

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **SACE students celebrated at Merit Ceremony**

The 34<sup>th</sup> SACE Merit Ceremony will be held on 19 and 20 May to recognise the academic success of 1,016 students who have collectively achieved 1,282 subject merits.

Subject merits are awarded to students who gain an overall subject grade of A+ and demonstrate exceptional achievement in that subject.

SACE Board's Interim Chief Executive Michaela Bensley congratulated the high-achieving students from the Class of 2021.

"We are delighted to be celebrating this special event with SACE merit recipients and their families," Ms Bensley said.

"These students remained dedicated to their studies regardless of the challenges they faced. They remained resilient and flexible and continued their learning. They received guidance from their teachers and were supported by their families, which helped them to reach the pinnacle of academic success. With the completion of their SACE, graduates have a world class qualification that opens up opportunities for future success."

South Australian Premier Peter Malinauskas will present the Tennyson Medal in recognition of the student who received the highest result in English Literary Studies.

The winner of the 2021 Tennyson Medal is 18-year-old Pulteney Grammar School graduate Amber Lennox, who is now studying a double degree in Commerce and Arts at the Australian National University.

Amber's love of literature began with visiting her local libraries as a child.

"I spent lots of time at the Charles Sturt and Hamra libraries over the years. I used to come home with a full bag of Percy Jackson, Hunger Games and Enid Blyton titles, then come back the next week to swap these for whatever I spotted on the shelves. Evening drives home from family dinners would have me straining to read the lines of my book under the flashes from the streetlights," said Ms Lennox.

Amber is now based in Canberra for her university studies, so her parents Peter and Chan Lennox will accept the award on her behalf.

Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson will present the Governor of South Australia Commendation Excellence Awards to 29 recipients.

Salisbury High School graduate Chloe Henderson is the recipient of the 2021 Aboriginal Student SACE Excellence Award. Chloe has won scholarships and awards in both the academic and sports fields and was a peer leader in an elite Aboriginal Netball Academy run by the South Australian Aboriginal Secondary Training Academy (SAASTA). Chloe's significant academic achievements have led her to studies in Criminology, and Law & Society at Adelaide University.

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The 2021 Excellence in Modified SACE Award recipient is Kyle Baker. The Blackfriars Priory School graduate completed his Modified SACE whilst also performing and instructing with the Circobats Community Circus, including at the Adelaide Fringe. Kyle also won an Order of Australia Association Student Citizenship Award.

The Minister for Education, Training and Skills Blair Boyer will officiate over the presentation of awards to students who have achieved 3 and 4 subject merits.

This year Walford Anglican School for Girls graduate Madeline Moss will respond on behalf of the Class of 2021 as the student representative.

"We are lucky enough to have experienced an education within the SACE program where the journey undertaken and the life skills gained are just as important – or arguably more important – than your final ATAR," Ms Moss said.

"I appreciate that the SACE is an academic program that caters for students of all abilities and interests, allowing students to flourish – no matter their circumstances."

For more information about the Merit Ceremony call Victoria Goodyear on 0448 671 050 or email [sace.media@sa.gov.au](mailto:sace.media@sa.gov.au).

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## Background

### Tennyson Medal

The medal is cast in sterling silver and features the portrait of Alfred Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate.

The Tennyson medal was established by the poet's eldest son, Hallam, 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron Tennyson in 1900, as an award for achievements in English Literature at the Public Examinations.

Hallam Tennyson was the Governor of South Australia from 1899 until 1902 and was then appointed Acting Governor-General of Australia in 1902. His appointment was confirmed in January 1903 for one year, at his request.

Hallam Tennyson wrote and published a children's book *Jack and the Beanstalk* and then wrote two memoirs about his father, and edited and published 9 volumes of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poetry.

### Recipient of the 2021 Tennyson Medal

The recipient of the 2021 Tennyson Medal is Pulteney Grammar graduate Amber Lennox. Amber studied English Literary Studies, Nutrition, Mathematical Methods, Biology and two courses offered in the Adelaide University Headstart program (Sociology and Forensic Science).

### Governor of South Australia Commendation Awards

There are three types of awards for the Governor of South Australia Commendation Awards:

#### *Excellence Award (2 categories)*

Category 1 – 90+ SACE credits plus Research Project receives A+ with merit

Category 2 – 70+ SACE credits plus Research Project at A level and nominated by the school, as well as demonstration of the SACE capabilities.

#### *Aboriginal Student SACE Excellence Award*

This award is presented to one Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student nominated by their school who has the best overall performance in the SACE and best demonstration of the SACE capabilities.

#### *Excellence in Modified SACE Award*

This award is presented to one student with identified intellectual disabilities nominated by their school who demonstrates outstanding achievement through the study of modified SACE subjects and demonstration of the SACE capabilities.

### Student responder – Madeline Moss

Madeline Moss is a SACE graduate of Walford Anglican School for Girls and a recipient of a Governor of South Australia Commendation Excellence Award. Madeline was the Debating Team Captain and supported her peers to develop their debating skills. She was actively involved in the Smith Family reading program, where she supported disadvantaged children to develop their literacy skills. While at school, Madeline also took on other leadership roles in music, soccer and water polo. She received a 2021 Duke of Edinburgh award and was also awarded three SACE subject merits in English Literary Studies, Physics and Mathematical Methods.