

“I just she was honoured by the award. She said she was honoured by the award. “I just hope people remember me kindly.”

TARRYN BRACKEN

JUST picture how important it is for a child, particularly one with a disability, to be able to communicate their thoughts to the world.

How important it is for them to be able to tell their parents when they're hungry or need to go to the toilet.

Then imagine how patient and understanding the person needs to be, who is teaching the child to communicate.

It is these special qualities, as well as her professional efforts as a speech pathologist, that led to Tarryn Bracken of Berkeley being awarded a Public Service Medal.

She is a senior member of the Illawarra Community Support Team, whose work with Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care clients is described as “inspirational”.

She was a founding member and president of the Illawarra Communication Support Network in 2003. It provides local families with the equipment and resources they need to provide non-verbal communication through methods such as hand signals or voice output devices.

“We don't know of any (similar organisations) in Australia,” Ms Bracken said.

“I think you need patience and a real passion to work in the field.

“Sometimes it can be very hard work, but you need to want to make a difference.”

Ms Bracken studied speech pathology at school, but it was only after visiting a school for children with special needs that she decided she wanted to spend her working life helping them.

Recognition: Fay Campbell was honoured for her union work.
Picture: ROBERT PEET



Inspirational: Tarryn Bracken is devoted to helping children.
Picture: KEN ROBERTSON

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MARY JOHNSTON

MARY JOHNSTON
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