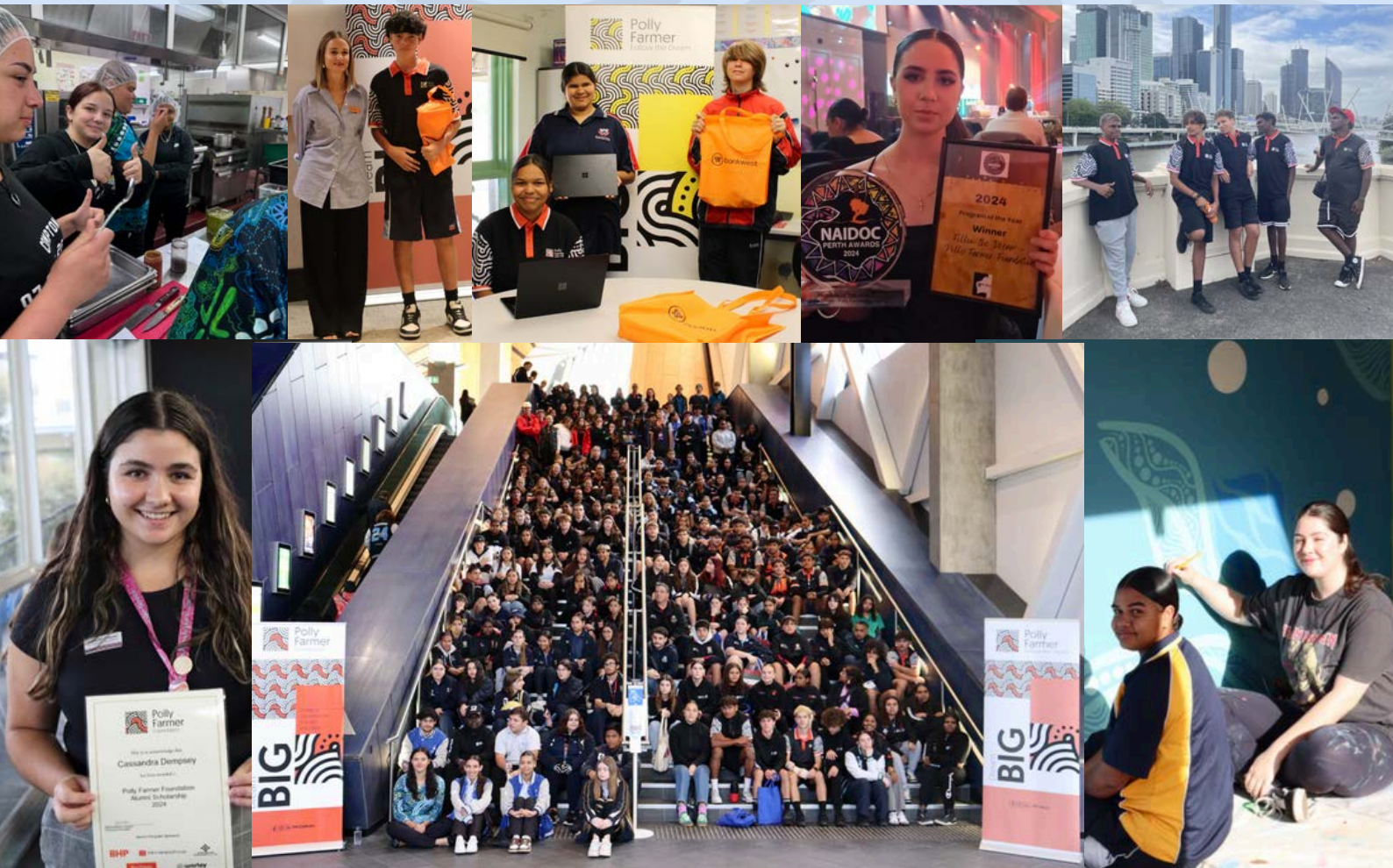




# FOLLOW THE DREAM ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



December 2024





# POLLY HOUSE OFFICIAL OPENING

The Foundation was thrilled to celebrate the official opening of our forever home the 'Polly Farmer House' earlier this year. The building not only honours our namesake 'Polly Farmer' but also provides stability and surety to the Foundation as we continue to deliver our Follow the Dream programs to aspirant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary and secondary students across Australia.

