

Media Release

The Hon Gabrielle Williams MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples



Thursday, 15 June 2023

CELEBRATING INSPIRING YOUNG FIRST NATIONS ACHIEVERS

Five young First Nations people have been recognised at this year's Ricci Marks Awards for their outstanding achievements and contributions to Victoria.

Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams attended the awards ceremony at Melbourne's Cargo Hall to celebrate the achievements and aspirations of young First Nations people in training, education, arts, sport, culture and community leadership.

This year's Ricci Marks Award recipients are Yemurraki Egan and Jayde Couzens, who each received a \$5000 grant to continue their community work.

Yemurraki is a proud Yorta Yorta, Wemba Wemba and Gunditjmara man dedicated to increasing opportunities for First Nations people to enter the building industry. He was awarded the Maurie Pawsey Scholarship for Indigenous Place Making in 2020 and now works for the University of Melbourne's Estate Planning and Development department.

Jayde, a proud Gunditjmara–Noongar woman, is pursuing her dream to study and gain a career in nursing, while caring for her young son. In her work, Jayde uses her cultural background of storytelling to connect with her patients and create a culturally safe space.

Recipients of this year's Ricci Marks Rising Star Award are Isaac Muller, Cobain Tipiloura and Elijah Aaron Brown, who each received a \$1,500 grant.

Isaac Muller is a driven and proud Wiradjuri and Palawa man, who continues his cultural tradition of storytelling through his work with ABC Australia.

Elijah Aaron Brown, a young and proud Wiradjuri man, plays for the Bendigo Pioneers Under 18 football team and aspires to play at the highest level.

Cobain Tipiloura is from the Tiwi Islands and has been recognised for his leadership of young students at St Patrick's College Ballarat.

Formerly named the Aboriginal Young Achiever Award, the awards were renamed in memory of Ricci Marks, a Wotjobaluk man who made an outstanding contribution to the Victorian community in his short life.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Gabrielle Williams

"The Ricci Marks Awards winners and nominees have all made remarkable contributions to their communities and represent the wide-ranging skills and strengths of young First Nations Victorians."

"These awards are an opportunity to celebrate the inspirational stories of young First Nations people and show just how much their hard work and determination contributes to the Victorian community."