

AGRIFUTURES RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD

Statement by Member for Central Wheatbelt

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition) [12.51 pm]: Every year, each state sends their best and brightest community leaders to the AgriFutures Rural Women's Award. Over the 21 years that this award has been running, some of our state's finest have been recognised as leaders in their field and change-makers in our rural communities. It was a pleasure to be invited to join nominees and guests at the Western Australian award ceremony on 5 May. Unfortunately, I could not attend in person, but I am told that the event was a resounding success.

WA's finalists were Debbie Dowden, a pastoralist in the Murchison, who strives to deliver innovative regeneration with a focus on natural capital accounting; Dr Bronwyn Blake, an animal nutritionist who is progressing the use of hemp in livestock management and expanding a fledgling industry; and, the winner, Louise O'Neill, who works to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of regional communities through her Farm Life Fitness programs. The nominees, our finalists and our winner, Louise, are a promising sign for our state's future. These women follow in the footsteps of tremendous alumni of this award, such as Cara Peek, the 2020 winner. While these promising community leaders continue in their bias-breaking endeavours, WA will benefit from their vision and drive. The more women we have at decision-making tables in every sector and industry, in business big and small, the better off we will all be. We wish Louise the very best when she heads to Canberra in September for the national award. She will be flanked by some of our country's most impactful rural women. The opposition—me in particular—look forward to seeing these change-makers reach new heights in their careers and we look forward to working with them to develop our regions.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Before you start, member for Mirrabooka, I remind the people in the Speaker's gallery that no photos are allowed and no recording of the proceeding is allowed while in the chamber.