

THE SELF ADVOCATE

NEWSLETTER OF THE SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK

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Inspire Awards

Funds in Court, with the support of the Transport Accident Commission, Women with Disabilities and the Portland House Foundation hosted the Inaugural Inspire Awards which were held on Thursday 21st April at the Price Waterhouse Cooper Building on Melbourne's South Bank.

The Awards recognise those who identify with disability and whose aim it is to make a difference in their own lives and in turn making an impact on their peers and the community around them.

The nominees are nominated by their peers. The categories celebrate and acknowledge people who demonstrate: excellence, passion, vision, and a commitment to assisting their profession and people to achieve their goals.

Adam James, Paul Campbell and Hayden McLean were nominated for the Advocacy & Speaking Up award that was presented by the Disability Services Commissioner. Hayden and Paul received certificates of merit while Adam was awarded with the 1st place and received a trophy.



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Inspire Awards



Zoe from VALiD nominated Paul Campbell. Paul is a pleasure to work alongside and is respected for his dedication and compassionate nature. Paul has grown in confidence through taking on various leadership roles in the community and at Northern Support Services (NSS).

One such role is as a Peer facilitator for the NSS self-advocacy group, which Paul has consistently been elected by his peers, to represent them. The 'Peer Support Committee' feeds into the decision making processes at NSS and reports to management.

Paul is also a member of the VALiD Peer to Peer groups, which educate other clients at NSS about the NDIS. For the last two years (2015-2016) Paul has volunteered at VALiD's three day 'Having a Say Conference' in Geelong. His skill and dedication in his catering role has been an immeasurable help and support to the rest of the volunteer team. Paul's attitude and work ethic is a standout amongst the other volunteers. Through his efforts, dedication and his role at the Having a Say conference he has inspired other Self Advocates to follow his example.

Northern Network

Paul Campbell talked to the network members about the Inspire Awards.

Good morning. My name is Paul.

I want to talk about 2016 Inspire Awards. The very first Inspire Award was held at Price Waterhouse Cooper building on South Bank.

The Inspire Award was hosted by Funds in Court which is part of the Supreme Court of Victoria.

The awards was about sticking up for yourself and volunteering in the community. The Inspire awards was also about making difference in community and helping other people in the community.

There were different Inspire awards.

Awards for people who done a good job in these areas:

- Human Rights
- Community Volunteering
- Performing Arts
- Advocacy & Speaking Up

People put my name forward to receive the Advocacy & Speaking up award. The Disability Service Commissioner Laurie Harkins presented me with a certificate of merit for coming second.

Adam came first and got a trophy. He won money. Adam won because he spoke up for people with disabilities. At the awards there were a lot of people. I meet Amanda Ben who organise the event.

Thank you Zoe from VALiD for supporting me. It was a good experience and I enjoyed it.

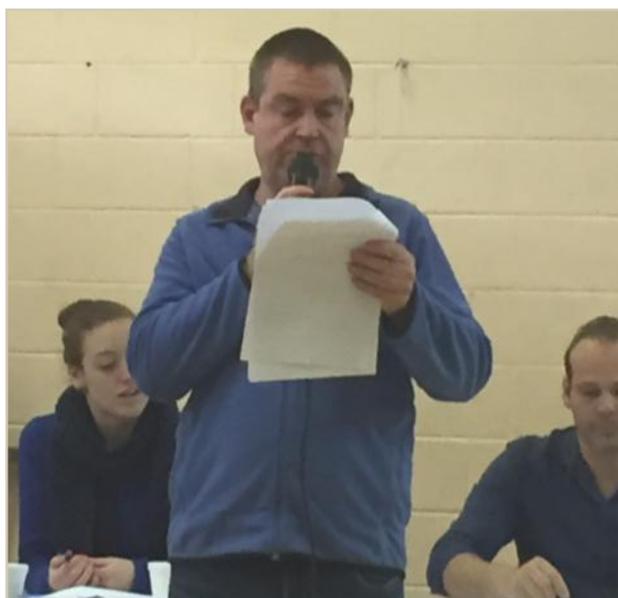
VALiD Website

VALiD is launching a new website at the end of July

The new website will provide more information about what VALiD does including training and workshops that are available

Be sure to check it out.

www.valid.org.au



Paul presenting at the Northern Network meeting.



