

### SPEAKER PROFILES



**Melissa Abu-Gazaleh** is a young woman passionate about young men's health. She is the 2016 NSW Young Australian of the Year, Illawarra Young Entrepreneur of the Year and was most recently named in Australian Financial Review & Westpac's 100 Women of Influence.

At the age of 19, Melissa attended RYLA and was inspired to combat the growing trends of mental health issues among young men. She established the Top Blokes Foundation which today has worked with over 10,000 young men, becoming Australia's leading boy's social education organisation improving boy's mental health and well-being.

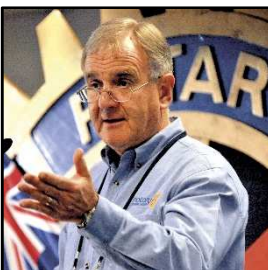
Powered by her favourite quote "we cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future", Melissa believes that young people have a powerful role in helping to reshape the engagement of young men. She is passionate about youth leadership and empowering young people to be agents of change, not tomorrow, but today.



**Deng Adut** is a community leader, author and internationally renowned lawyer. He has been nationally recognised for his achievements with NSW Premier Mike Baird inviting Deng to give the 2016 Australia Day Address, which drew critical acclaim home and abroad. In November 2016, Deng was named NSW Australian of the Year.

Having come to Australia as a refugee, following life as a child soldier in Sudan, Deng put himself through law school and has become a formidable advocate.

Deng practices in the areas of criminal, family and immigration law. He has not only worked at three reputable Sydney law firms but has also demonstrated a remarkable commitment to social justice having worked at Blacktown Local Court as a liaison officer to the local Sudanese community and at Parramatta Community Justice Clinic, which operates to provide disadvantaged members of the community access to the legal justice system.






**Bob Aitken** has fifty plus years' experience in journalism and media management. He retired as Executive Director of Rotary Down Under in 2014 and now runs his own media company; Bob Aitken Media.

Bob has served in many capacities within Rotary including: Chairman of District 9685 Public Relations and Polio committees, Project Manager of Rotary's NSW Graffiti Removal Day project and assisted with promotion of favourite Rotary projects in Australian Rotary Health and Dream Cricket.




In 2016/17, RI President John Germ has invited Bob to serve as End Polio Co-ordinator in Zone 7B and part of Zone 8.

Bob was Media Manager of the Sydney Olympic Games Hockey Tournament in 2000 and, in 2007, he was named a Member (AM) in the General Division of the Order of Australia Queens Birthday Honours List – for services to sport and the community through Rotary.

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	<p><b><u>Marcus Akuhata-Brown</u></b> is a gifted communicator and qualified teacher - he's an emerging leader and inspiring international speaker with a powerful message.</p> <p>Marcus motivates and inspires people to hit higher levels of performance and they leave his presentations with a fresh perspective on life. He's a gifted communicator and has travelled the world extensively – he's done everything from meeting the Queen and dining with members of the Royal family, working with the poor and marginalised in countries around the world and speaking at many Rotary International events.</p> <p>Marcus will stimulate, entertain and inspire you with his powerful message and creative delivery style – he tells of how glass lids of low expectation and achievement were lifted off his life and how, through positive encouragement, intuitive goal setting as well as having the courage to break out of comfort zones, led to a life of excitement, adventure and purpose.</p>
	<p><b><u>Bruce Allen</u></b> retired from full time work in 1999 and up until 2009 he spent his time balancing life between his many Rotary commitments, family life and running his own management and marketing consultancy.</p> <p>Bruce was District Governor of District 9680 in the Centenary Year 2004-05 and considers himself privileged to serve in that capacity. It was a very special year for all Rotarians as we all rejoiced, not only in the great history of our organisation, but in the opportunities we have to tackle the many challenges facing us in the future. During that year, the tsunami struck with a vengeance in the South-East Asia region and the district's Tsunami Relief Committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Bruce. He was appointed Foundation Chairman for District 9680 in July 2006 and held this position until the end of June 2009. He now works for Rotary International as Manager of The Rotary Foundation South Pacific &amp; Philippines Office in Parramatta.</p>
	<p><b><u>Jayden Bregu</u></b> knew exactly what he wanted to do as he grew up. He wanted to be a PE teacher, then he wanted to be a cook, a snowboarding instructor and then a physiotherapist. Connecting the dots, Jayden realised that his passion was in helping others achieve their aspirations through leadership and health. In 2015 he was invited to participate in the District 9675 RYLA and on the first day he made the decision that he would lead the Seminar Team. Since RYLA he has completed his Masters of Public Health, attended the Young Leaders Summit in South Korea, been selected for the NSW Government Graduate Program and helped run Rotary's Road to Broadway, a night that showcased the young musical theatre talent in the Sydney city area. One day he wants to own and run his own hospital but for now, as a RYLA Seminar Team Leader, Jayden wants to create an environment for the youth of District 9675 to continue to challenge themselves and develop their leadership skills.</p>

