

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2023 NSW Environmental Education Awards: Recognising Exceptional Contributions in Environmental Education

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The 2023 NSW Environmental Education Awards concluded with a resounding celebration of extraordinary initiatives and leaders dedicated to fostering environmental awareness and sustainability practices.

The awards, held to honour outstanding contributions to environmental education, showcased a diverse array of innovators and champions committed to regeneration and creating a sustainable future. Recognising the pivotal role of skilled, collaborative professionals, the event underscored their efforts in driving crucial behavioural changes essential to combat the pressing climate and ecological issues of our time.

Costa Georgiadis, esteemed patron and stalwart advocate for environmental education in NSW, shared reflections on the year's environmental education milestones, setting the tone for an evening celebrating exceptional achievements.

The ceremony recognised exceptional individuals and organisations across various categories. Among the highlights was the Return and Earn Program Leader Award, which honored Christian Maait and Meg Thomas from Marian College Kenthurst for their inspiring efforts in motivating their school community to recycle and raise funds for charity. Scott Thompson a school parent from Nabiatic Public School received a Highly Commended acknowledgment for motivating school and community engagement. Danielle Smalley, CEO of Exchange for Change, was there to present the awards for Return and Earn.

The Sustainable Schools NSW Teacher of the Year Award saw Aaron Parker from Macksville High School recognised for empowering students to become environmental citizens. Daniel Levitt from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Kensington, was lauded as the winner for his innovative pedagogical approaches and collaborative engagements.

Redlands School in Cremorne emerged victorious as the Sustainable School of the Year, celebrated for its comprehensive sustainability framework, rooftop gardens, and commitment to carbon-offset transportation. Quirindi Public School received High Commendation for its remarkable sustainability initiatives, including water conservation and biodiversity management.

Mememe Productions and Kids Connecting Nature were joint winners of the Sustainability Connect NSW Business of the Year Award, lauded for their vast educational platforms, workshops, and sustainable practices that are setting new benchmarks in environmental stewardship.

The NSW Emerging Leader in Environmental Education Award recognised Jess Menendez of Sydney Zoo and Sally Giblin as Highly Commended nominees for their innovative approaches and commitment to environmental education. Sally Eriksen of Ku-ring-gai Council received the NSW Environmental Educator of the Year Award for her exceptional contributions, inspiring leadership, and dedication to creating change with schools, teachers and local community members.

The 2023 NSW Environmental Educator of the Year Award celebrated exceptional individuals who have made significant contributions to environmental education. Graham Valentine from Quirindi Public School received a Highly Commended acknowledgment for his practical and engaging strategies motivating his school community. Peter Rutherford from Kimbriki Eco House & Garden, was recognized for his 25-year commitment to environmental conservation, championing organics, permaculture, and biodynamics and inspiring thousands to take action for the environment. The NSW Environmental Educator of the Year Award went to Julia Barnes, a scientist, teacher and community engagement officer for her remarkable dedication, impactful community work, and community development skills. Julia was lauded for her work with Water NSW, Sustainable Schools NSW, Sustainability Connect, AAEE Biennial Conference, and her participation in many other local initiatives.

The 2023 NSW Environmental Education Awards celebrated exemplary achievements and underscored the significance of environmental education in engaging communities for a more sustainable future.

For further information please contact

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