting up a community web site.

Photo 1: l to r: Barry Buffier (Director-General, NSW Department of Primary Industries), Peter O'Brien (Managing Director, Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation), Kate Schwager (2006 RIRDC NSW Rural Women's Award Winner), and The Hon. Ian Macdonald MP (Minister for Natural Resources, Minister for Primary Industries and Minister for Mineral Resources).

Mary Howard was the runner up for this year's award. Mary and her husband own and operate a local prawn trawl business in the lower Hawkesbury River.

Mary fears for the viability of the prawn industry because of the health of the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment. 'This is the second most productive prawn trawl fishery in the State but its health is under serious threat from weeds and pollution. We cannot ignore the problems anymore,' Mary says.

Mary is keen to provide information on environmental management strategies for the river and develop a DVD to visually explain the fishery, and as well complete research for a book which would record the participants in the industry, their vessels, and the historic villages of the Hawkesbury where they live and work.

Catherine Ford was a finalist for the award. Catherine is a farmer with 110 acres of macadamia nut and coffee trees on the North Coast. Originally, from Sydney, Catherine arrived on the north coast nine years ago. Catherine and her husband are now running a successful enterprise which they are hoping will soon be certified as organic. Catherine believes in sustainable organic farming and wants to encourage other women to take a lead in this area. 'There are many capable women farmers out there but they tend to be in the shadow of their partners'.

Catherine wants to establish a web site and run workshops on the north coast for women which showcase sustainable farming methods.

The other finalists Mary Howard and Catherine Ford.



Kendall - Get-up and go

With a population of only 2,500 residents in the village and its surrounding district, Kendall on the mid-north coast hosts a surprising number of major events. Every two years the village hosts the Watermark Literary Muster which draws writers from around the world. They have the annual Henry Kendall oration and an annual literary dinner and also offer a biennial writer's fellowship. Kendall also hosts a National Violin Competition and some events for the Camden Haven Music Festival.

Kendall is one of the villages in the Camden Haven and what makes it so special is a close-knit community and some highly motivated, capable women.

Elaine van Kempen went to live in the Camden Haven 12 years ago with her husband, writer Eric Rolls. He found the district a haven for his writing but Elaine needed to do something more. 'I'm a bit of an initiator,' she says.

It didn't take long for Elaine to find another community activist, Mavis Barnes, and given the area's literary traditions - Kendall is named after the poet Henry Kendall - a literary event seemed ideal. They began planning in 1995. With the support of three more women - Lyndal Coote, Andrina Dawson and Rosemarie Piontek - they set to work on the Watermark Literary Muster. Eric Rolls is the patron of the event and their sounding board.

Elaine says 'the women work brilliantly together. We decided up front to do the muster biennially and to focus on nature as the theme.'

They also eschewed the term 'festival' in favour of the more Australian 'muster'.

The first Muster was held in 2003 with water as the theme. In 2005 it was land, and planning is already underway for the 2007 Muster, on migration. The event is held in October just after the long weekend. In addition to many well-known Australian writers, last year's event also attracted both writers and readers from the United States and New Zealand. Over one-third of last year's participants attended the first Muster, which says something about its appeal.

The event costs about \$150,000 to run and is intended to be self funding. The women receive sponsorship from federal, state and local governments, with some of the support coming from businesses within their own community.

The Muster has been a boon for the local area - it attracts about \$70,000 income immediately into the community, has brought repeat visitors to the area, highlights the capacity of the town to deliver major events, and of course the attendant media coverage helps to promote further tourism.

A generous benefactor was so impressed with the Muster that he offered to fund a biennial fellowship for an emerging writer to write about nature, natural history or sense of place. It includes, amongst other things, 12 weeks paid accommodation in the Camden Haven area, a living allowance and mentorship from Eric Rolls.

With the Muster it's hard to believe these women have much time for anything else, but not so. They seem to have a hand in just about everything happening in Kendall. They are a testimony to the old adage 'give a busy person (in this case group of women) a job and it gets done'.

