

Patron: Her Excellency, The Honourable Margaret Beazley
AO QC Governor of New South Wales

2021 another big year for BCEF

Bush Children's Education Foundation (BCEF) has been providing support to families in the bush for more than 55 years. The main reason for families needing our help, in addition to their isolation, has been the impact of severe and prolonged droughts.

The after effects on economically disadvantaged and isolated people in the bush from drought, bushfire and the COVID-19 pandemic are still being felt and the mice plague and floods are also impacting many families. This is evidenced by the Board receiving well over 100 applications for our Secondary Rural Boarding Bursaries this year. We have again awarded over 74 Bursaries to 50 families attending 14 NSW regional Boarding Schools for a total cost of more than \$140,000.

We are pleased and proud that we have been able to provide this level of support for so many young people and their families in the Bush with massive support from our donors.

We cannot thank enough our very generous individual and corporate donors who make this possible over many years. Thank you one and all.



2021 Secondary Rural Boarding Bursaries Program

This year we again received over 100 bursary applications. After detailed assessment of these applications 74 bursaries were approved in 2021 at a total cost of around \$140,000. These bursaries will support young people from 50 families, with the students attending 14 boarding schools throughout country NSW including the following.

Rural Boarding Schools Supported in 2021

| |
|--|
| Calrossy Anglican School, Tamworth - 4 students |
| Farrer Memorial Agricultural High School, Tamworth - 14 students |
| Kildare Catholic School, Wagga Wagga - 4 students |
| Kinross Woleroi School, Orange - 2 students |
| Macquarie Anglican Grammar School, Dubbo - 1 student |
| Mater Dei Catholic College, Wagga Wagga - 6 students |
| Presbyterian Ladies College, Armidale - 1 student |
| Red Bend Catholic College, Forbes - 15 students |
| Saint Francis de Sales Regional College, Leeton - 3 students |
| Saint Paul's College, Walla Walla - 2 students |
| Scots All Saints College, Bathurst - 10 students |
| Snowy Mountains Grammar School, Jindabyne - 2 students |
| The Armidale School, Armidale - 2 students |
| Willyama High School, Broken Hill - 1 student |
| Yanco Agricultural High School, Yanco - 7 students |

We again this year embarked on an advertising and marketing campaign to let people in the bush know about the availability of our support. BCEF Director, Duncan Gay, was interviewed on the ABC Country Hour in the Riverina while Richard Dougan was interviewed on the ABC Country Hour, ABC Dubbo, ABC Tamworth, and the ABC's Sunday Morning program Australia All Over. In addition, we advertised in The Land Newspaper Digital Edition in mid-February.

If you know people who need help, please let us know, or have them contact us, or download an application for support from the BCEF website. <http://bcef.org.au/>

While this has been a challenging year for the BCEF Board and our Education, Scholarships & Bursaries Committee due to the large number of Secondary Rural Boarding Bursary applications, the available funding has provided an outstanding result in helping families to educate their children at Rural Boarding Schools.

Current CSU Scholarship Program

In addition to our current program of supporting four scholarships at Charles Sturt University, we have awarded an additional Scholarship this year making a total of five, with three at Wagga Wagga studying Veterinary Science and Animal Science, one at Dubbo studying Early Childhood and Teaching and one at Bathurst also studying Early Childhood and Teaching. Each scholarship is awarded for three years with a total value of \$10,000.

Our scholars are studying the following courses at CSU.

- ☀️ Cara Earlam – Bachelor of Veterinary Science, 4th Year, Wagga Wagga Campus

- ☀️ Hayley Grimson – Bachelor of Early Childhood and Teaching, 3rd Year, Dubbo Campus
- ☀️ Ellie West – Bachelor of Early Childhood and Teaching, 3rd Year, Bathurst Campus
- ☀️ Alex Farquhar Bachelor of Veterinary Science, 2nd Year, Wagga Wagga Campus
- ☀️ Alana Cocking - Bachelor of Animal Science 1st Year, Wagga Wagga Campus

Alana Cocking, our 2021 BCEF Scholar, comes from Attunga and North Tamworth and attended McCarthy Catholic College there. Growing up on a farm gave her the desire to work as a Vet with large animals. She hopes to transfer from Animal Science to Veterinary Science at the end of this year and ultimately work in the bush helping local communities.



Alana Cocking receiving her Scholarship Award from Richard Dougan, Chairman BCEF

We are delighted with the performance of our scholars studying at Charles Sturt University, particularly with the difficulties COVID-19 has caused in 2020 with limited opportunities for students to live and study on campus.

The BCEF selection panel was again privileged to interview outstanding candidates for the BCEF CSU Scholarship and would be delighted to award further scholarships at CSU, University of New England and University of Newcastle, when funds are available. This would help mitigate the severe financial hardship experienced by many country students from isolated areas as they undertake tertiary studies.

ICPA Conference, March 2021, Hay

In March 2021 Chairman, Richard Dougan attended the ICPA NSW Annual Conference where he made a presentation about the activities of BCEF and the availability of our Secondary Rural School Boarding Bursary and CSU Scholarship Programs.

This year's Conference was themed "Thrive in Isolation" and reviewed the many issues concerning the COVID-19 lockdowns and the problems for students and parents studying at interstate schools with mandatory cross-border isolation requirements.



Richard Dougan, at the Hay IPA Conference, responding to questions about the support BCEF provides rural families.



Lesley and Richard Dougan arriving at the Hay Golf Club for the ICPA Annual Conference Dinner

Environmental Factors

The long-term Bureau of Meteorology forecast for winter rainfall is likely to be above average for much of northern, central and eastern Australia extending into South Australia.

