



**NCWQ 2025
BURSARY
RECIPIENTS**

President's Message



On 19 June 2025, the National Council of Women of Queensland (NCWQ) was honoured by our Patron, Her Excellency Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, who acknowledged the impact of the NCWQ Bursary Program since 2009.

The brainchild of Past President and Honorary Life Member Noela O'Donnell AM, and former member Gloria Kirkness, the Bursary Program has grown from two NCWQ Bursaries to 38 Bursaries in 2025.

Her Excellency acknowledged the NCWQ Bursary Program has left a legacy, empowered hundreds of female students and earned the title of a signature program for NCWQ.

The Bursary Program would not be possible without the wonderful Sponsors. Thank you to our long-term sponsors and to the new sponsors. Sponsors now include Affiliate Organisations, individuals honouring loved ones, three levels of government, and companies who strive to improve gender equity through education.

I commend the Bursary Team for their dedication and investment in women and girls. Congratulations to Program Manager Kathy Cavanagh AM and the Bursary Team—all volunteers who have this year shown incredible resilience and ability to adjust to change.

I would particularly like to thank Dr Rachael Murray for taking on the challenge of the transition to Zealous, an online platform used successfully for the first time this year. Thank you also to Kley McPherson who guided Rachael to enable the link from the NCWQ website to the new platform which Rachael set up. Rachael and Kathy liaised with the Zealous support staff, organised training and worked with Team Bursary to consider the applications. As an Adjudicator I found the platform easy to navigate, to score and to share my comments with the Coordinator.

This year, Team Bursary have taken on the responsibility of organising the Bursary Presentations. I am thrilled so many of our past Bursary recipients are taking an active role in the event.

Congratulations to the 2025 Bursary recipients. You too were making history when you applied for a Bursary via Zealous. I am interested in your feedback on your experience of applying for a Bursary. The Bursaries aim to acknowledge your achievements and to encourage you to complete your studies, so ultimately you are in a better position to be economically independent. Being a recipient of a Bursary entitles you to complimentary NCWQ membership for 12 months. I encourage you to accept this offer and to take advantage of the opportunities which include attending NCWQ events, wearing the member pin with pride and becoming involved. NCWQ offers opportunities to network, to become part of the Bursary Team and to advocate for gender equity through our Advocacy Hub. I look forward to meeting you, and to your future involvement in in NCWQ. Once again congratulations.

Sandy Smith

NCWQ President

2025 Bursary Recipients

Broken to Brilliant Bursary.

City of Moreton Bay Bursary.

Claire Moore Bursary.

Cr Vicki Howard Bursary.

Hon. David Littleproud MP Bursary.

Elsie Byth Bursary.

ESA International Bursary.

Ethel Rowbotham Memorial Bursary.

Forum Communicators Bursary.

Helen Ovens Memorial Bursary.

Inspirational Connections Adele Rice AM Lifetime Legacy of Learning (ESL) Bursary.

Lavis/Wilson Queensland Child Watch Committee Bursary.

National Council of Jewish Women, Brisbane Section Bursary.

NCWQ Digital Technology Bursary.

NCWQ - Student from a Refugee Background Bursary.

Office for Women Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bursary.

Office for Women Forging Forward Bursary.

PhD Student Bursary.

Queensland Medical Women's Society Bursary.

AMAQ (QMWS) Professor Tess Cramond Memorial Bursary.

Mater Health (QMWS) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bursary.

QMWS Women in Radiology Bursary sponsored by Queensland X-Ray.

Quota Brisbane NCWQ Bursary to honour the late Dr Laurel Macintosh OBE

Rotary E-Club of Nextgen Bursary.

Science Bursary.

Senator Susan McDonald Bursary.

Soroptimist International Bursary.

Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI)

Audrey Martin Life-Long Learning Bursary

Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI) Bursary.

South Burnett Bursary.

The Gown Chick Bursary.

The Kathleen Langan Sports Management Bursary.

The Boyce Bursaries for Students with Disability.

Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR)

Women in Engineering Bursaries - Regional + SEQ

Women's College Bursary.

Women's Network Australia Bursary.

Joanne (Jo) De Simone

Jessica Davidson

Sandra Northfield

Eden Colen

Gabrielle Kerlin

Chelsea Jones

Jemima Davis

Kirra Sparke

Jessica Ruhle

Katie Dowling

Iradukunda Chella

Whitney Smith

Olivia Bennett

Isabella Fernando

Mitra Hussaini

Mackenzie Trenerry

Jaimee Mahony

Hannah O'Connor

Megha Kadian

Marita Bolic

Loyola Wills

Pranathi Settippalli

Ye Li

Phoebe Doolan

Emma Naumann

Meaghan Mannix

Lowana Walker

Jasmin Davidson

Isabella Sorrentino

Charisse Dizon

Tiarnae Fegan

Emma Lockwood

Chloe Mason

Georgia Falting

Milly Latcham

Elisha Pettit

Katherine Dunn

Alice Larkin

Broken to Brilliant Bursary

This inaugural bursary sponsored Broken to Brilliant, reflects their work as a survivor-led charity, to support domestic violence survivors in their journey of healing and rebuilding



My name is Jo and I survived an extremely violent relationship that went on for around 10 years. When I finally left – with nothing but my two young daughters – I had nothing, and I was most assuredly a broken woman.

Things have recently gotten better for me and I was recently accepted by the University of Canberra to complete my Masters in Social Work.

This bursary money will enable me to purchase a laptop in order to complete my course work. I'm so grateful to the sponsors of this award. You have no idea how much it cheered me when I find out I was a successful recipient of this award.

City of Moreton Bay Bursary

This bursary is to assist a female tertiary student from the City of Moreton Bay with her studies. She will have also contributed to the local community.



My name is Jessica Davidson and I'm currently a second-year student at UQ, studying a Bachelor of Science/Arts majoring in Ecology and Conservation Biology.

