

# QUT honours high achievers at the 2023 Outstanding Alumni Awards

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QUT is proud to announce the recipients of the [2023 Outstanding Alumni Awards](#). Celebrating the remarkable achievements of QUT alumni who have made significant contributions to their fields and communities, the 2023 awards recognise 12 outstanding alumni who have demonstrated excellence, innovation, and dedication.

Presented with their awards at a ceremony last night, those honoured have made their mark across various fields, from finance and healthcare to entrepreneurship, indigenous advocacy, sports, and community leadership. These exceptional individuals reflect the excellence inherent throughout the diverse QUT alumni community.

#### Outstanding Alumni Awardees:

**Kylie Rampa, QUT Outstanding Alumnus**



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Kylie Rampa is CEO of Queensland Investment Corporation (QIC), and has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the financial sector, shaping investment strategies that drive economic growth.

Ms Rampa holds a Bachelor of Business in Accounting from QUT and throughout her 25-year-plus career, which began at Macquarie Bank, has shown dedication to leadership and excellence. Her expertise spans private and public markets, real estate development, asset management, mergers and acquisitions, and business strategy and operations.

**Professor David Wilson, QUT Outstanding Alumnus**



As Senior Program Officer (Primary Health Care) at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Professor David Wilson has made groundbreaking contributions to global health by advancing primary healthcare initiatives.

His journey began at QUT with a Bachelor of Science and Mathematics, followed by a Bachelor of Information Technology. Subsequently, he pursued an Honours Degree in Applied Mathematics and a PhD in Infectious Disease Modelling. From academic to humanitarian, he then founded and served as the Executive Director of the [Optima Consortium for Decision Science](#), which collaborated with the United Nations, World Bank, and various UN agencies to optimise resource allocation in approximately 60 countries.

**Deanna Hood, QUT Outstanding Young Alumnus**



Deanna Hood is a senior robotics and software engineer, recognised for her innovative work in robotics and use of technology to improve lives.

Ms Hood started her journey at QUT at the age of 15. By 20, she had graduated with a Bachelor of Mathematics and Bachelor of Engineering (Electrical) and then obtained an Erasmus Mundus European Masters of Computer Vision and Robotics as the first Australian to receive full scholarship from European Commission. Robotics became her specialty field, and she is now working for Vexev on an ultrasound scanning robot designed to enhance the treatment for dialysis patients, aiming to make a significant impact on the lives of over half a million dialysis patients in the United States alone.

**Dr Clare Villalba, QUT Outstanding Young Alumnus**



Dr Clare Villalba is a Lead Strategic Designer at the Health Design Lab, Department of Health and Aged Care Services, and has been instrumental in improving healthcare and related spaces through design, including in government and academia.

Dr Villalba obtained her Bachelor of Design with Honours, specialising in Industrial Design, as well as a PhD from QUT. Her PhD focused on the design of primary healthcare and studying the persistence of preventable health conditions, with a particular emphasis on diabetic retinopathy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This research laid the foundation for the human-focused innovation stream of the Eye Health Innovation Strategy, implemented by the medical and healthcare team at the [QUT Centre for Robotics](#).

**Natalie Walker, QUT Outstanding Indigenous Australian Alumnus**



Natalie Walker is a leading figure in the field of social and economic policy reform, committed to making a positive impact on the lives of vulnerable individuals and communities.

A Kuku Yalanji woman from the Daintree Rainforest, Ms Walker has dedicated her career to advocating for social justice and driving meaningful change. She earned her Bachelor of Laws degree at QUT and is now serving as the Social Commissioner for the [Greater Cities Commission](#) in New South Wales, a role in which she plays a pivotal part in shaping policies and initiatives aimed at improving the lives of urban communities.

**Stephanie Parkin and Cassie Lang, QUT Outstanding Indigenous Australian Alumni**





Joint winners Stephanie Parkin and Cassie Lang have excelled as founders and CEOs of Parallax Legal, champions of Indigenous legal empowerment, committed to promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights, culture, and heritage.

