



**MEDIA RELEASE
8:57PM CANBERRA
MONDAY 25 JANUARY 2016**

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2016 AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS ANNOUNCED

2016 Australian of the Year – David Morrison AO (ACT)

2016 Senior Australian of the Year – Professor Gordian Fulde (NSW)

2016 Young Australian of the Year – Nic Marchesi & Lucas Patchett (QLD)

2016 Australia's Local Hero – Dr Catherine Keenan (NSW)

8:57pm, Canberra: Equality advocate and former Chief of Army, **David Morrison AO**, has been named as the **2016 Australian of the Year** at a ceremony held on the lawns of Parliament House in Canberra this evening.

The announcement was made by the Prime Minister, The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, who presented David Morrison with the Australian of the Year trophy.

The former Lieutenant-General Morrison, now retired from the Army, was awarded the honour for his commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion.

His very public 2013 video message, ordering misbehaving troops to 'get out' if they couldn't accept women as equals, went viral and he started a cultural shift which has changed Australia's armed forces forever.

Since then, the number of women joining the army has grown by two per cent and the culture is more accepting of racial, ethnic and sexual diversity.

In 2014, David was invited to speak at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, sharing the stage with US Secretary of State John Kerry and actor and activist Angelina Jolie, and arguing that militaries that exclude women 'do nothing to distinguish the soldier from the brute'.

David retired in 2015 after 36 years in the Australian Army, and four years as its Chief, but he continues his commitment as a champion of human rights in his new role as the Chair of the Diversity Council Australia and he continues to live in the ACT.

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The 2016 Senior Australian of the Year is Professor Gordian Fulde of NSW.

From midnight to dawn, while most people are in bed, Professor Gordian Fulde is presiding over one of Australia's busiest emergency departments. The Director of Emergency at St Vincent's Hospital and Sydney Hospital for more than three decades, Gordian is the longest serving emergency department director in Australia.

The doctor on call when disaster strikes, 67 year old Gordian has seen it all and is passionately outspoken about the scourge of 'ice' and alcohol-fuelled violence which delivers a flood of people into Australian hospitals each weekend. While you will occasionally see him appear on *Kings Cross ER*, Gordian is also actively involved in teaching and training students and staff in many facets of emergency medicine.

A member of the Board of the Thomas Kelly Youth Foundation, Gordian also supports many schools and community organisations, sharing his stories of working in an urban warzone, and warning of the dangers of a binge drinking culture, which is overwhelmingly the main cause of injury in Australia's emergency departments.

The 2016 Young Australian of the Year Award has been presented to 21 year old social entrepreneurs Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett of Queensland.

Best mates Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett built a free mobile laundry in their old van to help the homeless.

Orange Sky Laundry began in September 2014 and, since then, the world-first idea has rapidly expanded to five vans in Brisbane, Melbourne, South East Victoria, Sydney and the Gold Coast. Run by over 270 volunteers, the custom fitted vans with two commercial washing machines and two dryers, service over 36 locations and wash over 350 loads each week.

A catalyst for bringing people of all walks of life together, Orange Sky facilitates countless hours of conversations each week. In February 2015, they took their mobile laundry to North Queensland to wash clothes in cyclone affected communities.

Nic and Lucas have found a way to treat others the way they want to be treated by restoring respect, raising health standards and reducing the strain on resources. They now plan to expand services Australia-wide with the aim of positively connecting the community and improving the lives of others.

This is the first time the Young Australian of the Year has been jointly awarded to two people.

Youth educator Dr Catherine Keenan from NSW is Australia's Local Hero 2016.

A former journalist, arts writer and literary editor, Catherine Keenan turned her back on her career in 2012 to help nurture the talent and creativity of marginalised young Australians. As the co-founder and executive director of the Sydney Story Factory, Catherine has helped thousands of primary and high school students express themselves through writing and storytelling.

Catherine, who has a doctorate in English literature from Oxford University, is focused on helping people from Indigenous and non-English speaking backgrounds, but everyone is welcome to attend the Sydney Story Factory and all classes are free.

With energy, enthusiasm and sheer hard work, Catherine has raised funds, established partnerships and trained more than 1,200 volunteers who work with students one-on-one or in small groups to teach them writing skills, cultivate their creativity and help them find their own voice.

Catherine's passion for language, literature and creative writing is building self-esteem and academic achievement, opening pathways to higher education and improving the life choices of many young Australians.

The Chairman of the National Australia Day Council, Ben Roberts-Smith VC, MG, congratulated the Award recipients, who were selected from nominations received from the public.

"It's not an easy decision that I and the Board of the National Australia Day Council have to make about who stands here as the 2016 Australians of the Year, as the national finalists are all worthy recipients," said Mr Roberts-Smith.

"David, Gordian, Nic and Luke, and Catherine are Australians who truly inspire us and make us proud - they are people who step up, speak out and take action to make a difference in our nation and to help others."

