

CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY TASMANIA GRADUATION CEREMONY
SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
STANLEY BURBURY THEATRE, SANDY BAY
FRIDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2021

Good morning everyone and thank you very much for inviting me to participate in this 2021 Children's University Tasmania Graduation Ceremony.

Thank you, Uncle Dougie Mansell, for your welcome to country; and Eliza Emerson for your welcome remarks.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community. I recognise a history of truth, which acknowledges the impacts of colonisation upon our First People. I stand for a future that respects and acknowledges Aboriginal stories, culture, language and history.

I would like to acknowledge:

- Mr David O'Byrne MP
- Mr Andrew Wilkie, Member for Clark
- Alderman Simon Fraser, Glenorchy City Council
- Alderman Sharyn Von Bertouch, Clarence City Council
- Professor Natalie Brown and other members of the University of Tasmania
- Most importantly, I acknowledge the students who are graduating today and their families.

Today it is a new and exciting experience for many of you here in the Stanley Burbury Theatre. There are also other ceremonies in Launceston, Devonport and Burnie.

I became your Governor in June this year after being a lawyer and a judge for many years. I would like to talk to you for a few minutes about my role.

One of the most common questions I receive from school children visiting Government House is: "How did you get to be Governor?" In responding to this

question, I say that it all started with a good education: first at school through to Matriculation and then at our University of Tasmania.

My major role as Governor is to represent all Tasmanians, no matter which side of politics they prefer.

As Governor, I am a part of our parliamentary system of democracy. I undertake legal and constitutional duties. I do this impartially, no matter which political party is in Government.

I have a role in making our laws. You will have seen how our Parliament operates, with debates on Bills introduced in our House of Assembly – often called the Lower House.

A Bill is a document to introduce a new law or change an existing law. The Bill is examined and discussed before it is ready to be agreed by the majority of members of the House of Assembly.

The Bill is then sent to our Legislative Council – also called the Upper House – for discussion or amendment and approval. When the members have agreed to the Bill, it is brought to me at Government House. After I sign, it becomes a new Act of Parliament.

I have already signed many Bills into Acts, including Bills which permit the Government to spend money on behalf of all Tasmanians. This is done every year.

A good example of a new Act is the important Covid-19 Disease Emergency Act. We know that last year, Covid prevented our Children's University Graduations from taking place.

As Governor I also have a community role and a ceremonial role, which take up most of my working time. It is a privilege to meet Tasmanians of all ages, in a variety of occupations and all around our State.

I travel a lot around our island. I also host many community events at Government House, including school groups.

Because you have all enrolled in the Children's University, you all know that a lot of your learning happens outside the classroom. You will have experienced this through your visits to the Learning Destinations, and through your online activities arranged for you by the Peter Underwood Centre. I hope you find that the idea of learning outside the classroom is natural for you now, and that each of you to want to learn for yourself.

I hope you have all had great fun throughout the year, with all your results in your *Passport to Learning*.

The certificates that I shall present to each of you recognise your graduation and celebrate your achievement. Your certificate is an important document for you to keep and be proud of as you continue your education.

I am delighted to also take this opportunity today to congratulate all the parents who have made it possible for your children to sign up and participate in these extra-curricular studies. Your decisions should bring academic reward and social benefits to your children.

Finally, thank you to the Peter Underwood Centre and the University of Tasmania for supporting the Children's University Tasmania. It is an excellent initiative. As Governor I am honoured to present the certificates to our young Graduates today. Congratulations to you all.

Thank you.