



**3RD INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS
HEALTH AND WELLBEING CONFERENCE**
14-16 JUNE 2023, CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA



MEDIA RELEASE – 16 June 2023

Lowitja Institute honours outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers

Lowitja Institute has honoured outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research achievement at the 3rd Lowitja Institute International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference in Cairns last night, on the lands of the Gimuy Walubarra Yidinji and Yirrganydji peoples.

Lowitja Institute CEO Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed said the national awards celebrated excellence and contribution to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“Our conference showcases transformational community-led research that is grounded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing. Our award winners epitomise that work,” she said.

The winners of the 2023 Lowitja Institute awards are:

Cranlana Awards for Outstanding Research Leadership:

Professor James Ward, a descendent of the Pitjantjatjara and Nurrunga clans of central and southern Australia and Director of the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at the University of Queensland

Professor Jaquelyne Hughes, a Gumugul Woman of Wagadagam tribe, Mabuiag Island in Torres Strait, living on Larrakia country. Professor Hughes is a nephrologist and inaugural Clinical Research Professor in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Advancement at Flinders University.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Award:

Ms Amy McQuire, a Dharumbal and South Sea Islander woman, and award-winning journalist who has recently submitted her PhD thesis titled ‘Speaking to Silences: Media Representations of Violence Against Aboriginal Women’.

Pat Anderson Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researcher Awards, recognising emerging leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing research:

Associate Professor Odette Pearson, a Kuku Yalanji/Torres Strait Islander woman who was awarded her PhD in 2013. She is Co-Theme leader and Population Health Platform lead in the Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity Theme, at SAHMRI and adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Adelaide.

Mrs Betty Sagigi, a Torres Strait Islander Health Worker within the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service. She is the Aged Care Assessment Team Coordinator and Assessor for the Torres Strait, working as part of Thursday Island's Primary Health Post-Acute Rehab and Aged Care Program.

Tarrn-doon-nonin Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research Ethics Award:

Wungenging Aboriginal Corporation: The Birdiya Maya project is a partnership between Wungening Aboriginal Corporation and the National Drug Research Institute to conduct community-led research, focused on elevating the voices of Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness. The project is guided by a Community Ownership Group (COG) of 15 Elders, as co-researchers.

Lowitja Institute Lifetime Achievement Awards:

Professor Lester-Irabinna Rigney, a descendant of the Narungga, Kurna and Ngarrindjeri peoples of South Australia. He is esteemed Professor of Education and Co-Chair of the Pedagogies for Justice Research group in the Centre for Research in Educational and Social Inclusion, based in the Education Futures, Academic Unit at the University of South Australia. He is Distinguished Fellow at Deakin University and previous Distinguished Fellow at Kings College, London.

Pat Anderson AO, an Alyawarre woman known nationally and internationally as a powerful advocate for the health of Australia's First Peoples. She has extensive experience in Aboriginal health, including community development, policy formation and research ethics. Dr Anderson was appointed Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 2014 for distinguished service to the Indigenous community as a social justice advocate, particularly through promoting improved health, and educational and protection outcomes for children.

Adjunct Professor Mohamed thanked the Lowitja Institute's partner sponsors for the awards — the Cranlana Centre for Ethical Leadership, Australasian College for Emergency Medicine Foundation, Indigenous Allied Health Australia and the Walter Eliza Hall Institute.

"We could not provide such prestigious awards without them and thank them for their relationship with the Lowitja Institute and support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health research."

For media queries and/or to arrange an interview with Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed or award winners, please contact Jo Cackett on 0474 727 506 communications@lowitja.org.au or Marie McInerney on 0418 273 698.