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| Victorian Disability Awards  Wednesday 24 August 2022 |
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| Video Transcript |

**Alistair Baldwin, Host:** Good afternoon everyone, it's a pleasure to be here with you all today. I'm Alistair Baldwin and I'm your facilitator today. My pronouns are he/him. I'm joining you from the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation. I pay my respects to their elders past and present and I acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded. Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.

It's my pleasure to be presenting the Victorian Disability Awards today. When I was asked to facilitate, I thought what a brutal way to find out I was not nominated in any category.

Just a few housekeeping items before we get underway with the formalities; live captions are here, the link can be found in the chat. If you need technical assistance at any time don't hesitate to contact the support team available via email on awards@dffh.vic.gov.au or in the chat. We will provide a visual description of each nominee or team photo as they're shown on the screen.

I'm a white mid-20s man wearing a blue blazer speaking at a lectern in front of blue velvet curtains. All video content is audio described. Any audience member who is not blind or has vision impairment is welcome to turn off the volume and read the captions or minimise the zoom window to hear audio only. Our Auslan interpreters are Kieron and Mac, our captioner Michelle is supporting us throughout the event. The session is being recorded.

Wonderful, that's the housekeeping so let's get going with the awards.

I would like to introduce Wurundjeri Elder Tony Garvey. A proud Wurundjeri man, he has been contributing to his community for 30 years. He has worked for the Aboriginal co‑op in Healsville as well as for Wurundjeri Council.

In recent years Tony has developed his passion for Cultural Heritage Management within the council. Tony commenced delivering Welcomes four years ago when his mother Aunty Doreen Garvey-Wandin (Senior Wurundjeri Elder), gave her blessing for Tony to undertake this cultural duty. He has a deep connection with Coranderrk - a former Aboriginal Station in Healesville. He takes pleasure being a Wurundjeri descendent and with his strong past and contemporary connection with Coranderrk.

**Wurundjeri Elder, Tony Garvey**: Thank you very much for the warm welcome and also thank you very much for inviting us here today. It's very important for our culture going forward. If I can ask everyone for a minute's silence, we lost an Elder on Saturday morning, Aunty Margaret Gardener. If we can show some respect and have a minute's silence before we move on to the Welcome to Country that would be great, thank you, much appreciated.

*1 minute silence*

Thank you very much for that, much appreciated. As you heard my name is Tony Garvey. I'm a Wurundjeri Elder, my, great grandfather was - live at, due to colonisation and being forced off her land she decided to die there. The Wurundjeri people are also part of the Kulin nation. That means man.

In the Kulin nation there are five language groups, the Woi Wurrung, Coorong, Tunarong, Bunarong and the Wurundjeri territory we stand on today, in the inner city of Melbourne. It extends from the mountains of the Great Dividing Range south to the Yarra River and east, the Wurundjeri people they have a social totem, which is the eagle, Bundjil.

Represents spiritual powers throughout many parts of Australia, taught the laws about life behaviour and ceremony to make sure our culture will continue for all walks of life throughout Australia, was referred to as the creator of mankind from the land as that why we call the land our mother or the mother of creation. Never can the land be taken away.

The language will always belong to Aboriginal people. As we are part of the land and the land is part of us. As stories to the European people theirs is chosen faith ours is the dreamtime, ours is Bundjil. A traditional custom of the Australian Aboriginal communities is to give people permission to enter their land and you are joined to honour the spirits of ancestors, past, present and emerging which have nurtured the land for 80,000 years and we welcome you to the land and hope together as citizens of this beautiful country we can build develop and unite stronger, I will close off in my language. ‑ which means you are most welcome to the lands of the Wurundjeri people.

Once again thank you very much for inviting us here today and it's very important for us going forward as one. So thank you very much.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Thank you Uncle Tony for that wonderful welcome to Country. I have the pleasure of introducing a special guest.

Before entering Parliament he worked as an electrician on railways and building sites and as a service technician. His interest in community issues led him to roles as an electorate officer and advisor and serving on his local council. This person believes that Parliament provides an opportunity to change society for the better, making his community stronger, and fairer. This is what prompted him to run for Parliament. Please join me in welcoming the new Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers, and Minister for Chid Protection and Family services, Colin Brooks.

