

Winners announced

National Children's Youth Services Section Bess Thomas and Marjorie Cotton Awards 2000

The winners of the National Children's Youth Services section awards have been announced. Sarah Steed from Parramatta City Library Service is the winner of the Marjorie Cotton Award, and the Youthlink infoexchange program of the Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corporation is the recipient of the Bess Thomas award.

Sarah Steed is responsible for the co-ordination of programs and services for children and youth at the central and branch libraries of the Parramatta City Library Service. Her duties include collection development, customer service and staff development. Sarah has been actively involved in the development of web pages. In her own library service she has developed the website 'ParraKIDSmatta', and the ALIA Children's and Youth Services NSW section website.

Sarah's interest and service to the profession extends beyond her own library service, with active involvement in the Children's Librarian's Alliance of Western Sydney, the Children's Book Council, and as publicity officer for the

ALIA Children's and Youth Services section NSW committee. Sarah has acted as zone co-ordinator for the 'Nestle Write Around Australia' program.

Sarah has been invited to participate in workshops on children's storytelling, to present papers on her involvement with the 'ParraKIDSmatta' website, and on 'Children's activity in confined spaces'.

Sarah is a worthy recipient of this award which recognises her outstanding contribution to children's and young adult services and continues the high standard set by previous winners of this award, Heather Fisher and Narelle Poulton.

Yarra-Melbourne Regional Library Corporation's Youthlink infoexchange 2000 will be the recipient of the Bess Thomas award for 2000. The Youthlink infoexchange was launched in January 1999 to provide activities for the youth who used the Carlton branch library. Young people had free access to computers with internet applications, Microsoft Office, web page design, digital imaging

software, typing and games applications. Free training in the use of the software and web page creation was provided and the young people's work was displayed on the Youthlink website [http://www.yarranet.net.au/youthline]. Homework help was added to meet the needs of the participants. The project will continue in 2000 with a greater emphasis on offering more homework help.

The aims of the project are commendable: to promote pre-literacy and literacy support amongst culturally and linguistically diverse young people, and to increase school retention rates by supporting the students to meet school curriculum requirements. The project aims to give young people social and life skills to cope with social and employment issues; access to labour market services; and access to community support services.

The project is co-ordinated by Sarah Marland, a qualified social worker, and operates each weekday afternoon at the Carlton Library from 4:00 to 6:00pm and on weekends. The award money will be spent on promotion of the participants' websites. ■



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