I grew up in the Moreton Bay Region and value community involvement which began with leadership positions held in high school and has since seen me being involved with organisations such as Zonta, The Lions Club and local charities.

After completing my first year of university I was able to refine my degree to focus on a specific field of environmental science which I'm most passionate about, Ecology and Conservation. I aspire to pursue a career investigating the complex challenges threatening ecosystems and also contribute to the solutions.

Aside from academics I enjoy craft, reading, I'm on my university's cheer team and am currently completing a leadership development program offered through my university.

I would like to thank the City of Moreton Bay for sponsoring this bursary which will enable me to undertake extra-curricular internships and research experience programs which are beneficial for creating networks within the science community and further developing my crucial analysis and data interpretation skills.

Claire Moore Bursary

This bursary for a student of special education reflects the view of former Senator Claire Moore that education provides the best opportunities for us all.



Sandra
Northfield

Imagine being able to make a difference in a young child's life. This is the opportunity that has been granted to me thanks to Sen. Claire Moore and the Claire Moore Bursary.

I am a mature-age student approaching 50 years of age, studying a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) at James Cook University. Take it from me: it is never too late to start fulfilling your dreams! It involves dedication, hard work and some tears, but the rewards are plenty.

With prior experience as a teacher-aide in special education, I knew this was an area I was passionate about and have been privileged to witness how students benefit from support, encouragement and inclusion.

As an online student located in Central Queensland, without the assistance provided by former Senator Claire Moore, I would not be able to access the necessary training or resources required to enable student success. For your learners, these resources are essential for developing speech and language skills, writing skills and social skills. Thank you Claire, for believing in me and allowing me to promote my goal of providing a safe, inclusive learning environment where we can all learn together.

Cr Vicki Howard Bursary

For a female student living in the Brisbane City Council area, this bursary supports a recipient who identifies with the LGBTIQ community.



Eden Colen

I am a second-year student studying a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering at Queensland University of Technology. I identify as bisexual and am proud to be part of Brisbane's LGBTIQ+ community.

To have the support of Cr Vicki Howard means so much to me, and I want to thank her greatly for allowing me the honor of receiving this bursary. Her support will allow me to further commit to my university studies and internships. It will empower me to have even greater confidence as a woman in a highly male dominated field. Therefore, I am truly grateful for this opportunity, and I look forward to making the most of it.

I aspire to one day lead teams of engineers to achieve a more sustainable future, I have gained leadership skills through being the captain of multiple football and cricket teams, becoming a shift supervisor at Red Rooster and taking on leadership responsibilities within university group assignments. I also enjoy volunteering my time to tutor high school students in STEM subjects and have volunteered since 2021 as a crew member for the Torian Pro, a locally run CrossFit competition. I am passionate about ending prejudice against the LGBTIQ+ community.

Hon. David Littleproud MP Bursary

Recognising the difficulties for country students wishing to pursue their education, this bursary is for a female resident of the Maranoa Federal electorate, who is a first year in tertiary studies.



Gabrielle Kerlin

My name is Gabby and I am currently in my first year of studying a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy (Honours) at UniSQ in Toowoomba.

The opportunity to remain close to my community and home at Swan Creek, while pursuing my studies, has been invaluable. Not only has this allowed me to maintain a close connection with friends and family, but it has also enabled me to stay rooted in the environment that has shaped my passion for rural healthcare.

I am very grateful for the bursary sponsored by The Hon. David Littleproud MP. This support will not only help ease the financial pressures faced by regional students like me but also enable me to focus on the kind of student and OT I aspire to be. It will help cover costs such as travel to and from campus, as well as tuition.

I am passionate about supporting communities like the one I grew up in. I hope to one day be able to provide occupational therapy services to people in rural areas who lack easy access to such support.

Elsie Byth Bursary

Sponsored by Dr Susan Byth, this bursary recognises the work of her grandmother, Elsie Byth OBE, (1890–1988) in the National Council of Women, serving as both Queensland and National President.



Chelsea Jones

I am currently a Year 12 Student at Kingaroy State High School, graduating in November of this year, and planning to study Bachelor of Primary Education at the University of Sunshine Coast.

Being from the small community of Kingaroy, one of my main influences and role models in my life has been my teachers. Observing the way teachers have impacted my life and learning has made me realise this career choice will be the most fulfilling and rewarding path for myself.

Making school and the classroom a supportive and inclusive environment where all students are excited to be, alongside feeling safe and empowered with their learning, is my main aspiration.

I thank my Sponsor Dr. Susan Byth for creating this bursary and opportunity as I know this will help me throughout my time at University with my studies and the change of moving from a rural town to a more urban environment and starting this new chapter of my life.

After graduating from University, another one of my goals is to travel overseas and explore more of Australia, hopefully finding a small town similar to the likes of Kingaroy, where I can start my teaching journey.

ESA International Bursary

ESA International is a women's service organisation for Education, Service and Association. With a long history of supporting cancer research and care services, the bursary reflects this focus by assisting a female student whose family is affected by cancer.



Jemima Davis

I am currently in my first year of the Master of Organisational Psychology program at the University of Queensland, having recently completed a Bachelor of Psychological Science (Honours). I am passionate about understanding people and how workplaces can better support wellbeing and performance.

As part of my program, I am completing 1,000 hours of supervised practice towards general registration as a psychologist. This bursary will help cover costs associated with placement such as travel and meals, easing financial pressure and allowing me to focus more fully on my placements and coursework.

My long-term goal is to become an endorsed organisational psychologist and contribute to creating healthy workplaces — after all, we spend a large portion of our lives at work, so these environments should be safe and supportive!

I am very grateful to ESA International for this bursary and the support they provide to me and other students whose families have been affected by cancer.