**Minister Disability, Ageing and Carers and Minister Child Protection and Family Services, Hon. Colin Brooks:** Thank you very much Alistair, hello everyone, my pronouns are he/him. I'm wearing a navy suit if somewhat thinning grey hair. I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we are meeting, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation and pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging and in particular thank Tony Garvey for his welcome to Country. I acknowledge the disability commissioner, Dan Stubbs, Chris Farney, 2022 disabilities awards judge, Margherita Coppolino, comedian and facilitator today Alistair Baldwin. It's a pleasure to be with you today for my first Victorian Disability Awards, what a privilege.

This is an important annual event for the disability community and sector, as the new minister I look forward to taking the opportunity to learn more about your efforts. I thank you to the former advisory council for their role in the new categories for disability pride. In a moment I present my first minister's award in my role. Awards like these are a great opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the disability community. Today we recognise and celebrate your outstanding contributions to building an inclusive Victoria.

The impact of COVID‑19 over the past few years has made clear what I'm sure you have known for a long time, as human beings we need to feel valued, connected and included. We all need to be seen, and heard. We all need to access support of one kind or another.

When the pandemic started it reinforced how important these things really are. We recognised hardship in new ways. We saw the true value of connection and community. And we saw people all around the world change the way they live and work to keep these connections in place. Our experience with COVID‑19 has also shown how systems can work against some people more than others.

Groups that have for too long missed out or been overlooked or shut out from the choices so many Victorians take for granted, this includes people with disability who faced unique challenges as a community. The COVID‑19 experience has given added momentum to the push for lasting change that the people with disabilities and their advocates and allies have fought for over many years, we have seen a call for fairness, equality and inclusion, a call to recognise and put an end to overlapping forms of discrimination and exclusion, this is our challenge as a government and one we are deeply committed to.

Our new state disability plan, Inclusive Victoria, launched early this year, it lays down a challenge for all parts of government to change the way we work. Inclusive Victoria is intended to pave the way for a strengthened, disability inclusion bill that will see the appointment of Australia's first commissioner for disability inclusion. There's much to work to do but these are steps in the right direction.

We have worked for years to build a more inclusive and accessible world, the Victorian government heard the call and are committed to acting on it. Today's event we are here to celebrate, the Victorian disability awards recognise the outstanding contributions made by people that recognise the rights of people with disability; they celebrate you.

And they celebrate the commitment and creativity of people across the community people who through their ideas, dedication and hard work have made a difference. Congratulations to the nominees and winners. You have helped create new opportunities and experiences. You make the world more inclusive, welcoming and safe for people with a disability. That's the kind of Victoria we want to build and is truly something worth celebrating.

Since taking the role of minister I have been constantly amazed by the work done here in Victoria and I'm pleased to be able to celebrate this commitment to excellence with you all, we have incredible people to recognise today and they deserve all the accolades they get, thank you and have a wonderful day.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Thank you Minister Brooks for your moving words and presence here today. Before we commence the first rounds of awards, I would like to explain a few key items for nominees and audience members alike.

All finalists and highly commended nominees will receive a copy of their certificate in the mail in the coming week. All winners receive a framed certificate and gift to celebrate their achievement. Please join me as we go through all the categories in celebrating everyone's achievement as you can through the chat function and online.

So first category, it is the volunteer award. This award recognises an individual volunteer or group of volunteers who demonstrate exceptional skill and commitment to making Victoria a more accessible and inclusive place for people with disability. This award recognises someone who has made significant contributions to progress, in the rights and inclusion of people with disability or has shown a long‑term commitment to volunteering to support people with disability or promote disability pride. Or a volunteer who mentors, or supports people with disability to be active contributors to their community.

To support me in presenting the first round of awards today we have Argiri Alisandratos, Deputy Secretary from the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Over to you Argiri to announce the results.

Argiri Alisandratos, Deputy Secretary for **Children, Families, Communities and Disability at the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing:** Thank you Alistair, my, great pleasure to be with you today. My pronouns are he/him. I'm wearing a blue jacket, red tie, have very short hair and standing in front of a deep blue background. It's my pleasure to announce the winner of the volunteering award. After the detailed deliberation from our judges, the runners up are Sandra Bennett who is shown here in a blue/grey jumper smiling with short hair, wearing glasses and Marwa Mostafa who is to the right wearing a pink hijab and a grey top, smiling in front of a white door. Which means the winner for 2022 is Blind Sports and Recreation, Victoria volunteer ambassadors.

