

South Australia

ADELAIDE CONVENTION CENTRE

10 November 2022

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MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

At the heart of our community are those who recognise a need and are willing to make a difference.

They are our inspiration and form the essence of who we are as a State and nation – everyday people doing remarkable things.

Their stories not only inspire us but also engender respect, understanding and pride.

Each contribution, while unique, shares a commitment and compassion for others.

For many it is about using their expertise generously, beyond the boundaries of their roles.

Some have overcome challenges and assisted fellow South Australians to become the best they can be. Others are tireless in their resolve to promote inclusion and opportunity.

They are our heartbeat.

These awards enable us to thank them for their dedication, excellence and resilience, especially during this global pandemic.

Our nominees would not seek recognition for themselves, and so I thank those who took the trouble to nominate someone whose dedication deserves our acknowledgement.

I congratulate all nominees. You are role models enabling all South Australians to stand tall.



**Her Excellency the
Honourable Frances Adamson AC
Governor of South Australia**



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MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

Every day our lives are shaped by individuals doing great things, often behind the scenes, or away from the public eye. These people are the key to making our society and communities such special places to live.

That's why the Australian of the Year Awards are so important. They allow us to recognise and honour our most remarkable South Australians – our unsung heroes, leaders, innovators and advocates – who go above and beyond for their family, teammates, colleagues and community.

I offer my sincere congratulations to our South Australian award nominees for your well-deserved recognition. Your outstanding service and contributions show that you are productive and caring members of our community and every day, you make our state a better place to live, work and thrive.

As inspirational role models, you play an integral role in society by encouraging your fellow South Australians to strive for bigger and better goals and to uncover their true potential.

I wish you the very best of luck in these prestigious awards and thank you for your enduring contribution to our great state.



The Hon Peter Malinauskas MP
Premier of South Australia



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I am delighted to welcome you to the presentation of the 2023 Australian of the Year Awards for South Australia.

The Australian of the Year Awards celebrates the achievements and contributions of Australia's best – people who inspire us and who make a positive difference to the lives of others.

Every year, the South Australian community join the search for the next Australian of the Year, nominating people from all walks of life who inspire them. By putting someone forward, their nomination shows that the efforts of an everyday Australian has not gone unnoticed. I would like to extend my thanks to all those who nominated, without their help, we would not be here tonight.

From the thousands of people nominated across the country, 128 Australians have progressed to this next phase, recognised by their state or territory for their outstanding achievements. This is no small feat. Tonight, we celebrate 16 of these outstanding people, who represent the very best of South Australia.

I would like to congratulate all the nominees for their dedication, passion and their contributions to our country. It is a pleasure and an honour to celebrate you here tonight, and I wish you all the very best.



Mr Peter Tsokas
Chairperson
Australia Day Council of South Australia



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TARYN BRUMFITT

Body image activist, director, writer and speaker

Documentary director Taryn Brumfitt leads the Body Image Movement, an Adelaide-based organisation that teaches people to love and appreciate their bodies. Her 2016 documentary *Embrace* tackled the serious issue of women's body loathing and Taryn's path to body acceptance. It was seen by millions of people in 190 countries and is available on Netflix.

Taryn has written four best-selling books. She released a documentary, *Embrace Kids*, in September 2022 that aims to teach nine- to 14-year-olds to move, nourish, respect and appreciate what their bodies can do.

She has collaborated with body image expert Dr Zali Yager to create an *Embrace Kids* companion parenting book. They have also created the Embrace Hub – a free, research-based resource for teachers, parents, children, and communities on fostering body positivity.

Taryn's work has reached more than 200 million people. She is an internationally recognised keynote speaker whose work is recognised by UN Women.



PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER DANIELS

Environmentalist, zoologist and science communicator

Professor Christopher Daniels has been an incredible force in popularising citizen science in Australia. The former university academic and now government scientist has presented on ABC Radio for two decades.

He started with fortnightly backyard wildlife segments in 2003 and, since 2007, has presented community programs on urban environmental science.

Christopher was a driving force in Adelaide becoming a National Park City and spearheads efforts to connect South Australians with nature.