For information on the Muster visit
<http://www.watermarkliterarysociety.asn.au/Society.htm>

For information on the fellowship visit
<http://www.watermarkliterarysociety.asn.au/Fellowship/Fellowship.htm>



Left to right: Andrina Dawson, Lyndal Coote, Elaine van Kempen, Rosemarie Piontek and Mavis Barnes.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

2006 International Women's Day

All around the world, March 8 is marked as International Women's Day (IWD). It's a day to celebrate the myriad ways in which women make a contribution to the community, to focus again on the issues which impact on women's lives, and above all else, to recognise how women continue to make a difference.

The first Australian IWD rally took place in the Sydney Domain on March 25, 1928. It called for equal pay for equal work, an 8 hour day for shop

girls, no piece work, the basic wage for the unemployed and annual holidays on full pay.

Today IWD is a reminder that the gains we have made are due to the strength, determination and courage of women who risked their reputations and their lives to campaign for women's rights.

The campaign is not over - there are still some major issues to tackle, including violence against women, workplace reform, child care, poverty and international human rights.

UNIFEM Breakfast

The UNIFEM IWD Breakfast 2006 will be held on Wednesday 8 March, 7am-9am at the Grand Harbour Ballroom, Star City Hotel & Casino, Pymont.

The ABC's National Transport and Communications Reporter, Phillipa McDonald will MC the event, and Nanda Pok, founder and Executive Director of Women for Prosperity, a non-government organisation based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, will be the guest speaker. Ms Pok fled Cambodia to the United States as a refugee just before Pol Pot took control of the country.

Since Ms Pok's return home in 1992 she has dedicated herself to the reconstruction and development of her community. Ms Pok published a bi-monthly magazine to promote women in leadership, and has trained over 5000 women to hold political office. In the most recent elections, 613 of the 953 women elected were trained by her organisation.

Last year's event raised \$25,000 - a great result! The money was used to fund UNIFEM's activities with women in South East Asia. Proceeds from the 2006 Breakfast will be provided to the UN Trust Fund to support actions to eliminate violence against women, UNIFEM projects in South East Asia and the South Pacific.

For more information telephone 02 9411 2302 or email iwdsydney@unifem.org.au

Premier's Reception & Woman of the Year

Approximately 250 guests will attend the Premier's Reception at Government House on 8 March. At the reception the Premier will announce the *2006 NSW Woman of the Year* from the ten finalists. Nominations have come from all MPs and Ministers. Last year's joint recipients were Mary Rimoldi and Tracey Menzies.

For more than 30 years Mary Rimoldi has cared for over 70 children as a foster mother. Many of the children have had disabilities and terminal illnesses. At the time of her nomination Mary was 65 and still a foster parent.

Tracey Menzies is Olympic swimmer Ian Thorpe's coach and is head coach of the SLC Aquadot Club. She is a strong supporter of the NSW Government's sport rage prevention program, and has introduced strategies to her swimming squads to end bad behaviour toward officials.

Last year's event successfully gave women across NSW the opportunity to be recognised for their efforts which so often go unnoticed and rewarded. International Women's Day reminds us that for every successful woman we know in public life, there are thousands of others who are working hard, using their skills, taking on new challenges, and caring for others - who also deserve recognition.

Guests at the Premier's Reception will include the NSW Governor, Professor Marie Bashir AC, Members of Parliament, including the Minister for Women, the Hon. Sandra Nori MP, and nominees for the NSW Woman of the Year Award.

Join the celebrations for International Women's Day

International Women's Day Grants

This year the Office for Women provided approximately \$70,000 to 78 local councils and their partner organisations, to help organise events in partnership with community organisations, so that women can participate in and celebrate International Women's Day.

The Office received applications for some great events, some of which are highlighted below.

Bankstown - Young Women celebrate IWD

Young women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds are invited to celebrate IWD at the Wran Leisure Centre on Saturday 11 March from 11am to 3pm. There will be workshops on art and crafts, and skincare, and local hip hop artists will run sessions on hip hop and dance. There will also be water sports in the pool. The event is being organised by the Women's Issues Network. For information contact: Christina Radburn on ph: 9707 9999.

Pittwater - Surf lessons

Women over the age of 16 years are invited to a one-hour free surf lesson at Palm Beach. Sessions are being held at 9am, 10am and 11am on Sunday 5 March. For information contact Susan Turner on ph: 9970 1111 or email women@pittwater.nsw.gov.au

Surfers at the 2005 Pittwater International Women's Day event.



