

Minister for Fair Trading
Minister for Youth
Minister for Volunteering

Linda Burney MP



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MEDIA RELEASE

TWELVE YOUNG LEADERS TO ADVISE GOVERNMENT ON YOUTH ISSUES

Twelve outstanding young people have been appointed to the NSW Youth Advisory Council to advise the NSW Government on issues that are important to young people.

Minister for Youth Linda Burney addressed the group at their first meeting at Parliament House today, acknowledging their key role as a direct line of communication between the young people of NSW and the Government.

“The council reports directly to me and I am delighted with the mix of people this year – they come from a wide range of backgrounds from across the state and so bring with them both urban and rural concerns and issues,” Ms Burney said.

“As Minister for Volunteering, the first project I’d like to assign to the council is to undertake research and then advise me on the challenges facing young Muslims in relation to community participation and, more specifically, their involvement in volunteering.

“One of the benefits of this council is that it has the capacity to improve social cohesion through greater cooperation and interaction among young people across all community groups. That is why I am passing this task into their capable hands.

“The other project for the council to examine is cyber-bullying, a growing phenomenon among young people. Now, not only can kids be bullied in the playground, the bullies can send them a text on the bus, and they can find a nasty email when they get home.”

Members of the council range in age from 17 to 22 and have different skills and experience. They were appointed on merit out of a field of over 100 applicants.

“I am totally in awe of the achievements of this group of inspirational young people – some have been carers for many years, others are active in surf lifesaving clubs and Youth Councils.

“One high school student has already been involved with anti-racism and the Cronulla Peace Train project and another speaks at schools on inter-faith harmony. Another is a member of her Aboriginal Land Council, while one young man took a group of student aid workers to tsunami-affected Thailand.”

The NSW Youth Advisory Council members appointed for 2008 are: Amanda Scott, Chair, Windang, **Illawarra**; Mohammed Zaoud, Deputy Chair, **Auburn**; Samantha Dawson, **South Penrith**; Martin Drennan, **Bronte**; Tjirra Francis, **Dorrigo**; Krysten Gers, **Broken Hill**; Helen Machalias, **Armidale**; Maggie Malak, **Epping**; Matt Petherbridge, Weston, **Hunter**; Tim Quadrio, **Eastwood**; Matthew Smith, **Oatley** and Michael Yuen, **Parramatta**.

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Amanda Scott, the new Chair, believes it is crucial to provide forums like this to create a much needed link between the NSW Government and the young people of NSW.

“I look forward to working with the vast population of young people across NSW, and to continuing the great work undertaken by the former councils,” Ms Scott said.

“I feel privileged to be chosen to represent young people and to serve the Government as the Chair of this council.”

The NSW Youth Advisory Council was established under the Youth Advisory Council Act (1989) to advise the NSW Government, through the Minister for Youth on matters of concern and Government policies and programs concerning young people.

Young people interested in being appointed to next year’s Youth Advisory Council or any other NSW Government Board or Committee can register their interest on the NSW Government Youth website: www.youth.nsw.gov.au

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