



28 November 2011

MEDIA RELEASE

- EMBARGOED UNTIL 8 DECEMBER 2011, 3:00PM -

THE WESTERN LIONS WIN THE 2011 CARING TOGETHER AWARD

As part of the 2011 Young People Who Care Awards, which is co-hosted by Silver Chain, Carers WA and Woodside Energy Limited, a group of young volunteers from Port Kennedy (known as The Western Lions), have been awarded the 'Caring Together Award' for providing assistance with a special needs dance class.

The special needs dance class is comprised of children with varying disabilities including visual and hearing impairment associated with Cerebral Palsy Autism, Fragile X Syndrome, West Syndrome, Down Syndrome and many more physical and intellectual disabilities. The Western Lions include Kayla de-Vasconcellos, Tammy de-Vasconcellos, Lucas Merau, Jovan Kereopa, Kate O'Keefe, Belinda O'Keefe, Taylor Blake and Daniella Dos-Santos, who have been volunteering with the dance class for two years.

Ms Jessica Gatenby, Dance Instructor at Western Cheersport, notes that The Western Lions are a committed, consistent group who dedicate one hour a week to assist children with disabilities to integrate into fitness and dance.

"This is a beautiful bunch of young carers that have the potential to change lives but they just don't know it yet. They have such a mature approach to working with the children and unconsciously help to diminish barriers as they liaise, communicate, include and work together with respect and dignity," said Ms Gatenby.

Mr Chris McGowan, Silver Chain's Chief Executive Officer, noted that the Young People Who Care Awards is an opportunity to recognise exceptional Western Australians aged 10 to 18 years, who provide voluntary care to in our community.

"The Western Lions play a significant role in the lives of disabled children and the Port Kennedy community and I am pleased to award them the 2011 Caring in the Community Award. Congratulations Western Lions; you should be very proud of your efforts" said Mr McGowan.

The Awards ceremony will be held at the Aboriginal Peoples Gallery, Parliament House on 9 December, 2011.

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