

**COMMUNITY SERVICES EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

*Statement*

**HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan)** [6.20 pm]: A fortnight ago, I had the pleasure of attending and representing the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Mike Nahan, at the 2018 Western Australian Council of Social Service's biennial conference. The theme of the conference was "Making PLACE", which I think is quite an appropriate theme considering the funding situation of regional community resource centres. I congratulate Ms Debra Zanella, the president of WACOSS, and Ms Louise Giolitto, the chief executive officer, all the staff who assisted in putting this conference together, and the hundreds of people who attended the conference in one form or another.

I want to use this opportunity to draw attention to the many hardworking individuals and groups in the community services sector, who may very well be held in esteem by the people with whom they work on a daily basis, and also throughout the community sector more broadly, but who do not probably get the acclaim and plaudits that they deserve from the rest of us. The Community Services Excellence Awards were presented on the evening of 2 May. One of the recipients was Befriend, which is a small not-for-profit organisation that helps people to make friends—which is one of the most basic things to do, yet for people who have other challenges in their lives is often one of the most difficult things to do. Another recipient was Tuart Place, which provides a range of supports and opportunities for adults who as children experienced out-of-home care. Parkerville Children and Youth Care received an award for its multiagency investigation and support team, which does vitally important and difficult work in the area of child sexual abuse investigations. Another recipient was the Youth Involvement Council in South Hedland, which provides a range of meaningful programs for the youth of that town. Another recipient was the Save the Children Youth Partnership Project, which works with young people to reduce the number of juveniles in the justice system. Another recipient was Gumala Aboriginal Corporation for its work in providing improved services through its inclusive and holistic consultation processes.

Two individuals were identified for special recognition. The first was Ms Dellys Sice from Manjimup, who is part of a mobile support service for families with autism spectrum disorders. Dellys is also an active board member of the Manjimup Family Centre and in her spare time provides volunteer counselling services to people experiencing grief and loss. The second was Ms Dawn Wallam, who unfortunately I did not get the pleasure to meet. Dawn's work in the social services sector for over 40 years has a profound impact on the people with whom she comes in touch. Dawn was also recognised for her contribution to foster caring arrangements as the chief executive officer of Yorganop, which is Western Australia's first Aboriginal community-controlled foster agency.

It was my absolute pleasure to attend that conference and make the acquaintance of people who effectively are local heroes. These people often do not get the plaudits, acclaim and recognition in the broader community that they deserve. I hope this small contribution has made some difference in balancing that ledger.