



## Transforming the lives of rural and regional youth through education, training and careers.

### From the CEO's desk...



Since our last newsletter I have been lucky to attend several local Country Education Foundation grant ceremonies and have met with a number of our dedicated volunteers. I've gained valuable insight into what motivates our committees and how well engaged they are with their local communities.

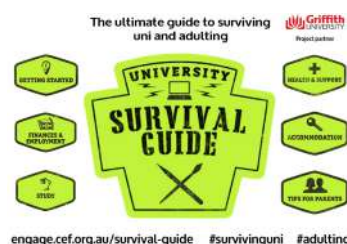
I've also witnessed first-hand the impact CEFA's support has on the diverse group of ambitious young people who receive our

grants and use our resources. I am genuinely excited when I meet the exceptional students we are helping to support through their education and professional journeys, and proud of the part CEFA will play in their futures.

In this newsletter you'll read about our success in measuring the impact CEFA's work. We recently sampled our alumni to find our completion rates for study and training are much higher than the national average. This important piece of work also shines a light on the significance of the partnerships we have with 20 universities around Australia; working together to fund more country students into tertiary education. Our co-funding agreements with universities saw an additional \$175,000 offered to grant recipients in 2016

and we know these funds are a game changer for many of those we support.

As we go to print, our new grant recipients are amongst the thousands of students experiencing university life for the first time. CEFA is helping them through this sometimes daunting but exciting time by producing the 2017 University Survival Guide (USG). Available online, the USG provides useful tips around finding great accommodation, study hints, health and wellbeing, budgeting, cooking and even tips for parents. The USG is proudly presented by Griffith University. You can find the USG at: <http://engage.cef.org.au/survival-guide>



Thank you to each of you for the part you play in supporting the diverse and inspiring aspirations of young people in the country. Next time, I look forward to telling you about the amazing success of our first ever Pig Push.

Until next time, happy Easter.

### Local Support Boosts Completion Rates

As the excitement and headaches of O-Weeks around the country settle and the academic year gets underway for new TAFE and university students, it is worthwhile reflecting on the part CEFA plays in helping young people achieve their education and training goals.

Late last year, we surveyed our 40 local foundations across NSW, QLD, SA and NT, and subsequently around 1,000 alumni to reveal that CEFA's grant recipients undertaking TAFE or other Vocational Education and Training (VET) study had a 90% completion rate, while those studying at university achieved an 87% completion rate.

The 90% completion for VET students is in stark contrast to the figures released by the NSW Department of Education showing an average completion rate of just 20% suggesting that our model of both financial and mentoring support are key to successful outcomes. CEFA CEO Wendy Cohen said the survey data indicated nine out of 10 young people supported by CEFA in the last 20 years have completed their VET training. "This fantastic result backs up what we have always believed - that local support is the best model for ensuring young people achieve their education and training goals. *Continued.....*

CEFA Principal Partners: origin foundation

BOYCE  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

AVIS

Griffith  
UNIVERSITY

MACQUARIE  
University

*Local Support Boosts Completion Rates cont....*

Photographer Terri Bush completed a two-year Advanced Diploma of Photography at Canberra Institute of Technology with support from her local CEF. “The CEF in Boorowa helped me purchase equipment for my photography course and for expenses associated with my end of year exhibitions.

“I definitely would have struggled to do the course if I didn’t get their support; photography is a very expensive course to complete. The extra benefit of CEFA’s program is that they keep in touch during your studies and check on how you are progressing. And there’s the sense of pride you get from being supported by your local community; Boorowa has really got behind me and supported me beyond my studies and into the early stages of my career.” Terri said.



Photographer and Boorowa Grant Recipient, Terri Bush  
*Photo credit: Robyn Armour*

## Meet the Team at the Country Education Foundation of Australia Head Office

CEO Wendy Cohen joined CEFA in September 2016 bringing with her over 14 years executive management experience in the NFP sector and a background in media, film and television in Australia and the United Kingdom.

