



MEDIA RELEASE

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NACCHO 2024 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacist Scholarship recipients announced

NACCHO has announced the successful recipients of the 2024 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacist Scholarship, proudly supported by a grant from Sanofi Australia. This scholarship program provides subsidy and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pharmacy students, with the goal of strengthening the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pharmacist workforce.

2024 scholarship recipient, Isaac Burgoyne commented, "I am incredibly honoured to have been granted this scholarship from NACCHO for 2024. Pharmacy has always been a passion of mine and the opportunities that this scholarship will open for my future are endless. I am very excited to see what my future will hold with the support from NACCHO and generosity of Sanofi Australia. I will put my rural upbringing to good use and form greater connections between my community and the pharmacy practice."

The program, which began in 2022 for two students, has now been expanded to include five recipients annually and will continue until 2025, demonstrating Sanofi's commitment to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Sanofi Australia and New Zealand Country Lead congratulated this year's recipients, the judging panel, and the NACCHO team for their ongoing leadership in this vital scholarship program. Building the skills of future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pharmacists is essential for ensuring culturally safe care within the pharmacy profession.

Out of over 35,000 pharmacists in Australia only around 100 identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, representing less than 0.3% of the pharmacist workforce.^{1 2} Currently Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in the health sector account for only 1.8% of the total health workforce, despite accounting for 3.2% of the Australian population.³

This disparity impacts patients, policy and pharmacists themselves and this scholarship is a step in the right direction to increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people graduating from pharmacy studies and entering the workforce.

Dr Dawn Casey, "Congratulations to all the remarkable recipients of this year's pharmacy scholarships. The quality of applicants was outstanding once again. We wish you all the best in your pharmacy studies and look forward to supporting you in your professional journey".

Liz Selby, Sanofi Australia, and New Zealand Country Lead congratulated this year's recipients, the judging panel, and the NACCHO team for their ongoing leadership in this vital scholarship program. "Building the skills of future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pharmacists is essential for ensuring culturally safe care within the pharmacy profession. We're immensely proud to continue our support of NACCHO, this program, and ultimately more equitable health outcomes. Congratulations to Dean, James, Shi-Anne, Matthew, and Isaac."

¹ [Department of Health. National Health Workforce Data Set. 2022.](#)

² [Pharmacy Board of Australia. Registrant data. Reporting period: 01 October 2023 to 31 December 2023.](#)

³ [Australian Bureau of Statistics. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: census. 2022.](#)

Selection panel member, Chastina Heck a proud Nywaigi Mamu Bidjara woman and clinical pharmacist.

"It is incredibly exciting to see growing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are choosing to study pharmacy. I personally know scholarships such as these provide financial assistance, but for some recipients the value may also translate to a sense of belonging to university life and the pharmacy profession."

Selection panel member Professor Faye McMillan AM FPS, a proud Wiradjuri Yinaa woman spoke about the relationship with NACCHO, Sanofi and students, "I am thrilled to see the relationship between NACCHO, Sanofi and the Pharmacy profession strengthened through this year's scholarship and congratulations to all the recipients."

NACCHO 2024 Winners: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacist Scholarship

The 2024 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacist Scholarship winners are:

1. Isaac Burgoyne
2. Matthew Cloake
3. James Sowter
4. Shi-Anne Wallace
5. Dean Webber

Quotes attributable to scholarship recipients

Isaac Burgoyne:

"I am incredibly honored to have been granted this scholarship from NACCHO for 2024. Pharmacy has always been a passion of mine and the opportunities that this scholarship will open for my future are endless. I am very excited to see what my future will hold with the support from NACCHO and generosity of Sanofi Australia. I will put my rural upbringing to good use and form greater connections between my community and the pharmacy practice."

Matthew Cloake:

"I am extremely honoured to be a recipient of the 2024 NACCHO Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacist Scholarship. Receiving this scholarship will allow me to get the absolute most out of my course and will make it much easier for me to achieve my goals both while at university and in my future career in healthcare. The funding I receive will help to relieve the pressure of the cost of living crisis, allowing me to centre my focus on my studies to achieve the best results I can, while the mentoring will help me to ensure I am on the right track to set my career up and enter the workforce in the best shape to affect positive change in my community."

James Sowter:

"I am incredibly grateful to both NACCHO and Sanofi for their generosity and dedication to community. To be considered for this scholarship again is an honour that I am eternally thankful for. Being a previous recipient of this scholarship has allowed me to make gainful connections within the pharmaceutical industry, assisted me in graduating with a higher education degree for the first time, and steered me further towards my goal of becoming a pharmacist."

Shi-Anne Wallace:

"I am a proud Aboriginal woman, a part of the Mamu mob in the Innisfail region of far north Queensland. Receiving this scholarship means the world to me! It gives me the opportunity to be able to do what is best for my study and my career without the constant worry about the expenses of everyday living. I have more time to dedicate to my studies and be able to aim higher than ever before. This offer is life changing and I cannot wait to see where I go and what I can do with this support behind me.

Thank You So Much!"

Dean Webber:

"Through the lens of my heritage and the guiding light of education, this NACCHO Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Pharmacist Scholarship embodies the profound journey of resilience, opportunity, and cultural pride. It's not just financial support; it's a bridge to realising dreams, honouring ancestral wisdom, and empowering generations to come. It signifies the fusion of tradition and modernity, where healing and knowledge converge to shape a brighter future for my community and beyond."

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[NACCHO](#) is the national peak body representing 145 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) across the country on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing issues. NACCHO is the third largest employer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, with over 3,500 out of the 6,000 staff working in ACCHOs being either of Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander background.

Many NACCHO members have almost 50 years of experience in the delivery of comprehensive primary health care. Services are delivered through fixed, outreach and mobile clinics operating in urban, rural and remote settings across Australia.



Our health in our hands

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