

20 December 2016

Top SACE achievers recognised with Governor's Commendation

Twenty-seven students have been named today as Governor of South Australia Commendation recipients for their outstanding achievement in this year's South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

Among the Commendation recipients are:

- six country students
- one Aboriginal student
- one student of the Modified SACE.

The Governor of South Australia Commendation recognises excellence in Year 12 SACE subjects, and in the qualities young people need for community life, citizenship, and work.

SACE Board Chief Executive, Dr Neil McGoran, has congratulated the students.

Dr McGoran said the Governor of South Australia Commendation inspires students to do their best both in and outside school.

“Achieving academic success in the SACE alone is an outstanding achievement, but to excel in extracurricular activities as well during a very challenging year is quite remarkable,” he said.

Recipients of the Governor of South Australia Commendation will be invited to the SACE Merit Ceremony on 7 February 2017.

A panel comprising the Governor, His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC, and representatives from the school, vocational education and training, and business sectors determine which students receive the Governor's Commendation.

Students can be eligible to receive a commendation in one of two ways:

- Achieving an A+ with merit in at least five Year 12 subjects, including the Research Project
- Achieving an A in at least four Year 12 subjects, including the Research Project, and demonstrating one or more of the SACE capabilities to an exceptional level.

Governor of South Australia Commendations are also awarded to the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student with the best overall performance in the SACE, as well the student with intellectual disabilities who demonstrated outstanding achievement through SACE modified subjects.

Governor of South Australia Commendation recipients

Abby Duncan – Toorak Gardens

Abby achieved 1 subject Merit in Physics. She also completed one Year 12 subject while in Year 10, and another two while in Year 11. While studying, Abby competed at the national and international levels in swimming, where she took on the role of Master of Ceremonies, and read the Players' Pledge at the opening ceremony for the Pacific School Games Australian team, speaking to 1000 people. Abby placed 4th in the Women's 50m Butterfly and won Bronze in the 4 x 200m freestyle relay at the Australian Open Championships, which doubled as the Australian Olympic trials.

Abhiram Hiwase – Stonyfell

Abhiram achieved 3 subject Merits, in Chemistry, Economics, and Research Project B (in 2016), 1 subject Merit in Biology (in 2015) and 1 subject Merit in Mathematical Studies (in 2014).

Alex De Ionno – North Haven

Alex achieved 1 subject Merit in Research Project B. In 2016, Alex spoke at a rally sponsored by the #LetThemStay movement protesting against the plight of detainees in offshore facilities. Alex is also involved in Surf Life Saving, and teaches lifesaving skills and coaches the Nippers. Alex also fundraises for animal support, and helps to care for his severely disabled sister. Due to his significant contributions to the school and local community, Alex has been nominated for a Student Citizenship Award through the Order of Australia Association.

Annabel Lane – Malvern

Annabel achieved 1 subject Merit in Research Project B. Annabel won the South Australian Young Historian of the Year in 2014, and her research essay on a soldier from Norwood, who fought in World War I, won her the 2015 Premier's Spirit of Anzac Competition, resulting in a trip to Gallipoli. A member of the school debating team and rock band, Annabel also participates in local jazz festivals. She also works part time as a teacher and entertainer for children at a performing arts group in Norwood.

Ashleigh Bradford – Walkerville

Ashleigh received an A+ with Merit for her Research Project and for Philosophy. She studied Year 12 over 2 years due to a health condition, and subsequent rehabilitation. Ashleigh has been involved in debating, concert bands, choir, umpiring, coaching, and playing netball (playing, umpiring and coaching), tennis, soccer; water polo, basketball, and hockey. Ashleigh works at a homewares store on a casual basis, and also babysits for families in the community.

Chelsea Brooks – Beachport

Chelsea is a CFS volunteer and has been involved in rescue and fire situations. She enjoys Highland dancing and Tae Kwon Do, where she has represented Australia in the World Championships in Italy. Apart from her studies and personal interests, Chelsea works part time at a local restaurant.

