

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Indigenous oral health study grant recipients announced for 2019

The Australian Dental Health Foundation (ADHF) and Dental Hygienists Association of Australia (DHAA) have awarded five study grants to support undergraduate Indigenous oral health therapy and dental hygienist students in their studies.

This year, each of the successful study grant recipients will receive \$5,000 plus mentoring services by DHAA.

Now in its sixth year, the grant offers Indigenous students funding that may be used to cover costs of dental equipment and textbooks, and financially support students while on placements or living away from home.

The successful students for 2019 are:

- Corinne Webster, NSW
- Jasmine White, SA
- Kellie Gleeson, NSW
- Latish Sykora, SA
- Tyla McMillan, NSW

ADHF Chairman David Owen extended his congratulations to the five recipients, saying: "All of our successful recipients are passionate about enhancing oral health, implementing preventive measures, and reducing dental disease of the Indigenous and wider community.

"The Foundation hopes that the grants will provide recipients with valuable assistance to help them complete their courses so they can embark on delivering care to help reduce the inequality that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

"We know that the delivery of dental care to Indigenous Australians is enhanced if that care is provided by a professionally qualified Indigenous practitioner."

Aboriginal health reports have found that Indigenous Australians are more likely than other Australians to have multiple caries and untreated dental disease, and less likely to have received preventive dental care. <sup>1</sup>

The oral health status of Indigenous Australians, like all Australians, is influenced by many factors including a tendency towards unfavourable dental visiting patterns associated with accessibility, cost, and a lack of cultural awareness by some service providers. <sup>2 3</sup>

More follows...

DHAA CEO Bill Suen also congratulated the recipients saying: “The DHAA is proud to be able to help fund study grants and mentoring support to these undergraduate students during their university journey.

“University can be a challenging time, particularly financially, so these grants are there to make the experience that little bit easier. We wish the recipients well for their future studies.”

**Interviews available with:**

David Owen, Chairman, Australian Dental Health Foundation.

Bill Suen, CEO, Dental Hygienists Association of Australia.

**Contact ADA Federal Media Advisor Jenny Barlass 0484 869 086.**

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**Note to Editors:**

The ADHF’s mission is to address the inequality between those Australians who can access the dental care they need, and those who can’t. It works to secure better access to quality dental care for all Australians regardless of their financial, geographical or social situation.

<sup>1</sup> AHMAC (Australian Health Ministers’ Advisory Council) 2017. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework 2017 Report. Canberra: AHMAC cited in AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2019. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/den/231/oral-health-and-dental-care-in-australia/contents/summary>

<sup>2</sup> COAG (Council of Australian Governments), Health Council 2015. Healthy Mouths, Healthy Lives: Australia’s National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024. Adelaide: South Australian Dental Service cited in AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2019. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/den/231/oral-health-and-dental-care-in-australia/contents/summary>

<sup>3</sup> NACDH (National Advisory Council on Dental Health) 2012. Report of the National Advisory Council on Dental Health 2012. Canberra: Department of Health and Ageing cited in AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2019. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/den/231/oral-health-and-dental-care-in-australia/contents/summary>



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