Dungog - We're not just girls

On 8 March, senior girls at the local Dungog High School will get to hear first-hand from local mothers and local professional women about their experiences. This will be followed by a belly dancing workshop for all participants. For information contact Tracey Lowry on ph: 4992 1224.

Bombala - Platypus country women getting together

Local women are invited to meet at the sensory garden in Bombala on 8 March for Tai Chi before breakfast at a local café. They will then move on to the Delegate Arts Centre where information will be provided on a range of women's issues. This will be followed by lunch with a guest speaker, and presentation of the Platypus Country Women's awards to recognise women who have made a contribution to the area. For information contact Karen Cash on ph: 6458 3555.

Randwick - Art Competition

Randwick City Council is again hosting its popular International Women's Day Art Competition. Local women aged over 12 years who live, study or work in the City of Randwick are invited to participate. Judges are looking for the best original artwork, which can be submitted in any artistic medium. There are several categories and prize money worth \$1000. The winners will be announced at the International Women's Day Celebrations on 11 March 2006, at Randwick Town Hall. For more information visit www.randwick.nsw.gov.au or ph: 9399 0902.

Upper Hunter - Tickle your fancy

New kindergarten mothers are invited to join local businesswomen for a free lunch on 8 March in Scone to meet, network and find out about local services. A professional laughter therapist will be on hand to get everyone laughing, and 'pamper packs' will be given out to those attending. For information contact Donna Rae or Jodie Phelps on ph: 6540 1100.

For information about other IWD events, go to www.women.nsw.gov.au

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Six decades of valuing children as a community - Lady Gowrie Child Centre

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre in Sydney was set up following the Depression. Lady Zara Gowrie, wife of the then Governor General, with the help of others, had lobbied to establish centres across Australia to improve the health and wellbeing of Australian children, particularly disadvantaged children.

Since opening in 1940, the Lady Gowrie Child Centre in Sydney has worked with three communities in particular - children from diverse backgrounds, their families and early childhood educators.

Approximately 300 families a year use three long day care centres, including two centres sponsored by the NSW Premier's Department and the Department of Corrective Services.

The Gowrie centre has been a leader in multicultural and anti-bias education and has pioneered programs for welcoming and including families from all ethnic and social groups, as well as gay/lesbian families.

Part of Gowrie's mission is to work with families from diverse backgrounds. Hundreds of recently-arrived and refugee families use crèche and community child care services when attending English language classes through the AMES consortium.

Margaret Young, CEO of the Sydney Centre, says early childhood education should be seen as a profession, and emphasises quality of programs and professional development for staff. The centre offers accredited training to current and future child care professionals and provides a resource centre. Gowrie has an excellent reputation as a demonstration and teaching service.

'Our major contributions to the NSW community have been leadership in developing early childhood services that are inclusive and respectful of individual children and families, as well as helping many more people understand what quality means in child care programs,' Margaret says.

The centre also offers a Department of Community Services funded telephone information line about child care services for families (1800 803 820 or 02 8594 4244) and a specialist Early Intervention Info line (1300 656 865) funded by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Homecare.

Margaret urges people to see early childhood education as an investment in children and society in the long term. Diversity of children's services is important, as she points out one service cannot be 'everything to everyone'. She says a diverse range of services, from pre-schools and out-of-school hours care, through to family day care and long day care, is the key to a thriving children's services sector.

The Lady Gowrie Child Centre in Sydney is a robust and unique organisation - for 65 years staff have referred to their founding principles of providing quality children's services and valuing diversity when making day-to-day decisions.



LEADING THE WAY

Mariko Ralph: National Council for Women's NSW 2006 Australia Day Award

Mariko Ralph is young, intelligent, ambitious, and too busy to have realised the significance of her contributions to the community. Luckily, her actions have not gone unnoticed.

Mariko has won one of the National Council for Women's NSW 2006 Australia Day Awards. The Office for Women has sponsored a National Council of Women Australia Day Award since 2002 to recognise a final year university student, whose efforts demonstrate they will have a positive influence on our future society.

