



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

From the CEO's desk...

In the lead up to Christmas I'd like to wish you all a very joyous and peaceful festive season. It's really the most fabulous time of the year here in Orange with the never-ending green vistas, warmer weather and cicada song. I hope it's lovely where you are too.



This is a whole-of-team effort and will be helmed by project officer Christina Parkin from Port Macquarie (also a member of the CEF family as a volunteer with the Hastings committee) and the engagement campaign will be steered by seasoned campaigner, journalist and local Orange boy, Stephen Offner.

As we approach this special time for giving and our thoughts turn to others, I'd ask that you might again think of the wonderful young people the Country Education Foundation and our local foundations support each year. If you are considering a donation for Christmas we'd be so grateful if you could continue to support country kids along their path to further education, training, and eventually, jobs.

One great way to donate - and receive tax deductibility - is via our new, refreshed and rejuvenated website www.cef.org.au.

We are very proud of the website – the way it looks, functions and the information it contains. Visit the new site to access the just released annual review which contains the good news stories from CEF for the 2016-2017 financial year – our new local foundations, student stories, our impact on communities and their local students, and a summary of our vision for the next few years.

A crucial element of our continued growth and capacity to impact the lives of even more young people across Australia is the successful rollout of our CEF Alumni Project.

November marked the official kick-off of the second phase of the project which will see CEF locate and engage with as many of our alumni from 1993 onwards as possible.

The project is due to be completed by mid-next year and will be the launch-pad for several important sustainability initiatives including mentoring, regular giving, impact measurement and CEF ambassador stories. The CEF Alumni Project Phase Two is supported by Origin Foundation, The Snow Foundation and The Vernon Foundation – thank you to these valued partners.

If you hear from Christina as she goes about her investigations, or if you have any ideas that might help us contact as many past grant recipients as we can, we'd love your help.

As always, thank you all - our volunteers, our donors and supporters and our corporate and education partners. We wouldn't be able to assist the 475 students we did in 2017 without you.

And finally, thanks to the generous CEF Board and to the exceptional team at CEF, it's a pleasure working with you all. I look forward to an even better 2018.

Until next time, stay safe and well.



www.cef.org.au/scholarships-guide/

Scholarship Guide

The 2018 CEF Scholarship Guide was launched in October.

This year we were lucky enough to have Macquarie University sign on as naming sponsors for the second year in a row. It's wonderful to have such committed support from our education partners, not just for our students, but also the resources we offer to all youth.

We encourage students, prospective university-goers, parents, carers and friends to look at this comprehensive guide available of scholarships. Please share with anyone you know who is capable and willing to put themselves out there for their futures.

Percy hits the road

In late October CEF spent a few days at the National Field Days in Borenore with Percy the Pig. This was the first time the CEF HQ has attended the National Field Days, and it was a successful exercise in helping to spread the word about who we are, what we do and where we are located.

We met a lot of interested students and parents and a lot of field day-goers had heard of Percy's travels in the Central West.

Percy will be on the road again in 2018!

CEF Principal Partners:



Paroo feeling success of past beneficiaries

Almost 12 years on from its inception the Country Education Foundation of Paroo, formally known as the Paroo Education Group, is starting to foster its next generation of committee members.

This is no easy task for a local foundation that covers an area of almost 48,000 square kilometres in South East Queensland. The largest town in the Paroo Shire is Cunnamulla, which is also home the shire's only high school.

The first generation of Paroo committee members are largely teachers, with the exception of chair Trish McKenzie, who is a farmer.

The in-coming generation of committee members are teachers, past grant recipients who have returned to the region, and even the wives and partners of these alumni.