He also uses the arts to promote conservation. Christopher has written 11 books including a children's book, *Koala*, produced a musical theatre show on koalas, delivered comedy for the Adelaide Fringe with South Australia's Science Media Centre, and advocates for numerous South Australian nature authors.

Now chair of the foundation 'Koala Life' and the Green Adelaide Landscape Board, Christopher received a Doctor of Sciences from Adelaide University in 2019. He holds adjunct professorships at the University of South Australia and University of Adelaide.



ANDREA MADELEY

Lawyer and workplace safety advocate

Andrea Madeley's 18-year-old son Daniel died in a preventable workplace accident in 2004. Since then, Andrea has become a tenacious advocate for others affected by workplace death and injury, and a powerful voice against unsafe work practices.

Andrea has lobbied members of parliament to protect entitlements under South Australia's workers compensation scheme. She has also submitted numerous proposals under Australia's model work, health and safety legislation. The South Australian Government nominated Andrea for the prestigious South Australian Women's Honour Roll in 2011.

Andrea completed a Bachelor of Laws degree with honours at Deakin University and was admitted to practise law in the Supreme Court of South Australia in 2019. Her focus is on personal injury law.

She helped develop South Australia's International Workers' Memorial Day Service, bringing together bereaved families and members of the public each year to remember those who lost their lives because of their work.



MARIE SHAW KC

Philanthropist and co-founder, Ice Factor program

Law trailblazer Marie Shaw KC has seen countless children in court following a trail of neglect and dysfunction.

She realised she could help these disadvantaged young people after witnessing the positive impact sport had on her dyslexic daughter.

Marie helped set up the Ice Factor program at Thebarton Ice Arena in 2005. Thousands of at-risk high school students have taken part in the ice hockey program, learning team values and building their self-esteem. The program has helped many avoid homelessness, drug addiction and crime.

Marie supported two ex-students in 2017 to set up the first Indigenous ice hockey team – the Kurna Boomerangs. The team has since travelled across Australia and internationally.

From a remote country town, Marie has fought her way to the top of her field. In her professional work as a senior criminal barrister, Marie also works pro bono and provides work experience opportunities for legal students.



MARGARET FISCHER AM

Co-founder, Feast Adelaide Queer Arts & Cultural Festival

Writing and acting in plays was always a regular pastime from a young age for Margaret Fischer AM, who went on to devote her life to South Australia's LGBTQ+ communities and the arts.

In 1997, she co-founded the Feast Adelaide Queer Arts & Cultural Festival, the state's major not-for-profit queer celebration of pride and diversity.

The festival has been a constant on Adelaide's arts calendar in the 25 years since, with Margaret holding a range of positions including board chair for 11 years.

She's currently Director of Feast Queer Youth Drop In, a bi-monthly safe social space for LGBTQ+ young people, and organises Queer Bingo which raises money for the service.

Youth Drop In has had a significant, positive impact on attendees, some of whom live in awful conditions, are in unsafe relationships and feel unable to be themselves anywhere else.

Margaret also helps deliver mental health workshops for the queer community.



SANDRA MILLER

Aboriginal rights activist, advocate for Indigenous health and welfare

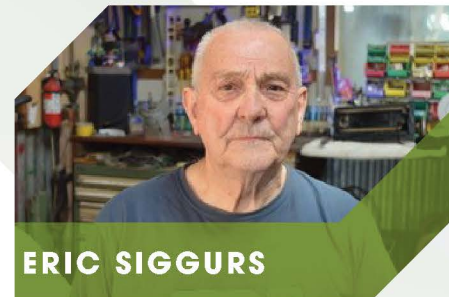
Sandy Miller, a proud Wirangu woman from the Ceduna area, has been a trailblazer, breaking down barriers for Aboriginal women aspiring to leadership roles at a time when they were under-represented.

Sandy trained as a social worker and in the early 1980s worked for the Department of Community Welfare in Adelaide. She pushed to change government policies that were detrimental to Aboriginal children and encouraged Aboriginal people to become foster parents.

She went on to play an important part in policy development and service design across key state government portfolios, including Aboriginal health, ageing and welfare.

