

MRS MARIE THOMPSON

Citation for the conferral of a Master of Education (*honoris causa*)

Mrs Marie Thompson is being recognised by the University with the award of a Master of Education (*honoris causa*) not only for her amazing contribution to education but also for her tireless efforts for the community in general. She epitomises what is best in community participation and selfless commitment.

Her commitment has been acknowledged from a whole range of perspectives, perhaps the most noteworthy being: the life membership conferred upon her in 1997 by the Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Associations; the New South Wales Director-General of Education Award for Excellence she received in 1989 for her services to public education; and her Australia Day Council Australia Day Citizenship Award received in 1995.

Mrs Thompson's involvement in parent bodies began when her children commenced preschool and her involvement continued for almost thirty years. She served on the local Preschool Association for nine years; she was President of the Wagga District Council of the Parents' and Citizens' Association for ten years; she was inaugural President of the Riverina Parents' and Citizens' Association for six years; and for ten years she was on the executive of the New South Wales Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Associations.

No one outside of the official education system has had a greater impact on education in Wagga Wagga and the Riverina than Marie Thompson. Her advice and wise counsel have been sought by successive senior officers of the New South Wales Department of Education. Her service is always characterised by her initiative and her enthusiasm and she always encourages other parents and community members to take an active interest and involvement in the education of the children of the region.

She was appointed by successive Ministers and Regional Directors of Education to a variety of working parties and advisory committees including the Ministerial Committee on Rural Education and the Riverina Region Disadvantaged Schools Program on which she served for fourteen years. Many of these programs have had a lasting impact on the quality of education provision in this region. Her contribution to the Disadvantaged Schools Program took her all over the State where her insights were sought by a whole range of regional communities.

The combination of community involvement and commitment to education and young people led to her chairing the Wagga Wagga Police Community Consultative Committee for six years. She is the only civilian to have held such a post in New South Wales. She was appointed to this Committee not only because of her perceptions, insights and status within the community, but her ability to get things done and make things happen. As chair of this Committee, Mrs Thompson was instrumental in the development of the Wagga Wagga Restorative Juvenile Conferencing Model, and it is not an exaggeration to say that her support and commitment to this project ensured its survival against initial political and organisational opposition.

Mrs Thompson has made a contribution to the development of Charles Sturt University and its predecessors through her membership of the Advisory Board of the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education, the Wagga Wagga Campus Advisory Committee of Charles Sturt University and the Board of St Martin's Residential College.

It is fitting that the University recognises Marie Thompson's selfless effort on behalf of the University and the community by conferring on her this day, a Master of Education (*honoris causa*).

Dated this Twelfth Day of May Two Thousand