This year Mariko will complete her undergraduate law degree at the University of Sydney, and in 2007, is planning to do an Honours degree in Japanese, with a dissertation on gender issues and sport in Japan.

Mariko is a law tutor at the Koori Centre within the University of Sydney. She also participates in the



Mariko Ralph with the Minister for Women, the Hon. Sandra Nori MP.

Law School booth at the biannual University Open Days and in Koori Centre Open Days, where she enthusiastically promotes the power of higher education to potential students, especially Indigenous Australians.

It was only about ten years ago that Mariko learned of her Aboriginality. She says she does not conform to community's stereotypes about what Aboriginal people look like.

'Aboriginality is either a part of you or not: you shouldn't think about it in terms of how much or little you have.'

Mariko wants to use her law degree to assist the community. 'I would like to work in a community legal centre, and even in a commercial law firm's pro bono division, and focus on the legal issues and needs of Indigenous Australians,' she says.

Premier's Council for Women

The Premier's Council for Women is an advisory council which provides an independent source of advice to the Premier and the Minister for Women on issues of importance to women in NSW.

The Council is chaired by the Minister for Women, the Hon. Sandra Nori MP and its work is directed and managed by the Deputy Chair. The Council meets four to five times a year and identifies one or two priority issues for attention each year.

Our last major project illustrates how the Council works. The Minister was concerned by the loneliness experienced by many older women and, after some analysis, the Council decided to focus on the roles of housing and transport in older women's isolation. We consulted older women about

housing and mobility problems and presented our findings to the Minister, for discussion with her Cabinet colleagues.

One important outcome of our report was a seminar with the development and building industry, including Landcom, to look at ways housing developments could be more flexible so that women could remain in their own homes and communities as they aged.

Keep reading *NSW Women* for reports on our progress.

Deirdre Mason
Deputy Chair
Premier's Council for Women

GIRL POWER

'I like how we call all of the girls sista'

This is just one of the comments from a participant in the *SistaSpeak* pilot. *SistaSpeak* is a program for young Aboriginal girls in Years 6-9 that encourages them to see the importance of education, career development and financial independence.

The pilot was located in Dubbo and involved two facilitators, five Aboriginal role models/mentors and twenty young Aboriginal women from Year 7 at Delroyd High School. It ran over six weeks, and concluded in August 2005 with a certificate presentation in December. The program was developed in consultation with the local Aboriginal community.

A full evaluation report will be available in March 2006 but so far the preliminary evaluation is positive. Comments included:

'I liked it because it was energising and full of teamwork and we got to express our self.'

'We learned about respecting each other.'

'I got to understand the qualities for each job and learned a lot more about budgets.'

Stakeholders commented:

'It has gone so well, we are going to use the girls as mentors and peer support for the next group of year 7s.'

'Girls enjoyed the group work and sense of 'sisterhood' that was created and the group work gives them the ability to be confident about their knowledge.'

In November 2005, the Minister for Women, the Hon. Sandra Nori MP, met with mentors and organisers of the *SistaSpeak* pilot regarding any possible improvements prior to the program being run in other areas. The meeting was kindly hosted by Mrs Dawn Fardell, the Member for Dubbo.

With the benefit of the Dubbo experience the program will now be modified/refined for roll out to other locations in 2006.

Girl\$avvy rewarded

The Office for Women was delighted when its *Girl\$avvy* project received a commendation at the 2005 Premier's Public Sector Awards. Since 2002, 79 workshops have been conducted for 4,690 girls in high schools across the State, introducing them to the importance of financial independence. Fundamental to the success of the workshops has been the participation of local professional women who have succeeded in their chosen field.

The Office for Women works with the YWCA, Business and Professional Women NSW (BPW) and Guides NSW on the program.

In term one 2006, *Girl\$avvy* workshops will be held in Lismore, Queanbeyan, Cessnock, Macquarie Fields and Bombala. A special International Women's Day workshop will be held at Auburn for students from Auburn Girls' High School. For more information contact ofw@premiers.nsw.gov.au or phone (02) 9228 3141.