The slide shown has 13 people from the volunteer ambassadors in boxes. Some are on white backgrounds and others in blue, each smiling and looking at the camera. The Blind Sports logo in white text is centred saying, join us, join in.

In 2021 Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria created a program including 13 committed volunteers with lived experience of being blind or having low vision. These ambassadors have played a key role in the community by growing blind and low vision sport and recreation. They have collectively spent hundreds of hours creating and furthering opportunities for people who are blind or have low vision to become physically and socially active and improve their health and wellbeing. We also have a short clip to show you about the work they do.

I will await a few minutes for anyone who needs to mute their audio while the video plays.

VIDEO SHOWN

Genamarie, blind tennis player. It's quite interesting, after that first day of experiencing learning this skill, this sport, I changed my view on everything and I became incredibly brave. When you have to tread in a new space and someone gives you a way forward in it - someone shows you how to use it - without any of your mobility aids, if that's not a way of enhancing your self-confidence, I can't imagine what else is, it does, it just simply does.

Maurice Gleeson OAM. Hi, I'm Maurice Gleeson ‑ we believe that people who are blinds or vision impaired should be able to participate in any sport or recreational activity of their choice. It's incredibly important that service and programs provided have the knowledge to be able to engage and encourage people who are blind or vision impaired to participate in activities in a meaningful way.

Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria enhances the lives of people throughout Victoria who are blind or have low vision through sport and recreation. Since our establishment in 1977 we have evolved into a dedicated and thriving charity, which is setting the benchmark for blind sport and recreation in Australia, supporting more than 1200 members we encourage people who are blind or have low vision of all ages and diverse backgrounds to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Congratulations to today's winners in the volunteer category and it's great to see such wonderful support and praise happening in the chat and online. For our second category in excellence, is rather, excellence in creating inclusive communities. This award recognises the contributions of an individual or group towards building an inclusive community that improves the lives of people with disability.

The criterion for this award is an individual or group who has contributed significantly to one of the following: Changing community attitudes, improving buildings and infrastructure, enhancing communications - for example access to the internet, increasing the active participation of people with disability in the communities they identify with, including LGBTIQ+ Victorians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and young people, and Argiri will announce.

Argiri Alisandratos: Thank you, it's wonderful to see of our five short listed nominations the results are: The runners up, Wayne Holdsworth shown on the left in a blue and red striped shirt and black glasses smiling; Em Dewhurst shown on the right in a floral t-shirt with a locket necklace on a blue background. Also highly commended awarded to Mandy Hose and Kate Jones from Too Peas in a pod, podcast, wearing bright clothes in front of a white background.

This year we have two award winners for their outstanding work and contributions. Congratulations Lance Nilsson from Doncaster All Abilities Basketball and Change your Reactions - public autism campaign.

There are two images shown with the left photo showing six basketball players in orange jerseys and black shorts under a hoop, Lance is to the right in a grey shirt, smiling. The second is the logo of change your reaction text in black and Teal with autism changes your reactions, Lance Nilsson and the committee has provided competition to over 350 people with disability, Lance is also a coach in the competition and has fulfilled the roles for the past 15 years, the competition is not funded by government and Lance and the team are responsible to minimise the financial impact on the players who are generally on disability support pensions.

The Doncaster all abilities competition was founded in 1998, now in 2022, 36 teams and is the largest basketball competition for people with disabilities in Victoria, currently five players in the Australian representative teams and one of their athletes was named YMCA young person of the year, another was named ‑ citizen of the year for their contribution to the competition. Before I talk further about our second winner, the amaze team, we would like to show you the three short videos they put together as part of their change your reactions campaign. Again I will await a few moments for anyone who needs to mute their audio while the video plays.

VIDEO SHOWN

Two men sit in a cafe a waiter approaches and speaks only to the man in red, the man in blue pauses looks to the person in red, the waiter directs his question towards red top, blue considers before responding. Rewind to the beginning of the scene, the waiter approaches looking at both men. Waiter speaks directly to blue. Smiles all around. Change your reactions, supported by the Victorian state government amaze, a mother shops with her ten year old son in a super market.

