

YOUTH WEEK

753. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Youth:

Will the Minister for Youth advise the house how community groups and local governments throughout the state can apply for grants to host Youth Week activities?

Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for his interest in youth and his question, which gives me an opportunity to update the house on Youth Week. Grants are now available for activities to be held during Youth Week in 2015. This year's grants were allocated to 88 local government and youth organisations to help them hold activities during Youth Week. I spoke in this house earlier this year about a number of events that were run around the state, including Shark Bay's version of *The Amazing Race* and a circus held in Manjimup, and how Youth Week helps us to engage with youth. The grants are part of a process of sponsoring Youth Week next year. Applications for grants are open until 24 October this year and can be made through the Department of Local Government and Communities. While I am on my feet, I would like to speak about the many things that are happening in the area of youth at the moment. Stephanie Jackson and Trent Caldwell, two great youth in our community, have been nominated to be WA coordinators for National Youth Week. It is great to have representation from Western Australia at the national awards.

Another important point is that nominations for WA Young Person of the Year are open. This year a different approach has been taken. Normally the awards are held at the end of Youth Week in April, but this year that has changed, mainly because nominations would be called for in January and February but we struggled to get many nominations for the awards. The Youth Affairs Council of WA has taken the initiative to push the awards back to 20 November this year and nominations are now open until 3 October—next Friday—for anyone who is doing great youth work in our community. There are nine categories for which youth can be nominated. It will be great to see who will become the youth ambassador on 20 November.

An important change is to get away from the title “youth of the year” to “youth ambassador”. Youth in WA need to be recognised and given a role as youth ambassador. An important part of the role of youth ambassador is the recognition of youth in our community, and this year the youth ambassador will be given \$10 000 so that they can travel anywhere in the state to talk to schools and attend functions as the ambassador for youth in WA to acknowledge youth in our community.

Finally, this morning I went to Foyer Oxford, where YACWA has just opened its new office. It was supposed to be an opening this morning, but it was a bit of a soft opening because, unfortunately, it has not been finished in time. Craig and his crew at YACWA have done a fantastic job and YACWA finally has a permanent home after 35 years at Foyer Oxford. It is a great location and a great building built by this government this year to house over 200 youth in the community. It was great to go there this morning to officially open the YACWA office and to recognise the great work that it does.