

## MC OPENING (GALA DINNER)

### Manisha Pannu

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Gala dinner for Elevate 2019, before we begin I'd like to acknowledge and pay respects to the traditional owners of the land on which we meet the gadigal people of the Eora nation, and also like to pay respects to the elders past, present and Future. My name is Manisha and I will be your host for this evening. A couple of housekeeping matters, firstly full disclosure, I'm not funny so don't expect any jokes for tonight. The restrooms are located outside and to the right, the exits are located behind you.

Nothing's ever legitimate until it's on social media so we will be taking photos and videos of this event and the material may be published through various media channels worldwide. If you, if you do not wish to be featured please come and see me or anyone on the YSPN team. The word hashtag has been officially defined in the Oxford Dictionary, so you take any photos tonight please use hashtag Elevate 2019 and tag YSPN in all your posts, we will also be raising funds for YSPN and Sikh Youth Australia, if you'd like to make a donation please see Reshpaul who's standing at the back there. If there's anything else we can do to make your evening more pleasant please don't hesitate to come and see me or anyone on the YSPN team.

Before kickoff the formalities for this evening I'd like to take a couple of minutes to reflect on the events that culminated today. Today is being truly a remarkable day for Sikhs in Australia, we have successfully held the first ever Sikh Professional Conference in Australia which brought together twenty distinguished leaders and over one hundred and sixty attendees from across the region to discuss this story and the evolution of the Australian Sikh community, to be precise the Australian Sikh community is hundred and twenty five thousand Sikhs in Australia and I'm pretty sure we're growing. Your participation and attendance at this event has made Elevate 2019 a success story for this community and so it's only fitting that we come together this evening to celebrate this success. This event has been brought to you by the Young Sikh Professional Network also known as YSPN in association with our parent organization Sikh Youth Australia also known as SYA. A bit about YSPN. YSPN was formed in 2012 with the mission of creating the conditions to assist Sikh professionals to succeed and amplify their influence. We deliver this mission by hosting professional networking events, running a mentoring program and promoting the visibility of Sikhs in Australia and that's in line with the spirit of today's event Elevate 2019, the aim of which is to elevate our community to new heights and the Punjabi Sikh in me saying [03:11 inaudible] that's basically what we need to do.

Today Elevate 2019 is the biggest event YSPN has held in our six year history. So what do we have planned for you all tonight at this event? We will shortly hear from Mrs [03:28 inaudible] the president of Sikh Youth Australia, the parent organization of YSPN, this will be followed by a presentation on the first ever reports detailing the economic impact of Sikhs in Australia. Dinner prepared by solutions Indian restaurant will follow at 7:20 pm, this will be followed by a keynote speech for Mr. Kamal Jeet Singh Bakshi the first turban Sikh MP in New Zealand. Now you can't call this an Indian celebration unless we have some sort of music so we've got that planned as well, we have in store a cultural performance from the very talented Miss Parvyn Kaur from the band of the Bombay Royale and last but not least there will also be an opportunity for us all to network. Many of you may not know that YSPN was actually incubated at the 2012 Sikh Youth Australia Future Leaders camp, throughout the years the

relationship between YSPN and SYA has only strengthened, and we've partnered on several initiatives including and bringing this event together, Elevate 2019. What might make today even more special is that 20 years ago Mr. Harinder Singh co-founded SYA. What was merely an idea twenty years ago has transformed into a unified and resourceful body that is positively impacted Sikhs in Australia and today marks the 20th anniversary of that body that we know as SYA. So without further ado please join hands together to welcome uncle Satwant Singh on stage to share a few words.

[Applause]