Ethel Rowbotham Memorial Bursary

This bursary is sponsored by Beverley and Jill Rowbotham in memory of their mother Ethel Rowbotham RN (nee Matthews), who trained in New Zealand and throughout her long nursing career, worked there, and in the United Kingdom and Australia.



Kirra Sparke

My name is Kirra Sparke, and I am currently completing Year 12 at a private girls' college in Ipswich. From a young age, I have aspired to pursue a career in nursing and midwifery, with the goal of working within regional Queensland. This dream stems from my desire to care for others during vulnerable moments.

Throughout my schooling, I have sought opportunities to gain experience in the healthcare field. I have completed both a Certificate II and Certificate III in Health Support Services, and I am currently nearing the completion of my Assistant in Nursing (AIN) qualification. Next year, I plan to commence my studies at the University of Queensland, studying a Bachelor of Nursing and Midwifery.

Growing up in a farming family, I witnessed firsthand the lack of healthcare access and support available in rural communities. This opened my eyes to the pressing need for rural nurses and has been my dream to return to the regions and offer care to farmers and their families. I am incredibly grateful to have been awarded this bursary. The financial support will significantly ease the initial costs of university, including textbooks, uniforms, equipment and other expenses. I would like to express my gratitude to the family of Ethel Rowbotham for supporting future health professionals like myself.

Forum Communicators Bursary

Initially established to assist women's public-speaking skills, Forum, with open membership, offers advice in conducting meetings and organisational procedures. This bursary reflects Forum's passion for communication.



My name is Jess, and I am a new graduate speech pathologist and a 1st year PhD student at UQ. As well as this, I am an avid park-runner, and secretary of the Australian Voice Association.

Thank you so much to the Forum Communicators Association for this award.

As a clinical speech pathologist and researcher, I have a deep understanding of the impact of communication disorders on the population and know first-hand the impact they can make on the lives of individuals. Therefore, I am very grateful for the Forum Communicators Association for supporting my aspiration of becoming trained in laryngoscopy and improving the lives of all adults impacted by voice disorders.

Helen Ovens Memorial Bursary

Helen was well-aware of how easy it is for mothers, especially of young children, to lose their sense of identity. This bursary reflects the importance she gave to maintaining those interests which nourished her as an individual.



I'm a mum of two young children, currently studying a Bachelor of Education with a focus on Industrial Technology and Design. I'm a qualified Fitter and Turner, which is something I'm proud of achieving. I've also spent many years volunteering, including 14 years with the SES and founding a charity that supports young children who have experienced the death of a sibling. Contributing to my community and helping others has always been important to me

This bursary means a great deal. It will help me purchase essential equipment and attend my graduation, making the final steps of this journey a little easier. I'm grateful to the sponsor for recognising the challenge many mothers face in maintaining their identity. Your support helps women like me stay connected to who we are and what we value.

In my role as a teacher, I want to share my skills and experience with the next generation and encourage young people to follow their dreams. I especially hope to inspire girls to consider trades as a real option. More than anything, I want to show my own children that they can achieve whatever they set their minds to and build a secure future doing it.

Inspirational Connections Adele Rice AM Lifetime Legacy of Learning (ESL) Bursary

Adele Rice AM is a nationally recognised expert in multicultural education. She was the Founding Principal of Milperra State School (1984-2012). Chris Knight and Adele have shared a friendship for over 40 years through SIMNI. This bursary is sponsored by Chris' company, Inspirational Connections.



My name is Iradukunda Chella, and I am currently studying a Bachelor of Psychology. I moved to Australia six years ago with my single mother and two young brothers, and since then, life has been full of both challenges and growth.

Coming from a low-income background and being the first in my family to attend university, I've faced many challenges balancing study, part-time work. Despite this, I have remained dedicated to my education because I am passionate about learning more about human behaviour and mental health.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to the bursary sponsor for their generous support. Receiving this bursary means more than financial relief. It gives me the opportunity to focus on my studies and engage in my learning without the constant stress of trying to make ends meet.

My goal is to one day work in educational psychologist field. I want to give back to the community and support others the way I've been supported with the knowledge and experience I gained from my studies. This bursary brings me one step closer to achieving that goal, and I'm incredibly grateful for the encouragement it provides.

Lavis/Wilson Queensland Child Watch Committee Bursary

After 30 years of advocating for quality early childhood education, this Committee continues its legacy by the ongoing sponsorship of a bursary for a student in this field, with a commitment and passion for the education of the 'whole' child.



My name is Whitney Smith, from Innisfail, FNQ. I'm in my second year of studying a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) at James Cook University. From a young age, I've always loved being around children. I started teaching swimming lessons at 14 and spent my teenage years babysitting. When I first finished school, I thought I wanted to study engineering, then transferred to a pharmacy—but neither felt right.

When COVID hit in 2020, I came home from Brisbane and didn't return to university. Instead, I followed my heart and walked into a local childcare centre to ask about starting a career in early childhood education. A friend from school put me in touch with her mother-in-law, who owned a centre about 30 minutes away. I visited that week and started the very next day—and I haven't looked back since.

While some days can be challenging, the smiles and joy from the children make every moment worth it. As someone who still remembers my Year 1 teacher spending time helping me learn to tie my shoelaces, I aspire to be a nurturing, caring teacher that my future students will remember years later.

Winning this bursary has lifted a huge financial weight. It means I can focus on soaking up every learning opportunity without the stress of financial pressure. I'm truly grateful for this support and excited for what's ahead in my journey as an early childhood educator.

National Council of Jewish Women, Brisbane Section Bursary

This bursary reflects the sponsor's interest in the education and advancement of women through support for a student studying in the field of education.



Olivia Bennett

My name is Olivia Bennett, and I am the recipient of the 2025 NCJWA bursary. I would like to thank the NCJWA for their support and this bursary which will help me with my studies over the remainder of my course.

