



**EDUCATION
CHANGES LIVES.
AND FAMILIES.
AND COMMUNITIES.**

From the CEO's desk...



COVID may still be lurking, but we are determined not to let this slow us down. With more than 800 student applications already received, and many more still coming in, it is clear our volunteers are working hard to ensure their young people are aware of and can access CEF's support.

This is something our grant recipients don't take lightly either. You will read some of the wonderful things they have to say in this newsletter.

January saw Laura Egan, a longstanding and valued staff member, depart CEF for her next adventure. We have taken this opportunity to make some changes that will set CEF up well for the future - including the welcoming of two new team members to the national office.

You know that as an organisation, CEF is committed to achieving educational equality for our rural and regional youth. But what about our students who also live with a disability? The wonderful Karlee Symonds from Shoalhaven tells us about her experiences.

And lastly, an exciting announcement that no doubt you have been waiting for over three years to hear!

Juliet

Juliet Petersen, CEO



52 Hill Street, Orange NSW 2800
PO Box 245, Orange NSW 2800
1300 652 144 | info@cef.org.au

**The feeling
is Mutual**

We start the year with the announcement of another exciting new partnership.

Mutual Marketplace was established in 2016 by the credit union industry to optimise procurement opportunities and deliver savings for the benefit of all members.

They work with the ethos that we can achieve more together than we can alone. This philosophy is at the core of what we do at CEF, so we did not hesitate to sign on the dotted line to cement the partnership.

CEF and Mutual Marketplace will work together at a grassroots level to support young students financially as well as with training and mentoring opportunities. This type of support will focus on increasing student aspirations and community engagement in rural and regional areas.

Mutual Marketplace General Manager, Richard Austin commented, "The CEF partnership is a wonderful opportunity to work with an organisation doing great work in regional communities where we can actually add measurable impact."



He also noted, "We can see that the team at CEF are genuinely focused on maximising the opportunity, to deliver improved benefits for the people they support and that they are interested in a meaningful partnership."

CEF Chief Executive Officer, Juliet Petersen, says, "This partnership will explore new and different ways to support our regional youth beyond the financial, including leadership training and mentoring opportunities, initiatives that we are very keen to explore."

The partnership has already taken a positive step in this new direction, with six lucky students nominated by their local foundations to receive refurbished laptops to help them with their studies.

The students who received laptops were overwhelmed and extremely grateful for their new goodies, and are already putting them to good use.

We look forward to seeing what our collaboration with Mutual Marketplace will deliver.

“ Thank you for making this possible. It has enabled me to study and being a student of TAFE Digital, I cannot do it without a reliable laptop. I am completely independent at the age of 16, and digital study is the only option for me. ”

CLINTON GRAY

CEF Orange & Districts



LIAM FRENCH

CEF Walgett

“ I'd like to say thank you for the laptop. It will help me with my plumbing studies at TAFE and also doing research and watching videos of how to complete tasks. Thank you again I am ever so grateful. ”

Have you seen or heard about us?

It seems the work of CEF at the community and national levels is really starting to be noticed, which is pretty fantastic. If you have come across any media coverage, we'd love to hear about it.

Get in touch via email or share away on socials - spread the word!

CEF Principal Partners:



Audi Foundation



CONNECT

- www.cef.org.au
- @countryeducationfoundation
- @countryeducationfoundation
- @CEF-Australia



"I have loved working with Trish and the girls at the Paroo local foundation. They are lovely and I hope they keep doing what they are doing."

Lachlan Sheahan

CEF Paroo, QLD

Wal Dunsdon Memorial Scholar



"My local foundation was so supportive when I was going through loss, and a really hard time in my life. Thank you so much, WWW Clare!"

Abbey Bubner

WWW Clare, SA

Grant recipient



"My local foundation contact has been wonderful. I cannot believe how supportive she has been, and I thank her for making everything so easy."

Mason Anderson

CEF Balranald, NSW

Grant recipient



Beyond the Financial

As the next cohort of CEF grant and scholarship recipients begin their post-school education journeys, we thought this would be the perfect time to reflect on just how much CEF, and in particular our wonderful volunteers, mean to our students.

Twice a year we ask recipients to fill out a short report, letting us know about their successes and challenges during the year. We also ask them to tell us how CEF has helped them.

Overwhelmingly, they report what a wonderful experience it is to be part of CEF and to be supported by them.



CEF recipients say they have a great relationship with their local foundation and would look to be involved with CEF in the future as a result.

**CEF student end of year report 2021



"I'd just like to say thanks to my local foundation. I really can't express how grateful I am. In particular, thanks to Chris who is always keen to hear what I've been up to and is very supportive."

Tryphina Reu

CEF Central Australia, NT

Mary Vernon - CEF Scholar



"Great Lakes Education Fund (GLEF) is an amazing local foundation that has supported my university journey for 2 years. I am forever grateful for the funding provided and support offered."

Craig Lewis

Great Lakes Education Fund, NSW

Grant recipient



"I would just like you all to know that you are part of my success story, and please be extremely proud of yourselves because you made a little regional kid's dream come true."

Patricia Condino

CEF Walgett, NSW

Findex Community Fund - CEF Scholar

Genetics key for Karlee

At just 19 years of age, the remarkable Karlee Symonds from Shoalhaven Heads on the South Coast of NSW, is achieving in ways that showcase the true capabilities of people living with a disability.

