

MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTHERN TERRITORY'S AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARD RECIPIENTS HONOURED

**NT Australian of the Year 2010 - Warwick Thornton
NT Senior Australian of the Year 2010 - Alan Langworthy
NT Young Australian of the Year 2010 - Liam Jurrah
NT Local Hero 2010 - Norma Higgins**

Filmmaker Warwick Thornton was tonight named the Northern Territory's Australian of the Year 2010 and presented with his award by the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, The Hon Paul Henderson MLA.

Warwick, who hails from Alice Springs, was recognised as one of the nation's most promising contemporary filmmakers who is passionate about documenting the stories of his community to share with others. Born in Alice Springs, Warwick is a cinematography graduate from the Australian Film Television and Radio School. The 39 year old's debut feature, *Samson and Delilah*, is widely recognised as one of Australia's finest films and was selected for the 2009 Cannes Film Festival where it won the Camera d'or for best first feature.

Alan Langworthy was awarded as the Northern Territory's Senior Australian of the Year for his pioneering work in the development of remote renewable energy. The 60 year old from Berrimah established and manages Powercorp, a world-leading and groundbreaking power systems engineering company whose technology is enabling remote communities to have city-quality power almost entirely from renewable sources. In the early 1990s, Powercorp also pioneered high-penetration wind diesel systems that now power remote communities around the world, from Antarctica to the Azores. This year Alan also won a prestigious Clunies Ross Award for his contribution to science.

The Northern Territory Young Australian of the Year 2010 is 21 year old Liam Jurrah. Warlpiri man Liam is the first player from a remote community in Central Australia to be drafted by the AFL. Before this, Liam had not trained with elite training squads; instead he spent evenings at one end of the local Yuendumu basketball court kicking a footy through the hoop. Since he was 16, Liam has also been a member of the Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) Youth Development and Leadership Project and works as a youth mentor with at-risk Warlpiri youth facing serious life issues.

The Northern Territory's Local Hero 2010 is Katherine's Norma Higgins, who established a weekly growers market as an additional business opportunity for local farmers. It has delivered self-sustaining economic activity, employment, vocational education and training outcomes. Norma has also been involved in the Katherine Horticultural Association since its inception, is actively involved with the Primary Industries Training Advisory Council, and is a founding member of her local group of NT Women in Agriculture. In 2008, Norma Higgins won the NT Rural Woman of the Year Award.

The Northern Territory recipients will now join recipients from all other States and Territories as finalists for the national awards to be announced on 25 January 2010 in Canberra.

Tam Johnston, Program Director for the National Australia Day Council, said all the Northern Territory award recipients will travel to Canberra for the national awards and to take part in the 50th Anniversary of the Australian of the Year Awards program.

"All the State and Territory award recipients will attend a special celebration event on 24 January before the announcement on 25 January," said Ms Johnston.

"It will be a very special occasion and we look forward to sharing it with Warwick, Alan, Liam and Norma."

Ralph Norris, CEO Commonwealth Bank, offered his congratulations to the Northern Territory award recipients. The Commonwealth Bank has been the major sponsor of the Australian of the Year Awards for more than thirty years.

“On behalf of the Commonwealth Bank, I would like to congratulate the recipients from the Top End. Their hard work and achievements are an inspiration to the Australian community,” said Mr Norris.

For more information on the Australian of the Year Awards visit www.australianoftheyear.org.au.

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For further information or to arrange an interview please contact:

Nicole Browne, Media Opps 02 9954 7677 or 0414 673 762 or nicole@mediaapps.com.au