Denice Kickett, Follow the Dream alumni parent, conducted a heartfelt Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony. Tina Deegan, Follow the Dream coordinator, spoke about the long-term and continuing impact of Follow the Dream and the special bond between coordinators and their students. Kayley Emery, Follow the Dream alumni, spoke about her time in the program and the beautiful mural of Polly Farmer she painted at the entry to the building.

Kim Farmer, board vice chair and daughter of Polly Farmer, explained the Foundation's formation and called out Steve Hawke, Fred Chaney, Ron Edwards and John Cunningham - who were all in attendance - for their valuable input.

We thank current and former board members, partners, staff, stakeholders, alumni, students and friends of the Foundation for being with us on this special day.



## GARLETT GROUP PRO BONO SUPPORT

Many thanks to Emma Garlett and Jessica Moody from Garlett Group for their pro bono communications support this year. Support has included assistance with communication articles and facilitating an all of staff communications strategy day to identify media and other story ideas and opportunities for 2025.





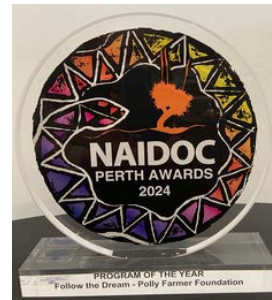
# FOLLOW THE DREAM WINS WA NAIDOC 'PROGRAM OF THE YEAR'



This year, 'Polly Farmer Follow the Dream' was named program of the year at the Boorloo NAIDOC Awards! The award recognises not-for-profit organisations delivering outstanding programs for the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community in Perth.

Board Chair Mandy Gadsdon and Vice Chair Kim Farmer were in attendance to collect the award along with Sevenoaks coordinator Dr. Jennet Hansen (who nominated the program for the award) and Sevenoaks alumni Rebekah Delaney and Matthew Harris.

Follow the Dream is a worthy winner, delivering culturally responsive academic enrichment to aspirant Indigenous students through after-school tuition and mentoring designed to develop knowledge, confidence, self-belief and inspire students to achieve their school and career aspirations.



Polly Farmer Follow the Dream is proudly partnered with the Department of Education WA

## BANKWEST DONATES 60 PRELOVED LAPTOPS TO FTD STUDENTS

Bankwest has generously donated over 60 preloved laptops to our Follow the Dream students to support them in furthering their education. Students travelled to Bankwest's Perth head office from across Perth and even the mid west to collect their laptops at a special morning tea with Bankwest General Manager - Enablement, Rachel Aikin, and to hear from Bankwest staff about their unique career journeys.

*"It's more than just receiving a piece of technology – it is a lifeline to stability and academic success." Year 12 recipient*

Big THANKS to Heidi Madden at Bankwest for organising the laptops and presentation, and the Bankwest IT Team who ensured the laptops were in perfect working order.



# 2024 PFF ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

This year, eighteen Polly Farmer FTD alumni were awarded PFF scholarships, receiving their certificates at a special morning tea at East Perth Football Club (the Perth home of Polly) where they met alumni partners, Polly Farmer Foundation board members and staff, and university representatives.

**PFF Alumni Scholarships will be available again in 2025.**

## 2024 SUCCESSFUL RECIPIENTS

- **Alexis Young**, Mandurah FTD, Bachelor of Nursing
- **Blayre Chivers**, Sevenoaks FTD, Diploma in Surveying
- **Carly Silver**, Northam FTD, Bachelor of Education (Secondary)
- **Cassandra Dempsey**, Cecil Andrews FTD, Bachelor of Applied Science
- **Courtney Collard**, Newton Moore (Bunbury) FTD, Bachelor of Social Work
- **Cynthia Nelly**, Tom Price FTD, Bachelor of Psychology & Human Resource Management
- **Dakoda Black** - Bolton, Katanning FTD, Bachelor of Education (Secondary), ECU
- **Isaiah McKenna**, Broome FTD, Bachelor of Laws, Curtin
- **Jaimee Davies**, Governor Stirling FTD, Bachelor of Education (Primary), CQU
- **Jasmin Bentink**, Albany FTD, Bachelor of Science (Environmental), UWA
- **Jason Goodlad**, Bunbury FTD, Cert III Conservation and Ecosystem Management, TAFE
- **Jasper John**, Broome FTD, Master of Teaching, ANU
- **Jessika Coenen**, Bunbury FTD, Bachelor of Education (Primary), CDU
- **Kalirra Tesling**, Champion Bay Geraldton FTD, Diploma of Beauty Therapy, CR TAFE
- **Lilli Byass**, Wanneroo FTD, Bachelor of Health Science, ECU
- **Shondle Neave**, Esperance FTD, Bachelor of Health Science (Nursing), Curtin
- **Tahlia-Rae Willcocks**, Mt Lawley FTD, Bachelor of Education (Primary), Curtin
- **William Hazelton**, Champion Bay (Geraldton) FTD, Bachelor of Arts (Geography), Curtin



