STEREO 974 general manager Rod Boyd has been rewarded for “doin’ time” with young prisoners to help them reintegrate with society.

The Deer Park resident co-founded the small business program called Serving Time at Port Phillip Prison’s Penhyn Youth Unit, which screenprints T-shirts under the Doin’ Time brand. All profits made from the T-shirts go to the charities Kids Under Cover, Whitelion and the Good Friday Appeal.

Corrections Victoria awarded Mr Boyd a Community Work Partnership Supervisor Award on November 7 for his work with the program, which was given the Most Outstanding Location-based Project award.

The 57-year-old former policeman said the program started in 2006 after he and the Truganina prison’s youth officer, Annie Hooker, thought of the idea.

“My idea is that the hope lies with the youth,” Mr Boyd said.

“Although they’ve hit a hurdle, one day they’re going through the front door of that prison and hopefully it’s not a revolving door.”

Mr Boyd said all of the 35 youths are assigned duties, which gave them life skills.

“The beautiful part about it is they support one another and we create that environment where everybody is putting in and helping everybody out,” he said.

“The place is abuzz when we are printing the T-shirts.”

“That’s what makes it a pleasure to walk in there.”

Mr Boyd said the program had sold “a good couple of thousand” of the T-shirts and raised $36,000 for charity.

He said that listeners of the western suburbs community radio station he ran had supported the program.

“We run a community announcement on air and one of our listeners heard about it and went out and sold $1300 worth of T-shirts,” he said.

“It blew me away, it really did.”

Mr Boyd said this year a $13,000 step-down monitor was bought for the Royal Children’s Hospital from money raised from the program.

“They couldn’t bring it in, but God did they bring in some magic photos of it monitoring a prem baby,” he said.

“That brought a tear to my eye because it was actually being utilised and it was helping that prem baby, so we are making a difference.”

Corrections Commissioner Kelvin Anderson said Mr Boyd had been a terrific mentor to the young prisoners and helped them develop the skills they needed to embark on a crime-free life at the end of their sentences.

“Rod’s achievements in working with young prisoners have been outstanding,” he said.

“He has broken down barriers and stereotypes often held by young prisoners about police officers and authority figures.”

For more information visit the website www.servingtime.org