

Friday 17 May 2013

AWARDS RECOGNISE OUR VOLUNTEERS' GREAT WORK

A record sixty nominees for the annual City of Ryde Volunteer Recognitions Awards were honoured last night when the winners were announced by the Mayor.

The Mayor Cllr Ivan Petch said: "Volunteers are the lifeblood of our community.

"They give their time, skill and compassion so generously to those in need, not only improving the lives of countless fellow citizens, but also the economic and social well-being of our entire community."

The Mayor paid tribute also to the nominators without whom the work of individuals and groups would go unrecognised. "We are delighted to see such a large increase in the number of nominees this year, up 53%, especially in the Youth category that was more than double the number last year."

Volunteer of the Year: Arthur McKenzie

Arthur has been a volunteer at St Catherine's Aged Care Service for 16 years and with Hunters Hill Ryde Community Services for 10 years. He is a volunteer bus driver, driving clients to places of interest, and local school and community events. Adept at everything from changing tyres to setting up the picnic spot, he loves to help people overcome social isolation.

Young Volunteer of the Year: Timothy Williamson

A keen Rotary volunteer and Epping Boys High student, Tim encourages young students to get involved in science and technology as the coach of FIRST Lego Leagues and Robotics Teams. Tim also leads EBHs Stream Watch environmental program and dedicates many hours to fund raising events.

Volunteer Group of the Year: Return to Work Program – Facilitators Helen Tribe, Victoria O'Neil, Jean White, Anita Belgiorno-Nettis

This group of skilled volunteers work through the Benevolent Society to assist underemployed, disadvantaged or vulnerable women to find part time employment. They have raised funds, designed program content and implemented the work-readiness program that has helped over 50 local women find work.

The Awards are held every year in conjunction with National Volunteer Week to honour the largely unseen army of volunteers who enrich the lives of so many in our community.