

23 October 2009

Media Release

Women shine at the 2009 Westpac Women in Business Awards

Thirteen of Papua New Guinea's high achieving women were honoured on Wednesday night when 260 people attended the 2009 Westpac Women in Business Awards at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Port Moresby.

Guest of honour, Honorable Powes Parkop, Governor of NCD and General Manager of Pacific Jane Kittel were amongst the dignitaries who enjoyed the event.

"As developing nations grow and strive to meet their potential - the role of women must continue to change and evolve. The Westpac Women in Business Awards aim to recognise and highlight the outstanding contribution women are making to the development of the nation of Papua New Guinea," said Mr Ross Hammond, Managing Director, Westpac Bank-PNG-Limited.

"All our finalists are winners. They were winners before they were nominated. Representing the private, public and community sectors, each and every one of them is truly inspirational, and it is a honour to be able to recognise them through the Awards," Mr Hammond continued.

"Networking is one of the fundamentals of business. Going forward we will put our support behind the development of a Women's Business Network in Papua New Guinea. We'll build on the networks already established by the Westpac Women in Business Awards, and will continue to foster the growth of women in business.

The Westpac Women in Business Awards is a series of five sponsored-awards with one overall winner. The 2009 winners are:

Overall winner of the 2009 Westpac Women in Business Awards & Daltron Entrepreneur Award winner – Betty Higgins



Betty Higgins, Owner and Manager of Betty's Lodge and Mt Wilehem Trout farm is the overall winner of the 2009 Westpac Women in Business Awards.

Betty's story is truly inspirational. As a young girl, her father wanted her to have an arranged marriage, and advised that if she wanted to go to high school she would need to earn the \$20 for school fees each year.

With just \$1 in her pocket and the dress she was wearing, she arrived in Madang, and enrolled in High School. For two years all her spare time was spent working to pay the school fees. During volunteer visits to the local hospital, she met a man who helped to fund the rest of her schooling.

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Betty and her husband purchased land at the base of Mt Wilhelm in 1987. She grew vegetables to raise funds to renovate the property, and so Betty's Lodge was born. Not content with running a highly successful lodge, Betty began a trout farm.

Betty has always been an advocate for Papua New Guinean women. She supplied seeds to women in her district so they could grow vegetables and earn an income by selling the vegetables to Betty's Lodge. If they didn't have their own land, she allowed them to use hers.

Betty hopes to inspire village women and teach them that through education and hard work, they can achieve anything in life.



The PricewaterhouseCoopers Private & Corporate Sector Award recognises outstanding achievement by a female manager in the private and corporate sector who has contributed significantly to the performance of a company or business unit. The winner this year is Mary Handen.

Mary Handen broke the mould when she was appointed General Manager Human Resources for the Steamship Trading Company in 2001. The only Papua New Guinean female to break into the expatriate and male dominated senior management team, she became a role model for many women. In 2007 Mary joined Datec PNG Limited as the Company Financial Controller. In this role she established new processes and systems and contributed to the realignment of Datec PNG Limited.

Mary's aspiration is to establish a Trust to provide scholarships for female aviators in Papua New Guinea in memory of her daughter, the late Ms Jannie Moala, Captain of the Airlines PNG flight that crashed in Kokoda in August.



The Cardno Acil Public Sector Award recognises outstanding achievement by a female manager in the public sector who has contributed significantly to the performance of any government service. The winner this year is Dr Rona Nadile.

Dr Rona Nadile, Acting Executive Manager of Employment Promotion, Department of Labour and Industrial Relations, is a woman who leads by example.

She played a key role in developing and implementing the new legal framework for the administration of foreign employment in PNG. By liaising with industry, government and the volunteer sectors, she influenced changes to assist businesses to recruit foreign workers whilst protecting jobs for Papua New Guinean citizens.

Dr Nadile has land at Samarai Township in Milne Bay Province, and her dream is to build a training centre where young people can learn new skills whilst contributing to the growth of tourism in Papua New Guinea.

