Northern Territory Young Achiever Awards – winners announced at Gala Dinner

Winners of this years’ Northern Territory Young Achiever Awards were announced at the Annual Gala Dinner held in Darwin on Saturday, 16 April.

The awards began in 2005 to acknowledge, encourage and promote the positive achievements of young Territorians between the ages of 14 and 29 years. The overall 2016 Young Achiever of the Year is Kate Axten, who is also the winner of the NT Government Young Indigenous Educator Award.

In total, 12 award categories were available for nomination, including arts, health and wellbeing, environment, Indigenous achievement and leadership.

The Somerville Community Services Award was one of the 12 categories, offering recognition to young people across the Territory for developing youth opportunities within their communities, as well as being inspiring and dedicated leaders.

The winner of the 2016 Somerville Community Services Award is Alicia Kent of Karama. Alicia received a $2,000 TIO BuildUp Saver Account and a magnificent trophy!

Congratulations to all NT category winners and nominees.

Read more about Alicia and our other award finalists on page 4.
A message from our CEO – Vicki O’Halloran

It is a historical time with the signing of the NDIS bilateral agreement for the NT. It is fair to say we are as prepared as we can be to transition to this scheme.

We are grateful for the negotiations undertaken by the NT Government – which focus on making certain the NDIS is responsive and appropriate for people with a disability, their families and carers who live in rural and remote areas.

On another note, we’re shovel ready for the completion of stage three of the Palmerston Community Centre. The Northern Territory Government have made significant capital funding available to Somerville for this project, which will in turn enable us to expand our services in line with increasing demands in the Palmerston and outlying regions.

To maintain this property and others for years to come, we have scheduled 19 Working Bees in a bid to maintain our properties to the highest standard. The NAB are amazing volunteers who regularly assist us at these events. They are an energetic, focused and friendly group of people who are dedicated to helping local community services.

It wouldn’t be possible to complete the amount of grounds and gardens maintenance; and internal and external painting that we do, without these inspirational volunteers.

Photos of our combined efforts are on page 11.

The photo below is beautiful Jemima. It encapsulates the essence of an extended family here at Somerville. Jemima is the daughter of David Forder – Family Services Coordinator in Katherine.

Enjoy this newsletter and thank you for your support.

Vicki O’Halloran AM
CEO, Somerville Community Services

Palmerston Community Centre

The Somerville Community Centre at Palmerston is a ‘one stop shop’ for Territorians.

The Centre provides: counselling service for families and individuals; financial counselling; community outreach programs; targeted family support services; emergency relief funding; No Interest Loans Scheme; homelessness counselling and support; and a child and family contact program. The Financial Counselling Help Line (1800 007 007) also operates from the Palmerston Community Centre.

Demand for our services in Palmerston has never been greater and continues to grow with the influx of new families into newly developed suburbs and an increasing Defence presence.

Somerville remains very grateful to the Northern Territory Government for the initial land acquisition and subsequent funding to build the Community Centre. Due to financial restraints, approximately 250 square metres of space earmarked for more counselling and training rooms has remained unfinished for over two years.

Now due to the wonderful support of the NT Government who have made significant capital funding available for this project, Somerville are in a position to complete the final stage of the construction fit out. Somerville raised $100,000 towards the work.

Now that the design work is complete, construction work will be able to commence immediately.
The Northern Territory has signed up to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). This is a significant milestone for the Disability Sector in the NT.

The Territory Government has agreed to contribute $99 million a year and the Commonwealth $105 million a year, once the program is fully operational. Approximately 4900 Territorians are set to benefit from the NDIS, compared to about 3500 presently.

The NDIS funds people with disabilities to seek professional service providers like Somerville, effectively giving them more choice and control over managing their needs.

In the Northern Territory, the bilateral agreement for transition provides for a staged area-by-area rollout, building on the lessons from the Barkly region trial site that began on 1 July 2014.

The East Arnhem region will phase into the scheme from 1 January 2017 and the remote Darwin zone and Katherine will phase in from 1 July 2017, followed by Central Australia and rural and urban Darwin.

The Commonwealth Government has committed $422 million over the forward estimates for transition to a full scheme for the Northern Territory.

As the NDIS is a big change it is being introduced in stages over the next three years – to ensure it is successful and sustainable.

From 1 July, the NDIS will begin to roll out nationally in seven states and territories, with transition to full scheme to commence in Western Australian from 1 July 2017, once an agreement is finalised between the Federal and Western Australian governments.

The Scheme will provide approximately 460,000 Australians who are under the age of 65 and living with a permanent and significant disability with reasonable and necessary supports, such as: personal care and support; access to the community; therapy services; and essential equipment.

