



News release: 10 March 2010

**Diana Certificate of Excellence
awarded to Southwark young volunteers**

Thirty young people, working for a Camberwell-based voluntary organisation, will be honoured for their selfless efforts to positively change their community at a special ceremony on Wednesday 10 March 2010.

The young volunteers, aged between 12 and 18, will be presented with Diana Certificates of Excellence at Southwark Council's new headquarters at London Bridge. This award recognises the outstanding contribution of groups of young people who work to improve their communities, organisations or schools.

The young people are all members of Heartbeat Communiversity, a community empowerment organisation supported by the Youth Sector Development Fund (YSDF) under the Department for Children, Schools and Families' Aiming High for Young People strategy to provide safe places to go and positive things to do for young people at times when they most want and need them – particularly Friday and Saturday nights.

Now ten years old, working alongside Southwark Council, Heartbeat Communiversity provides access to a wide range of projects designed to channel the energy and talents of young people and communities that can feel excluded from mainstream society.

Minister for Children and Young People Dawn Primarolo said: "The vast majority of young people work hard to fulfill their ambitions and make positive contributions to their community. Projects like Heartbeat Communiversity are a great way for young people to put their talents and hard work into action.

"There should be no barrier to young people succeeding, regardless of their background. Putting an end to the negative stereotyping of young people is an issue I hold close to my heart. Congratulations to everyone involved in this project and long may its success continue."

Councillor Nick Stanton, leader of Southwark Council, said: "The award is testament to the great work of Heartbeat Communiversity, and all the winners thoroughly deserve it. Some of these young people have gone from being among the most vulnerable in society to being volunteers, mentors and influential members of their communities. They show that there is far more to the area's young people than the negative 'broken Britain' stereotypes."

Maggie Turner, Chief Executive of the Diana Award, said: “The Diana Certificate of Excellence shines a light on a growing force of young people who get up off their backsides to change their communities and the lives of others. We warmly congratulate Heartbeat Communiversity. As a group of community entrepreneurs they have the power and ambition to build the cohesive society in which we would all like to live.”

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Notes to the editor:

The Diana Award has three award schemes; the **Diana Award**, our flagship programme for inspiring individuals, the **Diana Anti-Bullying Award** for young people who have tackled bullying and the **Diana Certificate of Excellence** for groups of young people who have made an exceptional contribution to their community.