Karlee was born with an inherited genetic eye condition that causes severe vision loss and is classified as legally blind.

This experience gave Karlee a passion for genetics and led her straight to a Bachelor of Health and Medical Science with the University of Wollongong. After completing her undergraduate degree, she plans to obtain a Master of Genetic Counselling, a highly specialised and emerging field.

Genetic counsellors provide information about how genetic conditions are inherited or who in families may be at risk of developing a particular condition. They also provide emotional and practical support to help people adjust to living with, or being at risk of, a genetic condition.

Finishing her first year of university amidst the COVID confusion is an achievement of which Karlee is especially proud, as online learning can be particularly challenging. Despite the unique and complex challenges presented to her, Karlee received High Distinctions and Distinctions, something few people can claim at the best of times.

"I rely on my sense of touch. Zoom classes meant I was unable to feel the models or diagrams, which made it hard to visualise in my head."

The support Karlee received from the Shoalhaven Education Fund (SEF) and CEF partners The Snow Foundation and Audi Foundation, enabled her to purchase the expensive materials and technology she needs in order to undertake her studies.

The impact of the funding Karlee received is immeasurable. She has purchased a PIAF tactile image maker which she explains, "is a machine capable of transferring drawings and diagrams into a tactile format for me to feel." Additionally, unable to drive and with a lack of public transport nearby, Karlee says, "without the valuable funds I would have struggled to travel up to uni each week."

Just like the wonderful volunteers from the Shoalhaven Education Fund who have supported her, Karlee is keen to help others.

AN ADVOCATE FOR UNDERSTANDING AND CHANGE

Accessibility. Equity. Capability. These are words that are so important to Karlee, and with good reason. Despite technological advancements and campaigns to correct the misconceptions about those living with a disability there is still a long road ahead. Karlee knows this and is determined to help drive change. "I aim to be a role model for other individuals who live with disabilities, especially those with vision impairment."

"Constantly, people are telling us what we are capable of doing and I want to prove that we can pursue any dream or aspiration and are just as capable as other individuals."

Like many of the 3.96 million Australians living with a disability, Karlee has found it difficult to gain employment due to "false perception and negative attitudes." This is one of the reasons financial support from CEF has been so important to her. Statistics show that 58% of people who are blind or have low vision and want to work are unemployed.

Like the wider population, many of those living with a disability are intelligent, dedicated and talented. As Karlee accurately states, they are capable and willing to make great contributions not only to the workforce but to our communities. And in her case, even our country.



TAKING IT ALL IN HER (EXCEPTIONAL) STRIDE

Karlee is a competitive parathlete. And a very accomplished one at that. Since she started running competitively at the age of 15, she has broken many Australian records in the 100m, 200m, 400m, and 800m track events.

She represented the University of Wollongong at the 2021 University Athletic Games, bringing home a gold medal which was a highlight of the year for her. Karlee is a member of Athletics Wollongong; represented Australia at the 2019 Oceania Area Championships and is committed to - and has a great chance of - representing her country at the 2024 Paralympic Games in Paris.

Karlee doesn't just win gold, she is gold. Whether she is acing exams, breaking records or smashing stereotypes, Karlee is an extremely impressive young woman. Despite living in the dark, she is more enlightened than most.



Karlee with her guide dog, Olympia.

The Snow Foundation is a longstanding partner of CEF. 2022 is the second year of an amazing \$100,000 per year, five-year commitment, including **Snow Foundation Scholarships** for students from Shoalhaven, Yass, Braidwood, Goulburn and Snowy Monaro.



AUDI FOUNDATION TURNS FIVE!

When Audi Foundation was established in 2017, CEF was proud to be announced as an inaugural charity partner, and we continue this partnership today. During this time, Audi Foundation has provided **\$105,000 in scholarships** to students just like Karlee. We will be sharing more stories with you during the year about the incredible impact Audi Foundation has had on our rural and regional youth.



Percy's Back!



**He is rested. He is rejuvenated.
And like the rest of us, ready to get back out into the world!**
Percy and his dedicated support team will hit the road from Boorowa to Orange in September.
Be sure to connect with us on social media to keep up-to-date with ways you can get involved with **Pig Push 2022**.

Please donate to help more rural and regional youth continue their education and training

CEF is a registered charity with Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR1) status. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

There are three easy ways to donate to CEF

Online: visit www.cef.org.au and click the **Donate** button

Phone: 1300 652 144

Mail: Country Education Foundation
PO Box 245, Orange NSW 2800

I would like to make my donation

Weekly Monthly Annually Once off

I would like to donate

\$25 \$50 \$100 Own choice

Please make my tax receipt in the name of:

| | |
|---------|----------------------|
| Name | <input type="text"/> |
| Address | <input type="text"/> |
| | <input type="text"/> |
| Email | <input type="text"/> |
| Phone | <input type="text"/> |

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

Payment options

Cheque: Payable to Country Education Foundation of Australia

Bank Transfer: Country Education Foundation of Australia
BSB: 062-629 Account: 1009 0818 Reference: (YOUR NAME)

Credit Card:

Name on card

Card number

Expiry Date

CCV

Visa

MasterCard

AMEX

Signature

Please send me some information about leaving a gift in my will



EDUCATION
CHANGES LIVES.
AND FAMILIES.
AND COMMUNITIES.



**DONATE
ONLINE**