At the checkout the boy tries to help load the groceries a woman in the cue directs a comment towards the mother, wounded by the comment, rewind to the beginning of the scene. The woman speaks to the mother, the mother smiles and nods appreciatively.

Change your reactions.com supported by the Victorian state government.

A woman sits in an open plan office massages her stiff neck as her eyes flicker, she puts on dark sunglasses, as two colleagues Snicker as her, the colleague notices her in a distressed state and leans in towards her. She nods and give a slight smile of appreciation. Change your reactions, supported by the Victorian state government.

Argiri Alisandratos: I'm sure you will agree that amaze has made a significant contribution to changing attitudes and understanding towards autistic people with a ground breaking change your reactions campaign funded by the Victorian government as part of the Victorian autism plan.

Developed following consultation and review by autistic people and their families, and starring three different autistic actors, the campaign is the first change campaign to promote understanding and inclusion of autistic people. An independent evaluation of the campaign showed great impact. It strengthened understanding of autism, encouraged people to think and act differently and importantly autistic people and their families reported that they noticed a difference in the way they were treated. Congratulations to the Amaze Team. Back to you for our third category, Alistair.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Wonderful and congratulations to the winner, we're on to the third for this round, which covers excellence in employment outcomes, this awards recognises excellence of an individual or groups contribution to creating disability confident work forces and resulting in economic independence and inclusion for people with disability. The criteria for this award is an individual or group who has championed positive change and taken active steps within their organisation or community which has led to significant employment and career development opportunities and pathways for people with disability. I'll hand over again to Argiri to give the award.

Argiri Alisandratos: Thanks Alistair. Okay so here we have two short listed teams for excellence in employment outcomes. I'm pleased to announce that North East health Wangaratta tidy team has been awarded a highly commended result with the photo on screen showing seven people two displaying the team uniform and pointing towards the back of a person's top the other five are looking at the camera in front of some greenery so this means our winner for the excellence in employment outcomes category is Harley Dalgeish and where is my coffee team, it's a social enterprise café providing on the job training in the job skills program for people with a disability in Wangaratta.

The photo provided has five staff in blue aprons and one person in a black coat standing in front of the café on some steps, the café opened on 3 December 2021 and currently supports 11 people with disability in hospitality skills development, work experience, and employment partnerships. It serves as a vehicle to increase the social, economic and civic participation of people with disability in the local community by holding events and linking in to local businesses through the Villa, Marie Catholic homes partners program.

In the first six months of opening where is my coffee has delivered 1,000 hours of training to 11 people with disability, the opening of the café has raised awareness of people with disability in the community and trainees have been supported to identify and advocate for their employment goals. Clients can remain working in the café until they are ready to take their next step to employment or another pathway. Two people with disability are in the process of transitioning to paid work in the community with Vila Maria Catherine homes support, congratulations.

I will now like to continue by making some reflections about the awards today as well. And again thank you to Alistair, thank you so the minister and thank you for being with us today in these important awards.

I would like to formally acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are gathered, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation, I pay respect to elders past and present and any other Aboriginal people here today and I also acknowledge Wurundjeri Elder Tony Garvey thank you for joining us, the Victorian disability council members and particularly the outgoing chair George and commissioners here today welcome and thank you for joining us it's wonderful to join you here today to mark the 2022 Victorian disability awards, this annual celebration shines a light on the incredible work that organisations and individuals are doing to support the inclusion of Victorians with a disability.

And demonstrate once again how committed, talented and creative the individuals and organisations who work in this space are. Your efforts make a huge difference to so many people so thank you one and all. The incredible work of today's nominees and winner is so important in showing that what is possible in the disability tor and the broader community, and bring experience and energy and often new ideas about the kind of disability led initiative that's government can help promote and grow. Has awards show that not every project has to be large scale, high profile initiative to be successful.

Real change can and often does start in the grass roots, through new and creative approaches to things like making it easier and more accessible for people with disability to join every day activities standing up for the rights of people with disability. Helping to make work places and communities more inclusive. Or increasing disability pride.

