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Top Award goes to Alice Springs 2013 NT Arts Access Awards Recipients

Held in Alice Springs on 29th November, this year's NT Arts Access Awards recognised three Northern Territory based organisations and two individuals for their outstanding commitment to making arts practice accessible through building strong community partnerships.

Through honoring the valuable partnerships that exist between the disability and arts sectors, award winners were selected based on their initiative, leadership, and involvement in projects that embody the spirit of genuine partnership and the benefits for people with disability and the communities we live in.

This year's award presentations were conducted by His Worship the Mayor Mr Damien Ryan, with Michele Castagna, Manager Disability Advocacy Services, as the Master of Ceremonies.

Although unable to attend the awards presentations, Emma Bennison, CEO of Arts Access Australia, delivered a video speech congratulating the recipients.

"I really want to say a huge congratulation both on behalf of myself and also of course, on behalf of the Board and staff of Arts Access Australia. It's wonderful to see the quality of award recipients this year." Ms Bennison said

"The awards of course are recognising a range of individuals and organisations who are really making exceptional contributions to insuring that artists with disability and the arts organisations who they are working with, are receiving well deserved recognition both in the NT and nationally, for the quality of the work they are producing."

This year's award recipients are:

NT Chief Minister's Award: *for Excellence in Inclusive Arts Practice through Community Partnership*

Presented to **Acacia Hill School – Based in Alice Springs**

Acacia Hill School was chosen as the recipients of the NT Chief Minister's Award because of their ongoing commitment to inclusive art practice through a multitude of arts programs and projects over many years. This sustained commitment by staff, teachers and support workers, to providing arts opportunities for the young people attending Acacia Hill School has undoubtedly reaped countless untold benefits and joyful times for these young individuals, their families and this community.

City of Darwin Award: *for Excellence in inclusive arts practice through community partnerships*
Presented to **TEMHCO (Top End Mental Health Consumer Organisation) – Based in Darwin**

TEMHCO was chosen for the City of Darwin Award due to their valuable participation during the 2013 Disability Awareness Week, with an art exhibit at the Casuarina Community Library and for their active art practice promoting health and wellbeing for their participants. One of their participant was an Ambassador for the 2013 Disability Awareness Week.

Disability Advocacy Services Award: *for Excellence in inclusive arts practice through community partnerships*

Presented to **Life Without Barriers – Based in Alice Springs**

Life Without Barriers was recognised for their Community Pathways Program which has partnered with a number of community organisations to enable high quality arts engagement opportunities for their clients. The individuals who access the Community Pathways Program provide a unique contribution to the community of Alice Springs and the strong culture of creativity and imagination here.

This year's certificate of commendation recipients are:

Jameson Casson – Based in Tennant Creek

Jameson, a 27 year old living with disability, is a key role model and valuable contributor to his community. Passionate about youth activities, Jameson was recognised for his participation in and dedication to the Gospel Group Leader for Youth program, run by Barkly Regional Arts.

Philomena Hali – Based in Alice Springs

Philomena was recognised for her tireless work as an individual arts practitioner, supporting inclusive arts practice since 2005. Her community partners include Central Craft, Arts Access Central Australia and InCite Arts. She has also worked directly in partnership with a diverse range of community organisations including Casa and the Mental Health Association of Central Australia. Philomena has been involved in countless arts programs that have offered inclusive creative opportunities, resulting in exceptional experiences for the participants, along with producing high quality and inspiring art works.

The NT Arts Access Awards are well recognised and supported by the Northern Territory Government, through Ministerial representation from various portfolios, along with other territory and local government branches, including the Department of Arts and Museums and Darwin City Council.

Managing and supporting organisations include – Incite Arts (formally Incite Youth Arts & Arts Access Central Australia), Arts Access Darwin, supported by Darwin Community Arts and Disability Advocacy Services.

For inquiries please contact:

Anneke Rose: admin@inciteya.org.au or call 08 8952 6338

Virginia Heydon: virginia@inciteya.org.au or call 08 8952 6338

**InCite Arts: Delivering community arts and culture programs in
the central desert region since 1998**