I plan on using the bursary to buy stationery and equipment for my placements but also to help develop myself as an educator. I have previously attended conferences like the annual Home Economics Institute of Australia (HEIA) conference which gives me invaluable knowledge and connections to personnel in the field. Financially, this bursary gives me the freedom to attend personal development conferences and courses without financial burden.

My aspirations are to become a head of department in home economics (or science which is my minor) and revolutionise the way that subjects are taught and received by students. Personally, I want to remove the stigma that subjects like textiles and sewing are traditionally feminine subjects or labour heavy subjects like wood working are masculine. Thank you for this opportunity and I hope to meet more like minded women in the field.

NCWQ Digital Technology Bursary

Sponsored by NCWQ, this bursary aims to encourage more females in the field of digital technology



Isabella Fernando

I am currently in my third year at Queensland University of Technology (QUT), pursuing a double degree in Business (Economics) and Information Technology (Information Systems). I am incredibly grateful to receive this bursary, which will support my studies during my exchange in Singapore as a 2025 New Colombo Plan and ASEAN Centre Scholar.

My program includes a semester at the National University of Singapore, an internship with Investment NSW supporting trade and investment in the region, and learning Mandarin. This bursary will ease the financial pressures of living abroad and allow me to fully engage in my studies, internship, and the local culture.

My interest in the Indo-Pacific began during a study tour to Vietnam, where I explored sustainability and the circular economy. Since then, I have developed a passion for strengthening collaboration between ASEAN and Australia to drive meaningful social, economic, and environmental outcomes.

Before heading on exchange, I volunteered with Rosies and served as Workshop Director at QUT Women in Business. I believe relationships and community are at the heart of personal and professional growth. I wouldn't be where I am without the support of others, and I want to give back in any way I can.

I would like to formally thank NCWQ and acknowledge their generosity and continued support for women based in regional Queensland.

NCWQ Student from a Refugee Background Bursary

An original bursary sponsored from 2009 by NCWQ, this bursary assists a student currently at high school, to further her educational outcomes.



Mitra Hussaini

My name is Mitra Hussaini, and I come from a family that is passionate about education and has always encouraged me to work hard and stay grounded. Education has played a big role in shaping who I am today – not just through school, but through the challenges I've faced and the resilience I've had to build, and helped me to grow. I'm incredibly grateful to the sponsor of this bursary. Your support means more than words can express, and I truly appreciate this opportunity.

This bursary will allow me to fully focus on my studies, especially as I work towards my dream of becoming a doctor. I've always been drawn to medicine – not just because of my love for science, but because I want to help people in moments when they're most vulnerable and give back to the community.

I hope to make a real difference in the lives of others, especially those who feel unheard or overlooked. This bursary brings me one step closer to that future. Thank you for your support.

Office for Women - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bursary

The Queensland Government Office of Women is a long-time supporter of the NCWQ Bursary Program. This bursary provides support to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander tertiary student.



Mackenzie Trenerry

Hi, I'm Mackenzie Trenerry, a proud Kamilaroi woman and a PhD candidate in Water and Sanitary Engineering at Griffith University. My research focuses on improving access to safe, sustainable water in Indigenous communities by integrating traditional knowledge with scientific practice. For me, this work is personal – it's about cultural survival, equity, and ensuring that First Nations voices are central in decisions about water.

I'm deeply honoured to be awarded the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bursary, supported by the Office for Women. This bursary eases financial pressures and allows me to focus more fully on my research, mentoring, and volunteer work. It also represents a powerful message of belief in my journey – and in the broader vision of Indigenous women leading solutions for our communities.

Looking ahead, I hope to be a researcher and advocate who not only works with communities, but uplifts them. My goal is to see more Indigenous women shaping the future of environmental policy and engineering – and inspiring others to walk proudly in both culture and science.

Office for Women - Forging Forward Bursary

This second bursary sponsored by the Queensland Government Office for Women is for a female 'Forging Forward' in a new career path to give greater financial stability.



Jaimee Mahony

I'm an autistic mother, wellbeing advocate, and survivor of childhood domestic family violence, currently undertaking postgraduate study in Mental Health and Neuroscience at the University of the Sunshine Coast. My background spans disasters, child mental health, and national systems reform. I co-founded the Independent Collective of Survivors (ICOS), where I led national advocacy to ensure survivor voices were reflected in the Survivor Statement now in the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children.

This bursary eases the financial pressure of study while raising young children and my contract work supporting families.

My aspiration is to complete a PhD exploring trauma, neurodevelopment, and healing — weaving together neuroscience and lived experience. I believe neuroscience belongs to everyone, and that healing must be led by those who know its shape. I want to transform how children impacted by adversity are seen, heard, and supported across health, education, and policy.

I'm deeply grateful to the Office for Women and NCWQ for backing women like me — women forging forward, even when the path hasn't been easy. Your belief in our potential helps build a better future for everyone. Thank you!

PhD Student Bursary

This anonymously sponsored bursary is for a female PhD candidate, whose research focus will be of benefit to women and their families.



Hannah
O'Connor

Hi, I'm Hannah O'Connor, an Accredited Practising Dietitian and PhD candidate at the University of Queensland's Centre for Health Services Research. My research explores how diet can help prevent Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM), with a focus on supporting a healthy gut microbiota during pregnancy. I am also passionate about understanding how to help women adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviours, especially during pregnancy and postpartum.

I grew up in Vanuatu and now live in Brisbane, where I juggle my research with teaching yoga, working as a dietitian and learning how to make sourdough. My research journey has been shaped by an interest in the links between food, health and behaviour — and I hope to continue contributing to research that improves the health of women and their families.

I'm incredibly grateful to the sponsor of this bursary for supporting my work. Receiving this bursary has allowed me to attend a leading nutrition conference in the United States — an opportunity that would otherwise be out of reach. It's helping me build international networks, strengthen my research, and stay energised for the final stretch of my PhD. My long-term goal is to lead research that drives practical, empowering change in maternal health, particularly for women in rural and regional centres.

