



2023

Gold Coast
Student Excellence Awards

EXPERIENCE
GOLD COAST.



NOW, LET'S CELEBRATE

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Event Schedule

WELCOME TO COUNTRY - LANN LEVINGE AND
CANDACE KRUGER

OPENING ADDRESS - CR TOM TATE,
MAYOR, CITY OF GOLD COAST

WELCOME ADDRESS - JENNINE TAX, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR - EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE GOLD COAST

MAINS ARE SERVED

AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY COMMENCES

DESSERTS ARE SERVED

AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY CONCLUDES

CLOSING ADDRESS - THE HON. KATE JONES, BOARD
MEMBER - EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE GOLD COAST

LIVE PERFORMANCE - THE HANLON BROTHERS

LUCKY DOOR PRIZES ANNOUNCED

LIVE PERFORMANCE - THE HANLON BROTHERS

OFFICIAL AFTER PARTY AT THE GARDEN KITCHEN & BAR



Congratulations

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US FOR THIS SPECIAL EVENT!



Message from Cr. Tom Tate, Mayor, City of Gold Coast

Jingeri. Welcome to the 2023 Gold Coast Student Excellence Awards!

Tonight we celebrate your many accomplishments throughout 2023. As Mayor of the Gold Coast I'd like to thank you for your outstanding contributions to our wonderful city.

Many of you have travelled great distances to pursue your academic goals here and in doing so you've become part of the fabric of our community by bringing new ideas, cultural influences and a willingness to embrace our lifestyle.

Congratulations to all the finalists and thank you for your outstanding contributions towards Australia's Favourite Classroom.

Message from Jennine Tax, Executive Director, Education, Experience Gold Coast

With the influx of new students arriving on the Gold Coast this year there are many reasons for celebration tonight.

The Gold Coast Student Excellence Awards recognise the achievements of some exceptional candidates this year, acknowledging those students who have taken the initiative to lead and support their peers by actively contributing to the betterment of life in our city.

Enjoy tonight's end of year celebration and on behalf of the Study Gold Coast team I'd like to express our gratitude to all the nominees for their admirable endeavours.



Excellence in Enhancing our Communities

Recognises a current Gold Coast student who has consistently demonstrated excellence through work experience, volunteering, or community engagement to enhance the broader Gold Coast community.



Georgia Frame

ST HILDA'S SCHOOL

Georgia is passionate about making a difference by encouraging young people to create positive change. Her contributions to the community include volunteering for Cherish Women's Cancer Foundation, and the Youth Advisory Council at Headspace Mental Health. Georgia also volunteers with the Literacy and Numeracy Program within St Hilda's Junior School where she helps years 1-3 develop their skills, engaging with them to increase their desire to learn.



Iris Pham

BOND UNIVERSITY

Iris is a firm advocate of community engagement for mental wellbeing. She is the founder of A Waiting Cove, a free weekly women's support group, while also working at the After-Hours Safe Space in Southport. Iris is a member of Global Shapers, a network of young people driving dialogue, action and change. Her volunteering credits include the Youth Advisory Council Committee in Headspace, Drug ARIM, Smart Recovery, Red Cross, and the Wesley Mission.



Jesse Zborovsky

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Jesse's impressive community credentials include being an active member of the SES, teaching sailing to the disabled, as well as hosting fundraisers and volunteer drives for Angels Kitchen in Southport, which provides meals to those in need. Jesse is also the Volunteer Coordinator for Griffith University's ENATCUS, an organisation focused on sustainable entrepreneurship and social enterprises, where he recently served in Cambodia on a mission helping to build homes for impoverished communities.



Excellence in Protecting our Environment

Recognises a current Gold Coast student who has consistently engaged in initiatives or programs that promote sustainable practices or create awareness of the importance of protecting our pristine natural environment.



