

## Minister Zoe Bettison

Minister for Volunteers

Monday, 8 June, 2015

### Inspiring a new generation of volunteers on Volunteers Day 2015

Volunteers Minister Zoe Bettison says a suite of new State Government initiatives will help to inspire a new generation of South Australians volunteers.

Speaking at today's State Volunteer Awards, Ms Bettison said volunteering can provide a valuable pathway to employment for young people.

"Volunteering gives young people a great sense of responsibility and it exposes them to a range of career options across government, industry and the community sector," she said.

"While South Australians continue to volunteer in record numbers, it is important that future generations continue to get involved.

"That is why the South Australian Government is providing volunteer scholarships, time exchange programs and recognition schemes – to encourage young South Australians to explore the benefits of volunteering."

Ms Bettison today joined more than 1500 volunteers for the award ceremony at the Adelaide Festival Theatre – a free event featuring performances by Adelaide Cabaret Festival artists.

"Today provides us with a timely opportunity to shine a spotlight on young volunteers, ensuring they are encouraged and supported in their efforts through programs such as the Youth Volunteer Scholarship Award program," Ms Bettison said.

"The program provides up to \$3000 toward study costs for young volunteers up to 25 years of age and currently involved in volunteering."

Applications for the Youth Volunteer Scholarship Award program open this Wednesday, 10 June, and close Friday 24 July 2015.

Ms Bettison said the recently announced pilot volunteer recognition scheme is also aimed at encouraging more young South Australians to get involved in volunteering.

"This uniquely South Australian program will be a combined time-exchange and volunteer recognition scheme," Ms Bettison said.

"Young people will be able to register with an organisation and bank their volunteer hours using a smart phone app. They can then use their banked hours to access rewards and benefits through the volunteer recognition scheme."

The pilot is part of the Volunteering Strategy for South Australia, a partnership between the volunteer sector, business and government.

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The strategy was developed to improve the experience of volunteers, enhance outcomes for volunteer organisations and to help meet South Australia's Strategic Plan target to maintain a volunteer participation rate of 70% or more.

Volunteering SA/NT chief executive, Evelyn O'Loughlin, said today's award recipients were a mix of inspiring individuals, community-minded sporting clubs and businesses with strong sense of corporate responsibility.

"With more than 900,000 South Australians volunteering formally or informally, Volunteers Day is an important occasion for us to pay tribute to their work," Ms O'Loughlin said.

"The event celebrates the many and varied ways that our volunteers dedicate their time, from patrolling beaches and helping in emergencies, to delivering food and providing companionship to the elderly and isolated.

"These prestigious awards commend those who inspire and promote the spirit of volunteering through exemplary service to the community."

The following awards will be presented by His Excellency, the Honourable Hieu Van Le AO, Governor of South Australia:

- Michelle Sibbons was awarded the *Joy Noble Medal* for outstanding efforts in volunteering to support families with children suffering from Congenital Melanocytic Nevus, a rare but potentially life-threatening condition.
- West Beach Surf Life Saving Club's '*On the Same Wave*' Project received '*The Andamooka*' *Community Project Award* for its contribution to teaching newly arrived immigrants about how to be safe at our beaches.
- Adelaide Airport Limited was awarded the *Premier's Award for Corporate Social Responsibility* for its partnership approach to community investment.

For further information about volunteering and the Youth Volunteer Scholarship Award program, visit the Office for Volunteers website at [www.ofv.sa.gov.au](http://www.ofv.sa.gov.au) or call 1300 014 712.