

MEDIA RELEASE

Break the bias - Act to forge gender justice and racial equality

On International Women's Day (IWD) we ask all Australian's to join us in celebrating the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and to consider what action they can take to create gender and racial equality.

In families, organisations and communities across Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls are making an exceptional leadership contribution. They are challenging stereotypes, tenaciously overcoming hurdles and rising above marginalism, racism and discrimination to successfully drive positive sustainable change for our People.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker and Health Practitioner Workforce, for example comprises of strong, skilled and proficient women striving to create a culturally safe and accessible healthcare system. The success of our own organisation is, in part, fuelled by the participation of intelligent, connected and vibrant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women not content with the status quo and challenging the paradigms that have continued to harm our people since colonisation.

NAATSIHWP acknowledges the many varied and successful achievements of our women and girls across Australia and thank them for the invaluable contributions they have made. Our women and girls are making a difference across all spheres of society. Their strength, commitment and resolve is inspiring and rightly a cause for celebration.

But, while celebrating the contribution of our women and girls is vitally important, it is not enough. The systemic racism and gender prejudice that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women consistently face is unacceptable. The antiquated attitudes and behaviours that impede their progress and compromise their health and wellbeing must change.

Consistent with this year's International Women's Day theme its time to '*break the bias*'. Greater action must be taken to forge gender justice and an equitable society that is diverse, inclusive and free from racism, stereotypes, and discrimination. We all have a role to play.

On this day and every day forward what can you do to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's leadership and their equitable participation in decisions that impact our lives?

We encourage you to learn more about what you can do by visiting [Wiyi Yani U Thangani \(Women's Voices\)](#) an initiative led by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, June Oscar AO.