

**2020 AGRIFUTURES RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD**

*Statement by Member for Central Wheatbelt*

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition)** [12.51 pm]: I rise to pay tribute to the national winner of the 2020 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award, Ms Cara Peek, announced yesterday in an event connecting all states via Zoom. The Rural Women's Award celebrates what it means to be a woman in rural Australia and recognises leadership and initiative shown by an outstanding woman in her regional community. Ms Peek is a Yawuru–Bunuba woman from Broome. It was a privilege to be present at the awards yesterday, along with WA alumni of this prestigious award, Cara's mother and sister, the Minister for Regional Development, the member for Kimberley, sponsors and supporters. She joins other amazing Western Australian women to have received the national gong, including wheatbelt powerhouse Caroline Robinson; the inspirational Tanya Dupagne, who started Camp Kulin; and the amazing Sue Middleton from Wongan Hills.

Cara has been recognised for her work on the project Saltwater Academy, an initiative of Saltwater Country, an organisation she founded to empower Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people have a proud but complex history in Australia's pastoral industry. Saltwater Academy celebrates this heritage and the role that Aboriginal people have played whilst providing emotional, economic and cultural initiatives to engage the community, including training and employment. Cara is a lawyer, entrepreneur and social innovator, and is most deserving of this accolade. The award will provide a national platform for her work and passion to make a difference. Sincere congratulations to Cara and all those who have supported the project and the important work she does for the community.