Maximum temperatures for winter are likely to be above average for northern, south-western, and south-eastern Australia. June maximum temperatures are likely to be above average for northern and eastern Australia. Minimum temperatures for winter are also likely to be above average for most of Australia.

A stark example of the changes in climate are shown by the photographs below taken 18 months apart beside the Tilpa Pub between Louth and White Cliffs.



Darling River, at Tilpa Pub January 2019



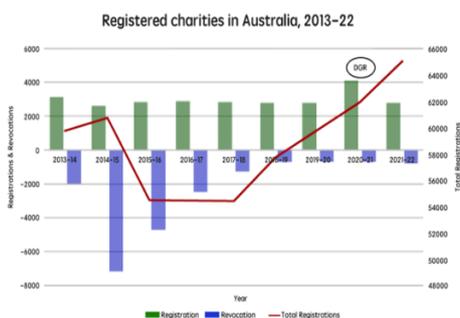
Darling River, at Tilpa Pub October 2020

Economic Factors

The climate outlook is very positive and should assist people to get back on their feet after the drought. Unfortunately, it takes years for farming communities suffering from the drought to reduce debt and to restock their farms. It is also generally agreed that farms have one good year in seven to ten years. We can expect more drought as a part of our Australian climate but this may be exacerbated by climate change.

The uncertainty around our export of agricultural commodities to major trading countries is largely unresolved and may have major economic ramifications for the primary industry sector.

The competition for charitable donations today is extremely high with more than 65,000 Charities and Foundations registered in Australia.



Board Meetings

The Board and its Standing Committees meet regularly throughout the year to manage the affairs of the Foundation and to provide support for the bush as much as possible.

There have been no changes to the composition of the Board since our last communication.

Financial Report

We have had a significant increase in the level of financial support that we have provided for our Rural Secondary School Boarding Bursaries in 2020 and 2021 as shown in the table below.

| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Applications | 75 | 130 | 109 |
| Approved | 48 | 80 | 74 |
| Budget Cost | \$80,000 | \$160,000 | \$140,000 |

BCEF Bursary Approvals and Costs 2019 - 2021

This increase, together with our expanded number of CSU Scholarships has provided a great result in utilising the funds donated for these purposes.

The Board is always concerned that funds donated to support Secondary Bursaries and University Scholarships are applied for this purpose.

We continue to manage our operational expenses to keep them to a minimum and cover them by one-off specific grants or from investment income.

Fundraising & Marketing

The Fundraising & Marketing Committee has done a fantastic job in raising sufficient funds to support the massive increase in our Secondary Rural Boarding Bursaries in the last two years. Major donations from Corporate Organisations and Foundations have helped this enormously as well as our individual and social organisation donors. We have seen the positive impact of the breaking of the drought and the terrific management of the COVID-19 pandemic in New South Wales improve conditions in the bush. However, we anticipate continuing high demand for our Bursary Program and we ask for your ongoing support.

Your support is greatly appreciated in making bursaries and scholarships available.

View and follow our activities through the BCEF website <http://bcef.org.au/> and social media:

<https://twitter.com/BCEFAustralia>
https://www.instagram.com/bcef_australia/
<https://www.facebook.com/BCEFAustralia/>
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/bcef-australia/?viewAsMember=true>

Funding Packages

We can tailor funding packages for individual and corporate donors enabling them to support specific areas. Please contact us if you would like to discuss the level of commitment required in any of these areas.

Recent Testimonials

"Dear BCEF Directors

I'm from Tottenham NSW which is 150km west of Dubbo. I would like to say a massive thank you for the financial support you have been able to provide to my family, which has allowed me to complete my HSC at Scots All Saints College in Bathurst.

I am so grateful for the funds BCEF provided as they allowed me to stay at school throughout the drought and financial hardship of the past few years. I know that without your help I wouldn't have been able to continue my schooling in Bathurst and I'm so grateful and thankful for your selfless support.

After school I have chosen to accept a Gap Year with the RAAF with hopes to study at ADFA and gain training to become a pilot in the RAAF. I have also received offers to study engineering at several universities which is keeping my options open. These opportunities were only made possible through BCEF's funding and I am so thankful for your generosity.

I hope that BCEF can continue to give kids in the bush opportunities such as mine so that children from isolated communities can have the best shot as possible at senior education and the HSC.

Once again, thank you"

"Many thanks to you, the BCEF team and the Board for considering and awarding the boys this bursary funding."

"We would like to thank you very much for awarding the BCEF bursary to our daughter Georgina for 2021 and

are very grateful for the contribution to the increasing costs of boarding school."

"Thank you very much for awarding Angus this bursary towards his boarding fees. We appreciate the support of BCEF."

For all our supporters and stakeholders, thank you for your support through this difficult time. As mentioned earlier in the Newsletter it does not take much for our climate conditions to change and while we expect to maintain similar funding requirements for our Bursary and Scholarship Programs the level of demand is likely to increase significantly with the onset of another drought.

With best wishes



Richard Dougan - Chairman
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Bush Children's Education Foundation of NSW Inc

Directors as at 30th May 2021

Richard Dougan BA, CMC, FIMC, Cert IV & Dip Proj Mgmt
Chairman

Gerald Naughton BCA, FCA, SF Fin, GAICD - Vice Chairman

John McRae -BA, MComm, FCPA, FCA, AICD, JP - Treasurer,
Chair Finance, Management & Investment Committee

Kerry Blight Med, BA, Dip Ed, Ltt B - Chair, Education,
Scholarships & Bursaries Committee

Jenetta Russell OAM GAICD CCEO - Chair, Fundraising,
Marketing & Partnerships Committee

Andrew Heaven BA Dip FP CFP JP - Public Officer

The Hon. Duncan Gay

Rod Cowdroy - BBus

**BCEF is a Registered Charity with tax deductible status
as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR).**

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