

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**1 NOVEMBER 2023**

## **2024 AUSTRALIANS OF THE YEAR FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA ANNOUNCED**

**2024 Australian of the Year for South Australia – Timothy Jarvis AM (Hyde Park)**  
**2024 Senior Australian of the Year for South Australia – Sister Meredith Evans (Underdale)**  
**2024 Young Australian of the Year for South Australia – Tiahni Adamson (Adelaide)**  
**2024 Local Hero for South Australia – Rachael Zaltron OAM (Ridgehaven)**

Awards event livestreamed via [australianoftheyear.org.au](https://australianoftheyear.org.au)

**8:30PM (Adelaide time) Wednesday 1 November 2023:** The 2024 Australian of the Year Award recipients for South Australia have been announced at a ceremony in Adelaide this evening.

The four South Australia recipients will join those from the other states and territories for the national awards to be announced on 25 January 2024.

**The 2024 Australian of the Year for South Australia is environmental scientist and advocate Timothy Jarvis AM.**

An environmental scientist, author, filmmaker, philanthropist and speaker, 57-year-old Timothy (Tim) Jarvis AM seeks pragmatic solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss.

This includes South Australia's Forktree Project, which involves restoring degraded farmland back to nature and growing rare native plants to safeguard them from extinction. Tim is also vice-president at Fauna & Flora; a global ambassador and governor of WWF, ambassador to Koala Life and a board director of the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife.

As an adventurer, Tim re-enacted Douglas Mawson and Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic explorations and advocates for the protection of Antarctica. And this year, he helped secure 475,000 square kilometres of marine sanctuary off World Heritage-listed Macquarie Island.

In 2017, Tim was made a Bragg Fellow by the Royal Institution of Australia and has won multiple awards, including the Australian Geographic Society's 2016 Conservationist of the Year for his 25Zero project about melting equatorial glaciers.

**Sister Meredith Evans is the 2024 Senior Australian of the Year for South Australia.**

Sister of Mercy Meredith Evans has dedicated her life to helping the vulnerable and inspiring others to do the same. Through her vocation, 75-year-old Meredith has provided kind, non-judgemental care and assistance to many – including refugees, young people, women experiencing homelessness, women exiting violent relationships and women leaving prison.

In 2019, Meredith established the South Australian division of Young Mercy Links – a network of young people passionate about social justice, advocacy and education.

She was also instrumental in re-establishing Justice for Refugees SA and the Young Christian Workers Movement in South Australia. In 2014, Meredith partnered with like-minded people to start a new Circle of Friends in Adelaide, providing on the ground support for refugees.

Meredith's care has extended abroad, engaging people to contribute to the work of the Jesuit Refugee Service in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The service provides newly built homes for people with a landmine injury and their families.

### **The 2024 Young Australian of the Year for South Australia is wildlife conservation biologist Tiahni Adamson.**

A proud Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman descended from the Kaurareg Nations, Tiahni Adamson is passionate about sustainability.

She graduated from University of Adelaide with a Bachelor of Science (wildlife conservation biology) and is now the lead community engagement officer at climate change solutions company CH4Global, where she ensures Indigenous knowledge is embedded into CH4Global's projects.

Tiahni has worked with the CSIRO on Indigenous education programs, trained under Al Gore as a Climate Reality Leader in 2019 and fostered relationships between First Nations communities and government.

A regular speaker on the intersection of Indigenous justice, climate change and environmental conservation, 28-year-old Tiahni is also on the national leadership team with Seed, Australia's only First Nations-led youth climate justice group, and a youth dialogue member for the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

She was recognised as one of Science and Technology Australia's Superstars of STEM and an InDaily South Australian 40 Under 40 for 2023.

### **Founder, Backpacks 4 SA Kids, Rachael Zaltron OAM is the 2024 Local Hero for South Australia.**

In 2013, Rachael Zaltron OAM and another family began collecting donations and putting them into backpacks to help a few vulnerable and neglected children.

This was the start of Backpacks 4 SA Kids. Commencing in Rachael's carport, the organisation now has its own warehouse and volunteers helping vulnerable children across the state.

Under Rachael's leadership, the organisation provides backpacks with age-appropriate emergency clothing, toiletries and other necessary supplies for children aged 0 to 16 years who are taken into care, need to quickly leave their homes due to family violence or experiencing homelessness.

Backpacks 4 SA Kids also provides home starter packs for families starting again after domestic violence, and anchor packs for young people aged between 12 and 25 who are experiencing homelessness. They also provide Christmas presents for 0- to 18-year-olds entering emergency care.

Since 2012, 50-year-old Rachael and her team have helped more than 86,000 South Australian children.

National Australia Day Council CEO Mark Fraser AO CVO congratulated the South Australia award recipients.

“The award recipients for South Australia are great Australians making contributions which help people and our environment,” said Mark.

“Tim and Tiahni’s achievements are recognised on a world stage; Sister Meredith’s work know no bounds and Rachael’s foresight and action has changed lives around South Australia.”

For more information on the Australian of the Year Awards, visit [australianoftheyear.org.au](http://australianoftheyear.org.au).

**ENDS.**

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**PHOTOS:** From the awards announcement event can be downloaded as available after approx. 9:30pm Adelaide time from this link (credit NADC/Salty Dingo): [SA Media Distribution photos - High res](#)

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[australianoftheyear.org.au](http://australianoftheyear.org.au)