



Media Release

Embargoed until Friday May 19 2023

SA educators honoured for excellence in teaching and learning

Nine outstanding South Australian educators, including one with a chicken called 'Hennifer Lopez', will be recognised at the annual Catholic Education Awards ceremony on May 18.

The Awards – which are celebrated as part of Catholic Education Week (May 15 – 21 2023) - recognise outstanding achievements and contributions by staff and volunteers across South Australia's 101 Catholic schools.

Those honoured in these inaugural awards include:

- **An experienced educator with a passion for the environment and a sense of humour** – who has implemented sustainability projects including vegetable and butterfly gardens, a worm farm and chickens named Eggie Betts, Chicky Minaj and Hennifer Lopez
- **An assistant principal** – who is building relationships and changing the lives of disengaged students through a bespoke program
- **A young early career teacher** – who is already making a big difference in Port Augusta in just his fourth year
- **A volunteer parent** – who has dedicated her time weekly for a decade
- **A laboratory manager** – recognised for more than 20 years of work above and beyond his role which includes an Aquaculture program and supporting school partnerships with indigenous communities

A unique school program will also be recognised:

- **The Graduate Program at Kildare College** – an innovative and high-impact approach that supports and empowers early career teachers to become dynamic professionals

The nominees are across seven award categories including:

- Early Career Teacher (< five years)
- Experienced Teacher (> six years)
- Education Support
- Volunteer Supporter
- Innovative Program
- Leadership/Lifelong Contribution
- Laudato Si

The award ceremony will be held at Hilton Adelaide at 8:00pm on May 18 2023 attended by the Honorable Katrine Hilyard MP, Minister for Child Protection following a Mass at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Wakefield Street led by Archbishop Patrick O'Regan.

"These awards shine a light on the incredible passion of our staff and volunteers. The Awardees demonstrate the extraordinary outcomes that can be achieved when people are dedicated and passionate about teaching and learning," says John Foley, Assistant Director, Catholic Education South Australia.

"At Catholic Education South Australia we really care about our students – we're keen to see every young person in our schools thrive. Each of these recipients is a wonderful example of the unwavering commitment to Catholic education shown by staff and volunteers in our 101 school communities across the State."

A full list of Awardees follows – detailed profiles of the awardees, interviews and photographs are available on request.

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9 Award Recipients:

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Early Career Teacher (Primary)	JARED CENTENERA Reception Teacher, Saint Ignatius' College
Early Career Teacher (Secondary)	NATHAN O'BRIEN Secondary Maths and Science Teacher, Caritas College
Experienced Teacher (Primary)	MADELINE COLE Early Primary Coordinator and Reception Teacher, St Michael's College
Experienced Teacher (Secondary)	RUTH TAYLOR APRIM, Thomas More College
Volunteer	LOUISA SCOPACASA Parent Volunteer (P&F Committee member and second-hand uniform shop coordinator), Our Lady Queen of Peace School
Education Support	JAMES LODGE Laboratory Manager, Saint Ignatius' College
Innovative Program	GRADUATE PROGRAM (led by Raymond Kropinski) Kildare College
Laudato Si	NICK MEZZINO Primary Teacher, St Thomas School and Preschool
Leadership / Lifelong Contribution	SUSAN YOUNG Catholic Education South Australia