

**Circular No. 19/2009**

11 May 2010

SB:mr

To: All ACTU Affiliates  
Trades and Labour Councils  
Union Media & Communications staff

Re: ACTU National Union Awards 2009

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Dear colleagues,

We are proud to announce the winners of the ACTU National Union Awards for 2009. The following document details each award category and a brief description of the 2009 award *finalists, highly commended* and *winning* nominations.

The 2009 award ceremony was held on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April, in Sydney at the Organising Conference welcoming drinks. More than 500 people attended the ceremony and was enjoyed by all. We would like to congratulate those who nominated and those who attended.

If you have any questions about the ACTU National Union Awards please contact Michelle Ryan on 03 9664 7379 or email [mryan@actu.asn.au](mailto:mryan@actu.asn.au)

Yours sincerely,



**SHARAN BURROW**  
President

## **ACTU National Union Awards 2009**

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The ACTU is proud to announce the winners of the ACTU National Union Awards for 2009. The awards have been running for more than 10 years and the ceremony provides the opportunity to showcase the amazing work, dedication and expertise of union delegates, organisers, industrial officers, staff and supporters of our broad movement.

This year we have received many high quality nominations and are impressed by the ingenuity, innovation, creativity and effort that unions put into their workplace and community campaigns.

The awards ceremony this year was held during the welcoming drinks of the ACTU 2010 Organising Conference: PowerUp, in Sydney. More than 500 conference attendee's and award nominee's attended the ceremony and provided all award nominees a warm cheer.

### **Delegate(s) of the Year**

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The ACTU Delegate of the Year is awarded to delegates who demonstrate success in areas such as mapping the workplace, increasing membership and activating members to campaign for better workplace rights and conditions.

There are two nominees' to be awarded finalists for this category. Our first finalist is, Angela Pridham who attended the awards ceremony with her husband.

Angela is with the NSW Nurses Association and has been an active union member since 1973. Over the years Angela has been committed to increasing membership and through various elected branch positions has effectively activated members to get results. A career highlight and demonstration of her commitment to members and health services is her work in the campaign to prevent the closure of maternity services at the Shellharbour Hospital, NSW. Currently, Angela is a delegate at Illawara Mental Health Services and has recently campaigned to limit nurses shift hours to a minimum of 12.

Our second finalist for delegate of the Year is for Leo Hackett. Leo is with the TWU and a delegate at Startrack, Minchinbury yard. In 2009, Leo negotiated the NSW and ACT Startrack EBA and membership density at Startrack is now at 98%. On identifying that some Startrack workers were being incorrectly paid, Leo, through negotiation secured back pay to staff to the amount of \$2.9 million dollars. On a weekly basis Leo holds membership meetings and is pro-active in educating new members and his community of the value and benefit of being in the union. Leo's achievements are to be applauded. Leo attended the ceremony to accept his award with fellow workmates.

The highly commended accolades for delegate(s) of the year are awarded to:

Professor Rhonda Small & Dr Sean Slavin from the NTEU. They led a bargaining team that secured better pay & conditions for all La Trobe University staff, in particular, contract staff by securing a new form of continuing employment for research staff. Rhonda and Sean have also increased membership by 56% at the Australian Research Centre for Sex, Health and Society.

Danielle Blanch from the AEU- NSW Teachers Federation is a delegate at Girraween Public School & Toongabbie Primary School; Danielle participated in major salaries case and successfully campaigned for a new classroom that had previously been denied by school management. Danielle is also the President of her local union branch.

Louise Howell from the NSW Nurses Association. - Assisted in major aged care campaign at Wallsend Aged Care Facility and increased density at this site from 54% to 79%. Louise activated every nurse at the site and their families to get involved and show support for this campaign.

The winning nominee of Delegate of the Year for 2009 is, Tracey Jacobson with the NUW at National Foods/King Island Cheese.

