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Marrickville's Citizens of the Year announced

Three remarkable residents have been recognised in Marrickville Council's Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year Awards.

Sister Aileen Crowe has been named Citizen of the Year, Ms Gladys Namokoyi is Marrickville's Young Citizen of the Year, and a Certificate of Appreciation has been awarded to Mr Andrew Heslop.

Sister Aileen is a Franciscan nun who in the 1970s and 80s lived in a remote area of rural Papua New Guinea where she was involved in adult education, with a particular emphasis on teenage women with no previous schooling.

Since then she has dedicated many years to helping asylum seekers. Her acceptance of other cultures and traditions has spread justice, peace and harmony, according to Mariya Tkachenko who nominated Sister Crowe.

Sister Aileen is presently enrolled in a PhD studying refugees and the policies of exclusion.

Young Citizen of the Year is Gladys Namokoyi, a successful music artist. Her hip hop duo KillaQueenz performed at Council's Australia Day Celebration at Enmore Park. Gladys came to Australia as a five year old refugee and is now an inspirational role model for young women striving to make their mark in a male-dominated and competitive world, and for all young people who've experienced displacement and faced adversity.

She is also a producer and presenter with Alchemy SBS Radio.

Late last year Gladys travelled to Tennant Creek to hold hip hop workshops. She has also held similar workshops in female detention centres. Gladys is currently studying for a training and assessment certificate to teach radio.

The field of nominees for the Citizen of the Year awards was so outstanding, it was decided this year to award a Certificate of Appreciation to Andrew Heslop, who was so moved by the story of Elsie Brown, whose death in her home in a Melbourne suburb went unnoticed for two years, he came up with the idea of Neighbour Day, an annual celebration of community. Since founding Neighbour Day in Melbourne in 2003 it has grown significantly year on year.

The Mayor Councillor Sam Iskandar said that our Citizens of the Year helped make Marrickville a more just, accepting and tolerant place. "They help send a clear message of how we can build a better global society," he said.

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