



Catholic Social Services
Australia

SPEECH

2010 AWARDS

EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE ORGANISATIONAL (MEMBERS)

CANBERRA

8 FEBRUARY 2010

Presented by

MICHAEL REUTENS

BOARD MEMBER, CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES AUSTRALIA

**Check against delivery

THE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE ORGANISATIONAL (MEMBERS)

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Tonight I have great pleasure in announcing two highly commended nominations in this category.

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Our second highly commended for this award this evening is **Marist Youth Care's Aboriginal Trainee Support Worker Project for Western Sydney.**

Western Sydney has the largest urban Aboriginal population in NSW. Many Aboriginal people face low levels of formal education, poor literacy and numeracy skills, a history of offending or incarceration, transitory accommodation, unstable employment histories, substance abuse, domestic violence problems and poor physical and mental

health. Only 45 per cent of Aboriginal people in Western Sydney are employed.

The Aboriginal Trainee Support Worker Project for Western Sydney is a full-time mentoring and support program that addresses these barriers by enabling participants to gain skills, qualifications and employment in the community services industry.

Ten Aboriginal people have completed the program, with 8 securing permanent, full-time employment with Marist Youth Care. The latest intake of 12 participants is mid-way through completing Certificate II Community Services. This group will commence full-time employment with Marist Youth Care in February 2010 and will complete a Certificate IV Community Services.

The program has been so successful that Marist Youth Care is proposing to extend it into an enterprise model.

The program has received enthusiastic support from Housing Minister Tanya Plibersek; Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion, Ursula Stephens; various NSW politicians, Federal bureaucrats and agencies.

I invite CATE SYDES, Executive Director to accept this award tonight on behalf of Marist Youth Care.