The opportunities that the NDIS will bring extend beyond people with disability, their families and carers. The workforce needed to service the NDIS when implemented nationally is in the order of 60,000 to 70,000 people.
Alicia Kent

Alicia (22yrs) is passionate about youth and mental health work and volunteers her time with Headspace and the City of Darwin Youth Advisory Group. She is a proud member of ShoutOut Youth Mental Health and YEAH; participates in Neighbourhood Watch Safety House events; and is an active Couchsurfing participant and volunteer.

Alicia took part in the 2015 CEO sleep out and raised $500 for Burmese Refugees as part of the 2015 Ration Challenge. She is dedicated to achieving positive outcomes for youth and enjoys encouraging other young people to get involved.

Tristan Perriam

Tristan (20yrs) is a dedicated young leader in the Palmerston community. He volunteers his time with the Army Cadets and the ‘Youth Inspiring Palmerston’ youth advisory group – where he was involved in event planning for Youth Week 2015.

Tristan also volunteers for the Salvation Army, providing assistance with assembling and distributing hampers to those in need at Christmas time.

Despite the many challenges that Tristan himself has faced, including bullying, family tragedy and ADHD, he has grown to become a positive role model for younger people.

Nicole Richards

Nicole (24yrs) spends a great deal of her spare time with Volunteering SA&NT, as well as visiting patients at the Alice Springs Hospital and nursing home residents at Anglicare. In addition, Nicole volunteers her time at the visitor information centre of Tourism Central Australia and supports local community events including: Finke Desert Race; YMCA King of the Mountain race; and the RSL Anzac Day service.

Nicole has also successfully organised a Relay for Life team to raise funds for the Cancer Council.

Jarrod Rollo

Jarrod (15yrs) volunteers a significant amount of time raising awareness about cancer. He would like to spread the message that cancer can affect anyone. He successfully organised his third Pink Game with the Nightcliff Dragons Rugby League Club and NT Rugby League and was able to raise over $3000 for the Royal Darwin Hospital Hospice.

Jarrod is now looking to host a Blue Game for Beyondblue and a Closing the Gap game for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

Congratulations to Alicia, Jarrod, Nicole and Tristan and to all category winners and nominees. Somerville could not achieve the success we do without volunteers such as these young people who are nominated for the Northern Territory Young Achiever Awards.
International Women’s Day

International Women’s Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women past, present and future.

In Australia, a number of events are held to celebrate International Women’s Day that include large gatherings, conferences, awards, exhibitions, festivals, fun runs, corporate events, concerts and more…

In Darwin, Somerville Community Services organised a fundraising event attended by over 150 women. The 2016 theme of our high tea event was ‘Pledging For Parity,’ and was successfully catered for at the Darwin Casino.

The morning included songs by the Somerville Choir; international dances by Somerville staff; traditional dancing and costumes; a catwalk display of the national award winners; Raw Cloth finest haberdashery; and Maria Koko Headwear Designs.

Guests enjoyed delectable food and wine, enticing draw prizes, a silent auction and a keynote address by our own Vicki O’Halloran AM.

The event was an initiative of Somerville’s Workplace Diversity Group to celebrate womanhood and their achievements; contribution to our communities; and the progress towards equality for women. The message “as women, we can do anything” was emphasised and acknowledged.

Somerville would like to thank everyone that attended; Master of Ceremonies, ABC radio announcer, Lisa Pellegrino; and all of our sponsors.

International Women’s Day – continued
Family Services

Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services (NTPFES) Open Day

NTPFES Open Day was a free event to showcase the work of Tri-Service members. The event had something for everyone and included: crime presentations; flying fox off the building; simulated car crashes; drug raid demonstrations; riot demonstrations; bush fire simulations; and plenty more...

Somerville hosted an information stall at the event, which proved a great success with over 15,000 people in attendance on the day. This provided us with an opportunity to connect with families and individuals from Darwin, Palmerston and the surrounding communities. The event also provided a great opportunity to network with the other participating agencies and services.

Public awareness of Somerville and our services was found to be highly positively with wonderful feedback received by those with personal experiences of support. A big thank you to Kerry Boswell and Jason Erlemann for running the stand.

WISE Employment Job Fair

WISE Employment is a Not for Profit employment services provider and recently held a Job Fair in Palmerston designed to bring job-ready candidates together with prospective employers in a relaxed environment.

Somerville attended the event and received a large number of enquiries from job seekers interested in working in the community service and disability service sector.

Thank you to WISE Employment for organising the Job Fair.