Cosette Hoe – Seacombe Heights

Cosette achieved 2 subject Merits, in Chemistry and Research Project B. Outside of SACE studies, Cosette, who speaks five languages fluently, also studies Russian to broaden her linguistic abilities. Over the past 6 years, Cosette has also been involved in community services in a number of Asian countries. She was selected to travel to Singapore to attend the CRADLE physics program, where she learnt how to operate high-powered telescopes photographing constellations.

Emily Bennet – Port Noarlunga

Emily has been involved in many activities, leadership initiatives, and clubs while at school. She led a Women's Week initiative at the college to raise attention about the issues that women face, such as the gender wage gap, domestic violence, hunger, and homelessness. She supports students in the flexible learning centre. Emily is also a member of the Torrens Rowing Club, and training begins at 4.15am, 4 days a week, before school. She also attends after-school training sessions and weekend time trials.

Georgina Trotta – Lower Mitcham

Georgina achieved a subject Merit in Health. She has participated in the United Nations speaking competitions, and the school concert band and flute ensemble. She is committed to social justice and the Gay Straight Alliance, and liaised with the school principal to implement policy changes at the school level. Georgina has been a Cancer Council Ambassador, and served on the Multicultural and International Women's Day Assembly committees. She is also a volunteer with St John's Ambulance.

Hannah Bransbury – Royston Park

Hannah achieved 2 subject Merits, in Biology and English Communications (in 2016) and 3 subject Merits, in Information Processing and Publishing, Research Project B, and Workplace Practices (in 2015).

India Shackleford – Warradale

India will be awarded the Governor of South Australia Commendation – Aboriginal Student SACE Award. This commendation is awarded to the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student with the best overall performance in the SACE (and who has undertaken the majority of his or her studies in a South Australian school).

Isobel Abell – Kapunda

Isobel achieved 1 subject Merit in Mathematical Studies. She has completed Ensemble Performance, Mathematical Studies, Solo Performance, Musicianship, Specialist Mathematics, and the Research Project, for which she received an A+. In addition to her SACE studies, Isobel has been awarded the Gold Medal for the Duke of Edinburgh Award and has completed Honours with the Australian Music Examinations Board. Aside from her love of music, Isobel has a passion for mathematics and speaks fluent French. She regularly visits an aged care facility, and is a member of the Adelaide Youth Wind Orchestra and performs at community events.

Jack Armfield – Kingston

Jack achieved 1 subject Merit in Mathematical Applications. He has involved himself in school and community activities during his senior school years, including vice-presidency of the SRC, and leadership in community and school sporting groups. Jack is captain of the Kingston Cricket Club A grade team. Jack has won numerous awards for sport, including the Kowree-Naracoorte Football League Under 17 Best and Fairest and the Scott MacFarlane Memorial Medal for the Glenelg Football Club's SANFL Youth Championship.

Jiayi Litten – Marlestone

Jiayi coordinated a number of fundraisers while studying, including Cancer Council, World Vision, and sponsoring a student who was competing in the Rio 2016 Paralympics. Outside school Jiayi volunteered to take on the role as public relations officer for a Superkart racing team, and has prepared and edited film for the sport on YouTube. She also supported migrant community groups and volunteers for the Overseas Chinese Association, and has applied to work for the Refugee Association to tutor new arrivals and translate for Chinese immigrants.

As a Chinese immigrant who arrived in Australia in 2010 with no background in English, Jiayi has excelled in learning English. Jiayi has started a small business selling stationery online. She hopes this will provide some financial support while she studying computer science.

Joshua Smith – Farrell Flat

Joshua achieved 5 subject Merits, in Mathematical Applications, Research Project B, Mathematical Studies, Accounting, and Chemistry.

Kalyan Rigney – Taperoo

Kalyan achieved 1 subject Merit in Research Project B. She has earned her Bronze Medallion and is a regular volunteer for the Semaphore Surf Life Saving Club. She is also an assistant instructor and mentor for the club's Nipper Program. Kalyan has participated in The Long Walk, twice, to raise awareness and improve support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and life opportunities, and has completed a Certificate III in Business. Kalyan's Year 12 studies included: Society and Culture, Mathematical Applications, Communication Products, and the Research Project.

