

The night of nights for social workers in South Australia was held last night at the Beach House in Glenelg, hosted by the AASW's South Australian Branch. The Awards were an opportunity to celebrate and pay tribute to the tireless commitment that many qualified South Australian social workers provide in their often challenging and complex work. AASW South Australian Branch President Patricia Muncey said, "The South Australian Social Worker of the Year Awards reflect the collaborative efforts of nominees and their commitment to the values of social work. "This year's winners highlight the breadth and depth of social work practice across South Australia. We are proud to recognise social workers who are at different stages of their careers from student to advanced practitioner." There were award winners in six categories: Student of the year – Sioban Prideaux, UniSA Ms Prideaux was awarded for generously contributing to the local student community and supporting Women's Safety Services. Rising Star - Emma Drummond, Department of Child Protection, Adelaide Ms Drummond was commended for applying high levels of cultural responsiveness in her delivery of child protection services. Leading the Way in the Workplace - Cassandra Dunn, Drug & Alcohol Services SA Ms Dunn was commended for her leadership in inspiring students and co-workers to break down barriers for clients in the field of drug and alcohol services. Rural and Remote Impact - Tara Blaikie, Department of Child Protection, Far North Far West Region Ms Blaikie was commended for achieving positive outcomes for children in her region, using knowledge of local communities and social work values. Head, Heart & Hands - Cassandra Dunn, Drug & Alcohol Services SA Ms Dunn was commended for driving changes across clinical guidelines to address the needs of a diverse range of client groups. Agent of Change - Verity Paterson, Country Health SA Local Health Network Ms Paterson was recognised for working tirelessly to address disadvantage in the Eyre and Far North Health region in collaboration with a range of service agencies. Department for Child Protection (DCP) Chief Executive Cathy Taylor said: "We are proud to be a Gold Sponsor of the Awards and recognise the important role of social workers in the community. "We are pleased to partner with the Australian Association of Social Workers to deliver these Awards, which highlight the positive impact social workers have on our most vulnerable children and families. "Social workers are amazing people who make a world of difference to those who are experiencing difficulty in their lives. "I congratulate all the winners and thank all those who nominated, for the effort you put in day in, day out, to help others."

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