

**Young Achiever Awards – 2016**

**Ashleigh Poh**



Ashleigh completed a Bachelor of Science degree with honours at The University of Melbourne in 2012. She was the top student of the Immunology major and was awarded a position on the Dean's list. She is now a final year PhD student at the Walter Eliza Hall Institute, where she is investigating the role of immune cells in the development and progression of gastrointestinal cancers. The quality of her work has earned her numerous awards including the competitive Cancer Therapeutics PhD Top-up scholarship, and various travel bursaries to present at international conferences and universities.

In addition to her academic achievements, Ashleigh is a passionate ambassador for medical research. She has served as a site coordinator for Cancer Council Victoria's Daffodil Day for the past five years. Through CSIRO's Scientists in Schools initiative, Ashleigh also works with primary schools to inspire and encourage early interest in medical research.

**Tom Burns**



Tom is studying a PhD in neuroscience at Monash University where he hopes to help uncover the mysteries of the brain using novel computing and mathematical techniques. He has been a Bioethics Fellow at the World Health Organization in Geneva, volunteered as a tutor and mentor for high school and international university students, and is this year's president of the Students of Brain Research Network in Victoria. Tom is extremely humbled and honoured to be thought worthy of this award and is excited to meet Rotarians, honoured guests, and his fellow awardees.

**Catia Pierotti**



Catia completed a Bachelor of Science, majoring in chemistry, and a concurrent Diploma in Music at The University of Melbourne in 2014. During her undergraduate studies, Catia was accepted into the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program at The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI), where she was part of a research team investigating a novel cell death pathway called necroptosis, which has been linked to various inflammatory diseases. This work led to her being an author on a research paper published in 2014 in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. In 2015, Catia was awarded the Colman Speed Award for the highest scoring Honours student at WEHI and also attended two conferences,

the Centenary Scientific Symposium and the Japan Australia Meeting on Cell Death. In 2016 she received an Australian Postgraduate Award and will be commencing her PhD at WEHI later this year.

In addition to her academic studies, Catia is passionate about music, sport and working with children in the community. She has been studying classical piano since the age of 9 and received a Distinction in her Associate Diploma in Music piano exam from the Australian Music Examinations Board, studied clarinet and saxophone at high school, has been a member of various bands, choirs and musical groups over the years. Catia has also volunteered for Edmund Rice Camps Victoria, a charity that runs camps for children and families who are socially or economically disadvantaged, or who have disabilities or special needs. Catia is also a recipient of both the Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award.