Sandy continues to be a strong voice for her community since leaving the public service. She's had leadership roles in Aboriginal health and legal rights groups, and holds multiple board and executive appointments.

She has represented her community in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance and at the United Nations.



ERIC SIGGURS

Volunteer, Technology for Ageing and Disability SA

When Eric Siggurs retired in 2005, he did what most other retirees do – travelled and did jobs around the house. But after 47 years with an engineering company, he eventually grew tired of not contributing to society.

At age 70, he started volunteering for Technology for Ageing and Disability SA and has since spent more than 12 years in his shed inventing and making equipment to help people with disabilities be independent, rather than relying on services.

Eric's contributed to more than 60 community projects that have improved the lives of others.

Among the equipment he's designed and built are parallel bars that can be attached to treadmills, allowing children with disabilities to exercise at home, and rotatable frames so that people can produce art.

He's also designed and made equipment that has enabled children to go to the toilet without assistance and a ceiling-mounted pulley swing to support leg mobility.



EUGENIA TSOULIS OAM

CEO, Australian Migrant Resource Centre and founding member, Settlement Council of Australia

Eugenia Tsoulis OAM was helping her fellow Greek migrants settle into life in Australia back when she was in primary school.

Once a week before school, she'd act as a translator to help bus conductors deliver Greek men to potential employers around Adelaide.

Her passion and life's work ever since has been assisting new migrants and refugees.

Eugenia has helped thousands adjust to life in their adopted land. She has led the Australian Migrant Resource Centre as Chief Executive Officer for 25 years. The organisation supported 4,200 new arrivals in 2020 alone.

She's been involved with the Settlement Council of Australia for 20 years, a peak body that links community workers in migrant services at the grassroots level with national policy makers.

Eugenia's colleagues call her the 'fairly godmother' of settlement services – someone you can always call on for advice and support, and who has touched thousands of lives.



JOSH CAVALLO

Professional soccer player and equality champion

Josh Cavallo plays professional A-League soccer for Adelaide United FC and has represented the Australian under-20 national team.

He made sports history in 2021 by coming out as gay – making him the first in the Australian A-League and the only openly gay male professional footballer currently playing top-flight football in the world.

Josh's announcement inspired an outpouring of support from the world's top players, clubs and leading sports organisations – and encouraged other top league footballers to come out. But in a world in which homophobic bullying is still rife, he has also endured abuse during games and on social media.

Josh's actions influenced Adelaide United to host the first A-League Pride Games, staging men's and women's fixtures to promote inclusivity.

Flinders University presented Josh with an honorary doctorate in 2022 to recognise his exceptional contributions as a role model in elite men's sport and as a champion for equality.



FELICITY GRAHAM

Author, advocate and CEO, Fostering Change Australia

Felicity Graham spent nine years of her childhood in the foster care system, being moved from place to place, including a youth homeless centre.

After a year in what she thought was her forever home where she felt loved and cared for, her mental health deteriorated. With her carers unable to provide the support she needed, Felicity's placement ended.

At 17, Felicity Graham published an autobiography, *Not Held Down*. Through the book she hopes to raise awareness about the challenges in the child protection system and to give a voice to children in care who feel forgotten.

Felicity advocates for better support for children, plus more training and support for foster carers, through her organisation Fostering Change Australia, which she launched at the age of 19.

Currently studying youth work, she shares her lived experience with foster care agencies and other relevant organisations and hopes to extend her advocacy.



ZAINAB KAZEMI

Multicultural advocate and volunteer

Zainab Kazemi was 13 when she arrived in Australia with her family after fleeing Afghanistan. Now Zainab is helping other new arrivals, particularly Afghan women, to feel a sense of comfort and belonging in their new country.

Zainab remembers having her head shaved as a child so she could be disguised as a boy, just to be able to go to the shops. When she came to Australia, she found the cultural and linguistic diversity at her school so liberating that she was inspired to share her own culture with others.

She is now studying teaching at the University of South Australia and has participated in two Youth Parliaments.

