

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Older Australians congratulate Sister Anne Gardiner, Senior Australian of the Year, all senior nominees, and our Australian of the Year**

Leading seniors advocacy body COTA Australia has congratulated Sister Anne Gardiner AM on being awarded Senior Australian of the Year for 2017.

COTA Australia Chief Executive Ian Yates said Sister Anne Gardiner AM was an extremely worthy recipient in recognition of her 50 years of service to supporting the culture and community of the Tiwi people.

"Sister Anne Gardiner accepted the award on behalf of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart and the Tiwi people. This modesty is typical of older Australians who dedicate themselves to improving the lot of others and continue to give back to community," Mr Yates said.

"Sister Anne Gardiner's message tonight that we should be judged on 'Who we are, not what we are' is ever salient. It is a powerful and valuable message from this inspiring leader – which all who aspire to lead in our nation should themselves learn from.

"On behalf of COTA Australia and all older Australians I am extremely pleased to congratulate this amazing advocate for peace, love and the culture of First Australians. We thank her for her years of dedication and service.

Mr Yates said all the finalists for Senior Australian of the Year had made remarkable contributions to the Australian community in diverse roles.

"The Senior Australian of the Year award is an important acknowledgement of the oft ignored fact that older people keep on giving back to their communities into their 60s, 70's 80s and beyond.

"Older Australians have an enormous commitment and investment in their communities - local, national and global - that make great use of the wisdom and experience that accumulates with age and experience and is inspiring to the generations following them."

"COTA Australia also extends its congratulations to 2017 Australian of the Year and pioneering scientist Emeritus Professor Alan Mackay-Sim - who is also an older Australian who continues to give back to his community - for his enormous and continuing achievements in addressing vital medical challenges for our ageing population."

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