Home tutor tops the class – 2015 Volunteer of the Year

Volunteers from Harris Park, Winston Hills and Auburn were recognised for their outstanding contribution at the NSW 2015 Volunteer of the Year Awards at Parramatta RSL today.

The top award went to Mingxia Jiang from Harris Park who was named Sydney Mid-West 2015 Volunteer of the Year and for her work with Mission Australia’s Home Tutor Scheme.

Chief Executive Officer of The Centre for Volunteering, Gemma Rygate, said volunteers improve people’s lives by helping out and keeping people connected to their community.

“New research on volunteering in Australia shows that people give more than 743 million hours of their time each year – they’re the backbone of our community,” Ms Rygate said.

“This year The Centre for Volunteering received more than 500 nominations covering almost 7,000 volunteers – including teams - which shows how much communities value volunteers.”

Ms Rygate said Ms Jiang won the regional NSW 2015 Volunteer of the Year Award for her dedication to helping adults with a Chinese background improve their English skills, understand the Australian culture and settle into their local community.

“Mingxia has tutored up to 10 students at different times and is always willing to take on new students and travel to their home,” Ms Rygate said.

“Having a bilingual tutor is vital for many migrants to help them adjust to life in Australia and Mingxia helps them navigate these changes in an incredibly positive and supportive way.”

The Winners of the 2015 Sydney mid-west Volunteer of the Year Awards are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Overall Winner Volunteer of the Year | Mingxia Jiang of Harris Park  
Mission Australia’s Home Tutor Scheme |
| Adult Volunteer of the Year (25 – 64 years) | Mingxia Jiang of Harris Park  
Mission Australia’s Home Tutor Scheme |
| Senior Volunteer of the Year (65+ years) | Elaine Davies of Winston Hills  
Karobran - Eurella Community Services. |
| Volunteer Team of the Year | Human Care Welfare Team  
Auburn City Council |

.../2
ClubsNSW CEO Anthony Ball said the industry was proud to sponsor the Awards Program in order to help recognise volunteers across the state.

“With almost 50,000 volunteers engaged in our industry, clubs across NSW know how vital and valuable volunteers are to their activities and operations,” he said.

“We appreciate the inspirational role volunteers play in our communities to help others. “These Awards are an opportunity to put a spotlight on our volunteers and say thank you.”

NSW Minister for Multiculturalism Mr John Ajaka, who is responsible for volunteering, said the awards were an opportunity to uncover and celebrate the great achievements of volunteers across NSW.

“The NSW Government is proud to sponsor these awards because we understand the profound social and economic value of volunteering. Volunteers are remarkable people who deserve our recognition,” Mr Ajaka said.

Twenty regional Volunteer of the Year Awards ceremonies are being held around the state.

All regional winners will be in the running for the overall NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards, which are announced at a gala event on Friday 4 December 2015 to coincide with International Volunteer Day.

The Volunteer of the Year Awards are generously supported by principal partners the NSW Department of Family and Community Services, and ClubsNSW, the industry body which represents the state’s 1400 not-for-profit clubs, as well as Bupa Aged Care.

For information visit www.volunteering.com.au

Media inquiries: Kylie Yates 0418 607 575

BACKGROUND

The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards is an annual program run by The Centre for Volunteering – the State’s peak body for volunteering - to recognise the outstanding work of volunteers in every region across NSW. Twenty one award ceremonies are held across NSW in September and October where nominees are recognised with certificates and winners announced. Regional winners will be entered into the overall State 2015 Volunteer of the Year

For more information about more about the 2015 NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards and last year’s winners, go to www.volunteering.com.au