

Judges hail community hero

NOTHING short of heroic — that was the judging panel's reaction to the outstanding work of Launceston employment consultant Belinda Farley-Wills.

Ms Farley-Wills won the 2009 Employment Consultant of the Year at the National Employment Services Association's awards for excellence.

Ms Farley-Wills, of Salvation Army Employment Plus, outshone more than 2000 of her compatriots to win the honour in Sydney on Wednesday.

Ms Farley-Wills has guided more than 100 fellow Tasmanian Aboriginal people into employment in the past year alone — a feat that fittingly saw her crowned as Australia's top employment professional helping the disadvantaged.

Ms Farley-Wills began work at the Salvation Army as a secretary, but her passion to help fellow Tasmanian Aboriginal people soon led her to the position of pathways and Aboriginal consultant.

However, according to the awards' master of

ceremonies Brad Elliot, the accolade recognises Ms Farley-Wills's complete commitment to her community.

"She's invested more than 15 years working for her community," he said.

National Employment Service Association chief executive Sally Sinclair said that programs like those run by Ms Farley-Wills had direct and lasting impacts that improved the social fabric of society.

— Naomi Sarich, work experience student



NESA's Sally Sinclair (left) and Belinda Farley-Wills (centre) with other award winners.