

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Suleyman MP
Minister for Veterans
Minister for Small Business
Minister for Youth



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ANZAC PRIZE STUDENTS DEPART FOR INTERNATIONAL TOUR

A group of secondary school students from across Victoria have departed for an international study tour in Türkiye with support from the Allan Labor Government as part of the Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize.

Minister for Veterans Natalie Suleyman on Monday farewelled the 2024 prize recipients ahead of their 10-day tour of Türkiye during which they will learn about the courage, service and sacrifice of the Anzacs who fought in the Gallipoli Campaign.

The 12 winning students and three teacher chaperones will explore historically significant sites from the Gallipoli Campaign and participate in an educational program.

Students will learn from historians at sites across the Gallipoli peninsula including Anzac Cove, Lone Pine, the beaches of Cape Helles and a newly discovered Australian trench system at Silt Spur.

The study tour group includes teacher chaperone Stephanie Schwarz who won the Prize herself as a student 10 years ago and travelled to Türkiye as a prize winner in 2014.

The successful students submitted outstanding entries exploring the significance of Victoria's Shrine of Remembrance or a local community war memorial that honours Australians who served in war and peacekeeping missions around the world.

Year 10 Hampton Park Secondary College student Mahdia Qasimi was inspired to submit a project on her own unique personal encounter with war after the Australian Defence Force helped her family leave Afghanistan.

Mahdia submitted a video presentation interviewing her grandmother and created her own war memorial, highlighting the need for memorials and recognition for women experiencing war.

Another successful recipient was Year 11 Nossal High School student Kylinda Zhan who wrote an evocative short story from the perspective of a First Nations veteran working on the Great Ocean Road, demonstrating a deep understanding of Australia's war history.

The group come from across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria, ranging from years 9 to 12 and includes First Nations students and students from diverse multicultural communities and backgrounds.

The Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize is an annual competition open to Victorian school students enrolled in years 9 to 12 with more than 500 students having been awarded the Prize since it began in 2005.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Veterans Natalie Suleyman

"We are so excited to see another study group depart for their adventure for the Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize. This competition gives young Victorians the chance to connect with our nation's history and the Anzac spirit."

"I wish the students and the accompanying teachers an unforgettable journey as they embark on this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to walk in the footsteps of the Anzacs."

"The Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize is one of the ways we are honouring and teaching the next generation of Victorians about the service, sacrifice and courage of our veterans."

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