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The **Trukai Community Responsibility Award** recognises outstanding achievement by a female manager working in the not-for-profit or non-government organisation sector. Tessie Soi is the winner this year for this category.

Tessie Soi, Director and Founder, Friends Foundation Inc, has created projects that support and care for people infected with HIV/AIDS.

She has organised burials for over 300 unclaimed bodies of babies and children left at Port Moresby General Hospital morgue, oversees home based palliative care for bedridden AIDS patients, and has created a buddy system for orphans whose parents have died of AIDS.

Created in 1998, Friends Foundation has partnered with the Family Health International and the Clinton Foundation to deliver K840,000 of projects to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Tessie currently uses her family home as a base in Central Province, but her dream is to build a centre to coordinate her programs.



The **IBBM Young Achievers' Award** recognises outstanding achievement by a young woman under the age of 30 in any field. The winner this year is Monica Pomat who will receive a scholarship from the PNG Institute of Banking & Business Management valued at K18,000.

Monica Pomat, Training Co-ordinator, has worked with PNG Microfinance Limited (PML) since it began in 2004. Establishing three PML branches in just six years, she has watched with pride, as thanks to her focus on training and development, five of her employees were promoted to branch manager roles.

Active within the community, Monica often travels to settlements and villages where she can be found talking to community leaders, encouraging them to understand the benefits of financial services.

Monica has helped many women establish their first account. Her aspiration is for all Papua New Guineans to have access to basic financial services. She wants to help women become financially independent by accessing small loans, which they can use to generate income to support their family, and in doing so earn respect from their family and community.

All category winners will receive a trip to attend the 2010 Australia/PNG Business Forum in Townsville, Australia and the overall winner will also receive Brian Bell gift vouchers valued at K2,800; and an all expenses paid trip to attend one of the Westpac Women's Markets "Learn, Lead & Succeed" events in Australia next year.

Westpac operates in seven Pacific countries including the Cook Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. It was established in PNG in 1910 when its first branch opened in Port Moresby and another soon after in Samarai. The Westpac network in PNG now includes 16 branches.

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For more information, contact Cynthia Kewei, Events Research Co-ordinator, Westpac PNG on 3220 725. Or email ckewei@westpac.com.au.

Photos of the event available on request.

SPONSORS**Platinum sponsors**

Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Cardno Acil, Daltron, Trukai and PNG IBBM.

All Platinum sponsors have supported the awards for the last three consecutive years.

Gold sponsors

Thanks to the Gold Sponsors who have put their name behind the Westpac Women in Business Awards. They are Qantas, Air Niugini, Budget Rent-A-Car, EMTV, Yumi FM and Nau FM and new gold sponsor Brian Bell.

JUDGING CRITERIA

The judging panel is made up of two senior representatives from Westpac, senior representatives from each of the Platinum Sponsors and a senior representative of the community.

A panel of judges met with each finalist and judged them on the following criteria –

- Leadership – demonstrate outstanding achievement and their ability to lead others to achieve challenging objectives, to influence others and to set aspirational standards for other women.
- Good Governance - demonstrate your track record of managing responsibility and upholding the highest levels of integrity and good governance.
- Success - demonstrate outstanding achievement in academic, sporting, professional and business activities.
- Values – provide examples that demonstrate how your personal and business principles have lead the way in community and corporate life.

Judges

Westpac Bank-PNG-Limited: Jeanette Leeson, Head of Retail and Sales and Marketing and Brendan Raftery, Head of Finance and Company Secretary.

Pricewaterhouse Coopers: John Roberts, Partner, PWC.

Cardno Acil: Suzi Chinnery, Development Practioner| Sector Performance Monitoring and Reporting.

Daltron: Bruce Mead, General Manager.

Trukai: Mea Willie, Brand Manager.

PNG IBBM: Morea Geita, Manager Training.

Qantas: Julian Barry, General Manager.

Chairperson: Lady Winifred Kamit, Partner, Gadens Lawyers.