MEDIA RELEASE
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TIME RUNNING OUT TO NOMINATE FOR 2015 AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Nominate now at australianoftheyear.org.au

Nominations close Friday 1 August 2014

Time is running out to have your say on who should be considered for the 2015 Australian of the Year Awards, with nominations due to close on Friday 1 August 2014.

The National Australia Day Council, which runs the Australian of the Year Awards, is asking the public to nominate someone they find inspiring for the four award categories:

- Australian of the Year
- Senior Australian of the Year (60 years and over)
- Young Australian of the Year (16-30 years)
- Australia’s Local Hero

National Australia Day Council CEO Jeremy Lasek says the Australian of the Year Awards program recognises 128 Australians in eight States and Territories each year and one nomination is all it takes for someone to be recognised for their contributions or achievements.

"The Australian of the Year Awards is a great opportunity to say thank you to the many people in our communities doing great things, many of whom are unsung heroes," said Mr Lasek.

"It only takes one nomination for someone to be in the running for the awards as they are based on merit - we look at the contributions a person has made or their achievements.

"It's easy to nominate someone - you simply tell us why you find them inspiring and what they've done. Your nomination could celebrate a great Australian and help find the next Australian of the Year."

More than 1300 nominations have already been received for the 2015 Australian of the Year Awards, with a diverse range of quiet achievers, community contributors and high profile Australians among the nominations received to date.

Some of those already nominated include:

- Ryan Campbell (Broadwater, NSW)
  Ryan became the youngest person to fly solo around the world in a single engine aircraft in 2013, completing the circumnavigation at just 19 years of age.

- Sean Willmore (Mornington Penninsula, VIC)
  Sean founded The Thin Green Line, a world-renowned foundation which supports the vital work of wildlife rangers in protecting endangered species and fighting wildlife poaching.

- Hetty Johnston (Gold Coast, QLD)
  Hetty is the Founder and Executive Director of Bravehearts, an organisation advocating for better child protection in Australia. Hetty is a lobbyist who often highlights and promotes action against paedophilia within media, families, school and in the general community.
• Drisana Levitzke-Gray (Balga, WA)
Drisana, who is deaf, works in a voluntary capacity to improve acceptance and understanding of deaf youth in Australia and around the world, fighting for social inclusion of deaf people and creating a series of online videos for deaf people.

• Jimmy Harrington (Adelaide, SA)
At 21, Jimmy undertook a walk of more than 15,000km around Australia to raise a quarter of a million dollars for cancer and the Brainchild Foundation. Jimmy continues to inspire people to support the foundation and the many children with spinal cord and brain cancer.

• Tegan Nadler (Hobart, TAS)
Tegan uses social media to effectively spread the word that families are in need of a helping hand and runs a program where families simply double a recipe when they're preparing for dinner and freeze half so meals are ready to be collected when needed and distributed to needy families.

• Andrew Heslop (Kingston, ACT)
Andrew founded Neighbour Day in 2003 to rebuild a sense of community across Australia and encourage people to connect with their neighbours, look after each other, to promote tolerance and create safer societies.

• Michele Castagna (Alice Springs, NT)
Michele, who contracted polio as a child and is quadriplegic as a result, is a mobility and disability advocate working to educate the community on disability inclusivity and to overcome individual and systemic ignorance of people with a disability. She was the first person with a disability to be elected to Alice Springs Council.

"These extraordinary people are just some of those already nominated and we want to be sure we have as many worthy Australians as possible in the running for the 2015 awards," said Mr Lasek.

"A person cannot be considered for the awards unless a nomination is submitted for them, so it's up to the public to tell us who's doing amazing things and who makes you proud to be Australian.

"If you haven't submitted a nomination for someone you think should be in the running for the awards, you only have until 1 August."

Nominations for all Award categories can be made online at australianoftheyear.org.au or call 1300 655 193 for more information or for assistance if you don't have internet access or need help completing a nomination.

Go online to submit a nomination before 1 August 2014 - one nomination is all it takes to shine a light on an Australian you admire.

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