Despite studying and working two jobs, Zainab volunteers her free time to assist recently arrived Afghan refugees in Adelaide. She speaks with politicians, the media and at community events, also participating in fundraisers to help those still in danger in Afghanistan.



AWER MABIL

Professional soccer player and co-founder, Barefoot to Boots

Socceroo Awer Mabil is co-founder of the not-for-profit organisation Barefoot to Boots, which aims for better health, education, policies and gender equality for refugees.

His own unique way of celebrating a goal is a message to those struggling with their mental health: you are not alone and you can speak up.

The winger knows something about trying times. Awer grew up in a Kenyan refugee camp after his family fled civil war in Sudan, before coming to Australia at 10. Only a year after reaching his dream to play for the Socceroos, his sister died in a car accident in 2019.

Awer says that he now feels 'unbreakable'. It is his experience of hard times, the memory of his sister and the knowledge that young people see him as a role model that drives him to perform. It's what he does that Awer wants to be known for – not his background.



NEIL DAVIS

Keynote speaker and co-founder, Sammy D Foundation

Sam Davis was 17 when he said goodbye to his mum and dad and went out to a party on 3 May 2008. The next day he was gone, killed in a one-punch attack.

Sam's father, Neil Davis, co-founded the Sammy D Foundation with the aim of trying to ensure no more innocent lives are lost to violence.

The Sammy D Foundation provides one-on-one mentoring for young people at risk of offending and anti-violence education programs. One school more than halved violent incidents after it started working with the organisation.

Responding to an increase in violence at junior sporting events, Neil and the Foundation developed a violence prevention program that's being delivered in clubs across South Australia.

Neil tells his story about four times a week and has reached more than 180,000 people in schools, sporting clubs and the juvenile justice system.

Neil's message is simple: violence is never the answer.



ELIZABETH HABERMANN

Voluntary assisted dying advocate

Elizabeth Habermann's 19-year-old son Rhys took medication to end his own life in January 2017. Rhys died at home peacefully with members of his family after eighteen months of agonising bone cancer that had spread and was terminal. At the time, what he did was illegal.

Rhys recorded a video to protect his family from prosecution, but the Habermanns were investigated by police for 18 months. Rhys's room was even called a crime scene.

Despite one trauma after another, Elizabeth has continued her son's advocacy for voluntary assisted dying. She has spoken to politicians and the media, sharing her family's experience and grief to raise awareness of the need for voluntary assisted dying.

Elizabeth was instrumental in the recent change of law that means South Australia will soon allow voluntary assisted dying.

This means terminally ill patients and their families will never again experience the unnecessary hurt her family did.



CHRISTINE ROBERTSON

Co-founder, Lost Pets of South Australia and creator, Chipblitz program

More than 65,000 pets across Australia have received a microchip thanks to Christine Robertson, but that wasn't what she initially set out to achieve.

Christine co-founded the Lost Pets of South Australia charity in 2013 to reunite lost pets with their families. The volunteer organisation uses social media and its connections with the RSPCA and other animal welfare groups to get lost animals back home.

However, it soon became apparent that many pets were being lost because their owners couldn't afford to get them microchipped. Microchip fees generally start at about \$65.

So Christine developed the Chipblitz program in 2015, allowing trained implanters to microchip a pet for just \$10.

Chipblitz is now the biggest pet microchipping program in the Southern Hemisphere. It has a partnership with national pet goods store PETstock and 1,400-plus volunteers. More than 44,000 pets have been chipped in South Australia alone since the program began.



MARIGOLD WHITE

Co-founder, Unifiy

As a migrant, Marigold White understands the emotional and practical difficulties that come with not having family close-by.

When she moved to Australia in the early 1990s, she missed family back in Ireland. By chance, she befriended an older woman. The two enriched each other's lives and became like family, despite being unconnected by blood or marriage.

Now Marigold helps other people form family-style social connection, those that include different generations. The not-for-profit she co-founded, Unifiy, is driven by empathy and the emotional importance – and health benefits – of making people feel valued and needed.

It offers opportunities for people to get to know each other through sharing interests, skills and experiences, regardless of age, personal circumstances or background.