Tracey oversaw a very challenging but successful bargaining campaign at National Foods/King Island Cheese resulting in, amongst other things, a 7% pay increase over 2 years and a 15% increase for afternoon shift work. The conditions won by the collective action at this site with Tracey will set a benchmark for other Australia-wide National Foods sites. Tracey met all the selected criteria for winning the award of Delegate of the Year.

## **Organiser of the Year**

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Organiser of the Year award winners are recognised for demonstrating success in, but not limited to, increasing membership, activating members and developing activists, setting up a communication network and implementing informal education strategies.

To be highly commended in this category is Rohan Webb, Lead Organiser with the AMWU.

Rohan has increased density from 45% to 80% and is to be especially awarded for being a strong advocate of workers' rights and a strong voice and mentor for all working Australians.

Our winner for Organiser of the Year 2009 is Daniel Walton at the AWU. Daniel is responsible for the AWU's National Campaign Team and works with all branches around the country. Daniel is a key driver of the AWU's 'Intensive' program that led to the recruitment of 2,384 new members; this has resulted in being the union's largest period of member growth in over 25 years.

Daniel has also proved to be an exceptional mentor for other AWU Organiser's.

Both Daniel and Rohan attended the award ceremony and Daniel delivered a workshop at the conference, sharing his skill and knowledge with other Union Organisers.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award - Individual**

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This award is made unionist in recognition of achievements to increase employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and/or assist in the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in the union movement.

The award is assessed by the ACTU Indigenous Committee.

The finalist for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander award to an individual is Johnathon Mullins from the CEPU Plumbing Trades Employees Union. An effective role model for young apprentices Johnathon is currently participating in Organising Works Program.

To be highly commended for this category is Leo Hackett, who is with the TWU and also a finalist for Delegate of the Year 2009. An indigenous Australian Leo is committed to educating his union and the wider community on indigenous issues and is involved in programs that strengthen the local community and support job opportunities.

We now come to applaud the winner of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander award to an individual to Terry Mason, Senior Lecturer at the University of Western Sydney. Terry is the President of the NTEU University of Western Sydney, NTEU Branch; he is also the Chairperson of the NTEU Indigenous Policy Committee (the IPC). Terry is a long standing member with an unquestioned commitment to the union and movement as a whole and has made a real difference for Indigenous and professional members at Universities across Australia.

We honor Terry for his passion, commitment and dedication in seeking justice for our Indigenous community.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award - Union**

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The next Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander award is for a union who has made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of indigenous Australians in their union and the community.

This nomination's for this award are assessed by the ACTU Indigenous Committee.

This year there are three finalists for this award. The first finalist is the CFMEU Mining & Energy Division, QLD District. The branch encourages board

participation and has increased awareness of Indigenous issues across the union through a variety of programs.

The second finalist award goes to the CPSU Queensland Branch who have implemented a Reconciliation Action Plan and developed protocols for the acknowledgement of traditional owners at union meetings.

The third finalist is the Queensland Council of Unions for its long-running and important 'It's time to settle', stolen wages campaign.

The winning union for the Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander award is the CEPU- Plumbing Trades Employees Union, for their apprenticeship scheme (Sanitation Program).

The program works with both young men and women mostly in rural communities and supports these individuals to obtain a plumbing trade apprenticeship. The union is dedicated to supporting these young apprentices by providing effective mentors and assisting with accommodation for the duration of their apprenticeship.

The apprentices and branch are also to be commended for their commitment in their participation and coordination of the 'Long Walk' and marshalling for the 'Dreamtime at the G' match.

## **Jennie George Award**

### **For contributions to women's advancement in unions**

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The Jennie George Award is assessed by the ACTU Women's Committee and is awarded to a union for recognition of the work they have done to assist in the development of women in the movement.

This year we have two finalists for this category and they are two individuals, Rita Mallia and Marnie Sluice.

Rita Mallia from the CFMEU NSW Construction & General Division branch is awarded for her support, encouragement and professional development of women activists and employees of the CFMEU.

Marnie Sluice is from the FAAA Domestic/Regional Division, she is a long standing member committed to the pursuit of women's industrial rights in the airline industry.

