



Dr Ross Ingram Memorial Essay Prize: award presentation

The 2006 Dr Ross Ingram Memorial Essay Prize was presented to Dennis McDermott, Koori psychologist, academic and poet, at the AMA National Conference in Adelaide in May 2006. This year we were honoured by the presence of Ross Ingram's wife, Julie Neville, who joined MJA editorial staff and federal AMA president, Dr Mukesh Haikerwal, in presenting the prize named in her late husband's memory.

Dennis McDermott is Conjoint Senior Lecturer in Indigenous Health at the Muru Marri Indigenous Health Unit of the School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of New South Wales. He won the prize of \$5000 for his essay, *Unknown family at the taxi stand*, which was published in the 15 May 2006 issue of the MJA (http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/184_10_150506/mcd10107_fm.html). In presenting the prize, MJA Deputy Editor Dr Ruth Armstrong commented that Dennis had combined the stories of his Aboriginal family, the insights of a psychologist, the analytical abilities of an academic and the beautiful, layered writing style of a poet to produce an



From left: Mukesh Haikerwal, Dennis McDermott, Ruth Armstrong, Martin Van Der Weyden and Julie Neville.

elegant and thought-provoking essay that emerged as a clear winner with the external panel of judges.

Dennis McDermott thanked the Journal for providing a platform for the voices of Indigenous people to be heard, noting that the complexities of Indigenous health were not being adequately represented in current media debates. He urged the doctors present to be bold in

supporting initiatives to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to resist measures that are counterproductive.

Entries for the 2007 Dr Ross Ingram Memorial Essay Competition close on 15 January 2007. The competition is open to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who is working, researching or training in a health-related field. See the eMJA for details (http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/180_10_170504/arm10277_fm.html).

The runner-up essay, *A journey of Indigenous identity*, by Dr Marshall Watson, is published in this issue of the Journal (page 150).