

MEDIA RELEASE



The Hon **David Hawker** MP
Federal Member for Wannon



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RECOGNISING OUR YOUNG SPORTING CHAMPIONS

Federal Member for Wannon, David Hawker, today recognised two of the Ararat region's young sporting champions who have been awarded grants to help them compete at a higher level in their chosen sport.

Ararat's Cortney Williamson and Mininera's Callum Baker each received \$500 through the Federal Government's *Local Sporting Champions* program to assist with travel and expenses to compete at national competitions.

Cortney represented Victoria in the Under 18 National Basketball Championships in Gawler, South Australia, while Callum competed against the best nationally and internationally representing Team Victoria in Athletics at the Pacific School Games in Canberra.

Mr Hawker congratulated the youngsters on their sporting success and said the Local Sporting Champions program is available for individuals and teams throughout the region.

"We often find that cost is the biggest barrier for youth wanting to compete at major sporting competitions," he said.

"The Local Sporting Champions program helps get young Australians, particularly from regional areas, to national and state sporting competitions. We want our youth to be active in sport, and distance or a lack of financial means should not be a barrier to participation."

Mr Hawker said young sportsmen and women in Western Victoria can now apply for their share of the \$1.6 million in Australian Government grants to help them to participate in sporting competitions.

"Individuals and teams are eligible to apply for grants of \$500 and \$3000 respectively. Grants can contribute towards the cost of travel, accommodation, uniforms and equipment to support participation in an official state or national sporting competition or national school sport competition. Recipients must be between 12 and 18 years of age (inclusive) and travelling more than 250km return to compete at these competitions," he said.

Mr Hawker said the Australian Sports Commission manages the Local Sporting Champions program on behalf of the Australian Government.

The Local Sporting Champions grant program is now open. To apply or for more information visit www.ausport.gov.au/champions.

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