Photo L-R: Managers Allison O’Connor and Kerry Boswell are currently recruiting family and financial counsellors for Darwin, Palmerston and Katherine.
**Katherine Cinema Day**

Somerville’s Katherine Youth and Family Services recently hosted a **Cinema Day** with the support of the Katherine Town Council and the Northern Territory Office of Youth Affairs.

The invitation was extended to children, together with their families, from Katherine and the surrounding communities.

They enjoyed the experience of being at the event and watching the latest family-friendly movies together, as many are simply unable to afford such an activity for their entire family.

Somerville would also like to say a big thank you to the Katherine cinema manager who was a great supporter of the event, flexible with service provision; and generous with her time interacting with families – which added to the enjoyable experience of those in attendance.

**Katherine Youth Gaming Competition**

In celebration of National Youth Week, Somerville’s Youth and Family Services in Katherine hosted a gaming competition for the community’s youth at the Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture Centre.

The event saw children and youth of all ages and cultures join in and support fellow players, while enjoying refreshments. Alternative activities included colour therapy, Connect 4 and building marshmallow towers throughout the day.

Events such as these provide the opportunity for our staff to further connect with Katherine’s youth by mentoring, interacting and diverting youth towards positive activities during the school holidays.

**Ima Safety House’s Birthday Fun Day**

Somerville provided one of the many information stalls at this year’s Neighborhood Watch’s **IMA Safety House Birthday Fun Day** held in Palmerston.

The Safety House Program is a community based network of safe places in a local area. Safety Houses can be a house, a shop or a business. They provide help to children should they feel unsafe, threatened or unsure, primarily when travelling to and from school. The program also aims to play a preventative role in community safety, providing safer neighbourhoods for our children.

The day was a great success and provided us with an opportunity to connect with individuals, children and families as well as provide information about our service and programs. The highlight of the day was appearances by ‘Hector the Safety Cat’ and ‘Ima Safety House.’ A big thank you to Kerry Boswell for organising and manning the stand.

**Children and families enjoying a special outing at the Katherine Cinema Day.**

**Somerville Family Services Manager Kerry Boswell with mascot IMA Safety House. The Safety House Program provides help to children should they feel unsafe, threatened or unsure while walking or riding in our streets.**
Financial Workers Forum

Each quarter Somerville Community Services hold a Financial Workers Forum for Financial Counsellors, Financial Capability Workers and Emergency Relief Workers.

The purpose of these forums is to bring together service providers along with both Department of Social Services (DSS) and ASIC staff to discuss and information share.

The forums are an opportunity for workers to build relationships within the sector and assist with ongoing referral pathways.

The Forum held in May included guest presenters Lorraine Gibbs from the Darwin Community Legal Service Elder Abuse Helpline and Nicola Colter from Amity Community Services who provided an update on the International Gambling Conference.

The last two Forums have been well attended and Somerville would like to thank our guest speakers and all service providers who have attended.

Good Insurance

Good Insurance has been developed by Good Shepherd Microfinance who is Australia’s largest microfinance organisation, offering a range of people-centred, affordable financial programs for people on low incomes at different financial stages of their lives.

Working with Australia’s biggest insurance companies, Good Insurance creates affordable, simple and effective insurance policies for people on low incomes. Their products enable people to insure their belongings or cars, so they’re covered if things go wrong.

If an insurance policy has been endorsed by Good Insurance, you know it has been designed for the customer, is affordable and that flexible payment options available.

**Good Insurance products include:**

**Essentials by AAI.** With these products you can insure your car, your contents or both.

- Contents Cover – up to $10,000 contents coverage for insured items
- Contents Plus – up to $20,000 contents coverage for insured items
- Car Cover – up to $3,000
- Car Plus – up to $5,000

You can choose to pay your premium annually, monthly or fortnightly (in instalments) and CentrePay is available to help manage payments.

**Insurance 4 That.** These products are a single item insurance solution, providing an alternative to traditional contents insurance by enabling people to insure individual items and nominate the insured value of these items.

With Insurance 4 That you’re covered for damage or loss caused by theft, fire, flood, storm and cyclone. There is also the option to take out additional cover for portable items against theft anywhere in Australia.

**Insurance 4 That** is available for items including:

- White goods
- Electronics
- Medical devices
- Furniture
- Musical instruments

You can choose to pay your premium in monthly, fortnightly or weekly instalments, or in one annual payment.

Good Insurance aims to reach the millions of people living on low incomes who are interested in insurance products, but are unable to access suitable and affordable cover.

