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Great news for Save the Children at youth awards

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Congratulations to two young Aussies making a big difference in their communities

On Friday 27 November, Preston Culbong and Danikka Calyon were recognised for the fantastic work they do in their communities at this year's [WA Youth Awards](#). They are two very inspiring young people and we're proud they're both part

of the Save the Children team!

Preston Culbong

Winner: Community Leadership Award and Young Person of the Year, WA Youth Awards

As well as picking up the Community Leadership Award, Preston Culbong was also named Young Person of the Year at Friday's awards ceremony. As part of the Save the Children team in Western Australia, Preston mentors young people to help them make positive choices so they stop offending and stay out of juvenile justice system.

Preston is a 22-year-old Nyoongar man who has always been passionate about equality. "I grew up with outspoken advocates and campaigners and was brought up to help not only my people, but my community and my fellow human beings, to create a better life for all of us," he says.

When Preston was younger, he faced lots of challenges including homelessness, racism and mental health issues. But he overcame these to become an active member of his community. He is now a Youth Case Worker with Save the Children, mentoring young people, giving them practical help and encouraging them to make positive decisions like attending school.

"I've always had this mentality that if we can help one kid out of that [juvenile justice] system we can help a whole family in the future," says Preston.

"The reason I do the work I do is simple. I was brought up that if you have the ability to make change in your community for the better, then you're expected to do it."

Preston is an outstanding role model for all young people and we're delighted that this has been recognised at the WA Youth Awards – but for Preston, the award doesn't just belong to him.

"The award is important because it's not just recognition for

myself, but for the community and the families that we work with. It's also a testament to the work that my family has done in bringing me up, supporting me through my struggles and now they can enjoy these recognitions."



Danikka Calyon

Highly Commended for The Commissioner for Children and Young People Participate Award

At just 17, Danikka is a fantastic role model for other young people in her community. At the WA Youth Awards, Danikka was highly commended for The Commissioner for Children and Young People Participate Award, which recognises young people who have shown dedication to making a positive change in their community and who have inspired other young people.

In 2011, Danikka started attending Save the Children's 'One Step Closer' program, an Aboriginal youth engagement initiative. It became clear she was a role model for other children and in 2015, she was employed as a Youth Mentor.

Danikka was primarily raised by her mother, who always taught her to help others. "I come from a family where we like helping people," she says. "It's just something we do, we help anyone who asks for it, no matter what."

In September, Danikka was Save the Children's Youth Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly in New York, where she represented Australia's youth on the world stage.

On being highly commended for a WA youth award, Danikka says, "It's important because it means that not only have I been recognised for the work I've done, but it promotes the work we do in the community," says Danikka. "It shows how young people are helping their generation instead of us relying on other generations to help us."

Danikka is currently completing Year 11 and has also successfully completed a Women's Leadership program, participated in the BHP Billiton Indigenous Leadership program and completed the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience program. And she is continuing her work with Save the Children.

"I love the work I do because I see a need and it needs to be addressed. If I don't step up to the plate, who will? Seeing a young person happy because of something I've done brings me joy."

A huge congratulations to Preston and Danikka.

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