

Media Release

More diversity needed in education leadership: 2018 Br John Taylor Fellow

An Aboriginal Catholic educator has today called on school authorities to do more to identify and develop leaders from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Kelly Humphrey is a Kamilaroi woman and the Assistant Principal at St Michael's Catholic Primary school at Coolamon in the diocese of Wagga Wagga.

"There is great diversity among teachers, but that is not translating into diverse leadership," Ms Humphrey said.

"Women are 80% of teaching staff in primary schools and more than 50% of teaching staff in secondary schools – yet the number of women in leadership positions is disproportionately low.

"And among first nations people who are educators, only 7% become Deputy Principals (or equivalent) and just 3% make it to Principal."

Ms Humphrey was today awarded the 2018 Brother John Taylor Fellowship, a \$25,000 research prize provided by Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW) each year to an educator to enable research into an issue that benefits Catholic teaching and education.

She said she will use the prize to study how the corporate sector overseas has successfully diversified its leadership profile.

"Sadly, Australian companies did not rate in the top 50 companies for culturally diverse leaders, nor in the 100 best companies for women's leadership development - despite our nation having one of the world's most culturally diverse societies. Why aren't we more successful in this area?"

"I want to use this prize to research how the corporate world encourages diversity by strategically developing individuals to take on leadership roles with the education sector, and share this with the Catholic education sector."

Ms Humphrey said she will study leadership development programs in the UK and the USA, and participate in Boston's Harvard Graduate School course on Women in Educational Leadership.

CSNSW Chief Executive Officer Dallas McInerney said Ms Humphrey was a standout choice for this year's Fellowship.

"Kelly has been a classroom teacher and an Aboriginal education officer for 12 years. Her research will help shape the future leadership of Catholic education in Australia."

Mr McInerney said the Fellowship was created to honour John Taylor, a Christian Brother, and his dedication to quality education and equity over 30 years as a teacher, principal and Executive Director of Catholic Education Commission NSW, the predecessor body to Catholic Schools NSW.

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