



### A Message from the Director



The winds of change. CEFA watched with caution as the federal government unveiled their proposed changes to Youth Allowance. It is true that there are aspects of the new Youth Allowance structure that make sense and will increase the accessibility of youth allowance for some through increasing the parental income limits. It is also true that for some, particularly rural students,

there will be further disadvantage. We have written to the Hon Julia Gillard and stakeholders in other political parties to address our concerns and we hope that the issues raised receive sincere consideration.

The last quarter for CEFA saw the first Rabobank Young Rural Leaders Summit get underway with participants taking part in a life changing seven-day program that was run by Outward Bound and co-sponsored by Thyne Reid Foundation. The quarter also saw CEFA's UTS University Experience Program run for the second year with 21 rural youth from four CEFA communities spend three action packed days in Sydney. So successful has the program been in increasing aspiration

and interest in university that UTS encouraged CEFA to invite Macquarie University on board, allowing us to grow the program, giving more rural students the opportunity to experience first hand what uni would be like. We are delighted to say that Macquarie University instantly embraced the idea which will now enable seven CEFA communities to participate and a total of 35 students.

We are incredibly fortunate to have the encouragement and investment of many partner organisations and donors who make it possible for an increasing number of rural youth in our local education foundation communities to have once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Experiences that are the catalyst for increasing confidence, aspiration and possibility.

Warm Regards

Jocellin Jansson  
Executive Director

### Proposed Changes to Youth Allowance

The federal government's proposed changes to youth allowance are of great concern to CEFA. While there will be some areas of increased assistance for rural youth, there are some that will, without doubt, further disadvantage many. It is proposed that in order to qualify as financially independent from their parents, students must work for 30 hours per week for at least 18 months during a two year period. The current system has been open to abuse by many students 'working' for family owned companies on a high hourly rate but in reality not undertaking much work at all and who are not actually from low income families, yet qualifying as independent. Given this, there was a need for some change, however we foresee that if the proposed method of qualifying is introduced many more rural students will face increased disadvantage. Surely there must be a better way of assessing need and independence which doesn't require a student to defer for two years.

Many students who defer university offers for two years will experience diminished interest in further study as they become accustomed to earning a regular income, lose confidence in their study capability after such a long period out of a study environment, form romantic attachments or become entrenched helping on the farm and feel compelled to stay and 'help out'.

Furthermore it is not realistic to expect rural students to be able to secure 30 hours work a week for 18 months to two years in their local area, particularly in times of on-going drought and economic downturn. Where will these students go?

CEFA strongly urges the federal government not to implement these proposed changes as it will further increase the level of inequity of access to tertiary education for many rural youth.

If you would like more information on the proposed changes, please go the front page of the CEFA website [www.cef.org.au](http://www.cef.org.au)

### New Education Foundations in Dubbo and Quirindi

CEFA is delighted to announce that the Vincent Fairfax Foundation has generously provided the funding to establish local education foundations in both Dubbo and Quirindi in NSW. This will be a great opportunity for youth in these regions. We now need to find a local champion in both of these communities who can assist CEFA in gathering together a local committee to establish the foundation. Do you know of someone in Dubbo or Quirindi who could become our local champion? If so, please let Jocellin know on 1300 652 144.

Being a part of your local Education Foundation is such a rewarding experience. Rick Firman, Chairperson of the Temora & District Education Foundation said, "Our community has really embraced the Foundation. There is such passion and enthusiasm for what we are doing and in our first year we have been able to assist eight students."

"One young student came up to me just recently and said thank you for believing in me and making my dreams a reality. This, for me, is what the Foundation is all about," Rick said.

### Quote of the Quarter

**"To achieve greatness you have to be great. Be the change you want to be. The Rabobank Young Rural Leaders Summit has allowed me to plan the footprints to the change I believe in."**

Summit participant, Jasmine from Narraburra via Temora, NSW on what she gained most from the experience.

