

Young pioneer was always going to help



Face of change: Young Social Pioneer Laura Iles.

By **ELOISE HANDLEY**

SHE is young, chatty and personable and this winning combination has propelled Laura Iles as one of Australia's official Young Social Pioneers.

"I've always wanted to help people, especially young people," Ms Iles said.

This kind nature meant she was one of a mere 14 other young Australians, who were recognised in the Foundation for Young Australians' 2009 Young Social Pioneers program in Melbourne earlier this month.

Although she admitted the trip left her a little frazzled.

"I got lost in Melbourne, at the airport the man driving the bus forgot to close the (luggage compartment) door and as we went forwards our bags got flung out and I got a cold," she sighed.

The forum enabled the social pioneers to gather information regarding spheres of interest the candidates had chosen such as the tools and rules of

public speaking.

The 25-year-old is the founder of Choose your Path (Save a Life), a program designed to educate the Warwick community about the dangers and consequences of drink driving.

Due to one of Ms Iles' many involvements, she is exposed to the high foot traffic or "wildebeests" meandering from one establishment to another.

"With my work with Rosies, I get to see a lot of youth in need," Ms Iles said.

She said many young people relied too heavily on the need for alcohol as a social lubrication, a stigma the pro-active Warwickite wants to change.

"Some people just need to know there's someone out there who cares," she said.

"A lot of young people don't have positive role-models.

"We are hoping our work will mean this cycle is stopped and won't happen in Warwick anymore."