Queensland Medical Women's Society (QMWS) Bursary

From its strong focus on supporting professional development including participation in international conferences and networking, the sponsorship of a bursary by QMWS assists female medical students or recent graduates to take advantage of these opportunities.



I'm a passionate molecular biologist and third-year medical student at the University of Queensland, driven by a deep commitment to translational medical research and compassionate clinical care.

My journey began as a child, sparked by the complex medical nature of my brother, who was born with congenital heart disease. Growing up, this introduced me to the world of medicine from an early age, instilling a deep desire to understand the science behind disease and healing.

Witnessing the limitations of existing treatments sparked a lifelong curiosity and drive to contribute to medicine and research, leading me to pursue a PhD in cardiovascular gene therapy at the University of Sydney. My research focused on developing novel gene therapies to prevent cardioembolic stroke. Presenting this research nationally, internationally and publishing in peer-reviewed journals has reinforced my belief in the power of translational science within clinical medicine.

I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to the QMWS and the NCWQ for awarding me this bursary. My ultimate goal is to evolve the cutting edge of medicine, surgery, and research, redefining what's possible for patients and inspire the next generation of innovators.

AMAQ (QMWS) Professor Tess Cramond Memorial Bursary

Former President of AMAQ, Professor Cramond's career ranged across her role in anaesthetics, CPR for Surf Life Savers, and establishing multidisciplinary pain clinics. The purpose of this bursary is to assist the recipient to attend a medical event or conference.



My name is Marita, and I am a sixth-year Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (Honours) student at James Cook University. I'm honoured and very thankful to have been awarded the AMAQ QMWS Bursary.

I was born in and grew up in Mackay before moving to Townsville, and later Cairns, for my medical degree. Throughout my degree, I have travelled across Queensland to undertake placement – including in Cairns, Mount Isa, Weipa and Mackay. I've also travelled to Canberra to complete two medical student research projects. I am also currently completing an honours degree to better understand pain experienced by patients undergoing intrauterine device (IUD) insertion.

My medical student experience has fostered a keen passion for research, and I've really enjoyed participating in and presenting my project findings at several conferences. This bursary will support my attendance at such a conference, whilst also allowing me to build professional networks and contribute to existing medical research.

I am most grateful to the AMAQ and QMWS for their generous sponsorship and look forward to sharing my conference experiences with them.

Mater Health / QMWS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Bursary

As part of their reconciliation and the broader goal to advance the parity of representation of First Nation Peoples in the Australian medical workforce, and its leadership, this bursary sponsored by Mater Health is for a female Indigenous medical student.



Loyola Wills

Kapu Goeyga, Nguzu nel Loyola Jane Wills, I am a Wagadagam woman of Mabuiag Island, Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait). I grew up on Larrakia country, before spending some years on Kurna Land studying; firstly a Bachelor of Arts (International Studies, Sociology, Legal Studies & 'Indigenous' studies) and secondly, the Doctor of Medicine.

Through this time I became a Mother to two kaazi, now 7 years old and 3 years old. I am a PGY2, first year ACRRM Trainee and work in Meanjin. My main goal in the future is to live and work on my ancestral islands, to support my community and their need for a model of care that is designed around, and implements our: cultural values, our ailan kastom, and a strength and research based approach to the chronic health conditions that we suffer as a result of colonisation.

I am on a journey at the moment as a junior Doctor to build the necessary skills required to work in a remote area. I thank the sponsors of this scholarship for providing me the opportunity to do this by way of funding my attendance at important learning experiences to help me build those skills. Mina big eso.

QMWS Women in Radiology Bursary sponsored by Queensland X-Ray

This bursary, offered for the first time in 2025, is possible due to the generosity of Queensland X-Ray in their support for Women in Radiology. It is intended to advance the career and/or leadership aspirations for women training in Radiology.



Pranathi
Settipalli

I am sincerely grateful to the Queensland Medical Women's Society and QLD Xray for this generous bursary and for their continued commitment to empowering women in medicine.

As a female doctor from an immigrant background, I have experienced the challenges of navigating a career in medicine without visible role models or strong female representation in leadership positions. These experiences have fuelled my passion not only for achieving my own goals of becoming a leader in my field, but also for advocating gender diversity and inclusivity through meaningful mentorship and support for other women in medicine.

Through my involvement in medical research, I have been fortunate to connect with like-minded individuals who share a vision for a more equitable healthcare system. With this bursary, I hope to build on these experiences - deepening my contribution to radiology research, engaging with thought leaders, and continuing to promote health equity for underserved and marginalised communities across Australia.

This opportunity strengthens my resolve to lead positive change in medicine, and I am honoured to be part of a community that values equity, diversity, and innovation.

Quota Brisbane NCWQ Bursary to honour the late Dr Laurel Macintosh OBE

This bursary, co-sponsored by Quota Brisbane and NCWQ, honours the late Dr Laurel Macintosh, for a doctor undertaking specialist training in ophthalmology. Laurel, a trailblazer in this field, also worked tirelessly as a member of both Quota and NCWQ.



Ye Li

I am grateful to receive the Dr Laurel Macintosh Bursary and am excited to follow in her footsteps to build the community of female ophthalmologists in Queensland. I have a diverse background, as I was born in China, grew up in the United States, completed high school and university in New Zealand, and started my career in Brisbane since internship.

I aspire to be a clinician-academic - to incorporate clinical practice with evidence-based research in order to provide patients with the best care. To achieve this goal, I regularly publish peer-reviewed articles, present at international meetings, and perform reviewing for indexed journals. A few awards I am proud of including the William MacKenzie medal for early excellence in ophthalmology research, best Young Ophthalmologist presentation at the Asia-Pacific Vitreoretinal Society Congress, best video at RANZCO congress, and first place in the Biomedical Imaging and Research Unit imaging competition in time-lapse biomicroscopy. As an honorary lecturer at the University of Queensland, I enjoy teaching medical students and residents.