The winner of the Jennie George award for 2009 is the CEPU Plumbers Union Queensland Branch.

In 2006, the branch recognised that there were only 6 female registered plumbers in the state and decided to do something about it – they now have more than 15 and aim to increase that to 20 and beyond.

Networking and mentoring programs have been established to support these women during their plumbing trade's apprenticeships.

Congratulations Plumbers Union-Queensland and Lil Shanley, who was the first female sprinkler apprentice in Queensland was there on the night to accept the award.

## **Best Communications Strategy**

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Entrants for the Best Communication Strategy are assessed by a number of criteria, including showing that a campaign has had a positive influence on public profile, has been well planned, innovative and has reached potential non-members.

Finalists for this award are the CFMEU Construction and General Division and the LHMU Queensland Branch.

The CFMEU Construction & General Division in 2009 for their new interactive member website.

The second finalist for Best Communications Strategy has been awarded to the LHMU, Queensland Branch for their 'Who's handling your breasts campaign', this campaign pushed to maintain the professionalism of radiographer practitioners and that they be 'accredited, registered and qualified'.

There are four highly commended accolades this year for the Best Communications Strategy. They are as follows:

- CFMEU Mining & Energy Division for their Coal Hard Facts report. This comprehensive report provides an update on climate change and the mining industry and it de-bunks opposition and mining corporation myths surrounding climate change.
- HSU for their Television Broadcast Centre. This professional set-up enables the production and delivery of high quality broadcast news bulletins to members.
- NSW Nurses Association for their very impressive 'Guardian of the nursing profession' branding campaign.
- CPSU Queensland (QPSU) for the successful 'Fight 4 jobs' campaign to protect Queensland public service jobs during the recent state election.

The winner of the Best Communications Strategy for 2009 is the Police Association of NSW for their 'Keep our Cops' campaign.

The NSW government pledged to cut the pay and conditions of Police Officers who were injured on the job. The Association embarked on a multi-faceted campaign to raise awareness and inform the public.

The Association established the 'Keep our Cops' website that drew more than 45,680 clicks to the site with 8,400 being in the police force and the rest from the general public. More than 21,800 people took part in online actions.

After an aggressive media push they received extensive print and broadcast coverage and many mentions were received.

A mass rally to support the campaign was organized but in the lead up to the rally the State Government conceded and came to the table with an offer that received an 83% acceptance vote.

Gary Black, Assistant Secretary (Organising) from the NSW Police Association was at the ceremony to accept his award and he also delivered a workshop during the conference to share his campaigning expertise.

## **Best Workplace Campaign**

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Again, the category of Best Workplace Campaign was hotly contested and we decided to break the category into two – so that we can acknowledge the sorts of campaigns that cut across an entire industry or sector.

The highly coveted Best Workplace Campaign award winners must demonstrate that in addition to a successful outcome of a campaign they have also increased membership, promoted union values and that the campaign operated on many fronts beyond the workplace, for example, politically, among customers/service users and within the wider community.

Best Workplace Campaign finalists are:

- LHMU Queensland Branch, for their 'Who's handling your breasts' campaign;
- NSW Nurses Associations, Hunter New England Health Services Rosters campaign;
- NSW Nurses Association, Aged Care Campaign; and the
- CPSU-Queensland Branch for their 'Fight 4 Jobs' campaign.

The highly commended accolade goes to the AEU Queensland Teachers Union for their EBA campaign which has resulted in Queensland teachers now being among the highest paid in Australia.

This year we have joint winners for this category, the FSU CBA NSW Coast, and the multi-union 'Gotta love Sydney Ferries' campaign.

The FSU CBA NSW Coast campaign was bought about by the delegates and FSU Organisers getting together to fight back the appalling demands from bank management.

Finance Sector Workers have for a long time endured a work culture surrounded by bullying, work overload and unreasonable performance targets. During the height of the GFC, CBA NSW Central Coast Reps were told to increase targets yet again and this gave rise to many wanting to collectively do something about it.

