



DONATION, DONATION, DONATION...

THE ICAEW EVERYBODY COUNTS AWARDS ARE GIVEN IN RECOGNITION OF THE TIME AND ENERGY MEMBERS HAVE DEVOTED TO CHARITY OR COMMUNITY PROJECTS.

ANGELA WEST

The 2011 Everybody Counts Award winners have been announced. They were selected from four different categories: member in business, member in practice, retired member and younger member, and were chosen for their level of commitment and the difference their work has made, serving as an inspiration to others.

'Each of these winners has led by example, showing how dedication and focus can make a difference to people's lives,' says ICAEW president Clive Parritt.

The four each earned a well-deserved £2,000 donation towards their project or organisation.

The annual Everybody Counts Awards recognise ICAEW chartered accountants' exceptional charity work. For more details, visit www.icaew.com/everybodycounts



HELPING THE HOMELESS

A tax consultant with BASF plc in Cheadle, Clare Jones was honoured for her role as volunteer treasurer for The Wellspring, Stockport. She assumed the position seven years ago, shortly after qualifying as a chartered accountant. 'I knew a lot about the good work The Wellspring had been doing and was keen to use my newly-acquired skills for a good cause,' she explains.

The Wellspring provides services to homeless and disadvantaged local people, engaging with similar organisations to extend their services throughout the country. The team comprises a small number of professionals, a nurse and GP, alongside a large number of volunteers. 'I look after the finances, preparing monthly accounts for the management committee, dealing with bills and ensuring cash balances are closely monitored.

'Our goal is to support people out of homelessness and to become independent of our services. We also help improve numeracy and literacy skills through GCSE Maths and English classes, as well as provide computer skills, first aid and food hygiene courses and art groups.'

The Wellspring also works with victims of domestic abuse, asylum seekers, drug and alcohol users, those with mental and physical health issues or with financial problems. However, as the economic downturn began to bite, the charity faced increased costs together with severe cuts in grant funding. 'This proved very challenging but, by focusing our fundraising efforts and cost control measures, we overcame the financial strains and are in a much stronger position as a result,' Jones says.

Continuous work is required to maintain voluntary income and cost control. 'It costs us £365 per day to run The Wellspring. Through our "365" campaign, we are looking to local businesses, schools, church groups and other organisations to consider giving us an annual donation of £365 in return for an allocated "memorable day" advertised at The Wellspring. We're delighted to receive this award.'

For information on The Wellspring, visit www.thewellspring.co.uk



REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

Keeping fit and having fun is part of the charity job for Derek Redwood. By day he is managing partner of Clifton House Partnership but manages to devote a significant amount of his spare time to helping Bobath Children's Therapy Centre Wales, an international, Cardiff-based charity. The centre provides specialist physiotherapy and occupational, speech and language therapy for children with cerebral palsy. It grew from a small group of parents who had nowhere to turn for support for their children.

Redwood got involved 12 years ago. 'I wanted to do something close to home and arranged a sportsmen's dinner, which I'd already been doing successfully for a football club, raised £2,000 for Bobath and felt good about it. It became an annual event.

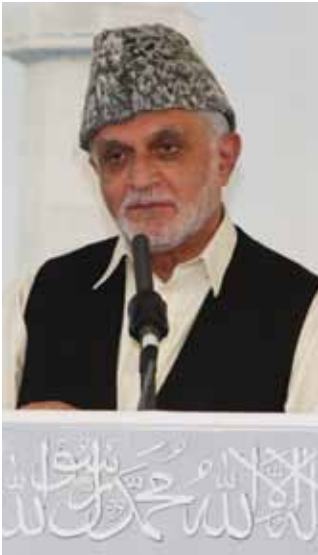
'I approached friends and business associates and the Friends of Bobath fundraising group was born. In those days, we only had a community fundraiser and it was very low key. I've moved that forward quite significantly by

getting the name out among the community. I organise numerous fundraising events and have helped in the growth of the organisation from a small self-funding unit.'

Through events ranging from mountain climbing and charity football matches to ladies' coastal walks and musical evenings, the group has now raised almost £200,000. 'We try to do things that are fun, so people have a good time, raising money along the way.

'As a small charity, I'm thrilled to be able to raise Bobath's profile with this great award. It's hugely satisfying and the effort we put in is repaid many times over. There are a lot of very worthy charities but they have massive press coverage and the cards are stacked in their favour. I'm proud to say that I'm probably known as much for my charity as for my work in the practice.'

For more details, visit the Bobath Children's Therapy Centre Wales website: www.bobathwales.org



MAKING MOSQUES

Having recently retired as a partner at Pawley & Malyon in London after 40 years, Nisar Butt is an old hand when it comes to charity work.

His main achievement, he says, was setting up the finance department at AMA (Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK) where he has been finance secretary for 30 years. 'When I took over, the charity wasn't registered, its annual income was less than £100,000 and there was very little cash in the bank. There were no accounting procedures in place so, using my knowledge and skills as a chartered accountant, I set about bringing the charity into the 21st century, in order to safeguard the income and assets.'

AMA provides educational loans and grants to the disadvantaged, including orphans and handicapped people as well as to several UK charities. Over the last 30 years, Butt has dedicated 25-30 hours a week to the organisation. 'We have managed to acquire many buildings and community halls and have also built several mosques, including our HQ

in Morden, one of the largest in Europe.'

Butt has his finger in a lot of charity pies. He recently helped organise a reunion of his old school in Nairobi which raised funds for a new computer department. He also helped set up Humanity First, which is active in providing relief to areas in the wake of natural disasters.

'Our teams of volunteers, doctors and engineers have helped in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti and the tsunami in Indonesia. After the earthquakes and floods in Pakistan, we were virtually the first on the scene and set up medical camps, emergency shelters and provided food and sanitation.

'It's great to have the recognition with this award. You get a lot of satisfaction working for any charity and dedication is the key. If you have that, nothing is difficult.'

For further details, see AMA UK's website at ahmadiyya.org.uk and for Humanity First, go to humanityfirst.org



CHOCOLATE TREES FOR KIDS

After spending a year teaching in Ecuador, Helen Ashdown (pictured back row, middle), an assistant manager for Deloitte in the Thames Valley, set up SelvaKids (selva is the Spanish word for jungle) to improve the educational resources in schools in the Amazon region.

'After university, I taught English in a small rural school there,' Ashdown explains. 'I met Cassandra Walker, a volunteer at another school and we both fell in love with the place and decided we wanted to make a difference.'

The pair have implemented various projects, including selling Ecuadorian silver and traditional Kichwa jewellery made from plant fibres and seeds. Their flagship scheme, School Bank, is a community bank where money in a capital fund owned by the school can

be loaned out to buy seeds for crops. 'The loan is repaid at a low interest rate and, once the crop has been grown and sold, the interest helps fund the schools.

'We also sell chocolate trees in the UK and for every one bought, we plant one on a plot of land donated by a school. The profits from the sales of the trees and the cocoa grown go towards increasing the funds available in the school bank, which in turn increases the loans to generate more funds.'

Future projects include expanding into healthcare and helping with the effects of climate change. 'For one of the schools, deep in the jungle and very remote, we're considering buying a horse which can be rented for a small fee,' she says.

'Schools regularly approach SelvaKids asking for help and we turn them away due to lack of funds. The Everybody Counts Award will help enormously and allow us to work with a greater number of them.'

It costs just £5 to plant a chocolate tree. Find out more on the SelvaKids website: www.selvakids.co.uk