In the short term, the bursary will assist with attending the annual RANZCO fellowship exam preparation course this year. In the long term, I plan to pursue multiple international fellowships to provide patients with world-class care.

Rotary E-Club of Nextgen Bursary

As part of Rotary International, this E-Club values the opportunities provided by education and strengthens communities through volunteering. This bursary recognises the difficulties for regional/rural tertiary students to continue their education.



Phoebe Doolan

My name is Phoebe Doolan, and I am a recipient of the Rotary E-Club of Nextgen Bursary.

I am a 3rd year Occupational Therapy Student at CQ University. I am grateful for the support that the Rotary E-Club of NextGen offers to university students. The support of this bursary will allow me to focus on my studies and my seven-week unpaid mental health placement. I am interested in pursuing a career in mental health, in particular working as an occupational therapist with Queensland Corrective Services.

As I grew up in rural Queensland, I am also passionate about supporting access to health care services in similar communities.

Outside of my studies, I work as a Student Ambassador where I visit local high schools to inspire and educate students on how to achieve their future goals. I am also a volunteer coach for the Rockhampton Fitzroy Rowing Club. As a former rowing student, I appreciate the opportunity to give back to the volunteer-run club that supported my rowing journey. I take pride as a mentor to the students as I aim to demonstrate important values applicable in both the rowing environment and their daily lives

Science Bursary

Sponsored by June McNicol OAM. June's experience as a metallurgist gives her an understanding of the difficulties facing women working in the physical sciences field. This bursary reflects her desire to assist female students following in her footsteps.



Emma Naumann

I am currently enrolled in a 1-year end-on Honours program, majoring in Physics, at James Cook University in Townsville. This is my fourth year of study after graduating with Distinction from a Bachelor of Advanced Science, majoring in Physics and Mathematics, in 2024. Throughout my study I have worked as a PASS leader for multiple subjects, represented the JCU Physics department at events such as Open Day, and been the founding president of the JCU Physical Sciences Society.

I aspire to work in the exciting – and quickly evolving – field of quantum mechanics. This bursary will allow me to focus on my studies, by assisting with cost-of-living and study expenses, and potentially funding travel for attendance at a quantum physics conference, helping me to kick-start my career in the field of quantum mechanics.

Science is simultaneously both incredibly demanding and rewarding. I hope that one day, I will be making significant contributions to my field, and hopefully help to inspire the next generation of young women to follow their dreams and pursue science.

Senator Susan McDonald Bursary

Sponsored by Senator Susan McDonald, this bursary reflects the importance for regional students to be given the opportunity for tertiary study.



Meaghan Mannix

I am originally from Townsville and graduated from Saint Patrick's College, Townsville. From there I completed a Bachelor of Speech Pathology at JCU, Townsville and have since returned to studying and am currently in my final year of completing a Bachelor of Dental Surgery at JCU in Cairns.

I am deeply connected to the oral health challenges facing Far North Queensland, particularly the urgent need for improved access to paediatric and early intervention services. The intersection of speech pathology and dentistry offers a valuable opportunity to deliver holistic, preventive care to children in rural and regional communities.

Receiving the Senator Susan McDonald bursary will greatly alleviate the financial pressures on my final placement and enable me to complete my studies with greater focus and stability. Upon graduation, I plan to stay in Far North Queensland and work predominately in the public sector. My goal is to assist leading intervention programs that prioritise the health and well-being of vulnerable and underserved populations across the region.

Soroptimist International Bursary

With the theme “Soroptimists – Lead to Educate, Empower, Enable” this bursary for an Indigenous woman studying in the areas of Medicine, Health or Education, reflects this ideal.



I am a proud First Nations woman from the Yuin people of South Coast NSW but have resided in South East QLD for 15+ years. As most women do, I wear many hats. I am a wife, mother to 2 children, full time worker, part time student, children’s author and aspiring entrepreneur. I feel deeply humbled to receive this scholarship, as with my many hats comes much responsibility.

This bursary is not only a financial relief, but also a powerful recognition of the effort, resilience, and passion I pour into all areas of my life. It allows me to continue pursuing my education without sacrificing the needs of my family or compromising my dreams.

I want to sincerely thank the sponsor for this generous support. This opportunity brings me one step closer to achieving my goals of generational change for my children and family.

As the first in my family to pursue higher education, I hope to inspire others who come after me to have the self-confidence to aim higher.

I hope to continue making my community proud and to one day pay this support forward.

Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI) Audrey Martin Life-Long Learning Bursary

This bursary is to recognise Audrey’s ongoing contributions to Soroptimist International and changing the lives of young girls to have a better future. Audrey enjoyed a long career as an Adult Education Vocational Teacher.



My name is Jasmin, I am a 20-year old animal lover, and I have lived in Moreton Bay for my whole life. I am currently studying my Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing at TAFE Groveley.

2025 will be my final year of studying before going out into the veterinary industry. Ever since I was little my family knew I would end up working with animals, they always tell me how they could see the strong connection I have with animals great and small. Whilst it took me a little time to find my purpose in life, I believe that the veterinary world is where I can make a difference.

I would like to thank the Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc. for honouring Audrey Martin, and for choosing me as this year’s recipient. The bursary is going to greatly help ease the travel costs for my course, allowing me to focus fully on completing my studies and becoming a valuable part of the veterinary industry.

Soroptimist International Moreton North Inc (SIMNI) Bursary

This bursary is to assist a veterinary science student, especially recognising the costs involved with placements and assessment.



Isabella
Sorrentino

I grew up in Victoria and am now in my final year of veterinary science, studying at JCU, Townsville. From a young age, I've had a deep love of animals and a desire to help those who cannot speak for themselves.

