



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

ROTARY MELBOURNE YOUNG ACHIEVER AWARDS

Wednesday 23 July 2025

Acknowledgments

The Right Reverend Dr Peter Hollingworth AC OBE, former Governor-General of Australia

Philip Cornish, President and **Members**, Rotary Club of Melbourne

2025 Rotary Club of Melbourne Young Achiever Award recipients

Distinguished guests

I begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the lands on which this building stands – the Wurundjeri people of the Eastern Kulin Nation – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present.

It is a pleasure to join you all here today.

Founded in 1921 as the first Rotary Club in Australia, this organisation has been committed to supporting young Victorians since its earliest days.

Initially, part of Rotary's work involved fundraising for the Scouts movement – providing the resources that enabled young people to travel abroad to further their education.

In 1925, the then Governor of Victoria, the Earl of Stradbroke, attended a Rotary Club luncheon to thank members for this contribution, saying:

"Now, perhaps more than ever, there is a call for leadership... We want to train our young [people] to take high and responsible positions, in both business and public life."

A century later, Rotary Melbourne remains committed to encouraging young Victorians to make a meaningful contribution to their communities.

Although the scope of work has changed, those values to support leadership and instil purpose are still there.

Organisations are fragile things – and there are very few in our State that have been dedicated to a mission for over 100 years.

To stand the test of time requires a strong base of support.

Volunteer spirit is at the heart of so many communities in Victoria, just as it is central to the mission of Rotary Melbourne.

I've seen it firsthand at the Rotary Club barbeques at our annual Open Day at Government House – and I am pleased to support your work as an Honorary Member.

But strong volunteer spirit alone does not provide organisations with the means to sustain themselves into the future.

That relies on being able to invigorate the same spirit within others, communicate the mission and have it resonate within the next generation.

These Young Achiever Awards are testament to Rotary Melbourne's ongoing work to do just that.

As former President of Rotary Melbourne and Rotary International, Sir Angus Mitchell, once said:

"...we cannot have a better world unless the coming generation is made the primary focus of our attention."

For over three decades, these awards have recognised the contributions of young Victorians from all walks of life, who are making a tangible difference.

To be a recipient, one must demonstrate exemplary leadership, perseverance, and service.

No two people who have received this award over the past 30 years have shared the same story.

What they do have in common, however, is that they all uphold the values that Rotary Melbourne has been championing for over a century.

While these awards are a fitting acknowledgement of the efforts of today's recipients, we and they should also be proud of their work to uplift people in their communities.

In fostering that spirit of service and leadership so early in your careers, your contributions have the potential to benefit countless more people in the years to come.

I'd like to thank members of Rotary Melbourne for your dedication to your neighbours and to your community.

Your mission is a vital one, and it is pleasing to see it being carried on by the next generation.

Congratulations to all recipients – I look forward to presenting you with your awards.

Thank you.