

MEDIA RELEASE

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MULTICULTURAL AWARDS RECOGNISE VICTORIA'S 2016 DIVERSITY HEROES

The outstanding achievements of Victoria's newest Diversity Heroes were honoured in Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence 2016 in a special ceremony held at Government House last night.

Now in its 15th year, the annual awards acknowledge and celebrate people and organisations who have made valuable contributions to multicultural communities in Victoria through fields such as philanthropy, advocacy, leadership, arts, health, education, media and innovation.

Victorian Multicultural Commission Chairperson Ms Helen Kapalos said the awards recognise Victorians who champion cultural diversity.

"Each recipient goes above and beyond to support our multicultural community and make a difference in the lives of others. And they do so with unwavering passion and dedication, embodying what it means to be a Diversity Hero," said Ms Kapalos.

Coordinated by the Victorian Multicultural Commission, the 2016 awards received more than 170 nominations across 12 categories, including two new categories – the Youth Award and the Award for Community Innovation.

A total of 19 awards were presented at the ceremony with a further 77 certificates of merit distributed before the event.

Youth Award recipient Monica Forson said she was honoured to be recognised for her commitment to advocacy and community development initiatives for African Australian young people.

"To be acknowledged for my contributions is humbling and also reaffirms my belief that I'm doing purposeful work. I want to make a positive change to inspire, and work directly with, other young people to address issues, develop meaningful solutions, and change the perceptions society holds about youth," added Ms Forson.

Ms Kapalos presented the awards alongside Mr Anthony Howard QC, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, the Hon. Robin Scott, Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Natalie Hutchins, Parliamentary Secretary for Education Judith Graley MP and Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police Graham Ashton AM.

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A complete list of award recipients is included below.

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Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence 2016 Recipients

Award Category	Nominee	Panel Assessment
Ambassador Award	Lella Cariddi	Winner
Ambassador Award	Asian Australian Alliance	Highly commended
Award for Community Innovation	Wyndham City Council	Winner
Award for Community Innovation	Dianella Health	Highly commended
Award for Meritorious Service to the Community	Barbara Brown	Winner
Award for Meritorious Service to the Community	Casey Multifaith Network	Winner
Award for Meritorious Service to the Community	Jenny Semple	Winner
Award for Meritorious Service to the Community	Hindu Society of Victoria	Highly commended
Award for Meritorious Service to the Community	Deepa Rai	Highly commended
Award for Meritorious Service to the Community	Dr Sylwia Greda-Bogusz	Commended
Corporate Innovation Award	St Vincent's Hospital	Winner
Corporate Innovation Award	Gateway Health	Highly commended
Education and Early Childhood Award	Dandenong West Primary School	Winner
Local Government Award	City of Greater Dandenong	Winner
Local Government Award	Manningham City Council	Highly commended
Local Government Award	Yarra City Council	Commended
Media Award	Luke Waters	Winner
Premier's Award for Community Harmony	John Gandel AO and Pauline Gandel	Winner
Victorian Multicultural Honour Roll	Nazer Nazir	Winner
Victorian Multicultural Honour Roll	Julien Leyre	Highly commended
Youth Award	Monica Forson	Winner

For a full list of certificate recipients and more information about the award recipients and categories, please visit www.multicultural.vic.gov.au.

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