

**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE
COMMUNITY SERVICES EXCELLENCE AWARDS**

Statement by Minister for Community Services

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Minister for Community Services) [12.14 pm]: I rise to inform the house of some outstanding community service achievers who were recently recognised at the annual Western Australian Council of Social Service Community Services Excellence Awards, which I had the privilege of attending. Through those awards, we celebrated and recognised our state's often unsung heroes in the community services sector, and what a deserving celebration it was. The WACOSS Community Excellence Awards recognise community sector workers for their commitment to helping make a difference in the lives of vulnerable Western Australians every day. The awards are a partnership between the state government through the Department of Communities and WACOSS.

The many finalists and eight award winners were recognised at a ceremony at Optus Stadium on 1 May. The 2023 award winners for the category of organisation providing collaborative, innovative or creative programs or services was Man Up WA for small organisation, Starick for medium organisation, Gumala Aboriginal Corporation for large organisation and Busselton Hospice Care for regional organisation. The winner of the award for outstanding community-led collaboration leading to better community outcomes was Social Reinvestment WA. The winner of the award for outstanding achievement by an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation, leading to better outcomes, was Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service. The winner of the Above and Beyond Award was Winnie Hayward, and the winner of the Excellence in Leadership Award was Elena Petrici. These eight winners have made an incredible contribution to our community. Like them, every day thousands of dedicated staff and volunteers in our community services sector work to support Western Australians who experience disadvantage and adversity.

In my capacity as Minister for Community Services, it has been a great privilege to travel around WA and meet with so many of these hardworking people across the sector, and I look forward to meeting many more of them. Awards nights like these are a great opportunity to recognise their incredible efforts. I want to congratulate all the deserving finalists and winners, and extend a huge thank you to all community service organisations for the wonderful and most important work they do each day to make a difference in people's lives. I thank WACOSS for its ongoing support and partnership with the state government for this event, and for hosting a wonderful celebration.