If you know someone who can benefit from Good Insurance, please have them call our office on 8920 4100 or visit our website www.somerville.org.au for more information.
Working Bees commence for 2016

Now that the wet season is all but over, Somerville has commenced its program of Working Bees for 2016.

Somerville prides itself on ensuring that all houses, units and buildings are maintained in a safe, secure and healthy environment. Improvements are continually carried out, not only to maintain the quality and functionality of our facilities for our clients, but to ensure that the environment for staff and clients is attractive, pleasant and safe.

This year we have a schedule of nineteen Working Bees in a bid to maintain our properties to the highest standard.

So far six Working Bees have been completed, thanks to a huge effort by our Assets, Infrastructure and Maintenance Team (AIM) who were supported by staff and volunteers from National Australia Bank (NAB). It’s amazing what teamwork can achieve!

Trees and palms were planted, garden beds reworked, fertilised and mulched. Despite the hard work the days are filled with laughter and plenty is achieved in a very short time.

Many thanks to everyone, especially the people who live and work in the houses for their warm hospitality and moral support. A big thank you also to NAB who are committed to helping local community services.
Harmony Day

Somerville Community Services embraces diversity in the workplace and celebrates many cultural events throughout the year including Harmony Day.

*Harmony Day* is an opportunity for all Australians to celebrate our cultural diversity. It is held on the same day as the United Nation’s *International Day* for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Over 80% of Somerville’s employees originate from non-English speaking countries and this year we celebrated *Harmony Day* by holding a multicultural lunch.

The lunch featured a wide variety of dishes, a cooking competition and general atmosphere of tolerance, acceptance and happiness. Staff went to a great deal of effort in the preparation of spectacular homemade traditional dishes which encompassed a wide range of cultures. Somerville’s organisational culture continues to promote total acceptance and the embracing of what is not always familiar to all persons.

For this year’s cooking competition we were on the hunt for the best fried rice chefs. The winning team: Samjhana, Diana, Victoria and Milan, creatively presented the winning fried rice in pineapple bowls!

It was a fun, belly-filling lunch and a big thank you to everyone for sharing their culinary delights and to the Somerville Workplace Diversity Group for organising this special, culturally diverse lunch.

Somerville celebrated Harmony Day by holding a multicultural lunch featuring a cooking competition for the best fried rice.

*Photo L-R:* Disability Support Workers Jay R Flores, Ming-Jing Hsieh and Roderick Pineda with their ‘fried rice’ entry.

*Photo L-R:* Somerville Manager Bonnie Solly and Disability Services Coordinator Mavis White cooking up a storm.
Photo L-R: Disability Senior Support Officer Victoria Large with Disability Support Workers Sumijhana Gurung, Diana Setyorini and Milan Gurung with the winning dish.

Photo L-R: Judges Sumedah Rankot, Vince Yuen, Liza Metcalfe, Terri-Anne Dureau and Shiju Varughese tasting the dishes from the three finalists.

Photo L-R: Winners are grinners! The winning team: Diana, Milan, Victoria and Samjhana creatively presented the winning fried rice in pineapple bowls. (tasting judge Vince Yuen in the background).
Making news this quarter...

Department of Social Services

Staff from the Australian Government Department of Social Services (both Northern Territory and National Offices) met with Somerville’s Management Team to exchange information about our programs and engage in networking activities.

The Department of Social Services provides funding to support our free Financial Counselling Helpline. The Helpline is attended by experienced Financial Counsellors who assist with a wide range of finance related issues including money management, general debt and bankruptcy.

If you or someone you know is experiencing financial problems, please call the Financial Counselling Helpline on 1800 007 007.

City of Darwin Library Services

Staff from the City of Darwin Library Services visited Somerville to provide an overview of their programs and services.

Membership to the Darwin libraries is free for NT residents. Members are able to borrow books, DVDs, ebooks, and emagazines as well as having access to free computer use and free wifi.

The libraries hold live music sessions every Friday lunch time at Casuarina and the City Libraries, with special events happening every month.

More information can be found on their Facebook page. www.facebook.com/CityofDarwinLibraries

Deputy Chief Minister visits Somerville

Minister Peter Styles, MLA for Sanderson, called into Somerville to meet our Managers and CEO Vicki O’Halloran AM. Peter was provided with an update of our Disability Services, Family Services and Financial Services programs.

Somerville appreciates the magnificent support provided by the Northern Territory Government and it was a great opportunity to talk to Peter face-to-face to discuss a number of important issues. Minister Styles joined staff in an afternoon tea and even had time for a quick game of Connect 4!