She was long-standing CEO of Equestrian NSW, guiding them through the equine influenza crisis, securing relief funding for industry members and bringing substantial growth to the organisation with a focus on membership, fundraising and advocacy.

“Growing up in rural NSW has inspired me to return and get involved in progressing opportunities for rural and regional youth. Young people from country areas are vital to a prosperous future for Australia. When our youth do well, our communities do well”

Juliet Petersen is settling onto her role of Partnerships and Committee Liaison. Stepping into the NGO field for the first time after many years teaching in regional schools, Juliet is looking forward to developing CEFA’s national reach through the development of more volunteer-led committees and increased involvement from universities.

“I’m keen to take what I know about education and young people and translate that into support programs and funding to help young people transition to university or tertiary training,” she said.



CEFA Head Office Team (L - R): Annella Powell - Fundraising & Marketing, Laura Egan - Projects & Operations, Deb Carroll - Finance, Wendy Cohen - CEO, Juliet Petersen - Partnerships & Committees, Nicole Wright - Administration

We welcomed Annella Powell as our Fundraising and Marketing Manager in mid-February. Nella was most recently fundraising coordinator for a South African NGO in a development volunteer capacity and prior to that worked for 10 years with Cancer Council NSW’s western region office in events, fundraising, health promotion and management positions. “I’m excited by the opportunities and possibilities ahead for CEFA and helping young Australians overcome the challenges of distance and isolation to achieve their tertiary education or career dreams”

Juliet and Nella join the existing team of Projects and Operations Manager Laura Egan, Finance Manager Deborah Carroll and Nicole Wright in administration.

Looking after CEFA’s Projects and Operations, Laura comes to CEFA after four years of running a home business and raising two small children. Laura has over 20 years’ experience working in the equine and veterinary industries around the world ranging from hands-on mucking out stables and veterinary nursing to roles managing events, member relations and marketing. “I’m passionate about access to quality education and having equal opportunities no matter where you are from”.

In addition to managing CEFA’s financial records and processing donations for local foundations, our Finance Manager Deb Carroll maintains the business records for a family farming enterprise and is Treasurer of the Zonta Club of Orange. Deb’s depth of financial and community experience is a huge asset to CEFA. “We all have a part to play in making our communities stronger and CEFA’s local foundations around Australia are playing their part very well.”

But really, the first person everyone meets whether its over the phone or when they visit the office, is Nicole Wright our administration officer. Nicole brings 12 years of experience in administration, customer service and accounts to her role and says working for a not-for-profit and helping people is the sort of environment she thrives in. “I like being involved in an organisation where I feel I can contribute and together we can make a difference”



## Our Committees - a snapshot of CEFA's reach and impact in 2017



472 grants have been awarded to date

\$668,900 total value of grants to date



6 had previously applied and been unsuccessful



88 have applied for and been successful previously



224 applied for the first time



391 grants for assistance with costs of attending university

35 grants to assist with TAFE/VET costs



46 grants for other costs of employment or training - professional trade memberships, Australian Defence Force etc.



6.5% identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders

162 successful applicants were men



310 successful applicants were women



2017 Kapunda HS Centenary Foundation Grant Recipients (L - R) Back: Chairman, Mr Barry Vogt, Blake Trotta, Jaime Hayward, Curtis Wall, Ben Weichert, Daniel Wilsdon, Emily March, Jordan Bracegirdle, Courtney Bell, Principal Ms Kristen Masters. Front: Tahlia Lukeman, Ashleigh Ruediger, Adele Laubsch, Elise Prior, Cait Stocks, Rhia Daniel, Lisa Daniel & Kristyn Beck. (Absent: Kim Becker, Amy-Beth Davies, Sam Smith and Andrew Dempsey)

## Student Stories

We first met James Ansell in 2013 when a grant from the Central Australian Education Foundation enabled him to travel from Alice Springs to the Australian National University (ANU), Canberra to study.

