

2 September 2020

Congratulations to the winners of the 2021 Young Voices Award, brought to you by *Australian Catholics* magazine in conjunction with Australian Catholic University.

The winners of the 2021 *Australian Catholics* Young Voices have been selected from more than 700 entries across the Junior (Years 5 and 6), Intermediate (Years 7 to 9) and Senior (Years 10 to 12) sections. Students were able to enter written, photographic or digital projects.

The young age of some of the entrants was no barrier to the seriousness of the topics they explored, which ranged from climate change, issues of equality such as racism and gender equality, to abuse and exploitation of humans and animals.

Jesuit Communications director Michael McVeigh said in selecting the winners, the judges went for those works they felt had the strongest impact. Judges also tried to ensure that recognition was given to entries across all formats.

'The judges were impressed by the time and effort taken with all of the entries', Mr McVeigh said. The winning entries appear in the Spring edition of *Australian Catholics*, and will also be available online. *'It's a great privilege to be able to offer a platform for young people to speak engagingly, and creatively, on issues they're passionate about.'*

The winner of the Junior Section was Lucia Minto, St Joseph's Primary School, The Junction, NSW for her video entry 'The cover is not the book'. The entry looked at discrimination from both a personal and an objective perspective. Junior Runner-up was Madison O'Brien, St Anthony's Catholic College, Deeragun, Queensland, whose video entry was an interview with an Indigenous Support Officer about racism and being Indigenous in Australia today.

Intermediate winner was Molly Himsforth, Cabra Dominican College, Cumberland Park, SA. Her video entry explored issues of race in a personal and objective context. Intermediate Runner-up was Sebastian Higham, also of Cabra Dominican College. Sebastian wrote about living as an autistic teenager.

Phoebe Sheridan, St Joseph's Catholic College, East Gosford, NSW was the Senior Section Winner with her podcast about vaping and how e-cigarettes are marketed to younger people. Senior Runner-up Zoe McGee, Saint Aloysius College, North Melbourne, Vic, gave voice to the issue homelessness and sleeping rough.

The judging panel was Michael McVeigh, Michele Frankeni (*Australian Catholics* assistant editor), Fr Andrew Hamilton (*Australian Catholics* editorial consultant), Neve Mahoney (*Eureka Street* assistant editor) and Julian Butler SJ (Jesuit Communications staff). The winners receive a range of prizes and will attend an online awards event.

'ACU has been a proud supporter of this competition since 2010. We believe that our role as a university is to inspire and equip people to make a difference – an important part of which is to cultivate the ability to see life through the eyes of others', said Kathy Vozella, ACU Director of Marketing and External Relations.

'The Young Voices Awards provides an opportunity for young Australians everywhere to engage and reflect with the world around but also give them an important platform to be seen and heard. In order to be agents of change in the world, we all need to act and think empathetically.'

Thanks to our sponsors Australian Catholics University, Seven Steps To Writing Success, Penguin Random House, Sharpie, Paper Mate, Parker and *Eureka Street*.

For more information and excerpts from the winning entries, see www.australiancatholics.com.au/article/students-make-their-voices-heard.

Full winners list attached separately.

Please direct any enquiries to Michael McVeigh, Jesuit Communications Director, on (03) 9421 9611 or email michael.mcveigh@jesuit.org.au.