



Media Release

Tuesday, 7 December 2021

Australia's first Aboriginal ophthalmologist A/Prof Kris Rallah-Baker to deliver 2021 Barry Jones Vision Ovation

The second annual Barry Jones Vision Oration will be delivered by A/Prof. Kristopher Rallah-Baker, Australia's first Aboriginal ophthalmologist.

Due to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic related restrictions, the oration will be released as a pre-recorded video on Wednesday 8 December on the [Vision 2020 Australia website](https://www.vision2020australia.org.au).

A proud Yuggera and Biri-Gubba man, A/Prof. Rallah-Baker is a highly respected ophthalmologist and is one of the founding members of the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association, a Board Director of the Royal Flying Doctors Service, technical advisor to the Fred Hollows Foundation and Chair of the Vision 2020 Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee.

A/Prof. Rallah-Baker spoke passionately about his work, linking his family's personal story with the goal of developing confidence and capacity among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to "realise the ability of people to determine their own futures."

While acknowledging the enormous efforts of non-Indigenous ophthalmologists and other eye health professionals, A/Prof Rallah-Baker reiterated the critical importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people being central to solving the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people's eye health.

For A/Prof Rallah-Baker, preventing vision loss and restoring sight is not just important of itself, but it is also important for the impact it can have on the ongoing vitality of Aboriginal and Torre Strait culture, enabling the ability to "pass on and transmit ancient cultures" and maintain the "endearing connection with country and with the eons of history that came before."

The Barry Jones Vision Oration was inaugurated in 2020 and is named in honour of the Hon Dr Barry Jones AC, who has been a long-standing supporter of the eye health and vision care sector, highlighted by 12 years as Chair of the Vision 2020 Australia Board. He continues to support the sector in his role as the organisation's Patron, and his passion for the work being done by Vision 2020 Australia members is evident.

Speaking at the conclusion of the 2021 oration, Dr Jones described A/Prof. Rallah-Baker as a "persuasive advocate" and welcomed his leadership in the sector.

Vision 2020 Australia Chair the Hon Christopher Pyne opened the oration by sharing his family connections with the ophthalmological profession, noting his father had been involved with similar work and organisations as A/Prof Rallah-Baker during the 1950s.

The 2021 Barry Jones Vision Oration will be available from Wednesday 8 December at www.vision2020australia.org.au/BarryJonesVisionOration/

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Vision 2020 Australia is the national peak body for the eye health and vision care sector, representing around 50 member organisations involved in local and global eye health and vision care, health promotion, low vision support, vision rehabilitation, eye research, professional assistance and community support. [vision2020australia.org.au](https://www.vision2020australia.org.au)