

MEDIA RELEASE

SATURDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2012

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA'S AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENTS 2013 ANNOUNCED

Western Australia's Australian of the Year 2013 - Kerry Stokes AC
Western Australia's Senior Australian of the Year 2013 - Lorraine and Barry Young
Western Australia's Young Australian of the Year 2013 - Akram Azimi
Western Australia's Local Hero 2013 - Caroline de Mori

Four outstanding West Australians have been chosen as WA's Award recipients for one of Australia's highest honours – the Australian of the Year Awards. Award recipients will represent Western Australia in the Australian of the Year Awards nationally.

Entrepreneur and philanthropist, **Kerry Stokes AC** has been named **Western Australia's Australian of the Year 2013** for his extensive philanthropic contributions to Australian society.

One of Australia's leading business identities, Kerry Stokes is the Chairman of Seven West Media, which includes the Seven TV network and The West Australian newspaper.

He is Chairman of Seven Group Holdings which includes WesTrac, one of the world's biggest Caterpillar dealerships across Western Australia, NSW and North-East China.

He also has interests in a diverse range of Australian and international enterprises including mining, property and construction.

Born in Melbourne, he moved to Perth and in the 1960s and 1970s became involved in WA property development. He made his first foray into the media with the regional television network Golden West based in Bunbury. Over time he acquired more television stations before taking a significant stake in the Seven Network in 1995.

Kerry has been pre-eminent in preserving ownership of Australia's military heritage including the purchase of several Victoria Cross medals which he donated to the Australian War Memorial.

Kerry's many board memberships include the International Council for Museum & Television and the Council for the Australian War Memorial.

He has received multiple awards for his philanthropy including the 2011 Charles Court Inspiring Leadership Award.

Lorraine and Barry Young have been named joint **Western Australia's Senior Australian of the Year 2013** for their work as Meningococcal campaigners.

Lorraine and Barry Young have dedicated the past 15 years raising awareness of, and finding an effective treatment for, the deadly meningococcal septicaemia bacteria.

Tragically, in 1997 the disease took the life of their only child, 18 year old Amanda, just 24 hours after she started showing symptoms of the disease.

Lorraine and Barry decided to establish the Amanda Young Foundation, which has created Australia-wide community education programs about meningococcal disease and funded medical research into the development of vaccines to target the elusive meningococcal B.

In 2011, the Foundation reached thousands of families through an education campaign in more than 150 child care centres in WA.

Fundraising by Lorraine and Barry and dozens of volunteers allows the Foundation to support survivors of the disease and their carers in the most practical ways. Funding is provided for special computer and bedding equipment, for education, specialist counselling and advanced prosthetic limbs.

In addition, the Foundation helps to fund the development of young people into Western Australia's future leaders through scholarships, bursaries, workshops and camps.



Western Australia's Young Australian of the Year 2013 is 25 year old mentor, **Akram Azimi** for his work mentoring young Indigenous people.

Arriving in Australia 13 years ago from Afghanistan he went from being 'an ostracised refugee kid with no prospects' to becoming his school's head boy. An outstanding student, he topped the tertiary entrance exam scores among his classmates. He's now studying a triple major – law, science and arts – at the University of Western Australia.

Intent on giving back to his adopted country, Akram uses his leadership and pastoral skills to help young people in remote and rural Western Australia.

In 2011 he co-founded a student-run initiative *I am the other* set up to raise awareness about Indigenous issues in universities. His philanthropic roles have included working with True Blue Dreaming, which helps disadvantaged remote Indigenous communities.

For three years, Akram mentored young Indigenous people in the Looma community in the Kimberley region, and he has mentored primary school students in the small farming community of Wyalkatchem, in WA's wheat belt.

Akram is also mentoring a Special Olympics athlete to help raise community awareness of disability issues.

Western Australia's Local Hero 2013 is indigenous health advocate **Caroline de Mori** for her work in establishing a not-for-profit foundation in 2005 to overcome chronic health issues in Indigenous communities in the most practical way – by helping them grow and prepare fresh fruit and vegetables.

She recognised that the simplest way to provide fresh food, particularly to remote communities was to grow it locally.

Since then, Caroline's Edge of Nowhere Foundation, or EON as it's known, has been invited into 12 remote communities in Western Australia. The program, called Thriving Communities, helps Indigenous people understand the importance of fresh fruit, vegetables and bush tucker to a healthy diet and disease prevention.

Over five years, the communities learn how to grow, harvest, prepare and cook their food, and learn a range of skills to support a healthy lifestyle. A big focus of the program is children, who learn about preparing simple, healthy meals.

The communities are strongly encouraged to take responsibility for the program as Caroline believes ownership is an important part of education.

Caroline and her team have raised more than \$4 million for Thriving Communities from governments, Indigenous land corporations and the private sector.

The Western Australian award recipients will join recipients from the other States and Territories as finalists for the national awards announced on 25 January 2013 in Canberra.

Program Director for the National Australia Day Council, Tam Johnston, said the Western Australian award recipients are inspirational achievers giving back to help others.

"This year's award recipients have been celebrated for what they have done and how they are supporting and helping others," said Ms Johnston.

The Commonwealth Bank has been the Major Sponsor of the Australian of the Year Awards for more than 30 years. Chief Executive Officer Ian Narev congratulated the Western Australia's award recipients.

"The Commonwealth Bank is proud to acknowledge the Western Australia's award recipients. You are now national finalists in the Australian of the Year Awards and should be very proud of your achievement.

"While you have each been inspiring in your own way, you all share one common quality – you continue to selflessly improve the lives of others. Congratulations to you all and enjoy your time in Canberra in January" said Mr Narev.

For more information on the Australian of the Year Awards visit www.australianoftheyear.org.au.

Ends.

For interviews or information about the Australian of the Year Awards please contact:
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EMBARGO NOTE: Media attending the Awards event may of course report award recipients as they are announced on stage OR follow Australian of the Year Awards on Facebook for the awards announcements as they happen - once each award is announced, it can be reported.