When added up these ideas and actions work to take us closer to our goal, a goal of building a state where every Victorian can be healthy, safe and lead a life that they value. Congratulations to all our nominees for your brilliant work. Importantly, the projects and initiatives we are celebrating often build on or complement programs that the department has planned or is underway. Across government our work in the coming years will be guided by the state's fourth disabilities plan inclusive Victoria. The Inclusive Victoria vision was developed by Victorian disability advisory council and is written in the voice of people with a disability, it captures our shared aspiration for an inclusive accessible and safe Victoria that upholds the rights of people with disability, celebrates our diversity and pride and expands our ability to control our lives. Inclusive Victoria contains a great many actions across government that will contribute to achieving that vision.

Importantly, it also commits all of government to six system reforms intended to transform the way we work. Co‑design with people with a disability. Making sure those directly affected by policies and decisions have a chance to shape them. Aboriginal self‑determination, embedding Aboriginal leadership and over sight in all planning and delivery. Intersectional approaches. Recognising that often many factors come together to make disadvantage more complex and difficult. Accessible communications, and universal design to make sure that the right information reaches the right people at the right time and in the right way and that our built environment is accessible for everyone.

Disability confident and inclusive work forces. Ensuring all our work forces understand disability and that more people with disability are themselves in our work forces. And effective data and reporting so that we can better evaluate what is working, what isn't, and what we can improve. These are important changes to how we work as a department and across government. And much needed improvement to systems that have too often failed Victorians with disability in the past.

The department values the incredible partnership we have right across the sector, and they will be crucial to our work as inclusive Victoria rolls out. Thank you again for having me join you via video for this fantastic celebration. And best of luck to all our nominees, whether you take home an award, that's something to be immensely proud of enjoy the rest of the day and thank you.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Thank you Argiri for those wonderful words, while we may not be physically together it's wonderful to see the support and what's happening in the live chat. We move on to the second round of awards today of which there are two categories to announce. The first category is excellence in promoting health, housing and wellbeing. This award recognises the excellence of an individual or groups contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of people with disability.

The criteria for this award is an individual or group that has contributed to one or more of the following: Increasing the participation of people with disability in sport, recreation or leisure. Promoting better health outcomes for people with disability. Leading or helping to make changes to the way housing is provided so that it is more accessible to people with disability and promotes choice and inclusion within the broader community. Leading or helping to make changes to emergency health responses so they better meet the needs of people with disability during times of crisis, influencing the way that government or organisations provide health housing or wellbeing services so they are more inclusive of people with disability and or promote disability pride.

I would like to introduce Margherita Coppolino, was the judge for the awards what this year and is an inductee, an influential disability and inclusion consultant. Margherita has proven ability to inspire and influence a wide range of stakeholders on and ability to frame disability and inclusion issues in a commercial context. Margherita it also a powerful speaker and motivator. Margherita is a tertiary qualified and industry accredited trainer mediator, auditor and company director during her consultancy career she has honed and developed specialist skills in project management, mediation, facilitation, recruitment case management and key note speaking, her life and work has been profiled in the Australian, women's business, women wealth and a range of social justice publications I will hand to have to Margherita.

**Margherita Coppolino, 2022 Judges and 2021 Lifetime Achievement Honour Roll Inductee:** Thank you very much for the warm welcome. My pronouns are she/her. So the results are in and I'm pleased to announce we have three runners up. Western ‑ western health vaccination sedation clinic ‑ 11 people, in hospital rooms giving the thumbs up. With one person seated in a wheelchair. The disability health care access service, shown with five people, holding their hands in front of them outside in the garden in a semi-circle and love and care who are on the next slide, in the middle of the pathway surrounded in a multi coloured autumn leaves wearing bright yellow T‑shirts in a group. Next up ‑ [sound is choppy] this slide shows seven people looking to the the ‑ formatted in black, with white background, the blind sports logo, is shown again in the bottom right in the white text.

