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| Victorian Disability Awards 2021 |
| Noel Bates video transcript |
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# Transcript

[text on screen Inductee, Lifetime Achievement Honour Roll, Noel Bates]

[text on screen What has motivated you to contribute to the lives of others?]

[footage of Noel talking to camera]

Well that’s an easy one actually, it’s my eldest son Craig who was born in 1965 and just before his first birthday he was diagnosed as having angelman syndrome and with a forecast of him being profoundly intellectually disabled, probably reaching an intellectual capacity of around 18 months, non-verbal and would develop other problems, psychical problems yet to be identified.

So that along with the fact that once I started to become involved with the disabled and take a genuine interest in it, I was alarmed to find the state the support for the intellectually disabled was in Victoria, and in fact in Australia, so that’s kept me motivated for the past 56 years!

[text on screen Can you describe one of the achievements you’re most proud of?]

As a result of the lack of satisfactory alternatives we ended up putting Craig in Kew Cottages, which wasn’t the best thing but it was the only thing available at that time. When the new institution was developed down in Colac, we moved Craig down there.

During that first year I launched and founded a Colanda parents and friends association, an association that’s been running for 45 years now, very successfully, so that was one.

And I suppose one quick one to follow would be our successful negotiations with the education department and also the Department of Health to establish a special development school on the site of Colanda, for the benefit and education of the intellectually disabled.

That in fact happened and that school was judged three years running as the best special development school in Victoria, which is something to be proud of, it’s an achievement.

[text on screen What does it mean to you to be nominated for the lifetime achievement honour roll?]

Well it means quite a lot actually! Because what it does in fact, in acknowledging the work that I like many others have been doing, by virtue of that it also acknowledges the existence of the need to identify the disabled in our community, not identify them by their disability but identify them as a visible and vital part of our community.

So that’s pretty much what it means to me, it’s an acknowledgment of the work that I and many, many others are doing, and in turn the virtue of acknowledging the existence of the need to work for not only the intellectually disabled but all the disabled within our community.

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