This bursary from SIMNI is helping me travel across Southeast Queensland to complete placements in clinics I hope to one day work in. It gives me the chance to learn from experienced vets and build connections that will shape the start of my career.

I aspire to become the best vet I can be – someone clients can trust during their most difficult moments. My goal is to specialise in either emergency medicine or surgery, and to use those skills to support shelters across Australia and beyond.

My dream is to one day open a hospital and shelter for homeless cats and dogs, to provide care and comfort to those that might otherwise be overlooked. I'm incredibly grateful to SIMNI for helping me get closer to that dream.

South Burnett Bursary

Sponsored by the South Burnett Regional Council, this bursary is for a female student from the region, who has contributed to the local community. The bursary recognises the additional difficulties for regional students.



Charisse Dizon

My name is Charisse Dizon and I am a first-year student, currently studying a course in Pre-Medicine. I have had the privilege of being a part of the inaugural Year 12 cohort at St John's Lutheran School Kingaroy. I was also honoured to serve as their first Year 12 Senior School Leader and Senior Dux Awardee.

I would like to acknowledge the South Burnett Regional Council and express my gratitude for sponsoring me on my academic journey. This bursary will help reduce financial stress by contributing to educational, travel, and living expenses. Through this support, I can dedicate more time and energy to my academic performance, and focus on my personal growth.

It has been a lifelong dream of mine to become a doctor, and each day serves as a reminder that I am closer to pursuing it. By becoming a doctor, I aspire to improve the healthcare industry in my rural community. Furthermore, I wish to give back to my parents. Without their endless support, I would not have been able to achieve such astounding achievements.

To the NCWQ and South Burnett Regional Council, thank you for entrusting me to be the recipient of the South Burnett Regional Council Bursary.

The Gown Chick Bursary

The Gown Chick is a proudly Australian-owned and operated small business, supplying top quality graduation academic regalia. They specialise in custom designed graduation stoles for all levels of education. This bursary aims to give a 'second chance' for educational opportunities.



Tiarnae Fegan

My name is Tiarnae and I'm currently studying a Bachelor of Education (Primary) as an online student living in Townsville. Returning to study as a mature-aged student has been a big step and a meaningful new chapter in my life.

I'm also a mother of two children and work full-time, so balancing study, family and work commitments can be challenging. I don't often put myself first, as most of my time and energy goes into caring for my family and meeting daily responsibilities. Receiving this bursary from The Gown Chick has lifted a huge weight off my shoulders and reminded me that investing in my own goals matters too.

This support will help cover essential costs like textbooks, study materials and placement expenses, allowing me to focus more on my learning without constant financial stress. Coming back to university later in life has shown me how passionate I am about education.

My goal is to become a supportive teacher and to create a classroom where children feel not only encouraged but also engaged and excited to learn. I dream of fostering a positive environment where every student feels valued and eager to come to school.

Thank you so much for believing in mature-aged students like me. Your generosity is helping me move closer to my dreams.

The Kathleen Langan Sports Management Bursary

The bursary, sponsored by Ronda Nix OAM, is in honour of the late Kathleen Langan, recognising her contribution to sport and its administration, when those roles were voluntary, and male-dominated. She was a Life member for hockey at the Brisbane, state and national levels and internationally qualified.



Emma Lockwood

My name is Emma Lockwood and I am 20 years old, from Brisbane. My passion and love for sports runs deep through my involvement in sporting teams as a player, coach, volunteer, and avid observer.

I started swimming at just a few months old, later picking up a hockey stick and tennis racquet at 6 years old and a cricket bat at 8. Whilst I don't do swimming anymore, I have now played hockey for 15 years, cricket on and off for 8 years, and currently I coach tennis for work.

Shortly, I will be starting a new employment opportunity at Queensland Cricket as a Community Cricket Officer. As a result of these various passions, I began my Bachelor of Business degree at the start of 2024 with a major in Sports Management.

I would like to thank Ronda Nix for sponsoring this bursary as it helps many people like myself continue pursuing these areas of interest and make a difference in their communities. I hope to continue working and volunteering in different avenues of Sport Management - Coaching, Social Media Marketing and Managing, to gain as much experience as possible and eventually specialise in an area.

The Boyce Bursaries for students with disability

As a long-term advocate for those with disability, Sue Boyce has been an NCWQ bursary sponsor for a number of years, sponsoring two bursaries.



Chloe Mason

My name is Chloe Mason and I am in my first year of a 5 year double degree studying a Bachelor of Architecture/Bachelor of Built Environment (interior design major) honours at QUT. I finished high school last year and I am enjoying the challenges that university provides. Growing up, I loved to create and the idea of building and designing someone's affordable dream home really appealed to me. Especially if I can combine sustainability and help the environment at the same time. A double degree with honours offers me so many opportunities for my future career.

I want to thank the National Council of Women of Queensland and the sponsor for the Boyce Bursary, recognising those with a disability. This bursary will enable me to purchase computer equipment that I can use to complete my architectural drawings, a core component of my studies.

My hope is that by developing my drawing abilities from year one, I can realise my dream, build my future and one day create sustainable and affordable homes for Queenslanders.



Georgia Falting

My name is Georgia and I graduated high school in 2024. I'm now in my first year of studying a Bachelor of Creative Industry (Acting) at QUT. I was diagnosed with dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia in 2014, and while these learning disabilities have made parts of my education challenging, they've never stopped me from chasing my passion for performance and storytelling.

I'd like to sincerely thank former Senator Sue Boyce for supporting this bursary. Her long-standing advocacy for students with disabilities means so much to people like me who are working hard to follow their dreams while facing extra hurdles along the way. This bursary will help me manage transport and living expenses during intensive rehearsal periods, especially when I'm unable to take on paid work. It will also support my ability to see live theatre and invest in resources that strengthen my training.

