

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE1182

Oscar, June

(1962 -)

Born 1 January, 1962, Fitzroy Crossing Western Australia Australia

Occupation Aboriginal leader, Aboriginal rights activist, Administrator, Filmmaker, Health worker, Social justice advocate, Welfare worker, Women's advocacy

Summary

June Oscar, of Punuba descent, was born in 1962 at Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia. She was sent to Perth for her secondary education at the John Forrest senior high school. She left school at the age of 16.

After returning to Fitzroy Crossing, Oscar worked for the state community welfare and health departments. She later became a women's resource officer with the Junjuwa community. She chaired the Marra Worra Worra resource agency until 1991, when she was appointed to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission for a two-year term as a commissioner.

She was a principal of Bunuba Productions, which made the film *Jandamarra*, based on the life of 'Pigeon', the leader of Punuba resistance against European settlement.

Details

June Oscar is a proud Bunuba woman from Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia. She is an advocate and activist for Indigenous people, their languages and culture, with a particular interest in children's and women's issues.

June was appointed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner in June 2017; the first woman to hold this position. She currently sits on the governing council of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and is the chief executive of the Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre in Fitzroy Crossing. She also chairs the Kimberley Language Resource Centre and is a member of the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre.

In 2016 June won the prestigious Desmond Tutu Reconciliation Fellowship. She was awarded an Order of Australia (AO) in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2013 and two years earlier, she was recognized as one of the most influential women in the world.

The year 2012 saw June appointed as an Ambassador for Children and Young People by the Western Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People. She was also an Australian delegate to the UN Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues in New York in both 2009 and 2012. June has previously been the Deputy Director of the Kimberley Land Council and was also the first woman to chair the Marra Worra Worra Resource Agency (Fitzroy Crossing).

In addition to her work on Indigenous issues, June has also been influential in the education sector. She developed a curriculum for an Indigenous Knowledge Program for Wesley College in Victoria and has been a member of many education committees. June has also worked as a director of Bunuba Films for more than twenty years.

Published resources

Edited Book

The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Author Details

Leonarda Kovacic and Barbara Lemon

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