



Autumn Newsletter 2023



Education changes lives. And families. And communities.

FROM THE CEO'S DESK...

It's great to be bringing you this Autumn edition of our newsletter, the first of the year and the first in its solely online form.

This is a particularly special time in CEF's calendar when our volunteers and communities see the fruits of their labour. With many of our grant recipients heading to their new home away from home for the first time, this is an exciting, daunting and overwhelming time and as we know, every young person will handle this change very differently. This is why partnering with PeopleSense by Altius makes a lot of sense, which you will read more about in this newsletter.



Finally, 2023 is not just any year at CEF. We are delighted to be celebrating 30 years of support for our rural and regional youth and look forward to sharing this with you.

All the best,

Julie Petersen



Celebrating 30 years!

Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF) was born around a kitchen table in Boorowa NSW in 1993.

Once the seed was planted, that with community support, regional youth could access the same educational opportunities that their city cousins already enjoyed, the idea spread to surrounding towns and regions.

In 2003, Country Education Foundation of Australia (CEF) was established as a national charity.

Fast forward to 2023, CEF has 44 local foundations across five states and territories with over 415 dedicated volunteers.

Thanks to your support, we are excited to celebrate 30 years of changing lives. And families. And communities.

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COOPER IS ON A MISSION TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Dear CEF,

My name is Cooper Wielozynski and I graduated from Broken Hill High School, with my HSC in 2022. I was accepted into Charles Sturt University in Bathurst to pursue a Bachelor of Education and have just moved and commenced my studies.



I have experienced merged classes and watched a lot of teachers leave. This happened during my senior years of schooling which were the important years. I strongly believe there needs to be more information about what is really happening, especially in rural areas.

I have seen the good and bad of school experiences and the outcome of bullying and the cruelty social media. I will strive to make it a better environment for all children. School should be a happy place, a place of safety, something a lot of children might strive for, depending on their living situation.

I have also seen the amazing impact positive teachers who provide guidance and advice can have on a child's education.

I have had some wonderful role models. These people have encouraged and helped me work towards my goal of becoming a teacher.

Throughout my schooling, two teachers have had a tremendous influence on me. Mr Jason Bradley has inspired me immensely. He is a is passionate about his colleagues and students and an extremely knowledgeable teacher who is helpful and willing to assist and give advice, both to staff and students.

Miss Sarah Gillespie is another teacher who has helped shape who I am today. She has shown me what effort and putting 100% into her job looks like. Sarah gives me such motivation in becoming a teacher in a rural school. Teachers like this have chosen this job because they want to inspire and educate students.

I believe education opportunities should be equal and obtainable for all. It shouldn't matter where you live, every child deserves a wonderful education.

I look forward to becoming a teacher, giving back to rural communities and being a role model for future teachers. It shouldn't matter where you live, every child deserves a wonderful education which I would like to be part of.

Out of everything, there is one important thing people need to remember. Everyone should be thankful for the education available to us because some people aren't as fortunate. All you have to do it just do your best and look at the opportunity we're given in receiving an education.

Upon completing my studies, I hope to return to Broken Hill to give back to my local community and everyone that has helped me achieve my goals throughout my schooling years.

I truly believe with the help I am receiving, I will always continue to try my best to inspire others to pursue a teaching degree and to give back, and to help with the shortage of teachers willing to live and work remotely.

**Thank you for reading,
Cooper**



Cooper is one of three Broken Hill University Scholarship recipients for 2023, joining a growing list of students from the region who have been able to pursue tertiary education thanks to longstanding CEF supporters:

- **The McLean Foundation (Rob and Paula McLean)**
- **Eureka Benevolent Foundation (The family Foundation of Roger Massy-Greene and Belinda Hutchinson)**
- **The Zagora Foundation (Leigh and Sue Clifford)**

STUDENT SUPPORT JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY

We are excited to partner with PeopleSense by Altius to offer a mental health support service to all students supported by CEF in 2023. We value the emotional support that our volunteers give to students in their local community, and we have listened and understood that sometimes you would like to be able to offer more.

What is on offer and who is eligible?

Through the assistance program, currently supported CEF recipients will have access to one free session. A student will need to identify themselves as a CEF recipient and the foundation supporting them to confirm eligibility.

- Assistance is available to all CEF students
- One session is covered per student per twelve-month period by CEF
- Self-referral
- If further sessions are required, the Altius Group psychologist will facilitate referral to a GP for a Mental Health Treatment Plan with the same psychologist, or one of the students choice



Altius Group provide support and guidance to organisations and their people to optimise physical, mental and social health.

PeopleSense provide injury management and employee assistance programs to organisations throughout Australia.



Why are we offering this program?

The mental health of young people in Australia continues to be a concern, with rates of diagnosed mental health conditions and significant psychological distress rising, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Almost two in five people (39.6%) aged 16-24 years had mental disorder in the last 12 months
- Almost half (46.6%) the females aged 16-24 years and almost one third (31.2%) of males aged 16-24 years had a mental disorder in the last 12 months
- One in five (20.0%) people aged 16-34 years experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress
- Between 1/4 and 1/3 of people aged 16-34 years old did not or only partially had their need for counselling met



Hosted by CEF Alumna Sophie Gay, 'Young Money' from our partner **Findex Community Fund** is the go-to podcast & toolkit covering essential financial knowledge for young Australians. Listen now on your favourite streaming platform and visit findex.com.au/young-money/ for a library of complimentary resources.



Thanks to principal partner, **Waratah Education Foundation**, this **FREE** online resource not only informs and inspires post-school options, but includes everything our youth need to survive and thrive as students and adults. With plenty of helpful hints, tips and advice from our CEF students and alumni visit <https://cef.org.au/make-it-possible/>.



Celebrating 30 years of supporting rural and regional youth when they need it most.



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