Southern Network Report

Staying Safe: Freedom from Abuse and Neglect Project

The Victorian Government has asked VALiD to talk to people about abuse and neglect.

At the May meeting Jon and Zoe talked to the Southern Network about:

- Financial abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse.

They showed some videos about staying safe and talked about how abuse and neglect are NOT okay.

What can you do if you are being abused?

- Speak up
- Talked to your family or friends
- Talked to the police or an advocate

Jon and Zoe gave everyone some information about organisations that can help people if they are being abused or neglected.

Abuse is never OK it is against your human rights and against the law.



Speak up



Reach out



Get help

Eastern Network

Zoe from VALiD nominated Adam James for the Inspire Awards.

Adam has been a member of VALiD as a Self Advocate and representative of other self advocates for many years. Adam has attended the Eastern Self Advocacy Network meetings on a monthly basis. He has attended quarterly meetings with Arthur Rogers, the Deputy Secretary – Social Housing and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) reform, with other Self Advocates from around Victoria. Adam is also a member of the VALiD Self Advocacy Forum which meets every 2 months to talk about issues and concerns that may effect people with disability The forum is a group of self advocates who come together from different regions across Victoria.

Adam represented Self Advocates in the Eastern Division on the Leadership in the Reorientation of Day Services (LIRDS), where he sat in on meetings and gave input from a lived experience of an individual with disability. This role led to his position on the EDSN 'Working Together' group, where they are working on a project to empower people with disabilities to be trained as auditors to provide Disability Services with quality feedback of Self Advocacy Initiatives.

Adam has also overcome intense personal trauma and with this in mind he has worked to inspire others to speak up.

Adam talked about how proud he was to receive his award and trophy to the members of the Eastern Network at the June meeting. Adam was nominated for The Disability Commissioner's Best Achievement in "Speaking Up Award" which he won. Adam is pictured below receiving his trophy from Laurie Harkin, Disability Services Commissioner and presenting at the network meeting.



Hayden McLean

Zoe also nominated Hayden Mclean for the Inspire Award.

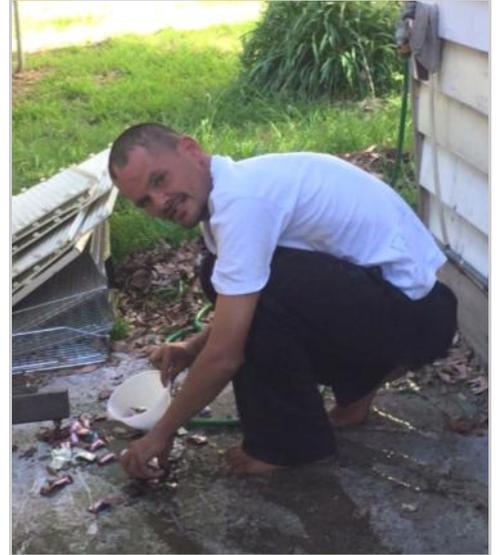
Hayden is a gifted, talented teacher. He is a loved son, brother cousin, uncle, grandson and friend. Hayden is a very important person in the lives of many. He is part of his community.

Hayden strives to teach people through his presence in his community, breaking down barriers through his patience with people while they come to the understanding of who he is.

Hayden constantly expresses his right to be like everyone else.

The way that Hayden teaches his community:

- Educating the community about Autism ways of communicating with people with Autism
- Inviting the community to participate in a community garden project at his home.
- Holding information sessions with Local police and shops in supporting his inclusion
- Facebook Community



HAVING a SAY CONFERENCE



8th – 10th February 2017

Deakin University, Waterfront Campus, Geelong

Australia's largest conference for people with disability

The Having a Say conference is a place where people can speak up and have their voice heard, be respected and empowered and it's a lot of fun!

