

**SUBJECT: MAYORAL MINUTE - AUSTRALIA DAY 2024 AWARD WINNERS****FROM:** The Mayor**EDMS #:** 24/56697

---

On Friday 26 January, the community came together for the 2024 Australia Day celebrations.

The much-loved Macarthur Lions Street Parade attracted a crowd of about 2,000. A big thank you to the Macarthur Lions for another successful celebration, it was fantastic to see the community come together to reflect and respect.

Council also held its first Citizenship Ceremony for the year, which saw more than 90 residents pledge their commitment to our great country and become Australian citizens. They have my wholehearted congratulations on taking the exciting step and choosing Camden to officially begin their lives as Australians.

At that ceremony, we had the pleasure of hearing from our Australia Day ambassador, Amar Hadid. Ms. Hadid became the first person in the world to receive a scholarship for skateboarding in 2017, thanks to the University of Sydney's Elite Athlete Program. On the skateboard, her determination, diligence and talent have seen her dazzle the skateboarding world at competitions across Australia and in the US, China, Brazil and Sweden. Off the skateboard, the proud Lebanese-Australian Muslim woman, is a passionate advocate for the equality of men and women in sport, the promotion of skateboarding and community cohesion. We're incredibly grateful to have had Ms. Hadid join us as our ambassador for this year.

I'd like to also take this opportunity to formally congratulate the winners of Council's 2024 Australia Day Awards.

Denise Pritchard took home the Camden Citizen of the Year Award. Ms. Pritchard has been a member of the Camden/Wollondilly Domestic Violence Committee for over 10 years, remaining proactive in its projects. She was also heavily involved in setting up Blue Wren House – Camden Women's Shelter, where she is on the board as its Chair.

Brydie Meredith, an inspiring teacher at Catherine Park Physie and Dance, was named Young Citizen of the Year. Brydie teaches five classes, three days a week, all in her own time, and supports club members who have social, intellectual and behavioural needs.

Beverley Batros and Garry Clarke both took home the Sports Achievement Award. Ms. Batros has been a member of the netball club, Benkennie, since its inception in 1984. Ms. Batros began at the club as a player before she coached for 16 years, offering countless hours of her time to develop the club's rising stars. Mr. Clarke is a member of the Eventing Equestriad Committee, where he volunteers as the club treasurer to help ensure the events held at the Camden Bicentennial Equestrian Park are always a success.

The Camden West Rural Fire Station won the Community Group Award. The Brigade has made significant contributions to the local community through their tireless efforts as a team of volunteers that respond to bushfires, structure fires, alarms, car accidents, back burning and fire preparation, storms, floods, searches, calls for assistance and more. They have an unwavering dedication to Camden and its surrounds responding to emergencies 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Taking out the Arts and Cultural Award was local artist, Patricia Johnson. Ms. Johnson has inspired and mentored many artists in our community and I'd like to thank her for dedicating so much time to sharing her talent and enriching our local arts scene.

It was an absolute pleasure to shine a spotlight on these fantastic people in the Camden community as part of our Australia Day celebrations. I truly believe Camden is the amazing place it is because of their tireless efforts and their dedication to helping those around them.

A big congratulations goes also to everyone who was nominated, who also work tirelessly to make the lives of those around them better.

### **RECOMMENDED**

**That Council note the information.**