Part of the challenge was that the branches are some distance apart but despite this they were able to draw up a petition to protest against the increase in sales targets, however, after doing so their area manager embarked on a campaign of retribution against the staff and most who signed the protest letter had their hours cut and were told that they had to re-locate to other branches.

After this, staff chose to press on and after sticking together they achieved the following: reinstatement of hours, all transfers overturned and the area manager was dismissed.

The FSU delegates who coordinated this successful campaign — many of whom were at the ceremony to receive their award include: Kim Anderson, Louise Arnfield, Jane Cassidy, Ann Collison, Joan Cornwell, Julie Dennis, Louise Engelshus, Joy Hall, Suzie Miller, Sally Proctor, Daniel Small, Alison Thom, Robyn Vingerhoed, Fiona Wright and Janne Writer.

Our second winner for Best Workplace Campaign 2009 is the, 'Gotta Love Sydney Ferries' campaign. Contributing unions to this campaign are the: MUA, AMWU, RTBU, ASU, AIMPE, AMOU, CFMEU and the CEPU – Electrical and Plumbing Division.

The Gotta Love Sydney Ferries campaign was a tremendously successful multi-union campaign in response to the NSW proposal to privatise Sydney Ferries. More than 620 employees across the Ferries networks got together to embark on a multi-platform campaign to lobby the state government to keep the Ferries in public hands.

Many who participated in the campaign were there at the ceremony to accept their award and the crowd was also treated to a 'save the ferries' song accompanied by ukulele.

### **Best Workplace Campaign – Industry Sector**

This year we have made the addition of the Best Workplace Campaign – Industry Sector category and we have awarded two unions with this accolade.

The first Best Workplace Campaign – Industry Sector award goes to the LHMU, WA Branch - Disability Team for their "LHMU Members Organising Disabilities for a better WORKING Life". This workplace campaign successfully negotiated a

union collective agreement, increased membership density, developed activists and promoted union values.

The second Best Workplace Campaign – Industry Sector goes to the AEU - NSW Teachers Federation for their recruitment campaign that focused on building their young member activist base and saw the recruitment of 1,500 new members.

Kelly Shay, Assistant Secretary with the LHMU WA Branch was there to accept their award along with John Dixon, Assistant General Secretary, and Kate Ambrose, Membership and Training Officer with the NSW Teachers Federation.

### **Special Mention: OH&S Award**

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Wendy Lark, CFMEU

A trade unionist for 35 years, Wendy Lark is the facilitator for the Workplace Tragedy Family Support Group of the CFMEU NSW Branch and has been fundamental in providing support to families where members have been injured or killed at work. She has written many submissions and discussion papers on the issue and is tireless in raising community awareness around OH&S issues. It is for these efforts that we congratulate Tracey and provide this special award. Wendy attended the ceremony.

### **Special Commendation for Bravery and Courage**

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This Special Commendation is to the MUA and in particular to their members on the Oceanic Viking, who assisted the rescue of refugees of Ashmore Reef in April 2009 and in Indonesia in October 2009.

This award is to acknowledge their bravery, courage, and compassion, principled and outstanding contribution in the rescue of refugees. Against ghastly odds, these members set-up a makeshift hospital and carried burned and injured refugees to care and shelter. It's for these tireless and in often dangerous circumstances that we award the following members a Special Commendation.

Oceanic Viking delegates: Ashley Pollock, John Allwood, Kel Lewis and Bruce Noble. Front Puffin: John McGartland, Steve Hulm, Jeff Carroll, Jannik Hansen, Mark Taylor, and Ian Lamey

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Thank you to all unions who submitted a nomination for an ACTU National Union Award 2009.

If you would like to learn more about the nominations for the ACTU National Union Awards 2009, please visit the union websites.

A call-out for ACTU National Union Awards 2010 will be made later this year. Please think about what campaigns you are running and any individuals who stand out for their union work and consider sending in a nomination.

Further information about the ACTU National Union Awards can be obtained by contacting Michelle Ryan on 03 9664 7379.