



MEDIA RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE VICTORIA FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

The Finalists have been selected for the Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria Regional and Rural Health Achievers Award in the 2019 Seven News Young Achiever Awards. The Awards aim to encourage, acknowledge and reward the achievements and valuable contribution young individuals make in their local communities.

The Finalists are:

- Dr Skye Kinder, 27 of St Kilda
- Arun Thomas, 29 of Horsham
- Dr Zara La Roche, 26 of Wangaratta

Dr Skye Kinder, 27 of Bendigo is dedicated to improving the health of rural and marginalised patients. Currently a doctor at Bendigo Health, Skye was recognised as Bendigo's Young Citizen of the Year. She went on to represent Australia's medical students nationally as Rural Health Officer of Australian Medical Students' Association. She later co-founded a national Rural Health Committee of the Medical Students Association and was Committee Chair for two years. One of her initiatives was the establishment of the AMSA Rural Health Summit. She sits as Director of Board of Rural Doctors Association of Victoria. In 2017, Skye was named Victoria's Junior Doctor of the Year.

Arun Thomas, 29 of Horsham is an experienced Registered nurse who has a strong focus and passion for leadership, governance and aged care. In 2018, Arun was awarded Victorian state-wide Celebrating Aged Care Leadership Award and became a finalist - Excellence in Leadership by Victorian Healthcare Association for championing resident care and safety. He has established a leadership scholarship as a part of 'giving back' to his Alma Mater to unlock the potential of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Arun is a Board Director at Stawell Regional Health and an Associate Nurse Unit Manager at Edenhope District Memorial Hospital.

Dr Zara La Roche, 26 of Wangaratta advocates for equal healthcare opportunities for all Australians. She aspires to serve the most in need of healthcare and specialises in rural health with focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. Zara has worked with doctors in remote Western Australia, travelled to Northern Territory to promote health careers to high school students, and completed medical placements in remote communities and homeless shelters. Her 2018 research, The First 1,000 Days Australia Project, aims to provide a comprehensive strategy to strengthen Aboriginal families so they can address children's needs. Zara also coordinated panels and discussions about Aboriginal health in Shepparton and Melbourne.

The Royal Flying Doctor Service Victoria, Regional and Rural Health Achievers Award will recognise young people in regional and rural areas who are dedicated to improving the overall health of rural communities. There are many who passionately and selflessly provide support, encouragement, assistance or professional services within the rural health sector, offering care, hope and inspiration to those in rural communities who have difficulty accessing health and well-being care.

The Regional and Rural Health Award acknowledges the services, efforts, actions and positive input provided by volunteers, carers and health professionals who have had a significant impact on the health of their community. These

young people are actively involved in health innovation and play a vital role in selflessly enhancing the quality of life of those who depend on them.

The Finalists will be presented and Winners announced at an Awards Gala Presentation Dinner to be held at Flemington Racecourse on Friday evening 10th May. Great prizes are up for grabs with each category winner receiving \$1,000 into an account in their name from Bank of Melbourne plus a \$1,000 Bartercard account from Wheelton Philanthropy and Budget Rent A Car, and a trophy.

One of the eleven category winners will be chosen as the 2019 Victorian Young Achiever of the Year and will receive a \$2,000 Jetstar flight voucher and a state trophy.

All Finalists will go into the People's Choice Award presented by NOVA 100, which is run through our Facebook page; "[Seven News Young Achiever Awards VIC](#)". Please ensure you like our page and vote for your favourite Finalist. The winner will be announced at the Awards Gala Presentation Dinner and will receive \$1,000 worth of concert and movie tickets courtesy of NOVA 100.

Community members including friends and colleagues of each Finalist are invited to share this special occasion. Tickets are \$130.00 each which includes a three-course meal, beverages and entertainment. Tickets can be easily purchased online by visiting www.youngachieverawards.com, clicking VIC, then clicking on the "purchase tickets" icon.

For further information about our other Finalists or purchasing tickets please feel free to contact the Awards Office on 9720 1638.

Congratulations and good luck to all Finalists.

End

<p>The Young Achiever Awards began in 2012 with the purpose to acknowledge, encourage and most importantly promote the positive achievements of all young people up to and including 29 years of age. The awards showcase the achievements of young Victorians, and pay tribute to their vision, innovation and commitment to contributing to their community</p>