Kritika Mishra – Rosslyn Park

Kritika achieved 4 subject Merits, in English Studies, Biology, Mathematical Methods, and Modern History (in 2016) and 1 subject Merit in Research Project B (in 2015).

Lilly Deluca – Brompton

Lilly achieved 3 subject Merits, in Research Project B, Biology, and Accounting. She has initiated a number of fundraising activities, and ran a half marathon to raise money for the Live Below the Line campaign. She supports international students to feel comfortable in their new environment. Outside school Lilly is a fully qualified swimming instructor, and works part time in a local café.

Madeline Hegarty – Greenock

Madeline achieved 2 subject Merits, in Research Project and Psychology. She was awarded an Honourable Award for the 2016 Children's Week Minister for Education and Child Development Awards, and the Lions Club of the Barossa Valley Coulthard Prize for all-round academic success. She also won the overall Student Citizenship Award for South Australia, and has participated in many fundraising activities. Madeline is passionate about sustainability and the environment, and was a finalist in the Conservation Council of SA Young Achiever Awards, and the Channel 9 Young Achievers Flinders Ports Environmental Award. In addition to her SACE studies, Madeline works at a local supermarket, and has completed a barista course at TAFE.

Ronald Bromley – Berri

Ronald will be awarded the Governor of South Australia Commendation – Excellence in Modified SACE Award. This commendation is awarded to a student with identified intellectual disabilities, who demonstrates outstanding achievement through SACE modified subjects.

Ryan Wood – Gulfview Heights

Ryan achieved 3 subject Merits, in Physics, Specialist Mathematics, and Chemistry (in 2016) and 2 subject Merits, in German Continuers and Mathematical Studies (in 2015). He was awarded the Goethe Institute Prize as the top German student in the SACE for 2015. He achieved the highest score at the 2016 ICAS Mathematics Competition, and represented the state in the Australian Brain Bee Challenge.

Shanna Lee – Kilburn

Shanna achieved 4 subject Merits, in Religious Studies, Music Individual Study, and English Studies (in 2016) and 1 subject Merit in Research Project B (in 2015).

She also passed her sixth grade piano Australian Music Examinations Board exams. She has composed songs as part of her Music Individual Study subject, and taught them to the entire high school for performance to the parent and student community. Shanna won a position at the National Youth Science Forum, and has organised many fundraising events within the school. Outside school Shanna volunteers at the Helping Hand Centre in North Adelaide.

Shannon McGarry – Aldinga Beach

Shannon is the recipient of a National Scholars Program to the ANU for 2017. She has represented the school in the media, and has been actively involved in raising awareness for various causes through the Social Justice Group. Outside school Shannon has fundraised for the 40 Hour Famine, and undertaken volunteer work at a community centre, where she prepared meals for children, helped with child care and maintenance, and helped teach English to refugees from Afghanistan, Egypt, and Jordan. Shannon also coaches an under-18s girls soccer team, and participated in an 8-month cultural exchange to Germany. She also works as a waiter at an Indian café.

Son Cao (Sonny) Tran – Richmond

Sonny achieved 4 subject Merits, in Research Project B, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology (in 2016) and 1 subject Merit in Mathematical Studies (in 2014).

Teham Ahmad – St Peters

Teham achieved 4 subject Merits, in Physics, Mathematical Methods, English Communications, and Chemistry (in 2016) and 2 subjects Merits, in Research Project B and Biology.

Terence Wee-Xiang Ang – Beaumont

Terence achieved 4 subject Merits, in Accounting, Research Project B, Chemistry, and English Communications (in 2016), 2 subject Merits, in Mathematical Studies and Nutrition (in 2015) and 1 subject Merit in Biology (in 2014).

Victoria Kitschke – Mount Gambier

Victoria has organised to participate in a yLead immersion to Tanzania. Outside school Victoria has completed her AUSTSWIM swimming instructor certificate, and is involved in regular youth masses in the local parish. She is also involved in local sporting clubs – she coaches younger players in netball and organised a fundraising dinner for a local tennis club. Victoria works part time as a swimming instructor and a waiter.