



Campaigns

Nearly £0.5m
the amount spent on
Isolagen cosmetic treatments by the
120 patients who contacted us
WHICH? RESEARCH

News of special bursaries to help campaigners make an impact

Get the support you need

CAMPAIGN AWARDS

There's important news for budding campaigners this month, as the Sheila McKechnie Foundation invites applications for the Sheila McKechnie Awards for 2008. The awards, named after influential campaigner Dame Sheila McKechnie, offer a unique package of support designed to give new and grassroots campaigners the skills they need to make an impact.

To mark the occasion, we've asked two past winners of the Consumer Action award, which is sponsored by Which?, to tell us what winning has meant for them.

Applications close in February 2008. Go to www.sheilamckechnie.org.uk for more information on how to apply or to find out more about the work of the foundation.

Dame Sheila was Director of Which? from 1995 until her death in 2004. The foundation established in her name was set up in 2005 to continue her legacy.

BETTER MEALS: 2006 WINNER JACKIE SCHNEIDER



Jackie Schneider

Primary school teacher

Jackie won the foundation's first Consumer Action award in 2006 for her work on raising the awareness of the low standards of school meals. As a mum as well as a teacher, Jackie appreciates the need for nutritionally balanced meals, so she set up the Merton Parents for Better Food in School Action Group in southwest London. Her campaign led to Merton council agreeing to set up a new policy and to involve

parents in its implementation.

Jackie, who has always seen herself not as a campaigner but as a 'doer rather than a moaner', says: 'The award's programme of support was incredibly energising and motivating. I've had the chance to meet and talk to people like the Children's Commissioner, whom I would never have met otherwise. It's also meant that our campaign has moved from being one with short-term goals to one capable of working in partnership with the local authority.'

CAMPAIGN NEWS

Isolagen patients helped

Which? has helped to set up the Isolagen Action Group, after 120 people contacted www.which.co.uk/cosmetic following our public criticism of the US-pioneered cosmetic treatment. The former patients lost around £3,500 each on treatment they believe didn't work and are now considering taking legal action. (More on cosmetic treatments on p7.)

Shoppers' rights online

Our staff unveiled a statue of 'The frustrated shopper' in London's Carnaby Street to mark the launch of our campaign on shoppers' rights. They also handed out advice on returning



goods and copies of our guide to shoppers' rights. Go to www.which.co.uk/shoppersrights for information on all your consumer rights.

Scots claims limit raised

The maximum that Scottish consumers can claim in small claims cases has been raised to £3,000 from £750. The increase is a victory in our long battle for the limit to be raised to £5,000, in line with England and Wales. We'll continue to fight for the extra £2,000.

Nanotechnologies

We've published a briefing on nanotechnologies, which use materials on an incredibly small scale. We look at their possible implications for a range of consumer products and the need to use them responsibly. More on this issue next year.

LEGAL PROTECTION FOR TENANTS: 2007 WINNER DEBBIE CREW



Debbie with Prime Minister Gordon Brown, one of the foundation's patrons

Debbie Crew

Campaigns & Development Officer, Citizens Advice

Debbie's campaign was kick-started when some tenants in Merseyside were evicted for asking their landlords to improve their accommodation. Appalled that they had no legal protection, Debbie launched a nationwide campaign for a change in the law. She surveyed the local authority's environmental health officers, showing that the problem was widespread

and had not been tackled.

This successful start to her campaign led to Debbie winning the Consumer Action award in 2007. Debbie tells us: 'As a result of the foundation's backing, I was assigned a mentor who is helping me to develop new initiatives to build on the media impact generated by my report, *The Tenants' Dilemma*. I'm now looking forward to shadowing housing minister Yvette Cooper and to getting a glimpse into the working life of a minister.'