

## Media Release

### Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Friday 31 October 2014

---

## University community celebrated in Australian of the Year honours

A University of Tasmania student, staff member and alumnus have been honoured in the 2015 Australian of the Year Awards.

All three hold degrees from the University.

The Premier of Tasmania, the Hon. Will Hodgman MP, announced the 2015 Tasmanian Australian of the Year Award recipients at a ceremony at the Henry Jones Art Hotel in Hobart last night.

University Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen, congratulated the recipients.

“To see that three of the four Tasmanian award recipients have a strong connection to the University is a testament to the quality of our staff, students and graduates,” he said.

“What is even more heartening, is the fact that each of the winners have displayed an admirable devotion to improving the lives of others in their goals and achievements.”

Professor Rathjen said the multigenerational nature of the array of chosen winners was inspiring.

“From Mr Mostogl, a young man just beginning a promising career, to Mr Croome at the peak of his career, to Professor Reynolds, who has established a respected career over many decades, these awards show the possibilities presented by perseverance, hard work and a commitment to excellence.”

### **2015 Tasmanian Australian of the Year - Rodney Croome AM (South Hobart)**

Mr Croome is a well-known equality advocate. He studied History at the University of Tasmania. A champion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) rights in Tasmania and throughout Australia, Mr Croome has spent the past 26 years campaigning for decriminalisation, anti-discrimination protections, and the recognition of same-sex relationships and families, including marriage equality. He has also worked tirelessly to end discrimination and improve educational and health outcomes for LGBTI people, particularly those in rural and remote communities. The National Convenor for Australian Marriage Equality, Mr Croome has made many personal sacrifices in the face of hostility and

ignorance, challenging homophobia in schools and in the police service, removing stigma and normalising relationships for same-sex attracted couples.

### **2015 Tasmanian Senior Australian of the Year - Professor Henry Reynolds (Richmond)**

Historian Professor Henry Reynolds is an Honorary Research Professor in the University's School of Humanities. Professor Reynolds is considered one of the nation's leading authorities on the history of Australia's Indigenous people. His seminal book, *The Other Side of the Frontier*, published in 1981, was the first to see history from an Aboriginal perspective.

An outspoken public intellectual, Professor Reynolds was the first academic historian to champion Aboriginal land rights. Fighting for reconciliation at a time when it was not popular, he was not deterred by the backlash and his courage, tenacity and commitment inspired a generation of Aboriginal and white Australian activists to persevere in their campaign for Aboriginal land and other rights.

His oral history project in the 1970s connected him with Eddie Mabo and greatly contributed to the High Court's recognition of land rights. Professor Reynolds' 20-plus books have not only won a string of awards, they have encouraged young historians to embrace Aboriginal history, have enriched the nation's understanding of our past and have pointed the way to a better future.

### **2015 Tasmanian Young Australian of the Year - Adam Mostogl (Queenstown)**

Mr Mostogl, 26, is a current student at the University, studying his Masters of Teaching. In any given week, Mr Mostogl might be helping young entrepreneurs to kick-start their companies, stimulating small businesses to challenge the status quo, challenging communities to understand their potential or teaching hundreds of students to embrace innovation to solve the problems of the future. Focused on empowering the community to create change, Mr Mostogl established illuminate SDF in 2009 and partners with many organisations, including the University and the Australian Maritime College, to inspire young people to embrace their creativity, identify business solutions to simple problems and recalibrate their approaches to learning.

The 2015 Tasmanian Local Hero is Mary Kay, a devoted community radio volunteer of many years.

#### **Information released by:**

University of Tasmania, Communications and Media Office

Phone: (03) 6226 2691

Email: [Media.Office@utas.edu.au](mailto:Media.Office@utas.edu.au)