Mercy Atukunda

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Mercy's distinguished contributions in protecting the environment have been imbued with an enthusiasm for community service that has been a source of inspiration and empowerment for others. She led a group of 40 domestic and international students along the beachfront on Clean Up Australia Day and facilitated the Griffith University contingent at the Friends of Federation Walk's tree planting event, joining the community to plant 900 trees to help restore the 91-hectare coastal reserve.



Bradley Litchfield

ELANORA STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Bradley has consistently demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to raising awareness of sustainable practices and environmental protection. Bradley's dedication to the orange bag drink container recycling program had a positive impact on his school's sustainability journey, subsequently representing Elanora State High School at the 6th International EcoSummit Congress in June. With a deep and unwavering dedication to environmental causes Bradley continues to encourage students and staff to make better choices for a sustainable planet.



Matilda Grant

A.B. PATERSON COLLEGE

Managing her school's Sustainability Club, Matilda inspires students while raising awareness about environmental issues. As an EcoMarine Ambassador, Matilda represented Australia at the Global Link competition where her team spoke about the devastating impact of shark nets on wildlife, taking out first place for their ongoing conservation efforts. Matilda was also recognised at the Asian Pacific Soroptimist Art Competition, and was awarded first place with an animated video dedicated to protecting our oceans.



Excellence in Championing Diversity

Recognises a current Gold Coast student who
has advocated for and championed the values of
embracing diversity in its various forms within
our community.



Rudolf Orbacedo

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

As a Pride in Law Advocacy Officer and LGBTQ+ Ambassador, Rudolf has elevated the academic, professional, and social experiences of law students, while also advocating for LGBTQ+ rights on Radio Metro and podcasting on the student support platform Vygo. Rudolf's achievements reflect a commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion in both academic and community settings, cultivating an environment where everyone feels valued while enriching our community through diversity and inclusion.



Yash Bhardwaj

HELENSVALE STATE HIGH SCHOOL

As an international student Yash initially struggled with the challenges of adapting to a new culture, language, and educational system. Yash has since developed into a confident communicator and leader by sharing his experiences, insights, guidance, and support while contributing to a welcoming environment for all students. Deeply engaged in his community, Yash has worked consistently to help bridge the cultural gaps and promote unity among people from diverse backgrounds.



Tylah-Reine Magele

ORMEAU WOODS STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Tylah-Reine demonstrated exceptional leadership through Fiafia Night, a multicultural extravaganza showcasing six cultures. Her other achievements include a post-event celebration which facilitated community engagement and networking opportunities, as well as creating a breakfast club for collaborative study and social interaction. Tylah-Reine's initiatives have successfully cultivated a nurturing environment that encourages inclusivity, academic support, and cultural exchange, exemplifying her commitment to fostering a cohesive and thriving school community.



Excellence in Peer to Peer Support

Recognises a current Gold Coast student who has consistently given their time to help others in the areas of mental health and wellbeing, academic support or any other initiative that benefits fellow students.



Bradley Cox

EMMANUEL COLLEGE

Bradley is the co-founder of Exam Insights, an educational platform offering an extensive range of resources that has transformed how schools approach QCAA external assessments. The platform has now reached students and educators in nearly every Gold Coast high school, achieving victories in both the QLD and National Divisions of the 2023 Plan Your Own Enterprise Competition. Exam Insights now serves over 2500 users, including 250+ educators in more than 190 schools across QLD.



Mekhala Egodawele

SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

Mekhala has worked with many organisations empowering students in the community through academic support, mental health, publications, and mentorship. As a volunteer for the Transforming Transport Makers project, Mekhala guided high school students with their social enterprise ideas. Mekhala has been a global advocate for international education on the Gold Coast and contributed to Southern Cross University's teaching and curricula development while assisting students across the Gold Coast, Papua New Guinea and China.



Yug Lathiya

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Yug has assisted droves of students in adjusting to university life by generously sharing study tactics, promoting wellness, and building self-confidence. Through one-on-one guidance, he empowers mentees to manage anxieties and unlock their potential. His engaging workshops on time management and exam preparation equip students with valuable skills to succeed. As a crisis support volunteer, Yug applies extraordinary empathy and maturity in aiding student callers overwhelmed by difficulties and trauma.



