



MEDIA RELEASE

Awards challenge and inspire

The Governor of Tasmania will present five young people with disabilities a Duke of Edinburgh International Award on **Monday 5 December**.

This is the first graduation group of the award program run by OAK, the first Tasmanian disability services provider to be licensed to run the award program.

OAK Possability CEO, Drew Beswick, says the awards and OAK's programs share the common goal of developing skills, wellbeing and personal growth.

"The Duke Edinburgh's International Award is an internationally recognised program for young people, building their skills to equip them for life and work.

"The award program is inclusive of people with disabilities because the challenges are set based on individual goals and interests. The tailored program helps motivate and inspire participants to challenge themselves and reach their goals."

Five OAK participants signed up for the program in January 2016 and completed four different challenges during the year.

Service - Challenge yourself to be a responsible, caring member of the community.

Physical Recreation - Challenge yourself to improve your, health, fitness and performance.

Skills - Challenge yourself to improve your skills and widen your interests.

Adventurous Journey - Challenge yourself to journey and explore with your eyes open.

The award leaders worked with participants to develop their own individual set of goals that were challenging but achievable.

Mr Beswick said that each award participant deserves to be proud of their achievements.

"Each of the participants pushed themselves outside their comfort zone, whether it was performing before a live audience, undertaking volunteering work or camping in the wilderness."

Mr Beswick said the young people enjoyed the experience greatly and a number have already expressed interest in working towards the silver award in 2017.

Media opportunity: 10:30 am, Mon 5 December

The awards will be presented at Government House by the Governor of Tasmania, Her Excellency, Professor the Honourable Kate Warner.

Media should be assembled at 10.15 am.

Further information: Cathy Limb on 0428 669 163 or climb@possability.com.au



Award recipients

Below is a brief summary of the achievements of each recipient:

Aidan Chick

Skills – Performed on stage as part of the Second Echo Ensemble (Dance and Drama).

Service – volunteered for Meals on Wheels

Physical Recreation – participated in fitness activities at the YMCA

Adventurous Journey – participated in a two night camp at the Far South Wilderness Camp.

Georgia Copleman

Skills – completed a Jewellery Making Course

Service – Volunteered for Meals on Wheels and Foodbank

Physical Recreation – participated in fitness activities at the YMCA

Adventurous Journey – participated in a two night camp at the Far South Wilderness Camp.

Callum Grundy

Skills – Learnt the guitar and performed in front of a crowd at the Waratah Hotel

Service – volunteered at the Lenah Valley RSL, where he runs the weekly fundraising raffle

Physical Recreation – participated in the Brightstars Dance Troupe

Adventurous Journey – participated in a two night camp at the Far South Wilderness Camp.

Adam Knowles

Skills – Learnt photography and was commissioned to take photographs for a live band (Moonshine Whiskey and the Ragged Pony)

Service – volunteered for Meals on Wheels

Physical Recreation – participated in fitness activities at the YMCA

Adventurous Journey – participated in a two night camp at the Far South Wilderness Camp.

Hayley Lyne

Skills – completed a Jewellery Making Course

Service – volunteered for Meals on Wheels

Physical Recreation – participated in a Bocce Competition at the YMCA

Adventurous Journey – participated in a two night camp at the Far South Wilderness Camp.



They all completed the 'Adventurous Journey' together. This team expedition provided opportunities to learn about the wider environment, as well as to develop self-confidence, team work and health. They cooked meals, set up and packed up their own gear and other equipment, went bush walking, explored Hastings Cave and made a campfire.

About OAK

OAK is a not-for-profit organisation that provides support services, training and employment to people with disability.

We were originally known as the Retarded Citizen's Welfare Association (RCWA), which was founded in 1953 by parents who wanted to improve the life of their disabled children once they had left their specific needs schools. OAK has been operating in its own right since 1992.

In July 2016, OAK agreed to merge with Possability, another disability services provider, with the objective to further improve services and opportunities for Tasmanians with disabilities. The combined organisation provides support services to 630 Tasmanians. We employ more than 600 people, including 130 supported employees.