A Quandamooka woman of Minjerrabah (North Stradbroke Island), Ms Parkin is renowned for her work as an Intellectual Property Lawyer and advocacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights and protocols within the arts and broader industries. Ms Lang, a Bundjalung woman, is a leader within the Native Title and Indigenous Cultural Heritage legal space. They share a profound passion for empowering their clients and providing support and confidence in exercising their rights.

**Nadine Bates and Kristen Souvlis, QUT Outstanding Entrepreneurial Alumni**



Joint winners Nadine Bates and Kristen Souvlis have made waves in the creative industries as founders and CEOs of Like a Photon Creative, shaping the landscape of children's film and TV with their imaginative and captivating storytelling.

With collective experience spanning two decades in children's television, publishing, and digital entertainment, Ms Bates and Ms Souvlis have long been committed to making a positive impact on the world through their work. One of their most significant milestones includes the creation of their own 2D and 3D animation studio, Pony Up Picture Studios, marking a historic achievement as Australia's first female-led and owned animation studio.

**Michael Davie, QUT Outstanding Sport Alumnus**





Michael Davie helped guide the Milwaukee Bucks to their historic 2021 NBA Championship win and now serves as the Men's Basketball Director of Strength and Conditioning and Sport Science at Brigham Young University (BYU) Athletics.

Previously, Mr Davie was Strength and Conditioning Coach at the [Australian Institute of Sport](#) and [Queensland Academy of Sport](#) (QAS) from 2007-2015. He notably worked with the Australian Swimming team in the lead up to multiple world championships and the London Olympic Games, in which the Aussie Dolphins took home ten medals.

While at the QAS, he also worked with elite sports teams in rowing, sailing, diving, cricket, triathlon, soccer, hockey, baseball, basketball, netball, and rugby.

**Karyn Murphy APM, QUT Outstanding Sport Alumnus**



Karyn Murphy is the Director of Female Rugby League and Head Coach for the Gold Coast Titans NRLW team and has dedicated her career to advancing women's participation in sports. Appointed in 2022, she became only the second female ever to coach an NRL or NRLW side.

The former captain of the Australian Jillaroos, she retired from elite rugby league after captaining Australia to its first World Cup victory in 2013. Her achievements beyond the sporting arena are equally impressive. Ms Murphy served as a police officer with distinction for 26 years and was awarded an [Australian Police Medal](#) for diligent and ethical service in 2005.

**Elijah Buoi OAM, QUT Outstanding Community Alumnus**



Elijah Buol is Chair of the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland and a passionate advocate for diversity, community cohesion, and social inclusion. He played a pivotal role in the COVID emergency relief effort in Victoria and works tirelessly to help disadvantaged youth and refugees integrate into Australian society.

Having grown up in a Ugandan refugee camp and losing his parents at a young age, Mr Buol arrived in Australia on a UNHCR scholarship. Supported by the QUT Learning Potential Fund, Mr Buol has obtained a Master of Law, Master of Justice in Intelligence, Graduate Certificate in Intelligence, Graduate Diploma in Family Dispute Resolution, and a Bachelor of Human Services. Elijah went on to pursue a Juris Doctor at ANU and continues to be a shining example of the transformative power of education.

#### Outstanding Alumni Awards

The Outstanding Alumni Awards recognise graduates of QUT and its predecessor institutions for exceptional professional and personal achievements and contributions locally, nationally, and internationally.

The awards showcase and celebrate the diverse achievements, leadership, and impact of alumni who are leaders and influencers in their professions and communities.

[Learn more about the 2023 Outstanding Alumni winners](#)

Main image:

top row: Stephanie Parkin, Dr Clare Villalba, Cassie Lang, Kylie Rampa

bottom row: Elijah Buol OAM, Karyn Murphy APM, Prof. David Wilson, Natalie Walker, Kristen Souvlis

inset right (top to bottom) : Deanna Hood, Michael Davie, Nadine Bates

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