



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 24 May 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Multicultural Awards

Mr BEATTIE (9.42 am): The 2006 Queensland Multicultural Awards will be presented this evening here at Parliament House. I am delighted to inform the House that our multicultural champion for 2006 is award-winning Brisbane author Nick Earls. I also want to highlight to the House the other successful people. I seek leave to incorporate that detail in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Nick is our second Multicultural Champion, taking the baton from tennis legend Pat Rafter. Nick has been chosen for his energetic and passionate advocacy for the rights of refugees and the disadvantaged.

As part of his role, he will drive a new literary program called "Diversity Writes" for the Queensland Multicultural Festival at Roma Street Parkland later this year.

Nick has lived in Brisbane since migrating from Northern Ireland as an 8-year-old in 1972.

He is an Ambassador for the Australian arm of international aid agency War Child, patron of Kids Who Make a Difference, and Hands on Art, and he is an honorary ambassador for the Mater Hospitals Trust and the Abused Child Trust in Queensland.

A University of Queensland honours graduate in Medicine, Nick initiated a War Child Australia project with the Rotary Club of Brisbane Planetarium which sent more than 10,000 new books to schools across the Solomon Islands.

The Queensland Government is proud to have Nick Earls as our 2006 Multicultural Champion.

Also tonight, new awards for Multicultural Achievers will be presented to Sim Hayward, Angelo Puglisi, Frank Farina and Sarina Russo.

These Queenslanders have made significant contributions to the social, cultural and economic life of this State.

New awards this year will also be presented to two Regional Queenslanders—Maria Rickertt, from Rockhampton, and Mayha Ghodosi, from Townsville, who is also our 2006 Outstanding Young Achiever.

School winners are Zillmere State Primary School and Yeronga State High School.

The Department of Employment and Training wins the Government Award for its Multicultural Employment Strategy.

Annerley Literacy Centre wins the award for a Community-based Organisation.

Central Queensland University wins the Large Business Award, and Asian Foods Australia in Cairns wins the Small Business Award.

Winners for their services to the community are Ms Mary Gavin, Mr Adam Lo, and Ms Galila Abdel Salam. For Refugee Services, the award goes to Mr Hassan Ghulam, of Townsville.

I extend a warm invitation to Members to attend tonight's Awards ceremony which commences at 5pm in the annexe.