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Good Sports program wins top national community sector award

A grass-roots community program, which aims to reduce alcohol consumption and anti-social behaviour among sporting clubs, has won the Organisation Award at the inaugural 2013 HESTA Community Sector Awards.

The Australian Drug Foundation's Good Sports program won the award for its work to make community sporting clubs healthier, safer and more family-friendly.

The Organisation Award category recognises organisations that have made outstanding contributions to social justice in Australia, through the development of an innovative program, project or specific service.

The program has grown from a small pilot scheme operating in Gippsland, Victoria to a national program, operating in every state and territory. The program now involves more than 5,000 community sporting clubs, with 1.5 million players and members, representing more than 70 sporting codes.

Head of Community Programs, Maree Sidey, said the Good Sports program had been operating for 12 years and had been extremely successful in changing the 'big drinking' and 'blokey' culture of local sporting clubs.

"The Good Sports program assists community sporting clubs to introduce changes that promote a culture of responsible drinking, by putting the emphasis back on people and participation in sport, rather than alcohol," Ms Sidey said.

"An evaluation of the program indicated short-term risky drinking has reduced by between 8 and 15 per cent. Modelling also suggests the odds of drink-driving reduced by approximately 8 per cent for each season a club was in the program. Participating clubs also experienced considerable increases in female and junior membership."

HESTA CEO, Anne-Marie Corboy, congratulated the winners of each category.

"The judges had a difficult decision to make, with hundreds of excellent nominations and 15 outstanding finalists. The winners are a credit to the sector and their communities. We're proud to honour these exceptional individuals and organisations," Ms Corboy said.

Jon McGregor and Scott Edgecombe, representing the Good Sports program, accepted a \$10,000 development grant — courtesy of long-term HESTA awards sponsor, ME Bank.

The winners of the HESTA Community Sector Awards were announced at an awards dinner in Adelaide on 25 March, during the Australian Council of Social Service National Conference.

The Social Impact Award winner also received a \$10,000 development grant, with the joint winners of the Unsung Hero Award each receiving a \$5,000 ME Bank *EveryDay* Transaction Account — courtesy of ME Bank.

HESTA is the leading super fund for health and community services, with more than 750,000 members and \$21 billion in assets. More people in health and community services choose HESTA for their super.

To learn more about the awards visit hestaawards.com.au

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