## Rabobank Supports Rural Leaders of the Future

The first official Rabobank Young Rural Leaders Summit took place in April and saw 36 young leaders aged 16 to 18 from CEFA communities come together to work on developing their leadership skills and potential. Based on the pilot programs of 2007 and 2008, this year's Summit was generously sponsored by Rabobank and Thyne Reid Foundation and was facilitated by Outward Bound. Participants were selected by their local education foundation and school for the leadership they display in the school and community. Conducted over a seven-day period, the students learnt about individuality, public speaking and stepping outside their comfort zones and also spent time abseiling, negotiating a high ropes course and camping. Participants heard from one of last year's young leaders, Jemima Buckman, on how the program had allowed her to be a stronger leader.

These lessons and activities fostered increased self-confidence, leadership skills and an understanding of working effectively in a team. By developing these attributes, the Summit aspires to encourage and develop confident rural leaders of the future.

A Summit participant, Shannon from Braidwood said the most important thing she gained from the experience was "a sense of community. Everything I achieved was through the support of an awesome group. I am a lot more capable than I ever imagined."

At the completion of the Summit, students were required to present a brief for a community project they plan to implement over the coming months. The project's objective is to directly



Anastasia, Merriwa, NSW and Jessica, Mudgee, NSW

benefit the student's local community.

Shannon plans to establish a group service for young females in the Braidwood region to help overcome their self esteem and confidence issues. Excited about what she hopes to achieve, Shannon believes "everything is possible with the right attitude."

Rabobank was delighted with the success of the Summit. CEO Bruce Dick said, "Rabobank is very pleased with the outcomes of the 2009 Rabobank Young Rural Leaders Summit. We are excited to be continuing our involvement and commitment to rural youth over the next few years and look forward to next year's Summit. I've received many personal thank you notes from participants and it's really uplifting to hear about the positive impacts of the Summit.



2009 Rabobank Young Rural Leaders Summit Participants

Well done to everyone who helped organise the event, particularly the students who committed themselves so admirably."

CEFA is incredibly grateful to Rabobank and Thyne Reid Foundation for their ongoing support of both the Summit and CEFA's mission. With their assistance over the next three years the Rabobank Young Rural Leaders Summit will become an annual event which helps to shape a bright future for rural youth and their communities.

## UTS Experience a Huge Success

A group of 21 rural students and four teachers from Balranald, Coonamble, Moree and Harden Murrumburrah travelled to Sydney to learn about university and city life first hand. The fully funded three-day trip, organised by CEFA with the generous support and funding of the University of Technology (UTS), provided the students with an opportunity to explore the UTS campus, on-site accommodation, hear from students studying at UTS who come from rural communities and importantly, learn in more detail about a faculty of their choosing.

Ruth Thompson, Manager of Student Equity at UTS said that 'for rural students, it can be much harder to achieve their tertiary education goals due to the challenges of cost, distance and separation from family and their local support network. For two years now UTS has funded this University Experience Program. It demystifies the whole concept of university and also explains to students the practical side of making their tertiary education goals a reality.'

Whilst in Sydney the students were also given the opportunity to visit Manly, the IMAX theatre, Darling Harbour and try many different cuisines, plus they enjoyed travelling by plane, train, monorail, taxi and ferry while they were visiting.



Harden Murrumburrah students conducting experiments in the Science lab

'In short,' said Charlotte Middleton, who accompanied the students and chairs the Harden Murrumburrah Education Foundation, 'it was an opportunity of a lifetime for these students and we are really grateful to UTS for giving them this opportunity.'

The students and teacher feedback each year has been incredibly positive with the only area for improvement being that students wanted to be able to explore two universities and more subject

areas. UTS recommended that we invite Macquarie University to participate so that we could extend the program by one day as well as give three additional CEFA schools the opportunity to participate. CEFA is delighted to announce that it took no time at all for Macquarie University to agree to partner the program and planning has already commenced for the 2010 university experience.

## Monaro's Blank Canvas Auction

After a year of planning, the Monaro Education Foundation hosted its inaugural Blank Canvas art auction on Saturday 2 May at the Cooma Showground. More than 60 original pieces of work went under the hammer for the benefit of further education for young school leavers in the Monaro region.

The artists were each provided with a blank canvas and asked to create something unique to be auctioned off at the event.

For a \$10 entry ticket, guests received a drink on arrival, a light supper generously prepared by local students and of course the opportunity to bid on the beautiful artworks on display.