My ultimate goal is to pursue a career in theatre, both here in Australia and internationally. I dream of one day moving overseas—particularly to London—to immerse myself in its rich theatre scene and continue growing as an actor.

Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR)

Women in Engineering Bursaries

The Women in Engineering Bursaries form part of TMR's ongoing commitment to increase the number of women in the traditionally male dominated engineering profession. These two bursaries aim to promote continued female engagement with engineering courses, ensuring a strong pipeline of qualified female engineers for today's contemporary workforce.



(Regional)
Milly Latcham

As a third-year student at CQUniversity, I am currently undertaking a Bachelor of Civil and Humanitarian Engineering alongside a Master of Project Management. Being raised in rural Queensland, I have chosen to remain here for my tertiary studies due to financial pressures and strong ties to my family and community. While this has kept me connected locally, it also brings limitations in accessing professional opportunities.

My interest in engineering began in early high school after meeting other women in the field. I pursued academic achievements inside and outside of the classroom, building strong leadership and teamwork skills. Today, I apply these through my studies, part-time work at a local engineering firm and leadership roles in Australian Field Archery, as a national champion, and trainee coach.

Receiving the NCWQ TMR Women in Engineering Bursary is an incredible honour. I sincerely thank the Department of Transport and Main Roads for their generous support. The bursary will help relieve financial pressures and allow me to dedicate more time to my professional and academic growth.

Looking ahead, I hope to one day combine civil engineering with ecological and human needs to help develop climate-resilient, community-driven infrastructure that benefits regional Queensland.



(SEQ)
Elisha Pettit

Having grown up in Darwin, I relocated to Brisbane in 2023 to commence a double Bachelors in Engineering and Environmental Science. I chose this path because the great outdoors have never failed to amaze me, and I believe that improving human quality of life can be achieved whilst still conserving the natural world.

Living away from my family as a full-time student and competitive athlete comes with its thrills and challenges. Thanks to the generosity of the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the Women in Engineering Bursary will help support my continued education, so that I can contribute to solving urgent environmental problems as a future professional. As someone who is passionate about gender equality, especially in STEM, I hope that my endeavours encourage other women who are also interested in STEM to consider careers in this field.

After graduating university, I would like to explore as many places overseas that I can. I believe that Engineering is problem-solving, and the first step is observation. I would love to learn more about how other countries are addressing issues of sustainability, and let this inspire my work in Australia.

The Women's College Bursary

The Women's College was established in 1914, as the first residential college for female university students studying at The University of Queensland. Women's College and NCWQ have a shared history since then. This bursary provides the recipient with associate membership of The Women's College for a first year university student in 2026.



Katherine Dunn

I am currently a Year 12 student, planning to study at the University of Queensland next year and complete a dual degree of Bachelor of Humanities/Laws. Alongside studying, I enjoy involving myself in all aspects of school life – including student leadership, music, sport and service. I keep busy by playing the cello and hockey, singing and volunteering, though I'm equally passionate about learning and reading in my spare time.

Outside of school, I enjoy working to fund future travel and doing Edmund Rice Camps on my school holidays, which has taught me the strength of resilience, compassion and connection.

These experiences have motivated me to keep learning and find meaningful ways to create positive change, particularly in areas of social justice.

I'm incredibly grateful to the NCWQ and the Women's College for this opportunity. With their support, I'm endlessly excited to grow within a community that values empowerment, leadership and sisterhood, and step into university life with the confidence to embrace new challenges and opportunities.

Women's Network Australia Bursary

The inaugural Women in Business Bursary is proudly offered by Women's Network Australia (WNA) to support women pursuing business or entrepreneurial studies. WNA is a leading national network for women in business, dedicated to fostering lifelong learning, financial capacity and supporting the health and wellbeing of women in business.



Alice Larkin

Hi, I'm Alice. I was born in Ireland but have spent most of my life in Brisbane. Right now, I'm in Year 12 at Lourdes Hill College, and I'm passionate about pursuing a career in business. To take that interest further, I recently completed the Get Set Education Diploma of Business, which has been such a rewarding experience.

One thing that's always been close to my heart is Formula One. Combining my love for the sport with my ambition in business is my dream—whether that means working with an F1 team or at the Australian Grand Prix Corporation, I'm determined to make my mark in the industry.

I'm incredibly grateful to Women's Network Australia for their generous support through the 2025 NCWQ Women in Business Bursary. This bursary will ease the financial pressure of my studies and allow me to focus more on my goals. I'm excited to be part of a network of inspiring women, and I look forward to connecting with like-minded individuals as I work toward my goals.

In conclusion...

The NCWQ Bursary Program shines because of the recipients. Congratulations to each of the 38 recipients in the 2025 Bursary Program. You are now part of the group of 425 bursary recipients since the program commenced in 2009. Take your position in this group with pride.

Thanks to our sponsors for their support and contribution to the bursary program. This year we welcomed some new sponsors – many of our other sponsors have been supporting the program for more than 10 years. Thanks also to the members of Team Bursary. The contribution of each of you contributes to the successful running of the program. Although generally wary of naming one person, I fully endorse President Sandy's acknowledgement of Team Bursary member Dr Rachael Murray, in the transition to a new system this year.

We continue to be amazed by our recipients – Congratulations to the 2025 Cohort of recipients. Success is rarely simple. For many it comes by navigating around the obstacles we confront. You are all achieving in your own way, as you follow your dreams. Be inspired – you are our inspiration.

"It is our choices, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."
– J.K. Rowling



Kathy Cavanagh AM
NCWQ Bursary Program Manager

Thank you to our 2025 Bursary Program Sponsors



Thank you to our 2025 Bursary Coordinators

Kathy Cavanagh AM
Samara Behrendt
Fran Cahill
Jenny Henricks
Yvonne Matta
Rachael Murray

Ronda Nix OAM
Noela O'Donnell AM
Pat Pepper
Colleen Proudlock
Karin Walduck OAM



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