

Media Release

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JAKELIN VERRAN NAMED BARNARDOS' ACT MOTHER OF THE YEAR

In a special ceremony hosted today by Barnardos Australia, and presented by Senator Gary Humphries, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Families, Housing and Human Services, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Citizenship, **Jakelin Verran** from **Casey** was announced as the ACT Mother of the Year in the Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year Awards 2010.

Jakelin will now attend the national announcement gala dinner in Sydney on Thursday, 6 May 2010 just prior to Mother's Day, at The Ivy along with the other seven state and territory finalists where one of them will be named the Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year 2010.

The past few years have been both euphoric and tragic for 27 year old Jakelin. In September 2008, she gave birth to Kobi – a brother to her two young foster children aged three and two. Then tragically, in February 2009 her husband John suffered a fatal heart attack whilst driving.

Suddenly Jakelin was a single mum with three young children under three years old. Without hesitation Jakelin had taken them in at aged five months and 28 days respectively. Whilst there have been many tough times, through Jakelin's dedication and determination they are now healthy, happy children who are thriving.

Jakelin says even though it's been a difficult year her children have given her the strength to carry on. "Watching each child grow and develop is the most rewarding and fulfilling experience in the world," she says.

Jakelin says she was shocked, humbled and honoured when she was announced as the ACT Mother of the Year. "There are so many amazing mums doing incredible work and I feel very privileged to have been chosen to represent the ACT," she says.

"These awards are very important in recognising the hard work and commitment of just some of the millions of unsung heroes in our community," says local Senator Gary Humphries. "Jakelin has been an outstanding role model to her children, but has also been a great support to our community. I am very proud to award Jakelin with the ACT award this year and am sure she will excel at the national awards."

"It was very difficult for the judges to narrow down the entries, as there were so many remarkable mothers who deserve to be recognised," says Glynis Sequeira, Marketing Director for Barnardos Australia. "However, Jakelin's devotion not only to her own family but also her commitment to other children won her acclaim amongst the judges."

As the Barnardos ACT Mother of the Year 2010, Jakelin was presented with a Johnson & Johnson gift pack, a Telstra digital tutorial and a Samsung phone and prepaid card, a Captain Cook Sydney Harbour Cruise, an ALMAY cosmetics hamper, a Lindt chocolate hamper, EasyFlowers.com.au flower arrangement, a copy of Paul Mercurio's book "Mercurio's Menu, an autographed copy of Damien's latest cd "Remember June" and his latest book of the same name, a framed certificate to mark the event and flights and accommodation to Sydney to attend the national announcement gala dinner.

Celebrating its 15th year, Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year Awards is the only national event that recognises the achievements of mothers and their enormous contribution to the Australian community.

The awards also aim to raise public awareness of the nurturing role Barnardos plays in the lives of thousands of children in Australia each year.

For more information contact Sofey Youssef, Awards Publicist, Barnardos Australia on 02 9743 2790 or 0419 272 237 or email sofey@bigpicture.com

Barnardos Australia's Mother of the Year
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