



Premier praises Woman of the Year winner

March 6, 2008

Premier Morris Iemma today announced NSW Woman of the Year is Dianne Madden, for her contribution to helping families living with mental illness.

Mr Iemma made the announcement at the Premier's reception for International Women's Day, honouring the contribution made by women to their communities.

"Dianne is a fitting winner of this important award, having made outstanding contributions to her community," Mr Iemma said.

"She is the founder and President of Camp Kookaburra in the Sutherland Shire.

"Camp Kookaburra is an annual program of events to support children aged 8 to 12 living with a parent, brother or sister affected by mental illness.

"The Camp reduces the isolation these children feel and has helped build an important support network for them.

"Beginning with 16 children from the Sutherland Shire, the successful Camp has been expanded to St George and will cater for 70 children in 2008.

"As a volunteer herself, Dianne's dream is that one day Camp Kookaburra will become a national program."

Mr Iemma said the NSW Woman of the Year Awards honoured a group of exceptional, hard-working and dedicated women who work diligently to improve the communities in which we all live.

"This year we've chosen to recognise the countless contributions that women in NSW make towards improving workplaces and working conditions over the last century and give credit to their tireless volunteering work and wider caring roles."

All Members of Parliament were asked to nominate a woman from their electorate for the 2008 NSW Woman of the Year Award.

Ministers were also asked to nominate one woman from their portfolio area. For the first time, nominations were sought from the community, peak women's organisations and the Premier's Council for Women.

Dianne was nominated by Member for Miranda Barry Collier.

Minister for Women, Verity Firth said there was a tremendous response to calls for nominations for Woman of the Year and it was a very difficult task choosing a winner.

The 12 finalists were: Pam Boney, Skye Bortoli, Jean Cinis, Josephine Clark, Janny Ely, Dianne Madden, Bev Manton, Melinda Medway, Alice Oppen, Catherine Hall, Tegan Wagner and Ruth Wilson.

"I would like to congratulate all the women nominated. It is a truly humbling experience to hear their stories and appreciate the diverse and extraordinary contributions these women make," Ms Firth said.