Anne Maslin, a member of the Monaro Education Foundation explained, 'Monaro had a terrific drawcard in that Lucy Culliton, who lives in our district, is a major artist so this was great for our publicity purposes.'

'We felt it was really important to maintain the 'fun' element of the evening and to encourage local artists to take part and bring along their families and friends,' Anne said.

The night was a great success and raised much needed funds to help local students from Monaro and Snowy Mountains regions in their transition from high school.

Well done to the Monaro Education Foundation and a big thank you to the organisers and everyone who attended for making this such a huge success.

## What's on Where in CEFA Communities?

**Temora Debutant Ball** – The Temora & District Education Foundation will host its first Temora & District Debutante of the Year Ball on Friday 28 August at the Temora Town Hall. Judged by local Member for Murrumbidgee, Mr Adrian Piccoli and wife Sonia and CEFA Executive Director, Jocellin Jansson, the Ball will host debutantes from the Temora Anglican, Catholic and Aria Park Debutante Balls, as well as debutantes from Ardlethan. For tickets and enquiries contact Committee Chairman, Rick Firman on (02) 6977 2021 or 0429 204 060.

**High Dining in Coota** – the Cootamundra Education Foundation is hosting a fundraising dinner on Friday 14 August at the esteemed White Ibis Restaurant at 7pm. Tickets are \$50/head for a three-course dining experience and there will be other minor wealth hazards on the night! Guest speaker is Major General Elizabeth Cosson. Please contact David Hain on 0419 277 907 to purchase dinner and raffle tickets.

**Lunch at Bell Trees** – The Upper Hunter Education Foundation is hosting a wonderful lunch at the historic Bell Trees homestead on 12 September. Those arriving at 11am will be treated to a tour of the magnificent homestead before lunch. Another draw card for the event will be an address given by former Sandy Hollow local boy, Stephen Gageler, Solicitor General of Australia. For enquiries and tickets contact Duncan MacIntyre on 02 6545 7231 or email tinagro\_m4@esat.net.au

## CIT Welcomes CEFA Students at Formal Lunch

On Thursday 18 June Dr Colin Adrian of the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) hosted a lunch at the Institute's new restaurant at the Reid Campus to welcome the 11 students CEFA has studying with CIT this year. Dr Adrian was interested to learn of the diverse array of subjects our students have elected to study. In 2010 CIT will offer a mentoring service to all CEFA students studying at the institute to help with their transition away from home and into a new mode of study.



Three of the 11 2009 CIT-CEFA scholarship recipients:  
Front L-R: Amanda Strickland, Emma Allen and Leith Collard.  
Back L-R: Tracey Hayne (CIT) Jocellin Jansson (CEFA) and Dr Colin Adrian (CIT Chief Executive).

## Thanks to the Young & District Education Foundation

Rebecca Wheeler is a grant recipient of the Young & District Education Foundation. Applying for support when she left high school at Hennessy Catholic College in Young, Rebecca received a non-cash grant that helped her to achieve her goal of attending Canberra University to study a double degree of Law and International Studies. To express her gratitude, Rebecca wrote the following letter to the Young Education Foundation and has agreed to CEFA's publishing it.



Rebecca Wheeler

*Dear Young & District Education Foundation,*

*I am just writing to express my gratitude. I am extremely grateful to the foundation for supporting and assisting me with the costs associated with my university degree. Thank you for acknowledging me as a deserving recipient. Thank you for making my dreams a reality and my aspirations possible.*

*I recognise that without your funding so many rural students would not be able to make it in the real world...and one of those students is me. I would be happy to tell my story to other students and potential recipients and let them know that the community is there for them and wants them to succeed. Please feel free to let me know of any way I can promote the Education Foundation as I would love to repay the organisation for its support.*

*I realise that one advantage Young has over its metropolitan counterparts is a caring community that is ready to lend a hand.*

*Thank you so much for your assistance and thank you for easing the burden of financial pressure. I don't know how I would have survived without your support so for that I am tremendously grateful and appreciative.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Rebecca Wheeler*

## Our Mission

To foster the further education, career and personal development opportunities of rural youth, through community based encouragement and financial assistance.