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	<p><b><u>Sarah Brown</u></b> is the Chief Executive Officer of Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku (WDNWPT) Aboriginal Corporation and has been helping the Indigenous Directors to run the organisation since its inception more than a decade ago.</p> <p>WDNWPT is also known as Western Desert Dialysis. Its mission is to improve the lives of people with renal failure, reunite families and reduce the incidence of kidney disease in local communities. It is run by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people and work to provide culturally appropriate dialysis services in remote communities, helping people to get home to country and family.</p> <p>Sarah holds a Master of Nursing, a Graduate Diploma in Aboriginal Education and a Graduate Diploma in Health Service Management. Prior to joining WDNWPT, she was a remote area nurse and university lecturer.</p>
	<p><b><u>Tabatha Buonaccorsi</u></b> has been described as loud, bubbly and overly energetic and of course, the only place she could be sent on Rotary Youth Exchange was Japan.</p> <p>Wanting to inspire others to get involved in Rotary Youth Exchange and to bring in a new generation to Rotary this 20-year-old young woman hopes to inspire and change people's views on Youth Exchange and Rotary.</p> <p>Tabatha has very high aspirations for a future involvement in Rotary. Who knows where the road may lead?</p> <p>She hopes to implement a new motto in Rotary, that is simply "If not us, who? If not now, when?"</p>
	<p><b><u>Zachary Fitzpatrick</u></b> is a Rotaractor and Student from the Wollongong area. He is passionate about community service and Rotary as a vehicle to change the world. As a younger man, Zachary was initially uninterested in leadership or community service but after a helpful push from his grandmother, he joined Rotaract. This all changed.</p> <p>Zachary rapidly embraced the values of 'Service Above Self', rising to the position of President of the Rotaract Club of the University of Wollongong, leading the club to raise over \$14,500. He is also very active in student leadership as the Chair of the University's Student Representative Council. Though more recently, he is a 2016 RYLA graduate and the current District Rotaract Representative for Rotary District 9675.</p> <p>Zachary has spent his energies largely behind the scenes, identifying ways to assist Rotaract to become a more Rotary engaged organisation whilst empowering the future of Rotary to develop strategic partnerships and innovate within the organisation.</p>



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**Wendy Gaborit** joined the Rotary Club of Mobilong in February 2005 and was President 2006/07 and District Governor 2013-14. A member of the Paul Harris Society, a facilitator with the Rotary Leadership Institute and Club Visioning co-ordinator. She was appointed to the role of Public Image Coordinator – Zone 8, 2015-16 and was reaffirmed in that role for 2016-17.

Wendy attended the then Institute of Technology undertaking studies in Social Group Work. She has subsequently gone on to study Social Work, and has completed post graduate studies in Business Administration and leadership studies. Wendy has been a public servant for the majority of her working life, moving from social work to social planning and then into administration with a career that has spanned Families SA, Children's Services and now Housing SA.

2005 saw Wendy give up corporate life and to take time out to "smell the roses". Instead she discovered Rotary.



**Jessie Harman** has been a Rotarian for over seventeen years. She is a member of the Rotary Club of Wendouree Breakfast in Ballarat. She has been active at both club and District levels, having held many different roles, including District Governor for District 9780 in 2010-2011.

Nationally, Jessie is currently the Project Lead, Regional Membership Plan for Zone 8 (Australia), and the immediate past Rotary Co-ordinator for Zones 7B and part of 8 (New Zealand, Pacific Islands and part of Australia).

Jessie's first experience of Rotary was as a participant of RYLA in 1987, and she maintains an active interest in Rotary's Youth and Leadership programs to this day. She also has a keen interest in membership development, and is co-author of "101 strategies for recruiting and retaining members".

In her working life, Jessie is Director, Partnerships and Commercial Engagement at Federation University Australia. At home, she is Mum to Claire, Georgia and James.






**Curtis McGrath** has served ten years in the Australian Army as a Combat Engineer. He has served in East Timor, Malaysia, Indonesia, Central Australia and Afghanistan.

While deployed to Afghanistan, Curtis' life was changed forever when he stepped on an Improvised Explosive Device, the result of this catastrophic event Curtis was now to live life with no legs.



