



MEDIA RELEASE

HIGH ACHIEVERS JOIN CELEBRATE WA BOARD

3 February 2014

Celebrate WA today announced four new high profile appointments to its Board, including **Tonya McCusker**, philanthropist and wife of the Western Australian Governor Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC.

The other appointments are 2013 Western Australian of the Year **Professor Bruce Robinson AM**, oil industry executive and former media identity **Tom Baddeley**, and high achieving young Western Australian Nyoongar lawyer **Krista McMeeken**.

The appointments expand the total number of Board members to nine and result from a renewed focus on succession planning and the need to provide strong leadership for the organisation during its current growth phase. The appointments strengthen an already prestigious Board for Celebrate WA, which is responsible for promoting and organising the annual WA Day celebrations; promoting excellence and achievement by Western Australians in all fields of endeavour via the Western Australian of the Year Award; and encouraging pride in all things Western Australian.

Chairman, John Poynton, said it is vital that Celebrate WA has a high quality Board and leadership team to fulfil its vision of ensuring all Western Australians feel included in WA Day celebrations and that people are proud of their state and its future aspirations.

"Tonya, Tom, Bruce and Krista are already helping to raise the profile of Western Australia in their respective fields of endeavour and I am pleased we have been able to attract four high calibre candidates to the board of Celebrate WA", Mr Poynton said.

Biographies of the new Board members are below and longer versions are available on www.celebratewa.com.au

Tonya McCusker

The Governor's wife, Tonya Nicole McCusker was educated at Mt Pleasant PS, Applecross SHS and through the WA School of Isolated and Distance Education. At age 15, she won a scholarship to study ballet in Monte Carlo before joining the Australian Ballet Company. She returned to the University of Western Australia and completed a Law degree in 1994.



Mrs McCusker spent several years working in Hong Kong and China and during that time completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Management from Henley Management College (UK). Her passion for youth development saw her return to Western Australia as Business Development Manager of the Leeuwin Youth Development Foundation and

she then spent 5 years as Business Development Manager for the Chamber of Commerce.

Mrs McCusker is currently a Trustee and the Administrator of the McCusker Charitable Foundation and works closely with more than 100 community and charitable organisations.

Professor Bruce Robinson AM

Bruce Robinson is The 2013 Western Australian of The Year and a leading scientist and medical researcher. He was a 2014 finalist for Australian of the Year. Professor Robinson co-established the award-winning Fathering Project in response to statistics that show the most powerful but missing factor in reducing youth substance abuse and crime was a strong father or father-figure. He has produced three best selling books and spoken to over 13,000 father-figures and mothers via schools, workplaces and community groups.

Bruce has also cared for thousands of asbestos victims and their families. He directs a prestigious national research cooperative, NCARD that has produced many world first discoveries and treatments. He is the acknowledged world leader in this field.

Bruce was recently honoured with an Order of Australia (AM). In addition to the awards and other recognition, Bruce has been publicly described as Australia's foremost author on fathering. He has also been publicly named an icon of medical research in Australia.

Tom Baddeley

Tom holds the role of Manager Government and Community Relations, WA & NT Business Unit at Australian energy company, Santos. Before joining Santos, Tom was Director WA of the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association, the peak industry association for the Australian upstream oil and gas sector, and WA Director of policy think-tank the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA). He holds degrees in Arts and Law from the Australian National University and has previously worked in law – first for a Supreme Court judge and later at a corporate law firm – as well as in journalism, working at The West Australian, and the ABC. Tom is also on the board of the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority Board of Management.



Krista McMeeken

Krista McMeekan is a local Nyoongar with a passion for Indigenous rights and developing the resources and support available to Aboriginal people in many fields. With a focus on academia, Krista dedicates her spare time to assisting Indigenous students in their academic studies and careers and contributes to the discourse of international human rights in Australia.

Krista holds a bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Western Australia was admitted to the Supreme Court in 2012 and specialises in commercial litigation. She is a member of the Law Council of Australia's Indigenous Legal Issues Committee and the NAIDOC Perth Committee, amongst others.

Krista has won a string of awards including the National NAIDOC Youth of the Year, the Human Rights Awards Young People's medal, she was inducted into the Western Australian Women's Hall of Fame and most recently, she was the recipient of the Pride of Australia Medal in the Young Leader category (WA).

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Information on Celebrate WA

As the State's premier leadership organisation Celebrate WA champions all that is positive about Western Australia and its people. It seeks to engage West Australians in a range of celebratory activities that promote and recognise excellence in our people, lifestyle, culture and potential.

Celebrate WA is responsible for the planning and implementation of key activities around this year's WA Day long weekend from 30 May – 2 June 2014, including the *Western Australian of the Year Awards*, *State of the Art (SOTA) Music Festival* and various other community events across the State.