

MEDIA RELEASE

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COTA congratulates 2021 Senior Australian of the Year Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann AM

The peak body for older Australians, Council on the Ageing (COTA) Australia, congratulates the 2021 Senior Australian of the Year, Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann AM, who received the honour in recognition of her exceptional work as an Aboriginal activist, educator, and artist.

Ian Yates AM, Chief Executive of COTA Australia, says the impact of Dr Miriam-Rose's work will be felt for many years to come as she has worked tirelessly to empower Indigenous youth through education about their culture.

"Dr Miriam-Rose has worked tirelessly to connect Aboriginal children with the culture and land to which they belong."

"She is also helping to break down the walls between Aboriginal culture and mainstream society. She has taught us about the importance of really listening.

"Dr Miriam-Rose was the Northern Territory's first fully qualified Aboriginal teacher, an art consultant for the Department of Education, a member of the National Indigenous Council, and founder of the Miriam Rose Foundation.

Mr Yates also congratulates all the national finalists who have been recognised for their ground-breaking contributions to equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities, disability advocacy, multiculturalism, and the Australian Scouts.

The 2021 Senior Australian of the Year finalists were Patricia Anderson AO (ACT), Isabel Reid (NSW), Aunty McRose Elu (QLD), Professor Richard Bruggemann (SA), Brian Williams (TAS), Bich Cam Nguyen (VIC) and Dr Richard Walley OAM (WA).

"I congratulate all this year's finalists and thank them for their tireless work in service of all Australians. Everyone recognised in the Senior Australian of the Year category is living proof that older Australians are a powerful force for change in our society," says Mr Yates.

"Our potential does not diminish as we age. The wisdom, experience and resilience of older Australians should be harnessed for the benefit of our nation.

Mr Yates also congratulated the winners of the 2021 Australian of the Year, Grace Tame, 2021 Young Australian of the Year, Isobel Marshall, and Local Hero for 2021, Rosemary Kariuk.

"The culturally diverse all-women winners of the 2021 Australian of the Year Awards send a special message to all Australian daughters and granddaughters – women are leading so much change in communities and the world, and you can too."

"COTA congratulates all winners and finalists and thanks them for their respective contributions to their communities and fields of endeavour."

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