

## Ms Evonne Goolagong Cawley MBE AO

The first indigenous Australian to succeed in tennis at an international level, Evonne is one of Australia's most admired women's tennis players and one of the country's most esteemed indigenous sportspeople. Evonne has received a number of national and international accolades including being awarded Australian of the Year in 1971. Subsequently she has contributed greatly to increasing the awareness of Australian women in sport and to facilitating Aboriginal access to sport. From 1998-2005, Tennis Australia appointed Evonne as a "Tennis Ambassador" and together they formed the national Evonne Goolagong Getting Started Program to increase overall female participation in tennis throughout Australia. Since 2005, Evonne has run the Goolagong National Development Camp for Indigenous youngsters with potential to become pro players, coaches or administrators.

*Honorary Doctor of Letters*

*Conferring ceremony: 5.00pm, 1 November 2014.*

### Citation

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present Evonne Goolagong Cawley MBE AO to you for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa).

Evonne Goolagong Cawley is a Wiradjuri Aboriginal woman and the first Indigenous Australian to succeed in tennis at an international level. She is one of Australia's most admired women's tennis players and most esteemed Indigenous sportspeople.

Throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, Evonne Goolagong Cawley remained among the top players in professional tennis. She reached the Wimbledon finals three more times in the 1970s. She was unbeatable in the Australian Open in the mid-1970s, winning the title every year from 1974 to 1977. She also won the Australian doubles crown in 1971 and from 1974 to 1976. She was the mainstay of Australia's Federation Cup team that won the Cup in 1971 and 1973 to 1974, and reached the final in 1975 and 1976.

In 1971, in the Queen's New Year's Honour List, Evonne Goolagong Cawley was awarded an MBE for her services to tennis. On Australia Day during the same year, she was named Australian of the Year. In 1975, she married Roger Cawley and had two children. She continued to play tennis and especially wanted to win Wimbledon again. By 1980, many tennis observers were writing her off as a 'has-been', but she surprised them all by going on to win Wimbledon that year in a memorable final where she defeated Chris Evert. The victory was even more impressive as she was the first mother to win a Wimbledon singles final since 1914. Although she wanted to keep playing, injuries made it increasingly difficult to compete. She retired from professional tennis in 1983.

Off the tennis court, Evonne Goolagong Cawley has been a successful businesswoman, a tireless worker for charity and a devoted wife and mother. In 1988, she was deservedly inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame at Newport Rhode Island and, in 1989, into the Aboriginal Sporting Hall of Fame. She has been Australian of the Year and Australian Sportsperson of the Year. At Barcelona in 1992, she became one of the first-ever Aboriginal Olympic torch-bearers and later at Monte Carlo, was part of the successful Sydney 2000 bid, serving on the National Indigenous Advisory Committee to the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games. In 2003, she received the International Olympic Committee Women and Sport Trophy for her services in those fields. Tennis Australia appointed her a Tennis Ambassador from 1998 to 2005, to encourage an increase in the overall female participation in tennis nationally.

Evonne Goolagong Cawley's life motto: DREAM – BELIEVE – LEARN – ACHIEVE! has now been adopted by the Evonne Goolagong Foundation, which uses tennis as a vehicle to attract Indigenous children in order to provide quality education and promote better health through diet and exercise.

Since 2005, under the auspices of the foundation, and as its first chair, she has run the Goolagong National Development Camp for Indigenous children. The program has awarded school scholarships, produced university scholars, tennis players and coaches, sports administrators and has facilitated employment placement. The foundation is the realisation of her dream for life after the pro tour: to give as many Indigenous children as possible the opportunity to be the best they can be.

Evonne Goolagong Cawley's active facilitation of Aboriginal access to sport will benefit future generations.

Chancellor, I present Evonne Goolagong-Cawley for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa), and I invite you to confer the degree upon her.