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MEDIA RELEASE



Awards help deaf youth realise their dreams

Forty-two ambitious deaf youths from all around Australia have been awarded grants by Deaf Children Australia to help make their dreams a reality.

The Deaf Children Australia Youth Awards were created to recognise the ideas and achievements of young deaf and hearing impaired people and highlight their positive contribution to society.

A total of 48 applicants between the ages of 15 and 21 years from Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia applied. Of those, 36 were from Victoria, 2 from Queensland, 1 from New South Wales, 4 from South Australia, 4 from Western Australia and 1 from Tasmania.

Applicants' requests included funding to set up personal businesses, assistance for further study and hobbies, such as learning to play the Tabla, creating an Auslan DVD, setting up an after-school deaf club and work experience.

Amanda Collins, year 10 student from Victoria is a budding creative writer and photographer. She was ecstatic that her request for funds to publish a number of books featuring her poems and photos was granted.

Amanda Collins said, "I am so happy that my dream is actually going to come true. The book will detail my life story, and what I have gone through being deaf. I want it to influence the lives of deaf teenagers, to let them know that they are not alone."

Damian Lacey, CEO of *Deaf Children Australia* says, "Our vision at Deaf Children Australia is that deafness is no barrier. These awards will give deaf and hearing impaired people the opportunity to fulfil their true potential."

The Deaf Children Australia Youth Awards were established through the generous support of Deaf Children Australia, the Allen & Cecelia Tye Estate and the Nelson & Brook Educational Trusts. The sum of \$29,000 was given away in grants.

Deaf Children Australia - formerly VSDC Services - has been providing information, advocacy, support services and educational resources to enrich the lives of deaf and hearing impaired children and young adults for 144 years. *Deaf Children Australia* represents the needs of 16,000 deaf and hearing impaired children throughout Australia. As a not-for-profit organisation, their service is made possible with the support of volunteers, the community, businesses and government financial grants.

For more information on Deaf Children Australia, please call 1300 365 196 or log on to www.deafchildreinaustralia.org.au.

For more information about this press release or to request an interview, please call Julie Postance on 9539 5362 or jpostance@deafchildren.org.au.

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