**PFF Scholarships  
open Friday 24  
January 2025!**

**Closing date  
Friday 14 March**

**More details to come**



# 2024 MOTOROLA STEM SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Motorola Solutions  
Foundation

Our Motorola Solutions Foundation partnership has supported over 45 alumni to pursue their STEM related dreams since 2020. This year we had the pleasure of hosting senior Motorola Solutions executives, including Con Balaskas, Managing Director Australia & New Zealand, at our Perth office to celebrate our twelve 2024 FTD alumni STEM Scholarship recipients.

**Motorola Scholarships will be available again in 2025.**

## University of Western Australia

- **Alexandrea Slade**, Eastern Goldfields FTD, Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)
- **Amos Smith**, Albany FTD, Bachelor of Science (Conservation)
- **Archer Key**, Duncraig FTD, Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)
- **Kirana Lockyer**, Broome FTD, Doctor of Medicine
- **Regan Gittins**, Governor Stirling FTD, Bachelor of Bio-Medical Science
- **Taleah Ugle**, Albany FTD, Bachelor of Bio-Medical Science
- **Jai Spencer**, Esperance FTD, Bachelor of Bio-Medical Science
- **Paige Walley**, Belmont FTD, Bachelor of Science

## Curtin University

- **Brodie O'Breza**, Manjimup FTD, Bachelor of Science (Science), Curtin
- **Rhys Barrett**, Eastern Goldfields FTD, Bachelor of Engineering (Honours), Curtin

## Murdoch University

- **Dylan May**, Fremantle FTD, Bachelor of Science, Murdoch

## University of Southern Queensland

- **Matilda Moore**, Alice Springs FTD, Bachelor of Bio-Medical Science, USQ



Motorola  
scholarships open  
Friday 24 January  
2025!

Closing date  
Friday 14 March

More details to come

*In 2021, less than 1% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people held a STEM qualification. With the Government's goal to have 1.2 million tech related roles by 2030, now is the time to explore STEM-related opportunities!*

# JALBI AUSTRALIA NEW SCHOLARSHIP

We are excited to announce a new Scholarship available in 2025 thanks to PFF Board Chair Mandy Gadsdon and her company Jalbi. The Jalbi scholarship will be offered to an alumni studying in the beauty, skincare, personal health care, natural beauty or related courses. Application details will be shared early next year.

Jalbi is an Aboriginal owned and operated business specialising in a range of natural hygiene and beauty products that combine traditional knowledge with extracts and essences from the Australian bush, while honouring connection to maternal lineage and connection to country. To find out more visit [www.jalbiaustralia.com.au](http://www.jalbiaustralia.com.au)



## BILYA BOORN SCHOLARSHIP FOR COMMERCIAL LAW STUDENTS

Will you be studying law in 2025? The Bilya Boorn Scholarship supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students through financial assistance (up to \$10,000pa), mentoring and professional development opportunities in commercial law. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who are enrolled or intend to enrol to study law at Western Australian universities are eligible to apply. The scholarship is funded by a collection of law firms, with Paige Littlefair announced as the first recipient earlier this year.



**BILYA BOORN  
SCHOLARSHIP**

**2025 applications close 14 March 2025.**

**To apply follow this link:**

**<https://www.cognitofirms.com/HSF8/BilyaBoornScholarshipApplicationForm>**

## ALUMNI JASPER JOHN AND JESSIKA COENEN AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS TEACHER SCHOLARSHIPS

Congratulations to Jessika Coenen and Jasper John, the recipients of the Bob Hawke Aboriginal Teacher Scholarship for 2024. Jessika has been awarded the undergraduate scholarship while Jasper is the postgraduate recipient. Jessika is an alumni from Bunbury FTD and currently an Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer at Dalyellup College and Maidens Park Primary School while she studies a Bachelor of Education. Jasper is a Broome FTD alumni and currently works at Broome Senior High School as part of the Teach for Australia program while he completes a Master of Education.



