

2025 Zonta Young
Women in Leadership
Awardee

Maya Elizabeth Farmer



District 23
Citizenship: Australia

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Citizenship: Australia Maya Elizabeth Farmer is a recent graduate from Toormina High School in New South Wales, where she served as school captain. An avid debater, she was a state semi-finalist in the Plain English Speaking Competition, delivering a speech on the educational divide between metropolitan and rural communities. She competed annually in the Write a Book in a Day, a fundraiser for the Kids' Cancer Project, and has continued her fundraising efforts since beginning her psychology studies at the University of Melbourne as a Hansen Scholar. Maya is a committed advocate for climate justice. She volunteers with the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, through which she has lobbied members of parliament, delivered climate education workshops in schools, and organized climate action events in her hometown. Her local efforts included coordinating youth-led concerts, planning protests and successfully lobbying her local council to declare a climate emergency. In 2024, Maya attended COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan as a youth delegate with Australian Youth for International Climate Engagement. She is also a member of Generation Justice, a group of nine young Australians who lodged a formal complaint with the UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change, arguing that inadequate national climate action violates the human rights of young people. Maya's summer internship with FORE Australia introduced her to key issues in women's health, where she wrote policy briefs exploring the intersection of gender and healthcare. Her interest in advocacy and health equity also led her to participate in the Oceans to Outback fundraiser for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, running 1 kilometre a day throughout October 2024. Maya aspires to work at the intersection of climate justice, rural health and women's rights as a future healthcare practitioner serving regional communities. In her free time, she enjoys reading, hiking and baking while singing (badly, she says) along to musicals.