Finally, our winner, for excellency in promoting health, housing and wellbeing is: Jane Tilley, pictured outside in the sunshine on her arms in a pink and white sleeveless top. She is standing sideways smiling at the camera in front of a garden bed, her work focuses on discrimination, and implication for public health and wellbeing, a lawyer by training is passionate about consumer engagement and using her diverse skill sets to benefit public health and policy outcome. Her research and advocacy effort regarding use of ‑ result of life insurance companies have been had already resulted in policy change in recent years. Of the practice by life insurance industry. Jane has been described for fighting for the rights of consumers against insurance companies and for her research and advocacy and leadership in this area to continue have been measured significant with impacts.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Thank you Margherita and once again congratulations to Jane Tiller for her work focussing on genetic discrimination and implication on public health and patient wellbeing. We will be moving on to the next category, excellence in promoting rights, fairness and safety, this awards recognises a groups contribution to assisting people with disability to speak up for their rights, prevent family violence, safeguard people with disability from abuse and neglect and make the community a fairer and safer place for people with disability. Making Victoria a safer and more inclusive place for all people with disability, successfully advocating to reduce barriers to social economic and civic participation and promote the rights fairness and safety of people with disability, promoting the rights, fairness and safety within the justice system including policing, the courts and prisons and creating significant changes in organisational policy and practice that help create cultural change and safer and fairer services for people with disability. So I would like to throw back to Margherita to announce the results of this category.

**Margherita Coppolino**: Thank you. I'm pleased to announce that the winner of the promoting rights fairness and safety campaign is: Mary Ritchie from Rubix sport. She is looking to the camera with a patterned top and white background. Mary has been nominated by her outstanding ability to support families, complex needs related to disability, the person nominating Mary said we have come across multiple barriers in, assessing care for our son and without Mary we would not be receiving the care he needs, he would have been in crisis and with increasing impact of family violence and trauma.

Disability involves more than just the individual it involves the family, and multiple factors frame works that must be supported for success. I believe the work that has been undertaken by Mary sets the precedent for the future for those with complex needs and diagnose ticks she has raised a high level of awareness of gaps and barriers between the mental health system and disability sector and how these two areas must come together to help those with the highest needs, Mary's work has made others listen and acknowledge the gaps in the system.

And I believe that this will add to changes for others in the future. Mary has motivated and supported me in such a way that I am taking these ideas in to a task force that has been established with the hope that we can all work towards a positive change for future, and ensure that disabled people and their families will always have a voice. Congratulations Mary, thank you. Back to you Alistair.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Thank you Margherita and once again congratulations to Mary Ritchie.

Excellence in promoting disability pride is a new category this year and we've seen some incredible nominations come through, this award recognises an individual or group that's helped foster a sense of pride of being a person with a disability, examples of this may include calling out ableism and addressing attitudes about people with disability, increasing pride in disability identity enhancing the voices of individuals and groups of people with disability particularly those with intersecting experiences of discrimination, advocating to industry government and broader society for better recognition and understanding of the social, and human rights models of disability. Creating spaces for the experiences, skills, and talents of people with disability to be celebrated and broadening the engagement in democracy and active citizenship of people with disability, it's my pleasure to throw back to Margherita to announce this award.

**Margherita Coppolino:** Thank you, the result for this category are based on two finalists. Congratulations to our highly recommended nominee, Chloe Hayden on screen she's wearing colourful clothes with a floral head set performing on stage with a microphone in her hand.

Which means, our winner is: I can network mentoring team, the whole team is shown on power point with a screen shot taken from a zoom call, there are 25 people all weaving and smiling on camera. For too long, the dominant has been negative and secondly to autistic young people they are understanding and since 2013 I can network has proudly, autistic led organisations based in Victoria has led the way in driving a rethink of autism and celebrate autistic strengths and add to the autistic voice.

I can empowered more than 2000 autistic young people across Australia each year through the autistic led mentoring programs in schools, online, promoting, confidence and autistic pride. I can has many autistic staff in paid positions who contribute to the design and the delivery of their game changing mentoring program. From I can school of mentoring to I can annual ‑ virtual expo, online mentoring groups specifically for autistic LGBTIQ teams, and adult, autistic performed professionals and professional development sessions. I can network is a national leader in the employment of autistic people, congratulations, thank you.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Thank you so much Margherita. For your work throughout the judging process in addition to supporting today's awards, we will be moving on to the final round of awards and I will be inviting minister Brooks to rejoin us.

With the category that saw the highest number of submissions now look at the emerging leader award as an emerging leader who has made a significant contribution towards creating a more accessible and inclusive Victoria for people with disability, nominations for people with disability in this category are strongly encouraged.

The criteria for the award is a person who has made a significant contribution to creating a fairer more inclusive Victoria for people with disability. A person whose contributions align with one or more of the state disability plan pillars and a person who is under the age of 30 or has been contributing to this space for under ten years. Minister Brooks will you please join me in announcing the results of this category.