Left to right clockwise: Dawn Fardell - State Member for Dubbo; Lee Dundas - Mentor; Yvonne Hill - Consultant, Aboriginal Education, Western Region; Neita Scott - Elder and Member Premier's Council for Women; Marilyn Redman - Facilitator for the Dubbo SistaSpeak Program; Lillian Elemes - Mentor; the Minister for Women, the Hon. Sandra Nori MP; Christine Fernando - Mentor; and Coral Yates - Elder.



The first female Prime Minister?

Jacqueline Furtado says she wants to be the first female Prime Minister of Australia. 'Luckily, I love a challenge and I am prepared to work hard,' she said.

Recently awarded the Australia Day Young Citizen for Liverpool, 20-year-old Jacqueline was a perfect candidate for the *Young Women's Leadership Project (YWLP)*.

Jacqueline was one of 30 young women from Western Sydney who came together six months ago, to learn how to improve their leadership skills and contribute to their local communities, as part of the project.

The initiative is the result of a partnership between the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC), the NSW Office for Women and TAFE NSW Western Sydney and South Western Sydney Institutes.

It targets young women aged between 16 and 24 years, from Auburn, Bankstown, Baulkham Hills, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Holroyd, Liverpool, Parramatta and Penrith local government areas. Sixty women will be selected for the project over a 12 month period.

The young women are selected because they are already leaders or they have leadership potential. They may be active in school, community organisations, paid and/or unpaid work,

Jacqueline Furtado (right) and her mentor, Alison Megarrity, Member for Menai.

environmental groups, political groups or sports. They attend a TAFE leadership course and are also mentored by existing women leaders.

Jacqueline chose Alison Megarrity, Member for Menai, as her mentor. 'I was very fortunate to have Alison Megarrity as my mentor. She taught me that I have to be prepared to work hard if I am to succeed in a career in politics and that it is important to always have a clear sense of what is important and my values. She also spoke about the challenge of being a woman in a male-dominated area, as well as the struggle to have a normal family life amidst the business that is the life of a politician.'

Jacqueline said the other young women in the project were 'incredible - passionate, inspiring, and high achieving.' She believes that the 'project has empowered the young women involved and inspired them to think outside the constraints of place and gender.'

'The YWLP challenges stereotypes that young women believe about who can be a leader and how a leader should or should not act/dress/speak.'

'This is invaluable at the age of 20, at the beginning of my working life!' she said.

Fair Play!

Congratulations to the Department of Tourism and Sport and Recreation which won a gold award in the recent 2005 Premier's Public Sector Awards for its Sport Rage Prevention Strategy.

The NSW Department of Tourism and Sport and Recreation got involved in the issue after community concern escalated about the poor behaviour of some men in several sporting codes in 2005. Media coverage focused on AFL football and rugby league, but there were also more reports in the media about abuse and harassment towards sporting officials, parents and spectators in many sports.

The Department initiated a range of resources to help clubs prevent and deal with sport rage incidents. These included: sports rage prevention workshops and industry seminars, a generic on-line resource and training program; a surf rage prevention program on the far-north coast; a curriculum resource with schools on the mid-north coast; as well as partnerships with Soccer NSW and the NSW Rugby League.

The Minister for Women, the Hon. Sandra Nori MP directly instigated a poster awareness campaign encouraging 'fair play on and off the field', with posters stating 'the man he becomes depends on what you teach him now'.

A poster aimed at young cricketers was launched early in 2005 and a rugby poster was launched last December at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Wests Tigers National Rugby League (NRL) players Benji Marshall and Robbie Farrah, who were both White Ribbon Day Ambassadors for the elimination of violence against women, assisted the Minister with the rugby poster launch.

The Minister, Benji Marshall and Robbie Farrah were joined by grade 5 & 6 students from St Francis of Assisi Primary School. The school students then participated in a coaching clinic with the NRL players.

The poster launch made the point that the notion of fair play on and off the field is an Australian ideal and that bad behaviour is unacceptable. It gives a strong message to children, parents and sporting groups about respect and responsibility.



The Minister for Women, the Hon. Sandra Nori MP with Wests Tigers NRL players (from left to right) Robbie Farrah and Benji Marshall at the launch of the poster 'Fair play on and off the field'.

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