



MEDIA RELEASE

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Celebrating the City of Melton's Community Achievement award winners

The winners of the prestigious 2024 City of Melton Community Achievement Awards were announced at a special presentation by Melton City Council on Thursday night.

The annual awards recognise the outstanding contribution of community members who dedicate their time to making a positive and lasting impact on individuals, groups and organisations within the city and making life better for others.

The five categories in the awards are:

- **Citizen of the Year** – for recognition of ongoing community leadership and involvement
- **Young Citizen of the Year** – for community leadership by people under 25 years old
- **Intercultural Engagement Leader of the Year** – for leadership that celebrates our diverse community
- **Disability Access and Inclusion Leader of the Year** – for commitment to improving the life of people with a disability
- **Gender Equity Leader of the Year** – for community leadership, promotion of gender equality and commitment to advancing the status of women

Melton City Council congratulates the winners and all those who were nominated.

Citizen of the Year

Claire Mouser - Claire contributes through her work with the 1st Caroline Springs Scout Group and partnerships with multiple local organisations. She has been the Community Development Manager at Woodlea for more than five years and has been responsible for developing effective relationships with community members, agencies, retailers and sporting groups. Claire developed connectedness and improved wellbeing by organising events, fundraisers and art murals for the Walk of Honour.

Young Citizen of the Year

Comfort Kennedy – Comfort is passionate about teaching and empowering all generations and cultures in the community. She is a highly active volunteer community leader with several organisations and an English tutor at the Djerriwarrh Community



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and Education Services. Comfort has had a tremendous impact on the lives of migrants and refugees in Melton through her teaching.

Mollie VanDer Linden - Mollie has been involved with Specialist Hoops Basketball for more than four years. She has an aptitude for helping others, whether coaching, providing support at tournaments or school holiday programs, or as part of the Student Leadership Team at her school. Mollie has shown dedication and compassion in working with people living with disabilities and has encouraged community involvement through her drive to support others.

Disability Access and Inclusion Leader of the Year

Lucas Murana – Lucas is the coach at Westside Strikers. Since starting as coach, Lucas has supported children with neurodiversity, specifically those with Autism, and has made tremendous efforts to ensure they feel included and valued within the Westside Strikers community. His actions have created an environment where children with disabilities feel wanted and accepted.

Gender Equity Leader of the Year

Kirisome Ronick Jnr Lam - Kirisome is an active volunteer through the Melton Secondary College and Melton Warriors Rugby Club. His roles include peer support, community assistance, cultural awareness and language translation. Kirisome is a male champion participant of Girl Force – a program that supports girls and women.

Intercultural Engagement Leader of the Year

Mashair Mohammed Abdalla - Mashair is a community volunteer for the Somali Women Development Association Inc. and an outstanding teacher. For the past five years Mashair has dedicated her time as a volunteer to supporting the Sudanese and South Sudanese communities in Melton, specifically children, youth and families. Mashair has advanced intercultural issues by promoting understanding and inclusivity and fostered dialogue and cooperation between diverse cultural groups in Melton.

Quotes attributable to City of Melton Mayor Cr Kathy Majdlik

"It makes me really proud to see that community spirit is thriving and these awards recognise the special contributions our residents make to our thriving City. Congratulations to all the winners."

"The dedication and commitment shown by everyone who was nominated shows why Australia's fastest growing municipality is so special."

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“All of the winners and nominees are contributing their time on top of their normal daily jobs and family commitments to help make our diverse community stronger and more inclusive for all.”

“This is a truly inspiring group of people, and I’m really pleased that their contributions are celebrated in this way.”

ENDS

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