

10 February 2015

## High achieving South Australian students honoured at SACE Merit Ceremony

Outstanding Year 12 students from across the State gathered at Government House today (Tuesday 10 February) to have their efforts publicly recognised at the SACE Merit Ceremony.

A record 874 students received certificates for a total of 1172 subject merits for outstanding achievement in SACE Stage 2 subjects for 2014. This compares with 828 students and 1117 subject merits for the previous year.

SACE Board Chief Executive, Dr Neil McGoran, said the event was also an opportunity for the “Class of 2014” to celebrate with their family, friends and other students.

“This is a tremendous achievement and one which provides a great sense of pride for families and teachers across South Australia,” Dr McGoran said.

“All students who successfully completed their SACE qualification last year are to be commended for their hard work and dedication. Their teachers and schools also deserve recognition for supporting students to reach their personal goals.

“Importantly, these students can all be confident that they have acquired a rigorous and internationally recognised qualification that has prepared them for life beyond school in the community, the workplace, training or their university studies,” he said.

As part of proceedings, the Governor of South Australia Commendation – Excellence in Modified SACE Award recipient was celebrated at the Merit Ceremony for the first time.

This year’s recipient is Viola Mulodiang. Heralding from Sudan, Viola did not attend school before coming to Australia and spent a lot of her formative years in refugee camps. She was only diagnosed with an intellectual disability once she settled in Adelaide.

The Felixstow student has contributed significantly to her school community. Her SACE pathway focused on developing skills to support her throughout her life, including ‘independent living skills’ programs. Her Research Project focused on her desire to gain employment.

Since 2011, the number of SA students with at least one completed Stage 2 modified subject has increased from 174 to 312 – a 79 per cent rise.

In addition, as part of the Merit Ceremony:

- The Tennyson Medal for the top English Studies student was awarded.
- 26 students with the highest overall SACE achievement were presented with the Governor of South Australia Commendation by His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AO.
- The Governor of South Australia Commendation – Aboriginal Student SACE Award was presented to the highest overall Aboriginal achiever.

The Tennyson medallist this year is Tess Murray. Tess credits her success to the support she has received from teachers throughout her schooling career.

1/2

“I have always thoroughly enjoyed reading and have been lucky enough to have very inspirational teachers in all my years of schooling,” Tess said.

“English enhanced my writing in other subjects, such as Biology and Chemistry, and allowed me to explain myself more coherently,” Tess, who plans to pursue a career in medicine, added.

Merit students were presented with their certificates by leading SA industry and academic identities, including Alan Noble, the Engineering Director for Google Australia and New Zealand, John Coetzee, Nobel Prize winner for Literature and Professor of Literature at the University of Adelaide, and environmental scientist, author and adventurer Tim Jarvis.