

HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS HONOURED WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

04. 12.15 Thirty current and active Holocaust Survivor guides have been awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of the 23 years that volunteers have spent sharing their experiences and life lessons with students and adult visitors at the Sydney Jewish Museum.

The group, aged between 70 – 96 years old, received a standing ovation as they took to the stage to accept the award that had been created specifically to honour their unique contribution to the community of New South Wales.

Olga Horak, who accepted the award on behalf of her fellow volunteers, said The Holocaust Survivor guides have been the foundation of the Museum since its inception.

“By sharing our individual stories and experiences of the Holocaust we have always hoped to share our message of tolerance and understanding while ensuring that the younger generation do not forget what happened and how fragile democracy and peace can really be.”

“We live here in a multicultural or ethnic society, and we definitely hope to live in harmony.”

The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards is an annual awards program run by The Centre for Volunteering – the State’s peak body for Volunteering – to recognise the outstanding efforts of the 2 million plus volunteers in NSW, and to promote the importance of volunteering in the community.

The Museum Survivor guides were singled out from a group of 7,000 distinguished nominees receiving a commendation from Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, who recorded a special message for the volunteers in attendance.

Prime Minister Turnbull said “Through their work, our volunteers make communities stronger, and together, they continue the honoured and long-held tradition of giving back.”

“The Sydney Jewish Museum is a wonderful example of the volunteer being at the heart of each visitor’s experience, and I congratulate the guides of being worthy recipients of this year’s Lifetime Achievement Award.”

Museum Volunteer Manager, Rony Bognar, who nominated the Survivor guides for the award, said the event had been extremely emotional and gratifying.

“It is almost impossible to imagine what it must be like to re-live the most painful and traumatic events of your life week in and week out, but the Survivor guides find the strength not only to share their experiences, but to inspire their audiences to change and improve their worlds today.”

“That the whole volunteer community of Sydney would stand and give the Survivor guides this incredible reception is something I think neither they nor I will ever forget.”

-END -