Fast forward to May 2017 and James, who graduated from a Bachelor of Science majoring in Astronomy/Astrophysics and Science Communication, and honours in Science Communication in 2015 will be a guest speaker alongside his idol, Dr Karl Kruszelnicki at an upcoming CEFA event. "I have always liked the idea of breaking complicated concepts down into layman's terms, like Dr Karl" said James "Without the support of my local CEFA, I simply wouldn't have been able to consider moving to Canberra to study. It was just too expensive. But here I am four years later about to meet and talk with someone who has been inspirational for many young Australians including myself"

James is currently a PhD candidate at the Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science (CPAS), and also working in an administration and a marketing/promotional role at the ANU to help pay the bills.

"I grew up in Alice Springs in the middle of Australia and had a purely spectacular night sky to look at' he says. "At ANU that evolved into involvement with the Black Hole Society (the Astronomy Club), the Physics

Society and the Science Communication Society. Currently I'm an intern on a crowd sourced astronomy project using observations from the Australian Telescope Large Area Survey in Radio. Although my own research tends to focus on the intersection between health science and society.

"Education is the greatest creator of opportunities" said James. "CEFA plays an essential role in opening up opportunities for improvement for individuals, communities and the world we live in. I'm a great example of CEFA giving people from all backgrounds and walks of life an opportunity to achieve more than they ever dreamed of."

When he's not pondering the big questions of black holes, James's hobbies include flying hot air balloons and organising pop-culture conventions like GAMMA. CON which is, as James puts it, a local comic convention.

You can follow James on Twitter @radiogalaxyzoo



2013 Central Australian Education Fund Grant Recipient, James Ansell

# PIG PUSH 2017 - PERCY PERSEVERANCE ARRIVES SAFE AND SOUND

Boorowa to Orange

"... these are real people in real rural families, they've got plenty of go about them, just sometimes they need a helping hand financially and a bit of encouragement. It's about giving them a leg up to get on with their chosen pursuits."

Justin Fleming,  
Boorowa Real Estate  
Pig Push organiser and fundraiser



**While the Pig Push 2017 concluded on April 1st it's not too late to add your support by donating to Percy below. Alternatively you may like to make a general donation to us to help more rural and regional young Australians access further education, training and jobs.**

Thank you for helping us get more rural and regional school leavers on their way to achieving their dreams.

Please complete this form and mail to:  
Country Education Foundation,  
PO Box 245, Orange NSW 2800.

Payment Details:

**By Cheque:** Please make your cheque payable to the Country Education Foundation of Australia.

**Bank Transfer:** Please make your payment directly to the following account:  
Country Education Foundation of Australia  
BSB: 062-629 Account: 1009 0818 Reference: (YOUR NAME)

**By Credit Card:**

Name on card

Card number

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Expiry Date

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CCV

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Visa

MasterCard

AMEX

Signature

Please send my tax receipt to:  my email or  my postal address

Please add me to the CEFA mailing list (your details will never be shared with a third party).

You can also quickly and easily make a donation to the Country Education Foundation by visiting [www.cefa.org.au](http://www.cefa.org.au) and clicking the **Donate Now** button on the home page or by phoning 1300 652 144. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

Name

Address

Email

I would like to donate

\$25  \$50  \$100

(nominate your donation amount)



The Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEFA) is a national not-for-profit organisation assisting rural and regional students to pursue their higher education, training and career goals. With your help we provide financial grants, scholarships, mentoring and support.

The CEFA family is proud to have over 40 local education foundation committees operating throughout New South Wales, Queensland, the Northern Territory and South Australia.

Since 1993 we've given almost 4,000 grants to young people across Australia. CEFA has helped apprentices buy their toolkits, funded laptops and textbooks for TAFE students and helped remote students travel to capital cities to study at university. Our support services also include an annual University Survival Guide, a Scholarship Guide and student mentor programs.

To find out more about our life-changing work  
please visit [www.cefa.org.au](http://www.cefa.org.au) or phone us on 1300 652 144