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Hotels give community group a boost

ARMIDALE non-profit community arts group Beyond Empathy has recieved a major boost from the Australian Hotels Association (AHA) to continue work facilitating a robust conversation about alcohol and the role it plays in families and the community.

Educating the community about the dangers of alcohol, AHA NSW CEO Sally Fielke was in Armidale on Tuesday to present Beyond Empathy Armidale's executive director Kim McConville

with a cheque for \$5000.

The money will help the organisation in maintaining its current 'just one less' strategy which centres on instigating a cultural shift in the way the community deals with and views alcohol.

The donation was made possible through the charitable efforts of the local sub-branch of the AHA.

Mrs Fielke said the association was proud to support such a worthy cause.

"AHA NSW is pleased to support a worthwhile

program that engages people who feel marginalised and helps build support networks through a creative process," she said.

"It's a courageous undertaking and when instigated in partnership with licensed premises and other community groups it has the potential to make long term change."

Kim McConville told *The Express* the organisation would continue to work with local hotels and the AHA in the future.

"The local hotels have been long term supporters of our work here in Armidale – like many of us, they are just as concerned about the serious misuse of alcohol and the harm it causes to individuals and families," she said.

"They have remained open to our innovative ideas for influencing change and we are delighted to continue working with them over the long term."



AHA vice president Patrick Gurr, Grand Hotel's Todd Kellsall, Beyond Empathy executive director Kim McConville, AHA NSW CEO Sally Fielke, Ashleigh Constance, Royal Hotel and Darren Thomas, Wicklow Hotel