

FOR SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

2017 Citizen of the Year – WARREN SMITH

2017 Young Citizen of the Year – KRYSTLE-JAYNE NG

At an Australia Day ceremony today, the Mayor, Cllr Bill Pickering announced the 2017 City of Ryde Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year, in recognition of service to the local community. The recipients are:

Citizen of the Year – Mr Warren Smith

Young Citizen of the Year – Ms Krystle-Jayne Ng

Acknowledging their outstanding contributions, the Mayor said the winners exemplified the character and fine qualities of the people who make up the City of Ryde. “Both Mr Smith and Ms Ng deserve the admiration of the community and the acknowledgement of role models.

“Through their deeds and actions, both have added enormous value to our city and to the lives of so many in our local community. They lead by example and show that community spirit is thriving in the City of Ryde,” the Mayor said.

Two Special Commendations were also awarded to nominees Angelina Bonifacio and Zahira Noor for their contribution to community life.

Citizen of the Year 2017 - Warren Smith

A long time serving member of the SES and current Community Engagement Officer, Warren Smith believes in raising the profile of the SES via face to face conversations about the important messages of the SES, rather than handing out leaflets.

He is a strong believer in multi-lingual communications and has created and presented several innovative diverse-lingual presentations in Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Hindi, Indonesian, Turkish and Farsi to get the message across to as many people as possible.

Producers at SBS Cantonese Radio recognised the value of Warren’s work and have twice presented his work on national radio.

His original interactive speaking style has developed through extensive research and practice and he is now a sought after key-note speaker, presenter and internal SES trainer.

In any given week, Warren's SES community commitments take him to all types and sizes of events, from the likes of the Granny Smith Festival, Harmony Day and the upcoming Lunar New Year, to smaller gatherings like scout and cub groups, over 55's, deaf community, volunteer organisations and a range of cultural and language groups. He even stepped up to the mark to address a crowd of more than 80,000 at the NRL State of Origin kick off at Sydney Olympic Park.

Internally, for the SES, Warren is a valued contributor to all aspects of the service thanks to his extensive field work and operations experience and his can-do philosophy.

Contributing at least 30 hours a week to the SES, his dedication led to him giving up much of his 'free-time' to projects such as the building of the Ryde Training Facility when he supplied his tools, donated materials and sourced thousands of dollars' worth of cladding. This training facility is now used by not only Ryde SES but also by visiting Unit volunteers.

A member of the SES for the past seven years, Warren is on call 24/7 but still devotes hours to community work with organisations like Riding for the Disabled, the Salvation Army Red, Red Cross and Neighbourhood Watch.

He has received numerous awards and certificates of appreciation including from Rotary and Probus.

Ryde SES will be celebrating its 40th Anniversary this year and Warren is a member of the working group to promote this landmark event.

His dedication to the community he serves, his incredible knowledge and giving nature make him a most worthy recipient of the City of Ryde Citizen of the Year Award.

Young Citizen of the Year 2017 - Ms Krystle-Jayne Ng

As an active member of the Ryde Youth Council since 2012, Krystle-Jayne has brought her passions for the community, environment and technology to the benefit of all.

Krystle had a lead role in securing Ryde Youth Council's successful application to host the 2017 NSW Youth Conference at Macquarie University in September. The conference theme of *Make IT Happen* will demonstrate to the expected 400 audience, how technology can create long lasting and meaningful connections within the community.

She invigorates every event the Ryde Youth Council puts on, encouraging input and collaboration. Her managerial skills ensure events run smoothly and led the change to paperless meetings, encouraging sustainable promotional material and promotion of collaborative technologies.

Named the Most Employable IT Graduate in Australia in 2014, after graduating from UTS with a Bachelor of Information Technology (Co-Op Scholarship) with a Distinction, Krystle was snapped

up by Microsoft as a Technical Account Manager, which led to the Managing Director of Microsoft Australia accepting an invitation to speak at the Youth Conference.

Her style is sometimes described as 'subtle' but her contribution is substantial and her impact on young people's role in the Ryde community is significant.

Special Commendation 2017 - Angelina Bonifacio

Angelina is a mother, wife and grandmother who gives 100% to whatever she is committed to. The daughter of an Italian immigrant family, she is a passionate about the Ryde area and is committed to life in the local community and to keeping the Italian heritage alive with the younger generation.

It was Angelina's hard work and passion that saw the launch of the hugely successful Light Up East Ryde Christmas event, first in 2015 and again last year. She applied for a Council grant, sourced all the 50 plus stalls, secured sponsors and raised funds through fashion parades, a bus trip and a trivia night. More than 3,000 locals attended each event and monies raised went to local charities.

Angelina is also the organiser of a bi-monthly women's networking group, runs children's cooking classes in the holidays and organises outings for local seniors.

Special Commendation 2017 - Zahira Noor

From refugee to women's advocate, charity worker and author Zahira Noor is a role model in the community.

Arriving in Australia in 1987 from Afghanistan, Zahira had little English but set to learning and to increasing her general knowledge of her new country. Her desire to 'give back' led her to voluntary work with Eastwood Community Centre and then a part time job in St Anne's nursing home in Hunters Hill and later at St. Joseph's College. Zahira has also given her time to the Heart Foundation, Australian Red Cross and the Hunters Hill Ryde Community Service where she provided stimulating conversation and activities to the elderly.

As her passion for bringing communities together and giving Afghan women a voice grew, through stories and poetry, her experiences resulted in the publishing of a book titled *Dobaiti*, as well as official recognition from the Immigrant Women's Speakout Association of NSW.

She continues as an active volunteer for the Afghan Women's Association supporting women in times of need and providing community education classes in computers.

For full details go to www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/citizen