

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Jobs and Industry
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Women



Saturday, 21 September 2024

CELEBRATING OUTSTANDING FIRST NATIONS YOUTH

Victorians are encouraged to celebrate inspiring young First Nations leaders by nominating them for a Ricci Marks Award.

Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins this week announced that nominations are open for the Ricci Marks Awards which recognise the outstanding achievements of First Nations youth in areas including training, education, arts, sports, culture and community leadership.

Each year, two young people receive a \$5,000 bursary each, and one young person is awarded a \$1,500 Rising Star Award.

The awards recognise future leaders who will play important roles in their communities as Victoria works to increasingly place the decisions that affect First Nations communities in the hands of First Nations people.

In 2023, Yemurraki Egan and Jayde Couzens each received a Ricci Marks Award in recognition of their work inspiring young people to progress their education and achieve their goals.

Yemurraki is a proud Yorta Yorta, Wemba Wemba and Gunditjmara man dedicated to increasing opportunities for First Nations people to enter the building industry.

Jayde, a proud Gunditjmara–Noongar woman, is pursuing her dream to be a nurse and uses her cultural background of storytelling to connect with her patients and create a culturally safe space.

Three young people received the Rising Star Award in 2023, recognising the abundance of young First Nations leaders across Victoria. Isaac Muller, Cobain Tipiloura and Elijah Aaron Brown each received a \$1,500 grant in recognition of their contributions in the areas of media and storytelling, sports, and education.

Formerly named the Aboriginal Young Achievers Award, the awards were renamed in 2004 in honour of proud Wotjobaluk man and previous award recipient Ricci Marks. Marks made outstanding contributions to his community during his lifetime in the field of sport.

Nominations for this year's awards close on 21 October.

For information on how to nominate someone in your community, visit www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/ricci-marks-award.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Treaty and First Peoples Natalie Hutchins

"I am proud to once again support the Ricci Marks Awards and celebrate the significant achievements and aspirations of young First Nations people across Victoria."

"The Ricci Marks Awards highlight the inspiring work First Nations youth do for their communities and the leadership they provide now and in the future, building stronger, empowered First Nations communities."

Media contact: Michaela Weston 0403 483 023 | michaela.weston@minstaff.vic.gov.au