

**SPEECH BY MARY VICTOR O'REERI
ON ACCEPTING THE AWARD OF WA LOCAL HERO 2011
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, Perth (20 November 2010)**

Your Excellency Dr Ken Michael, Hon John Castrilli, distinguished guests and friends,

When we think of suicide, we think of life – a life lost.

But when we think of life, we don't think of suicide.

That is because we know that life is to be enjoyed and lived to the full.

In preventing suicide in our society, it is not a matter of encouraging mere survival.

It is about placing CARE OF LIFE – LOVE OF LIFE - PROSPERITY as the centerpieces of our community.

It also involves asking ourselves - What does it take to create a society in which our youth look forward to leading long, strong and confident lives.

By working through the answer to this question, we will go a long way towards developing suicide proof communities.

As the WA Local Hero for 2011, I find myself standing on the shoulders of many local heroes in communities across this great state of Western Australia.

I acknowledge them today for their contributions also, even although I don't know all their names.

Local heroes know achievements aren't about luck – good things get done when we step up and keep on stepping up, even when it's hard.

In accepting this Award, may I thank my family, my colleagues, and my mentors and well-wishers including those who nominated me, for all that they have done to enable my work.

Thank you one and all – I am truly humbled.