

Minister for Fair Trading
Minister for Citizenship
Minister Assisting the Premier on the Arts

Virginia Judge MP



3 December 2008

MINISTER HONOURS COMMUNITY HEROES

A post-war migrant who has given 60 years of service to the Ukrainian community in NSW was today presented with the Lifetime Achievement in Community Services Award by Minister for Citizenship, Virginia Judge.

Mr Pavlo Czudakewycz was honoured at a ceremony in Parliament House, Sydney, marking the 2008 Community Relations Commission Awards for Volunteering.

“This Award duly recognises Mr Czudakewycz’s invaluable contribution to the people of NSW, and the Ukrainian community in particular,” Ms Judge said.

“There seems to be no aspect of Ukrainian community life in NSW untouched by Mr Czudakewycz, from school, church, youth, sport, community credit to aged care.

“He has also served as director of the Ukrainian Studies Foundation, actively raised funds for many causes and sung in the Ukrainian Catholic Church Choir for 60 years.”

Highly commended in the Lifetime Achievement Award was Dr Ervad Peshotan Katrak, Australia’s first Zoroastrian priest.

Dr Katrak arrived in Australia in 1975 with post-graduate qualifications in rehabilitation medicine from India, the United Kingdom and United States of America.

In addition to his medical duties, Dr Katrak was the first resident Zoroastrian priest in Australia to perform essential religious ceremonies.

He later set up the first Zoroastrian Sunday school where he is still teaching.

The Volunteer of the Year went to Mr Ken Habak for his outstanding contribution in the community sector in the Illawarra area for over 35 years.

“Mr Habak is one of the founding members of the Lebanese Association and has assisted in the settlement of other families into the Illawarra area since the 1970s,” Ms Judge said.

An active member and Chairperson of the Illawarra Ethnic Communities Council for more than eight years, Mr Habak has worked tirelessly to establish strong foundations and negotiate partnerships to attract culturally appropriate aged care, arts and youth funding to culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the Illawarra.

Mrs Shula Endre-Walder was named winner of the 2008 Community Service Award.

“Mrs Endre-Walder arrived in Australia in 1957, and from her teenage years volunteered as a youth leader, coaching immigrant children in maths, science and Hebrew,” Ms Judge said.

Mrs Endre-Walder became known as the Pink Lady of Prince of Wales Hospital, reading stories and distributing toys to young patients of the oncology / leukaemia wards.

“She also established a Bone Marrow Donor Registry for ethnic communities, and in conjunction with the Red Cross, set up School Blood Collection Centres for students over the age of 16.”

Highly commended in the Community Service Award for 2008 was Mr Kalyan Ram.

Mr Ram was recognised for 20 years of community service spent improving the lives of migrants from India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Nepal.

He is Emeritus President of SEVA International Inc (Social Entrepreneurial Ventures of Australian South Asians), and helped established the Indo Australian Association and the Sri Mandir Society to address the social needs of Indian-Australians and spiritual needs of Hindus.

“At the other end of the scale, I congratulate the Young Volunteer of the Year, Ms Samah Hadid, for her passion to improve services for young people at local, national and international levels,” Ms Judge said.

“Her community work has evolved from her membership of the Muslim Women’s Association from the age of 15.

“Samah is a powerful public speaker and writer, who works to improve youth and multicultural policy at all levels of government, including as a delegate to the Prime Minister’s 2020 Summit.”

Highly commended in the Young Volunteer Category was Mr Sam Maliki who at the age of 15, set up the only junior winter cricket association in NSW.

“Sam’s efforts are not limited to any one ethnic community or interest group, reflecting his desire to make a difference wherever possible.

He has organised many events and fundraising activities and sits on a number of committees, including St George Toastmasters and Rockdale Lions.

Ms Judge also congratulated the Community Relations Commission for celebrating these champions of volunteering.

“The Rees Government is firmly committed to promoting volunteerism across NSW,” she said.

“Our goal is for these champions to inspire others to follow their lead in helping to make our culturally and linguistically diverse society richer and stronger.

“I doubt we could find better role models for volunteerism than these well-deserving winners, whose dedication to others reminds all of us that individuals really can make a difference,” Ms Judge said.

Media contact: Kimberley Ramplin 0429 397 377