Participants say Unifiy gives them a greater sense of belonging, purpose and positive wellbeing.

Marigold supports community members to connect socially and to lead activities with confidence. She hopes to see Unifiy expand its impact nationwide.

RECOGNISING SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S FINEST

Since 1960, the Australian of the Year Awards have recognised people from all across the country and from all fields of endeavour. This is just a snapshot of the recipients from South Australia for the past five years. The full honour roll can be viewed at australianoftheyear.org.au.

Australian of the Year

- 2022** Professor Helen Marshall AM - Vaccination researcher
- 2021** Tanya Hosch - Leader, changemaker and visionary
- 2020** Dr James Muecke AM - Eye Surgeon and blindness prevention pioneer
- 2019** Dr Richard Harris SC OAM - Specialist anaesthetist and cave diver
- 2018** Professor David David AC - Craniofacial surgeon

Senior Australian of the Year

- 2022** Mark Le Messurier - Educator, counsellor and author
- 2021** Professor Richard Bruggemann - Disability advocate
- 2020** Sylvia McMillan - Volunteer
- 2019** Reginald Dodd - Reconciliation advocate
- 2018** Barbara Spriggs - Campaigner to prevent abuse of aged care patients

Young Australian of the Year

- 2022** Dr Trudy Lin - Special Needs Dentistry
- 2021** Isobel Marshall - Social entrepreneur
- 2020** Zibeeon Fielding - Runner, cyclist and fundraiser
- 2019** Eleni Glouftsis - Australia's first female AFL umpire
- 2018** Kyran Dixon - Role model for Indigenous youth

Australia's Local Hero

- 2022** Monique Bareham - President of Lymphoedema Association SA Inc.
- 2021** Russell Ebert OAM In Memoriam - Respectful relationships advocate
- 2020** Emmah Money - Cystic fibrosis advocate
- 2019** Megan McLoughlin - Advocate for organ donation
- 2018** Andrew Costello - Charity founder and community champion

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



Australian Government
Department of Health
and Aged Care



Australian Government
Department of Education



Australian Government
Department of Home Affairs



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* Names and post nominals of recipients in the Honour Roll are a reflection of the time they received the Award.

THE AWARDS PROCESS



1

It all starts with your nomination



2

An expert panel selects one State and Territory level recipient in each of the four award categories



4

The National Australia Day Council Board selects the national recipients



3

The state and territory recipients are awarded and go through to the national judging process



5

The four national recipients are awarded on Australia Day eve in Canberra

NOMINATE NOW FOR 2024



Want more information?

Visit the Australian of the Year Awards website australianoftheyear.org.au where you'll find latest news and profiles of Australian of the Year Awards nominees, recipients and alumni.

For more information on Australia Day, the Story of Australia campaign and NADC visit australiaday.org.au

Australia's Local Hero Award acknowledges people of any age making a difference in their local community.

In 2023, we'll celebrate 20 years of Australia's Local Hero award and pay special tribute to those humble people who inspire us with their selfless actions.

Thanks to the Department of Home Affairs, official partner of the award since its inception in 2003.



THE AWARDS TROPHIES

The Australian National University (ANU) is committed to better outcomes for our community, the environment, our nation and the world. As the national university, we feel immensely privileged to be the exclusive cultural partner of the 2023 Australian of the Year Awards, recognising the outstanding service to the community that many Australians make.

The trophies for the 2023 Australian of the Year Awards are the stunning result of a collaborative effort by staff and students of the Glass Workshop in the ANU School of Art & Design.

The geometric nature of the design aims to represent the multiple facets that have shaped Australian society, embodying a nation that is confident in its leadership, contemporary in its outlook and distinguished by its diverse community. The facets also capture the points of the Southern Cross, the star of federation, and are rendered in a brilliant blue symbolising the Australian sky.

Each award has been created through a process of cast glass, and meticulously ground and polished by hand. The awards have been a wonderful project for students to apply their creative and technical skills to complete a professional commission.

ANU School of Music students have also contributed theme music for the Australian of the Year Awards, which will be used throughout the state and territory announcements.





2023