



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## **DUKE OF EDINBURGH GOLD AWARDS**

**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

**Your Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex KG GCVO**

**The Honourable Gary Nain AO**, Chairman, Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Australia

**Mr Gary Rowe**, Chair, and Board members of Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Victoria

**Award Ambassadors**

**Award recipients**

**Distinguished guests**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

First, I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their elders past and present and to any elders here with us this morning.

I am delighted to welcome you all to Government House. The pleasure for me today is two-fold.

First, I am delighted to be joined by His Royal Highness the Earl of Wessex and may I offer to you, Sir, a very warm welcome to Victoria.

And secondly, I am delighted for the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the 66 young Victorians who shall receive their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Awards, and the 13 outstanding staff and volunteers who shall receive the Long Service and Distinguished Service Medals today.

I also extend a very warm welcome to each one of you, and to your families and supporters.

What is striking about the Duke of Edinburgh Award is that it so successfully combines a rich history across more than six decades now, with an on-going relevance to today's young people.

The principles of self-discovery on which it is based – empowerment, responsibility, commitment, community contribution and perseverance do not depend on the fashion of the day. They will never be outdated.

And so, it is wonderful to see the work of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh – who is of course one of the founders of these awards, and who has worked tirelessly for them – now continued by His Royal Highness the Earl of Wessex.

A recipient of a Gold Award himself, His Royal Highness is an ardent supporter of and advocate for the program.

I know that one of his great missions has been to broaden the reach of the award, to ensure that the experience is more accessible for those from different walks of life.

We are delighted in Victoria that the Duke of Edinburgh Award has partnered with Yooralla, to expand its reach and enable Victorians of all abilities to benefit from the program.

And what a gratifying thought that these awards now in 140 countries, has reached 8 million young people, almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a million of them, young Australians.

I am proud that 6,000 young Victorians – across 250 different organisations – commence this program each year and that the number is growing.

And so, this morning we recognise you – the young men and women who are to receive your Gold Awards – the highest level award.

You have each designed for yourselves a remarkable set of challenges to test your personal limits and abilities.

You have each succeeded.

And in doing so, you have demonstrated qualities that will hold you in good stead in your careers and your lives, as well as a commitment to serving your community.

Congratulations to each one of you, and thank you to your families who have supported you.

Today, we also celebrate those who have supported you and thousands of others: those who have worked and those who have volunteered their time and skills to the organisation across long years and in particularly distinguished ways.

May I congratulate and thank those who will receive Long Service and Distinguished Service medals.

You not only make things possible for the young people who undertake these awards, but you also model to them the very sense of service that the program seeks to instil in them.

Congratulations again to all the recipients of Awards today. And thank you again, Your Royal Highness, for joining us, and making this Award ceremony such a special occasion.