**Minister Brooks:** Thank you very much Alistair. We have three finalists for the emerging leader category. Emily Unity, Abbey Dalton and Chloe Hayden congratulations, the judges selected two winners in addition to the highly commended.

Our highly commended emerging leader is Emily Unity, Emily is pictured outside in a black blazer with long hair smiling to camera that means Abbey Dalton and Chloe Hayden are the winners, looking away from the camera smiling and Chloe is laughing holding a guitar and holding a floral head piece, in the legal profession. Abbey works in the human rights team in the Victorian government solicitors office where she advises on the application of the charter of human rights and responsibilities inclusion in relation to disability rights, she also runs a number of diversity initiatives, the co‑founder and executive director of the disabled Australian lawyers association the peak body which advocates for greater representation and inclusion of disabled lawyers in the legal profession.

From establishing internships for law students with a disability to helping make the courts system more accessible to speak on panels, her work has enhanced the participation of disabled people in the legal profession as well as access to justice for the community more broadly.

Chloe Hayden ‑ growing up selectively mute, diagnosed at autistic at 13 and spending her life she felt she didn't live in a world that accepted people like her she decided to make change she's the creator and vice behind the band shock therapy and the right to exist campaign that created global recognition and caused celebrities like Jimmy Fallon, Jack Black and Chris Rock to speak up about the abuse of autistic people.

She took to the world with her disability movement on a national and international level promoting accessibility equality and disability pride where her message of different not less, and embrace your eye sparkle is known by more than half a million people globally with that audience of half a million and billions of views across social media people from all walks of life tune in to her videos, educational posts and calls for change, well done to you all back to you Alistair.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Thank you so much and congratulations to the today's winners. Next we have our last publically nominated awards category which is the lifetime achievement honour roll, that recognises the exceptional individuals who made a significant contribution in the past 20 years and demonstrated an outstanding commitment to the rights participation and inclusion of Victorians with disability. People with disability are strongly encouraged to be nominated in this category, the criteria is an individual who demonstrated, inclusion of Victorians with disability for 20 years or more, minister Brooks could I hand back to you to announce our inductees for 2022.

**Minister Brooks:** Thanks Alistair. I'm honoured to announce five inductees, congratulations to Effie Meehan, Karen Underwood, Nigel Caswell, Amanda Golding and Sue Dymond, we've put together interviews with each inductee, each will provide their own image description within the videos. I'll wait a moment for anyone who needs to mute their video while the audio plays.

VIDEO SHOWN

**Minister Brooks:** Congratulations to our wonderful inductees now we move to the minister's award for outstanding leadership. Since 2017 ministers and their officers have chosen a winner for this award from all the finalists. The award goes to someone who has demonstrated immense leadership skills and has been a driver of change. The inaugural winner of the award in 2017 was Dylan Alcott from get skilled access and the recent was Rocco in 2021 I'm excited to announce this year's winner is: Blind sports and recreation Victorian volunteer ambassadors.

The slide shown is the same as the earlier one, has 13 people from the volunteer ambassadors each smiling and looking at the camera, the text is centred saying join us, join in, they created a new volunteer ambassador program in 2021 that includes 13 volunteers with lived experience of having blind or having low vision, these volunteers have improved access to sport and recreation at the local state and interstate level while advocating for people with low vision from regional tennis, golf activities and the cricket council and implementation of various ambassadors, these volunteers have gone above and beyond to make the world a more inclusive people who are people who are blind or who have low vision.

They also developed and patented now official audible cricket ball for blind players, to locate the ball using directional hearing, congratulations to you all, thank you back to you Alistair.

**Alistair Baldwin**: Thank you. That concludes the formalities for the 2022 Victorian disability awards. It's been an incredible honour to host these awards and share in the celebration today with you while remaining jealous I was not nominated at all speaking as someone who lives in Victoria with ADHD, it's been great to see what you have done for people with disability in Victoria thank you to everyone involved in the celebration our speakers and all our nominees to worked with us to put on today's online event.

Enjoy the rest of your day, today's event has been recorded and will be sent around to all attendees if you have any questions or feedback note that in the chat or using the details that will be provided post event, thank you.

End of webinar.