For more than 36 years, the Commonwealth Bank has been a proud sponsor of the Australian of the Year Awards.

Commonwealth Bank Chief Executive Officer, Ian Narev, congratulated the 2016 Award recipients for the extraordinary contributions they have made to our communities and our nation.

"Congratulations to the 2016 Australian of the Year Award recipients. Your achievements inspire us all to do what we can to make a positive difference to our communities," said Mr Narev.

David Morrison, Professor Gordian Fulde, Nic Marchesi and Lucas Patchett and Dr Catherine Keenan will take part in Australia Day activities by attending the National Flag Raising and Citizenship Ceremony in Canberra tomorrow morning. They will then travel to Adelaide where they will appear at the Australia v India 1st T20 cricket match at Adelaide Oval to take part in a Citizenship Ceremony and the Coin Toss and then will attend Australia Day in the City celebrations and appear on stage in Elder Park in the evening.

If there's someone you think should be considered for the 2017 Australian of the Year Awards, you can nominate them now at australianoftheyear.org.au.

ENDS.

Bio details for recipients attached with this media release

For further media information on the Australian of the Year Awards 2016 please contact:

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Zannie Abbott	0418 274 291	Scott Crebbin	0419 751 805

Follow Award announcements as they happen on Twitter: @ausoftheyear

and on the Australian of the Year Facebook page: [facebook.com/AustralianoftheYear](https://www.facebook.com/AustralianoftheYear)

TV Vision:

ABCTV will provide an ABC bugged digital feed of the Awards event for news reporting purposes - available live from 7.30pm via ABCTV on Monday 25 January 2016 - please contact Master Control at ABCTV Sydney on 02 8333 1620 with any queries.

Photos:

Photos of the 2016 Awards recipients will be available for download after 9:30pm 25 January 2016 at <http://www.australianoftheyear.org.au/news-and-media/>

Note:

The Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year, Young Australian of the Year and Local Hero 2016 will be at the National Flag Raising and Citizenship Ceremony in Canberra 10:00am-11:00am Tuesday 26 January 2016.

Please note interview access during Tuesday 26 January 2016 is limited due to travel and function commitments.

**For more information on the Australian of the Year Awards visit
australianoftheyear.org.au**



2016 AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR

NAME: DAVID MORRISON AO

Date of birth: 24 May, 1956

Lives: Griffith, ACT

Place of birth: Cairns, QLD

Partner: Gayle Morrison

Children: Timothy Morrison (31)
Samuel Morrison (29)
Ben Morrison (26)

Occupation: Self-employed

Education: Secondary – St Edmunds College, Canberra
Bachelor of Art
Master of Art (Strategic Studies)

Interests/Hobbies: Cycling, Golf, Cooking

2016 SENIOR AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR

NAME: PROFESSOR GORDIAN FULDE

Date of birth: 3 October, 1948

Lives: Dover Heights, Sydney

Place of birth: Engen, West Germany

Arrived Australia: 1950 (parents moved to Australia)

Partner: Lesley Fulde

Children: Sascha Fulde (30)
Tiffany Fulde (28)

Occupation: Director of Emergency – St Vincents Hospital, Sydney (for 32 years)

Education: Primary – Bellevue Hill Public School, Sydney
Secondary – Scots College, Sydney
Sydney University

Interests/Hobbies: Surfing, sailing, waterskiing
Walking beaches and bushland
Reading

2016 YOUNG AUSTRALIANS OF THE YEAR

NAME: **Nicholas (Nic) Marchesi**

Date of birth: 20 July 1994

Lives: Newstead, Brisbane

Place of birth: Brisbane, QLD

Occupation: Self-employed (7 years)

Education: Primary – St Ambrose, New Market
Secondary – St Joseph’s College, Gregory Terrace

Interests/Hobbies: Adventure, outdoors, helping others

NAME: **Lucas Patchett**

Date of birth: 10 May, 1994

Lives: Newstead, QLD

Place of birth: Wahroonga, Sydney

Occupation: Student

Education: Primary – Nudgee Junior College
Secondary – St Joseph’s College
University of Queensland

Interests: Sport, travel

Organisation Website: www.orangeskylaundry.com.au

2016 AUSTRALIA'S LOCAL HERO

NAME: DR CATHERINE KEENAN

Date of birth: 9 May, 1970

Lives: Alexandria, Sydney

Place of birth: Perth, WA

Spouse/Partner: Paul Maley

Children: Grace (8)
Sebastian (6)

Occupation: Executive Director and Co-Founder, Sydney Story Factory (4 years)

Education: Primary – St Paul's Primary School, Mt Lawley WA
Secondary – Mercedes College, Perth WA
University of Western Australia (BA Hons)
University of Oxford (MStud, DPhil)

Interests/Hobbies: Reading, writing, playing with my kids

Organisation Website: www.sydneystoryfactory.org.au