As Deputy Chief Minister, Peter is responsible for nine portfolios including Minister for Business; Minister for Racing, Gaming and Licensing; Minister for Employment and Training; Minister for Multicultural Affairs; and Minister for Senior Territorians.
Corporate Support

Somerville acknowledges the generous support of many individuals, families, organisations and businesses who continually sponsor and make donations to Somerville. One such long term supporter is Jape Nominees.

Connie Jape and Jose Lay called in to our offices to share morning tea with our Management team and staff.

Jape Furnishing Superstore is the largest furnishing retailer in the Northern Territory, with both a domestic and commercial division. It supplies furniture to Darwin, Katherine, Gove, Northern Western Australia and East Timor.

A big thank you to Connie and Jose.

Community Benefit Fund

The Northern Territory Community Benefit Fund (CBF) support community development and improvement initiatives. It is funded by a levy collected from electronic gaming machine revenue in casinos and licensed hotels.

Somerville Community Services would like to thank the CBF for providing financial support through the following Grant Programs.

Community Grants

The Community Benefit Grant Program for 2015 provided financial support for the purchase of three ‘hoist scales’ for use in our Disability Services houses. These scales are already in use and used in situations where regular weight checks are needed and service users are unable to stand on standard scales.

Gambling Amelioration Fund

Funding via the Gambling Amelioration Fund has been allocated to Somerville Community Services for a number of years. This funding has enabled our organisation to expand the existing financial literacy and counselling program to gamblers and their families in the Darwin, Palmerston and Katherine communities. Our Financial Counselling service for Gambling Related Issues is available to gamblers, their families and anyone who is experiencing financial difficulties related to gambling.

Thank you once again to the Community Benefit Fund and the Northern Territory Government.

People’s Choice Lottery

The People’s Choice Lottery is about helping not-for-profit charities, schools, clubs and community groups achieve their goals in providing a service to our community.

Somerville is in its ninth year of being a participant in this community lottery. Somerville receives a donation of $2.00 for every $2.00 ticket that we sell, so obviously, the more tickets we can sell, the higher the donation we receive.

There are 150 prizes to be won and tickets are on sale until 31 August 2016. Tickets can be purchased on line via: www.peopleschoicelu.com.au/community-lottery-home.

When purchasing your tickets you will be asked for the name of the organisation you support.

Simply type in ‘Somerville Community Services’ and purchase as many $2.00 tickets that you would like.

Buy a ticket and you’ll know you are supporting your LOCAL community service.

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Staff Profiles – Three generations of Somervillians

Jill May
Jill commenced work with Somerville in 1989, after reading an article in the local Katherine paper regarding four people who were being repatriated from Adelaide to be closer to their families.

Over time, Jill became a Disability Services Coordinator where she works as part of a team to realise the needs, wants, desires and aspirations of the people we support.

Twenty-seven years later Jill is still working as passionately as ever to help Somerville provide quality community based supported accommodation.

Lee-Anne Stubbs
Lee-Anne was only 12 years of age when her mum started with Somerville and she often visited her mother’s workplace as a child. Lee-Anne was very interested in community service work and in 1995, at age 18, Lee-Anne began working with Somerville as a casual staff member in one of the Katherine houses.

Lee-Anne then moved to Darwin and worked in Disability Services and Somerville’s Child Care Centres. In 1998 following the Katherine floods, Lee-Anne came back to Katherine for a short period of time to help out. Her daughter Bianca was only 14 months old at the time.

Back in Darwin Lee-Anne obtained a permanent position and worked in a number of houses before her husband was transferred to Tennant Creek with his work in 2002. Lee-Anne worked for an Aboriginal organisation in Tennant Creek and became a supervisor for two supported accommodation houses.

Two years later they moved back to Katherine and Lee-Anne obtained a permanent position in one of Somerville’s houses. Soon after Lee-Anne became a Coordinator just like her mother!

Bianca Stubbs
As years went by, Lee-Anne’s daughter Bianca grew up amongst many of the Somerville service users. The story is that Bianca learnt to walk pushing people around in their wheelchairs!

In Year 10, Bianca requested she complete her work experience with Somerville, which she thoroughly enjoyed. Now 18, Bianca works with Somerville as a casual Disability Support Worker.

All three have said on many occasions how they all love working for Somerville and are grateful for all the support and encouragement they have all received over the years.

Jill will be looking at retiring in the next few years (not if Vicki can help it!) but Lee-Anne says she will be there for a while yet. Bianca is training to become a paramedic.

Somerville is very fortunate to be the home of many dedicated long term employees.

Jill, Lee-Anne and Bianca