



NACCHO

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

Media Release

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A Champion of the World Missed

"Lionel Rose was a humble hero who brought so much pride to his people," said Mr Justin Mohamed, Chair of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

The NACCHO Board meeting in Canberra paid tribute to the late great Lionel Rose and expressed their sympathy for his family.

"We were all saddened at the death of Lionel Rose at the age of 62. The legend of his rise from a large family at Jackson's Track near Warragul to become a world boxing champion played a part in all our lives", Mr Mohamed said.

"In 1968 he brought together Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australia to celebrate his World Bantamweight Title victory over Japan's Fighting Harada. The same year he was named Australian of the Year, the first Aboriginal person honoured with the title, and he was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

"He meant a lot to all of us in the Aboriginal community. He showed you can aim high and win. At the same time, he remained humble about his achievements that also included a singing career.

"The planned state funeral for Mr Rose is a fitting tribute. In communities across Australia we are grieving his passing but also celebrating his life", Mr Mohamed said.

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