



# Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and Communities  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

---

## MEDIA RELEASE

---

Wednesday, 5 December 2012

### NSW VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCED

Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello has announced the winner of the NSW Volunteer of the Year 2012.

The Awards were established by The Centre for Volunteering in 2007 to recognise the efforts of NSW volunteers and promote the importance of volunteering to the community.

Mr Dominello, who is Patron of the Award, presented the award to Andrew Heslop, founder of *Neighbour Day*, which urges people to become more connected with their neighbours and to help the more vulnerable in their communities.

In 2003 he was motivated to establish the day after hearing about the discovery of a deceased elderly woman who had not been missed for more than two years.

Other winners in the 2012 Awards, announced to coincide with International Volunteer Day, include a teenage girl with brittle bone disease who continues to mentor young children in the Girl Guides. The Senior Volunteer of the Year Award went to a woman who improves the chances of disadvantaged women getting a job by helping them find clothes to increase their confidence and restore their dignity.

Mr Heslop encourages people to be on the lookout for vulnerable people by watching out for a build-up of mail, unkempt gardens or unopened curtains in the morning in their neighbours' homes.

"I am delighted to celebrate the outstanding contribution of volunteers like Andrew Heslop," Mr Dominello said.

"His work and those of many volunteers is helping to revitalise connections between people in their communities."

More than 240 million hours are donated every year by about two million individual volunteers across the state.

The 2012 award winners are:

- NSW Volunteer of the Year - individual winner: Andrew Heslop
- NSW Volunteer of the Year - youth winner: Michaela Collins
- NSW Volunteer of the Year - senior winner: Megan Etheridge
- Excellence in not-for-profit Volunteer Management Award: Manning Support Services at Taree
- Corporate Volunteer of the Year - Michael Cluff: Commonwealth Bank of Australia
- Corporate Volunteer Team of the Year: Ausgrid
- Volunteer Team of the Year - Carevan Volunteer Team: Albury-Wodonga



# Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and Communities  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

---

## MEDIA RELEASE

---

“On behalf of the NSW Government I sincerely thank and congratulate all the award winners and nominees for their outstanding and generous efforts,” Mr Dominello said.

“I also want to thank all volunteers in NSW. Our community is richer – socially and economically – because of them.”

The culmination of the Volunteers Awards coincides with the findings of a new report into preserving and promoting the rights of volunteers.

Mr Dominello received the *Recognition of the Rights of Volunteers* report by The Centre for Volunteering and the NSW Office of Communities Volunteering unit as part of official International Volunteer Day Celebrations.

The report, based on the views of the 1,000 volunteers who were consulted, contains key principles including: a commitment to best practice in volunteer management; volunteers being involved in organisation’s decisions that affect them; clarity on roles, responsibilities and expectations of volunteers and; access to training and professional development.

“Millions of volunteers make a vital contribution to our society and it is essential they are treated with fairness, respect and dignity by the organisations and individuals who benefit from this generosity and commitment,” Mr Dominello said.

The NSW Government will respond to the findings of the report in 2013.

## Winners - NSW Volunteer of the Year 2012:

**Volunteer of the Year:** ANDREW HESLOP

**Youth winner:** MICHAELA COLLINS

Michaela, 16, who has brittle bone disease, is a mentor with the Blayney Star Girl Guides and organises weekly activities for the girls aged five to 11.

**Senior winner:** MEGAN ETHERIDGE

Megan founded *Dress for Success*; a charity that assists disadvantaged women and improves their employability by increasing their confidence and restoring dignity. Mulawa Women’s Prison at Silverwater has hosted the program. It has also been expanded to an online program to assist people in remote locations like Gilgandra, Dubbo and Tumut.

**Excellence in not-for-profit Volunteer Management:** MANNING SUPPORT SERVICES

MSS in Taree demonstrated that organisations that provide volunteers the same status as their paid staff can have the greatest impact on a community. MSS conducted a review of



# Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and Communities  
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

---

## MEDIA RELEASE

---

its volunteer management practices and now provides pathways for volunteers into paid work in the organisation.

**Corporate Volunteer of the Year: MICHAEL CLUFF**

Michael works with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia and is being awarded for his work with the Cerebral Palsy Alliance.

**Corporate Volunteer Team of the Year: AUSGRID**

The Ausgrid Community Care Program delivers grassroots assistance to community organisations where its staff members volunteer.

**Volunteer Team of the Year: CAREVAN VOLUNTEER TEAM - Albury Wodonga**

Carevan provides support to homeless and disadvantaged people through a range of programs including meals and care packs.

For more information on the NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, please visit the website at [www.nswvolunteerawards.com](http://www.nswvolunteerawards.com). For information on volunteering please visit the NSW Centre for Volunteering website at [www.volunteering.com.au](http://www.volunteering.com.au).

**MEDIA: Jim O'Rourke 0409 185 431**