

LGBTIQ+ and PLHIV Communities Celebrated Alongside Address from Victorian Chief Health Officer Brett Sutton

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday 6 December 2022 - Presentation of the 2022 Thorne Harbour Health Awards were complemented by the 30th Annual Keith Harbour Address delivered by Victoria's Chief Health Officer Professor Brett Sutton.

The Thorne Harbour Health Awards recognise the outstanding contribution of individuals who have made a significant impact on improving the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ communities and people living with HIV. This year's recipients include:

- *President's Award* - longstanding HIV clinician and researcher, Professor Jenny Hoy
- *Greig Friday Young Leader Award* - peer facilitator and outreach volunteer, Tegan West
- *Life Memberships* - Danny Gallant and Russell Oke

As well as *Special Service Awards* to:

- Historian and Principal Assessor at Heritage Victoria, Dr Marina Larsson
- Trans and gender diverse community advocate, Starlady
- Longstanding volunteer, Derryn Pert
- First Nations trans nonbinary teacher and activist, Ricki Spencer
- Former Director of Rainbow Health, Marina Carman

Presentation of the awards was immediately followed by the delivery of the 30th Annual Keith Harbour Address by Victorian Chief Health Officer Professor Brett Sutton. The focus of Professor Sutton's oration was the importance of uncomfortable conversations.

"I'm an ordinary guy who has been thrown into extraordinary circumstances through the COVID pandemic of the last three years....I've sat in discomfort a great deal over the last three years - sometimes some extraordinarily uncomfortable situations."

"These are not unique to COVID. There have been hugely controversial and contested spaces - especially for marginalised populations, especially for those who have had to struggle for their voice to be heard and for their rights to be exercised."

Professor Sutton went onto to talk about his early clinical experiences at Fairfield Hospital in the early days of the HIV and AIDS epidemic through to his experiences working in East Timor-Leste.

"Let us all sit in uncomfortable conversations together, but bring our passion, bring our advocacy, bring our open mindedness. If we go in with a compassionate heart and a genuine willingness to hear and a genuine willingness to change, then the policy that will play out over time will work in all of our stead for all of the issues that are near and dear to us."

Thorne Harbour Health Award recipients are published in the 2021-2022 Thorne Harbour Health Annual Report 'We Are Family' online at: thorneharbour.org/about/annual-reports/

ENDS

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