



Executive Council
of Australian Jewry Inc.

MEDIA STATEMENT

20 November 2020

LAUNCH OF THE JEWISH ADVOCACY & LEADERSHIP CORPS

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the peak national representative body of the Australian Jewish community officially launched its flagship leadership and advocacy initiative in a national event with inductees into the Corps, communal leaders and members of The Giving Forum.

Forty-two outstanding young professionals from Jewish communities throughout the country were welcomed into the Corps, which will identify, develop and appoint leaders and advocates into key communal roles.

Opening the event, ECAJ Co-Chief Executive Officer Alex Ryvchin observed that “Jewish history has shown us over and over again that when we have leaders with vision, who are able to represent, advocate and persuade, our communities thrive. The absence of such leaders, we have learned, can be our demise. We can no longer leave it to chance that our leaders and advocates simply emerge.”

Noting the successful recruitment of Corps members from across the country, ECAJ President Jillian Segal AO said that “it is incredibly important that we develop young leaders across the smaller states.” Ms Segal concluded, “I believe that this sort of networked group will be extremely valuable to the community in its long-term viability and sustainability and that this is likely to become a signature program for the ECAJ.”

David Gonski AC spoke of the characteristics common to all great leaders and the importance of humility over hubris in leadership. “I wanted to be here to endorse this initiative and to compliment all of the new Corps members who have joined up, good on you ... you are taking the first step towards great leadership,” Mr Gonski concluded.

Representing the philanthropic network, The Giving Forum, Greg Shand, who initiated many of the conversations that led to the foundation of the Corps explained the necessity of leadership, advocacy and succession planning for the future of the community.

“We ought not to be betting our communities’ future on luck,” Mr Shand said. “We need to have an organised process and that is really what TGF wishes to support, an initiative to create the next generation of leaders to ensure we have a depth of talent, orderly succession in our representation and ensure we have a strong voice into the future.”

The audience also heard messages of support from members of the Corps’ sister program, the World Jewish Congress’s Jewish Diplomatic Corps and a special message, read out by ECAJ Deputy President Robert Goot AO SC, from WJC President Ambassador Ronald S. Lauder, who praised the Corps as “an innovation program, made possible through the generosity of The Giving Forum, which fills me with hope for a brighter future.” Ambassador Lauder said, “he was delighted the ECAJ has chosen to invest in its future generations.”

Programming for Corps members consisting of workshops, skills training, conferences, knowledge-building and mentoring will commence early in the new year.

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