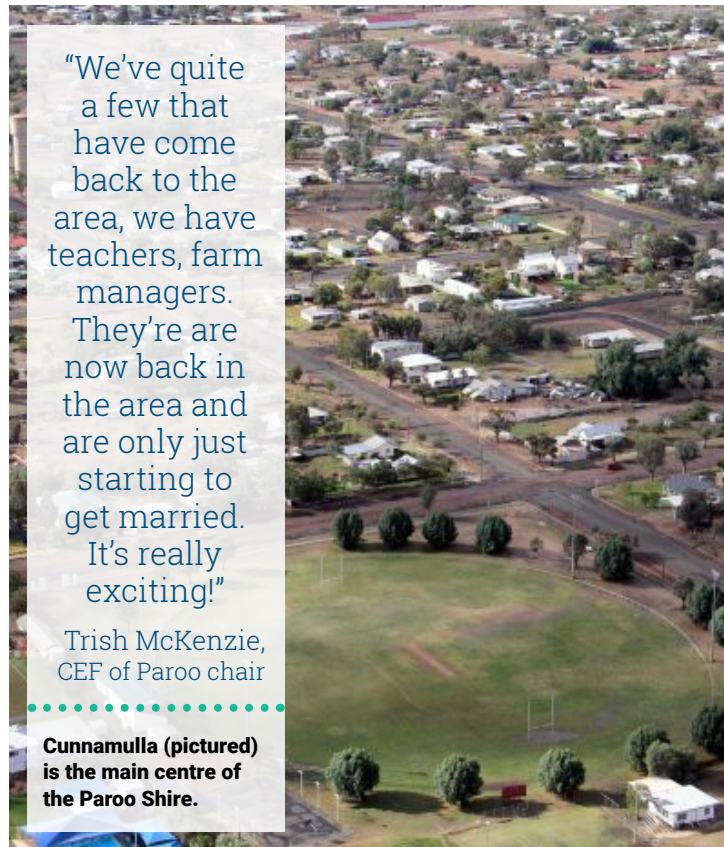
"We've quite a few that have come back to the area, we have teachers, farm managers. They're are now back in the area and are only just starting to get married. It's really exciting!"

"As I look at our list we've got nurses, and some of them haven't come back here, but I know they have gone back to rural areas. We have a teachers that have come back to teach here."

"We've helped some young men that have come back and are now farm managers and that type of thing."

Despite distances, this succession of membership has come naturally. The Paroo Shire may be large in size, and small on population, but it is close-knit and community-minded.

"We have a new secretary this year, a young teacher who's just had a baby. We also have a couple of former recipients on our committee, including a teacher."



"We've quite a few that have come back to the area, we have teachers, farm managers. They're are now back in the area and are only just starting to get married. It's really exciting!"

Trish McKenzie,
CEF of Paroo chair

Cunnamulla (pictured) is the main centre of the Paroo Shire.

"I can see we will have opportunities to hand this on. The existing committee is almost getting to the point of burnout after 12 years and I think this next group is keen enough to step up the plate."

"There's not enough people for the number of committees out here in this community. It's tricky."

One of Paroo's real challenges has been finding students who are seeking these CEF grants.

Only four students will graduate Year 12 this year at Cunnamulla State School, and all are planning to stay in the shire. The rest of the shire's students are educated at boarding schools or by distance education.

"The need has grown with the drought, but the take up comes in ebbs and flows," Trish explained.

"There are lots of young, married, returning 28 to 30-year-olds we helped when they were finishing school. There are many in that

age group, when they were going off to uni. Then there's a smaller group now."

"There is a bit of a changing dynamic."

"I don't think the need is growing as far as the number of kids, but it hasn't gotten financially easier for anyone over the past couple of years."

Trish recognises the students that are educated at the local high school seem to struggle the most in finding what direction they want to go in.

"But, we do not give up on them! We might only give (a student) a \$200 grant so we can help them a bit and stay in their mind. We hope by giving them a little we hope we can help keep them engaged and motivated."

"The teachers have encouraged them as much as possible and have done what they can, but we can not do any more until they know what they want to do. They can come to us at any time and we will help them."

Bite of drought takes shine off fundraising

Paroo's relationship with the local Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA) branch is strong, and both organisations have found it beneficial to fundraise together.

"We quite often combine with the local ICPA and will cater a clearing sale or workshop together. Every now and then we'll do one on our own. But we often try to do it with them, we have the same goals."

"If we cater something we have the information there and we promote it, but we really don't try and get a lot of our own local support."

"People are doing it tough enough around here, and they help a lot of organisations."

To combat this local donor fatigue Trish says the foundation committee works quietly.

"We try and get funds from outside. If I talk to someone I will mention CEF, but none of us have time to sit down and write 50 letters anymore. I'm more likely to gauge their interest and then send them information."

Trish said they look for opportunities that are time efficient and won't stretch volunteers too far, considering most people are involved in more than one local organisation.

DO YOU WANT TO HELP? For more information about how to join one of our 43 local foundation committees and where they are located www.cef.org.au

Gunnedah girls take ambitions, dreams and make them a reality

Gunnedah is still home for Ivy Watterson and Megan Isbester. The childhood friends may have left home to go onto university, but the connections and support they have from the Gunnedah community are still alive and well.

"I love driving home to Gunnedah and having that feeling (of home). I still do miss home after three years, I thought it would get easier every time I leave home. It really does show that I value where I grew up and the opportunities I received in Gunnedah," Megan said passionately.

"Gunnedah is very much home. You don't realise how great it is until you do move away," Ivy agreed.