Excellence in Fostering Creative Arts

Recognises a current Gold Coast student who has mastered a particular art form, instigated an arts-based initiative for community benefit, or made a significant contribution as a champion of our vibrant arts community.



Chaydon Jay

HILLCREST CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Best known for his portrayal of Young Elvis in Baz Luhrmann's acclaimed biopic 'Elvis', Chaydon has been working in the film industry for over 8 years. He is passionate about the craft of acting and is grateful for the opportunity to share what he has learnt and experienced to inspire others. Recently Chaydon collaborated with Bond University students in creating a short film which will promote the Gold Coast at international film festivals.



Barry Chi Chung Lee

TAFE QUEENSLAND

Barry has launched many initiatives to provide opportunities for students to network, collaborate and connect in creative disciplines. He helped launch the Web 3.0 event at TAFE's Coomera Campus where industry guests hosted information sessions relevant to course outcomes while showcasing student skills and connecting them with potential employers or project partners. Barry also instigated a Student Market where students can increase their client base and connect with creatives for collaborative projects.



Sehar Ijaz

NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY AUSTRALIA

In Pakistan, Sehar was elected President of the Kinnaird Literacy Society, where she initiated a campaign addressing educational disparities in Baluchistan by collecting and donating over 7,000 books to girls' schools, colleges, and libraries, advocating for education in a region where access is limited, especially for women. Now studying with the New York Film Academy on the Gold Coast, Sehar is committed to academic excellence while supporting her fellow students in their filmmaking journeys.



Excellence in Promoting Sport and Wellness

Recognises a current Gold Coast student who
has contributed their time, skills, and knowledge
significantly to sport and wellness in the community.



Cecilia Picaut

AUSTRALIAN PACIFIC COLLEGE

Cecilia's Community Wellness Program united local residents through group exercise, nutrition workshops, and mental health awareness seminars with participants reporting notable weight loss, increased vitality, and a heightened sense of belonging. Cecilia also instigated a successful online sports education platform and recently expanded local fitness options through the introduction of her Aquabike program, providing a dynamic and invigorating workout experience for amplified engagement, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and healthier community.



Jamil Ahmed

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY

Jamil's leadership skills are exemplified by his dedication to enhancing the university experience through his volunteer work with Griffith Mates. He organises regular frisbee games and has helped mitigate feelings of isolation and loneliness among students by hosting regular gatherings to create a sense of purpose. Jamil has provided valuable social and English language support to international students, including weekly check-ins and coordinating social gatherings to foster a more welcoming and diverse community.



Jasmine Hawkins

SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY

Jasmine is the only Gold Coast based skipping athlete representing Australia in her division, leading her team diligently for many years while also taking on the responsibility of coaching the junior team. Now stepping into the role of head coach, Jasmine exhibits impressive qualities as both a leader and competitive athlete setting the example through hard work, perseverance and integrity. Jasmine continues to champion her sport, advocating to have skipping included in the Olympic Games.



APPLICATIONS OPEN EARLY JANUARY

2024 MAYOR'S STUDENT AMBASSADORS

The Mayor's Student Ambassador Program is a once in a lifetime opportunity to explore the Gold Coast through unique and exclusive experiences. Develop your personal skills, create lifelong friendships, build your professional network and engage with the wider Gold Coast community while participating in this exceptional life changing program.

Thank you

To know more about our initiatives such as the Mayor's Student Ambassador Program, Kickstart Graduate Program, Gold Coast Student Excellence Awards, Mayor's Technology and Innovation Awards and the Gold Coast Careers Festival, please visit studygoldcoast.org.au

Find out more about our student support services, social events and facilities offered at the Gold Coast Student Hub at goldcoaststudenthub.com

Don't forget to follow Study Gold Coast and the Gold Coast Student Hub on Facebook and Instagram.

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