



(Tony Cannata)

(Karl Kachami)

(Adam Smith)

(Colleen Pearce)

(Mel)

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the(lifesaver)
Tony Cannata

Tony Cannata, 41, was on his way to work at his family's pizza restaurant in North Fitzroy when he saw smoke billowing from a townhouse in Brunswick. When he saw flames, too, he parked his car and dialled for help. "I thought, heck, I've dialled triple zero, I'll take the next step, just to make sure there's nobody in there." Cannata broke down the front door and, braving smoke and collapsing ceilings, found young couple Chris Gairns and Sarah Brown asleep in a smoke-filled upstairs bedroom and helped them escape. Cannata received a Certificate of Commendation from the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, the highest honour MFB can bestow on a civilian and one of only a handful given out this year.

the(trailblazer)
Karl Kachami

Karl Kachami kicked off the year with a one-man campaign against "rent as an opportunistic paradigm", offering three long-term occupants of his 11-room Fitzroy house fixed rent for the rest of their lives. Since then, the lecturer in corporate finance has observed the men's growing sense of pride and ownership in the place, doing renovations, planting a garden and cleaning up communal areas. He plans to extend the offer to other permanent residents. "The private sector is too quick to grab the ready dollar, forgetting the sense of loyalty or longevity that a compromise allows," says Kachami, 35. His tenants, aged from 20 to 80, are talking about getting a rainwater tank and keeping chickens. "They can see tomorrow in it," he says.

the(changemaker)
Adam Smith

Adam Smith was perfectly placed to head the creation of the nation's largest independent youth and education not-for-profit organisation, the Foundation for Young Australians. Smith, 27, was both CEO of the Education Foundation and deputy chairman of the former Foundation for Young Australians when the two organisations merged in May. Two months into steering a combined workforce of 65 staff, Smith was named one of six Young Executives of the Year by BOSS magazine. The result of the merger, says one of the nation's youngest CEOs, has to be one plus one equals three. "We have to create something new with a greater capacity to be an advocate for young people."

the(advocate)
Colleen Pearce

Since being appointed Victoria's first female public advocate last year, Colleen Pearce, 52, has been fighting for the rights of disadvantaged people across the state. Her job is to promote the rights of people with disabilities and protect them from exploitation or abuse – people such as the elderly dementia sufferer who, after trying to kill herself and her husband, was jailed for lack of suitable community accommodation. The story made front-page news in *The Age* and finally the woman was found more appropriate accommodation. Pearce also highlighted the plight of 99 Victorians "stuck" in the mental health system and advocated for the tenancy rights of people in government-regulated accommodation.

the(bisexual)
Bisexual

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