Expressions of Interest to do a presentation or performance will be available soon.

Registration opens mid September.

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Phone: 9416 4003

Email: havingasay@valid.org.au

Western Network Report

During June Western Network meeting guest speakers Victoria Cini and Shane Edwards from Co Health spoke about Living Safer Sexual Lives and Respectful Relationships. They covered topics such as rights, standing up for yourself and relationships. They also asked members whether they would be interested in attending their “Let’s talk about sex” forum at Maidstone Community Centre on the 17th of June. The forum focused on:

- relationships, sexuality and rights
- how disability services create safe and empowering environments where people can have good relationships
- how to support a family member with relationships and sexuality
- what you would like to see your region do to support people with disability to have good sexual health and healthy relationships

Voting is an important issue to members of the SA networks with the just past federal election and upcoming council elections in November a talking point.

Danijela Bura Aiken and Wendy Oxley from the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) spoke to the members about how to enrol to vote, how to vote and the importance for people to have their say and vote. Members also discussed what are some of the issues and responsibilities of local councils. Members participate in a ballot where members voted on what areas of governance at local councils were most important to them. Options were libraries, rubbish, parks, water safety and lights. Members place their preferences/choices on a ballot sheet and placed into a ballot box. There was a count and results were announced.



VALiD Peer Action Groups

VALiD is setting up Peer Action Groups for people with disabilities, their family members and supporters.

The Peer Action Groups will be helpful to people who are interested in finding out more about the NDIS, as it is being rolled out in their area.



Peer Action Groups bring together people with disability and/or families and supporters who share a common interest in a particular issue.

If you would like to join a Peer Action Group please contact David Craig on 9416 403 or email: david@valid.org.au

Network News



Katie and Anthony joined the VALiD team in March. They are now facilitating the network meetings as Rick and Zoe have moved in other programs that VALiD is running.

Katie has worked as an Occupational Therapist with children in Kindergartens and schools. She has also had experience working on research projects with Deakin University and the Office of Professional Practice.

Anthony worked at Northern Support Services (NSS) for 22 years. Previous duties at NSS included support worker, Employment Outcomes Co-ordinator for the past two years and facilitator of Certificate 1 in Work Education for 12 years. Anthony has also encouraged and empowered participants at NSS to be involved in monthly Peer Support Committee and to have a say about decisions made at their service.



If you would like more information about the network meetings?

Contact Katie and Anthony:



Eastern & Southern Self Advocacy Network
email: katie@valid.org.au

Western & Northern Self Advocacy Network
email: anthony@valid.org.au

Or call them at the VALiD Office on 9416 4003

VALiD Self Advocacy Report

During May the VALiD Self Advocacy Forum meeting, guest speaker Ander Calder from Uniting Church spoke about the findings of his survey, what spirituality or faith means to people. The forum came up with four major points

1. Beliefs and believing in God is important for some people.
2. Families and friendships are important.
3. Personal happiness and care are important
4. Doing things with others.



Guest speaker Mathew Parisan from Safe Schools Coalition Australia also spoke to forum members about resources for high school students on issues relating to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, transgender and intersex people. It's Okay to talk about it. The Forum members were asked to read the resources and given the opportunity to give their thoughts and opinions.

Network News



Do you have a story you would like to share?

You can call the VALiD office and talk to Brenda or arrange for Tully and Heather to come to your service and interview you.

You can give your story to a VALiD staff member at your network meeting or email your story to: brenda@valid.org.au



VALiD Membership for Network Members

Would you like to become a member of VALiD?

Membership is free to all people with disabilities that attend the VALiD Network meetings.

If you would like more information about becoming a member, talk to a VALiD staff member or call the VALiD office.



Contact



235 Napier Street, Fitzroy Vic 3065



Phone: 03 9416 4003



Fax: 03 9416 0850



Email: info@valid.org.au



Web: www.valid.org.au

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