MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 8 March 2012

CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY
NOMINATE NOW FOR WOMEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Nominations opened today for NSW Women of the Year Awards, announced as part of International Women’s Day activities. These new awards will properly acknowledge and recognise the contributions of women across the State.

Minister for Women Pru Goward said the awards give the community an opportunity to recognise the important role and achievements of women in NSW.

“We need the community’s help to find our next NSW women of the year,” Ms Goward said.

Perhaps you know a woman who has made a significant contribution to her local community - the quiet achiever, local hero or volunteer among us who you think should be recognised for her contribution.”

Nominations can be submitted at www.womenoftheyear.nsw.gov.au from today.

Ms Goward said a panel of judges will be given the difficult task of choosing the Premier’s NSW Woman of the Year.

“The panel will also select a shortlist of candidates for the People’s Choice – Community Hero Award,” Ms Goward said.

“This year it’s up to the community to decide who the winner will be.

“We want the community to get involved and vote for the People’s Choice – Community Hero Award recipient.”

The community will be able to vote online at www.womenoftheyear.nsw.gov.au from Thursday 19 April, 2012 after a short list is selected.

The selection panel will be led by the Minister and will include other high profile women and men who support the awards. The panel will include:

- Jodie Fox - Co-founder of shoesofprey.com. Telstra Businesswoman of the Year 2011, Hudson Private Award
- David Gallop - Chief Executive Officer, National Rugby League
- Major Paul Moulds AM - Director - Mission and Resources Social, The Salvation Army.
The NSW Women of the Year will be announced at a reception hosted by the NSW Premier in May 2012 at Parliament House. In addition to the state-wide awards, local members of Parliament will be invited to nominate a woman from their local area as their own woman of the year.

Ms Goward recently announced a new Council for Women’s Economic Opportunity to provide specialist advice to the NSW Government on strategies to give women greater economic opportunities.

“A NSW 2021 priority is to increase the proportion of women working in the traditionally male trades,” Ms Goward said.

“The new council will bring together experts from the engineering, construction, manufacturing, education and training industries.

“This Council will examine why women continue to be under-represented in large sectors of the workforce, and will champion solutions to increase the participation of women in non-traditional roles.

“It’s time to increase the number of women plumbers, carpenters and other non-traditional trades.

“Women currently make up less than 2 per cent of automotive and engineering, construction and electro-technology trades workers in NSW1.”

“It makes no sense. Especially when women are using electric drills, building cupboards and painting their own houses like never before. Obviously women can do the job; we just need to ensure they have the chance.

“We need to work with industry to secure a competitive labour force in our state. This Government is serious about gender equity and about rebuilding the economy.”

Ms Goward is encouraging everyone to take part today in International Women’s Day events throughout their community.

“I wish all women a very happy International Women’s Day and looking forward to hearing some of the great achievements women are doing throughout NSW.”

Media Contact: Simon Fontana 0467 738 139

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1 Source: ABS Labour Force Survey, Detailed, Cat 6291.0.55 data cube, EO8, NSW by sex by occupation, all employed people, Nov 2011