

Brave, bold and brilliant winners are announced as winners of the 2018 St David Awards

Bravery (Announced by Richard Parks) – Laura Matthews (South West Wales)

Laura was driving through South West Wales when she saw an extremely violent confrontation between two men. She took it upon herself to break up the potentially fatal conflict, in which a weapon was being used. Calling upon her skills as a South Wales Police call handler, Laura remained calm and managed to diffuse a very dangerous situation.

Citizenship (Announced by Cairn Newton-Evans) – Mair Elliott (Pembrokeshire)

Mair Elliott is 20 years old and is a mental health and autism campaigner in Wales. Mair has Autism spectrum disorder and has been battling serious mental illness since she was 14. Despite her personal struggles, Mair spends her time campaigning for improved services and increased awareness of both mental health and autism.

Culture (Announced by Dr Phil George) – David Pountney CBE (Cardiff)

David is Artistic Director of the Welsh National Opera (WNO) and is an internationally-renowned director and librettist. As both an artist and a cultural leader, David has made a unique and significant contribution to the artistic life of Wales.

Enterprise (Announced by Sion Barry) – William Watkins – Radnor Hills (Knighton, Mid Wales)

The Radnor Hills Water Company was founded by William Watkins in 1990 when he began bottling water from a spring on his family farm for airlines. Since then, the company has developed into a leading soft drinks company, producing around 250 million bottles a year.

Innovation, Science & Technology (Announced by Alwen Williams) – IQE (Cardiff)

Dr Drew Nelson co-founded IQE in 1988 and has led the Welsh semiconductor company to become an international world leader in the supply of epitaxial wafers for a wide range of products that enable technologies as diverse as mobile phones, high speed optical communications, ultra-efficient solar cells and low energy lighting.

International (Announced by Prof. Meena Upadhyaya OBE) – Phoenix Project (Cardiff)

The Phoenix Project is part of Cardiff University's Transforming Communities programme, launched in the Senedd by First Minister Carwyn Jones four years

ago to improve health and reduce poverty in Namibia. They have worked across international boundaries to achieve outcomes that are having a substantial impact on Namibia.

Sport (Announced by Jonathan Hill) – Aled Siôn Davies MBE

Aled Sion is the triple world champion and double Paralympic Gold Medal winner for Discus and Shot put from Bridgend who has proved to be an inspirational role model for young people from Wales and the world – both as world champion athlete and as a young man who has dealt positively with disability.

Young Person (Announced by Eleri Siôn) – Jasmine Williams (Llantwit Fadre, Pontypridd)

Jasmine is 11 years old and dedicates her spare time to raising money for homeless people in her home county of Rhondda Cynon Taf. Last year, she raised over £2000 organising fundraising events in her local community. Jasmine has shown compassion and a maturity beyond her years to help those less fortunate than herself.

First Minister's Special Award – Gerald Williams MBE (Yr Ysgwrn, Trawsfynydd)

Over the last four years events have taken place all over the world commemorating the centenary of the First World War.

2017 was a particularly significant year for Wales as we remembered the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele) which saw the loss of so many Welshmen, including Private Ellis Humphrey-Evans who is better known as the poet Hedd Wyn.

Gerald Williams MBE, of Trawsfynydd, Gwynedd has dedicated his life to preserving the memory of his uncle Ellis Humphrey Evans, or as he is better known as Hedd Wyn. Hedd Wyn died at the Battle of Passchendaele six weeks before the National Eisteddfod in 1917, at which he was awarded the Black Chair for his poem Yr Arwr (The Hero). That chair, as so much about Hedd Wyn's legacy, is kept at the family farmhouse, Yr Ysgwrn in Trawsfynydd which has been lovingly preserved as it was 100 years ago by the poet's family.

Gerald, as custodian to Yr Ysgwrn, has maintained his promise to 'always keep the door open' since 1954, welcoming visitors from all over the world to Yr Ysgwrn, and doing so free of charge. Gerald's tireless work has helped to keep the memory of Hedd Wyn alive and preserve the First World War poet's legacy for future generations.

Yr Ysgwrn houses exhibitions about the life and poetic legacy of Hedd Wyn, together with themes of Welsh language and culture, the bardic tradition, social and rural history, and the First World War.

Presenting the award, the First Minister said:

"The 31st July 1917, during the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele), saw

the loss of so many Welshmen, including Private Ellis Humphrey-Evans who is better known as the poet Hedd Wyn.

“For over 60 years, Hedd Wyn’s nephew Gerald who still lives in the family’s old farmhouse, has worked tirelessly, on a voluntary basis, to preserve the history of his uncle’s life and legacy for future generations. Gerald has welcomed thousands of people to the family home to share his experience with visitors from the local, national and international community.

“Make no mistake, without Gerald’s commitment and dedication this incredible part of our history, culture and language would be lost. So my special award this year is to Gerald Williams.”

The ceremony was hosted by Geraint Hardy, TV and Radio Presenter (BBC Friday Night Social / Codi Pac- S4C) and Catrin Haf Jones, ITV Cymru Wales Journalist and guests were entertained with music from Ify Iwobi & Co Band.