Ivy – a university graduate living in Armidale, and Megan – a third year teaching student living in Wollongong have both been supported by Gunnedah and District Education Fund during their studies.

Ivy now works as a marketing officer and will soon make the move to the central coast. It was Ivy who first learned about Gunnedah CEF, and recommended Megan pursue a grant when she went to university a year later.

"I started uni the year before Megan, and had been involved with CEF and definitely recommended she get on to it," Ivy said.

For Ivy, the \$9000 in grant money she received over her three years at university, allowed her to live independently.

"It helped me with accommodation, it supplemented what I was earning while I was working," Ivy said.

"I was concerned about the cost. I knew that I wanted to go to college but I didn't really comprehend how hard it would be to study, work and try to pay for it all."



Megan Isbester and Ivy Watterson

"I really wanted to be able to do it myself, and not ask for my parents' help, I'm a little bit stubborn like that. I couldn't just rely on my parents to fund college, especially because it's something I wanted to do."

Megan tells a similar story.

"With the scholarship money and working I haven't had to rely on my parents much, and for me – the independent person I am – I've loved that I could do that because of this money I received," Megan said candidly.

Megan, who is starting to think about career opportunities after her graduation next year, says she has felt the impact of CEF's support every day.

"You need money to live, you need money to be social and have fun with your friends. The three lots of \$3000 from CEF has just helped me so much, I've put it all toward my rent. I'm very fortunate," Megan said.

"It just really relieves the burden of the financial side of uni."

"It's a very daunting thing when you start to look at the costs of accommodation, particularly in Wollongong and living on the coast, it's very different. Even finding a park you must have money. Everything in your lifestyle changes from living in the country".

"With this money it just allows you to be able to live. And to feel comfortable and you're not constantly thinking do I have enough money to get through this week."

Ivy agreed in full with Megan.

"It helps you to focus on something other than money," Ivy said.

"Money is always going to be a concern no matter what you are doing, but it really helps you prioritise what's important, and at the end of the day that's your degree."

Both young women demonstrate that their strong personalities and determination have led them to successful starts, and that their character will continue to support their ambitions throughout their futures.

It's heartening to know the Gunnedah community is helping support their future leaders, and that the Country Education Foundation name is part it.

Committee engagement promotes greater insights and brand power

Local foundations

It's been a most encouraging and rewarding few months for our partnerships and committee liason, Juliet Petersen, with a great deal of committee engagement stretching from Adelaide, Griffith and up to Narrabri. We can also happily announce that most of our local foundations are transitioning to the CEF brand.

In September Wendy Cohen and Juliet attended a forum for members of our South Australian and Central Australia committees in Adelaide along with CEF founders Nick and Julia Burton Taylor.

The event was also attended by students, education partners and supporters.

The discussions ranged from succession planning to commu-

nity engagement and corporate sponsorship.

The past two months have also been full of road trips throughout NSW. Wendy and Juliet caught up with four local foundations over lunch. Connecting with Griffith, West Wyalong, Edward River and Coleambally/Darlington Point committees enabled the national office to hear of some of the local foundations' successes

and challenges. Issues such as fundraising and the CEF brand were discussed. Juliet also visited Gilgandra, Gunnedah and Narrabri as part of our overall engagement strategy.

"I have found these connections beneficial, and I find myself feeling more comfortable in my ability to help our local foundations and committees," Juliet said.

THIS CHRISTMAS WE ARE ASKING YOU TO GIVE THE GIFT OF A BRIGHT FUTURE



Don't let a young person's postcode hold them back.

When you donate to CEF you invest in the future of young people in rural and regional Australia, and their communities. Every dollar you donate to CEF goes to helping overcome the unique financial, social and geographical obstacles facing school leavers living in the country.

As a small charity we battle each year to meet the growing challenge of closing the participation gap between country students and their city cousins. We hope you'll join to take on this challenge together.

Support CEF and you'll be helping change the lives of many ambitious and talented young people who otherwise might not have the chance to study at all.

The power of ambition is transformative, and we need your help to keep country kids' dreams alive. Please donate to the Country Education Foundation so you 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

Name

Address

Email

Phone

I would like to donate

\$25 \$50 \$100

(nominate your donation amount)

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)

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Name on card

Card number

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Signature

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

Please add me to the CEF 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.cef.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.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET YOUR NEWS FROM US?

In an effort to save some trees the Country Education Foundation is wondering how you would like to keep receiving our news? This effort is also about saving on some of the mail out costs. The savings we make on a reduced mailing list will be directed toward helping country youth - the main aim of this organisation.

Name:

I would like to receive CEF newsletters and updates by:

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