Curtis' amazing attitude to the event could not have been more optimistic, he said to the men helping him that he would make it to the next Paralympic Games. Four years on, he not only made it to the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, he claimed a Gold medal in the K1 200m KL2 Paracanoe event.

Curtis is hardworking, determined, and loyal. To support veterans Curtis is an ambassador for Mates4Mates, a veterans' charity that supports them and their families and was part of the Invictus Games 2018 organization that has helped to secure Australia's bid to the games.

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	<p><b>Judith Mogi</b> was raised by her grandparents in a village in Indonesia. Through the hard work of her mother she eventually moved to Australia where she initially experienced bullying and discrimination because of her poor English skills and the colour of her skin. Judith became very passionate about community service and leadership and was on the Student Representative Council throughout high school including regional and state levels, represented as youth Member of Parliament, attended the International Science School and is a member of the Young Scientists Australia and Youth UN. She attended Rotary's National Youth Science Forum sponsored by Rotary club of Padstow which opened more opportunities.</p> <p>Judith was the Charter President of the Rotaract Club of Western Sydney University which chartered with a membership of 60 in April 2016 and has now grown to more than 80 active members. WSU Rotaract is on its way to really create an impact on many students' lives. The Club recently held a \$10,000 fundraiser ball for Movember and the Cancer Council.</p>
	<p><b>Helene "Bo" Morse</b> is deeply committed to improving the lives of people. She has the proven ability to provide team leadership, driving performance, program improvement and quality initiatives and fundraising. Bo is a visionary leader known for ability to win community support, develop key coalitions and build relationships with a shared sense of purpose. Bo has been on 20 international Rotary missions providing clean water, cleft palate/cleft lips &amp; burn surgeries.</p> <p>The act of humanitarianism comes down to one thing: individual human beings reaching out to others who find themselves in the most difficult circumstances...one bandage, one suture, one vaccination, one tent, one glass of water at a time.</p> <p>Bo is a solutions-focused, results driven leader with experience in change management and human resource development. Known to have excellent interpersonal and communication skills with proven ability to build strong relationships.</p>
	<p><b>Debbie Roberts</b> is a Rotarian, advocate, philanthropist a local leader promoting awareness of Organ Donation.</p> <p>In her personal mission to "inspire people to make a difference in the world," Debbie has served on the boards of several organizations. Debbie has also been the Chief Executive Officer of two charities, Ronald McDonald House Westmead and Youth Solutions.</p> <p>Debbie originally became part of the Rotary family, as an Interact member in the 1970s and joined the Rotary Club of Narellan in 2005. She has served Rotary in many capacities including Club President.</p> <p>With around 1,400 Australians waiting for a life-saving transplant, and a further 12,000 people on dialysis, organ and tissue donation has a far-reaching effect, changing the lives of both transplant recipients, their families and the community. Debbie is as committed as ever about ensuring awareness continues to grow and inspires people to think about and discuss a difficult and deeply personal subject.</p>

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	<p><b>Professor Michael Sawyer</b> OAM, MBBS, PhD, Dip Child Psych., FRANZCP, FRCPC is Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry in the School of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University of Adelaide and Head, Research and Evaluation Unit at the Women's and Children's Hospital in South Australia. He is currently the Honorary Medical Advisor for Australian Rotary Health (ARH). Prior to this appointment he was Chair of the ARH Research Committee and a Director on the ARH Board. He has also previously been Head, Department of Paediatrics and Associate Dean (Research) in the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Adelaide. In 2008, Professor Sawyer was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to the field of child and adolescent mental health as a researcher and educator.</p> <p>Professor Sawyer completed his undergraduate medical education at Monash University and his post-graduate training in psychiatry at McMaster University and the University of Toronto in Canada.</p>
	<p><b>Noel Trevaskis</b> is a Rotary International Director for 2016 – 2019 and a member of the Rotary Club of Bega. Noel was District Governor of District 9710 in 2005-2006 and is a past Board Member and Chairman of Australian Rotary Health. He has also served as a Board Member and Deputy Chairman of the Southern Tablelands Community College, a college assisting people with intellectual disabilities and special needs. He was a Rotary Co-ordinator and Chairman of the RI Membership Committee for our Zone as well as being a member of the RI Membership Committee. He is a recipient of the Service Above Self Award and the Medal of the Order of Australia.</p> <p>He was an advisor to researchers at the Centre for Mental Health Research Health at ANU.</p> <p>Noel recently retired after a lifetime working in the agricultural industry, mainly in sale and marketing but still does consultancy work in agri-business.</p>