

MEDIA RELEASE

THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER 2013

FROM REFUGEE CAMP TO GOVERNMENT HOUSE, OUR NEW MULTICULTURAL AMBASSADOR

Everyday hero and North Melbourne resident Ahmed Dini was one of only two Ambassador Award winners in the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) 2013 Multicultural Awards for Excellence.

Attending a prestigious ceremony at Government House last night, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Nicholas Kotsiras presented 25 year old Ahmed the award for his work with African communities in Melbourne's north west.

VMC Chairperson, Mr Chin Tan said the awards recognise the efforts of people who tirelessly support and celebrate Victorians from more than 250 backgrounds and 130 faiths.

"This year we are pleased to see new and emerging African communities recognised for their contributions, with Ahmed sharing the Ambassador Award with the Africa Day Australia organising committee," he said.

"Born in Somalia and raised in a Kenyan refugee camp, Ahmed is the founder and Chairman of the Australian Somali Football Association, and also brings students of different faiths together in community projects.

"Ahmed works closely with housing estate residents and Victoria Police, and shared his story for the Victorian Department of Justice's 'Knives Scar Lives' campaign.

"Giving young people a step up, Ahmed developed a Local Hero Leadership Program and was key to securing funds for a Sustainable Employment and Economic Development program in Melbourne's west, he said.

More than 70 people from an array of backgrounds and 23 organisations were recognised for their achievements at the 2013 Multicultural Awards for Excellence.

"Through the Multicultural Awards for Excellence, the VMC thanks outstanding people like Ahmed, who go above and beyond to make a difference for Victoria's multicultural communities," Mr Tan said.

"Ahmed has become a role model and advocate for young people, not just in his community, but for those in other culturally diverse communities" he said.

Mr Tan said the prestigious awards attracted more than 200 nominations across 10 categories, showing the breadth and support of people who make Victoria a great place to live.

“The annual Awards for Excellence confirm the Victorian Government’s commitment to promoting Victoria as a multicultural place, with His Excellency the Honourable Alex Chernov AC QC, Governor of Victoria and the Premier of Victoria, the Honourable Denis Naphine presenting awards,” he said.

Awards were also presented by the Minister for Local Government Jeanette Powell, Minister for Education Martin Dixon, and Chief Commissioner of Police Ken Lay.

For a complete list of winners in this and previous years, please visit:

www.multicultural.vic.gov.au

Media enquiries:

Carol Nichols, VMC Communications and Events Manager
(03) 9651 0649 or carol.nichols@vmc.vic.gov.au