Jessika Coenen

*"Education is hugely important to me; it is vastly important to surviving and thriving in today's world. Knowledge is how we, as Indigenous people, are able to keep our culture alive and look after country." Jasper*

*"I hope to be an inspiring teacher to all students and to make a positive impact on their lives and educational journey. As a proud Aboriginal woman, I hope to evoke students to have pride and passion for Aboriginal culture." Jessika*



Jasper John with his family



# POLLY FARMER COMMUNITY CANVAS UPDATE



The Polly Farmer community canvas has found its forever home after being officially unveiled by long time partner, the WA Department of Education, at their East Perth office earlier this year.

The 6m long reconciliation community canvas was the inspiration of Mt Lawley Outreach coordinator Tina Deegan, who wanted to honour Polly's famous quote:

*"Education is key for Aboriginal people to take their rightful place in modern Australian society"*

With the help of Broome FTD alumni artist Marlie Albert and Mt Lawley FTD students at Yanchep with Dr Noel Nannup, Polly's quote has been turned into a magnificent artwork. A true community reconciliation project with input from Follow the Dream alumni and PCs, and Polly Farmer Foundation staff, board members, and colleagues all contributing to the artwork.

Mt Lawley alumni Maddi Byron, alongside students from Dandjoo Darbalung (St Catherine's College), also played an instrumental part in completing the canvas.

Acting Director General Jim Bell thanked Tina and the Foundation for gifting the artwork to the Department where it hangs with pride, inspiring hundreds of Department of Education WA employees who view it every day.



**Polly  
Farmer**  
Follow the Dream





# POLLY FARMER CAREER EXPO 2024

Next year's Expo date:  
20 August 2025  
@ RAC Arena

PFF proudly hosted over 400 FTD students and alumni from across the country, including Port Augusta, Geelong, Alice Springs, Northam, Bunbury, the Kimberley and local Perth metro programs, at this year's Career Expo.

Denise Kickett started off the event with the Welcome to Country followed by Jake Louthean and Simon Thompson who were joint MCs.

Students were able to chat with 30+ stall holders about future employment, training and education opportunities.

It has been fantastic to see so many FTD alumni either working or volunteering at the stalls. You are an inspiration to the next generation!

We would like to thank our alumni and career expo partners - BHP, Rio Tinto, Worley, Monadelphous, Bankwest, Motorola Solutions, Holcim, RAC Arena and Mitsui Iron Ore Developments.

And of course, many THANKS to the FTD program coordinators, staff and alumni. We couldn't have done this without you.



**BHP**

**RioTinto**



**worley**  
DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE



**Monadelphous**



**MITSUI IRON ORE  
DEVELOPMENT PTY. LTD.**



**Holcim**



**bankwest**



# SPECIAL FTD 'SISTA GIRL' SCREENING

## WITH ALUMNI TERESA MOORE & CEZARA GRITTI-SCHNAARS

In July, over 250 FTD students, staff and guests were invited to a special screening of 'Sista Girl' by the Yirra Yaakin Theatre at Bob Hawke College. Students, who were in Perth for the FTD Careers Expo with many travelling from as far away as Kununurra, Esperance and even from outside of WA, were invited to watch the show and performers Teresa Moore and Cezara Critti-Schaars, both FTD alumni - what an amazing full circle moment!

After the show students were able to meet both Teresa and Cezara - and take a few photos. A big SHOUTOUT to FTD coordinators Asharie Bradshaw and Joe Manning, Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, and Bob Hawke College. This wouldn't have been possible without their support.



***"Sista Girl is an exploration of the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians, via the story of two women who share a white father"***



## MANDURAH FOLLOW THE DREAM CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

Mandurah Follow the Dream celebrated 20 years in 2024. Past and present students visited the centre with PFF staff and guests recognising their achievements. Many thanks to Andrea Tacko, who commenced in 2009 as a program coordinator, for organising the event. The Foundation is proud to have alumni Joel O'Driscoll (Mandurah FTD) and director and owner of Bidi Facility Services who with AWB Co has partnered with the Foundation to support Mandurah Follow the Dream with 2025 opportunities and experiences.





# LAW SOCIETY CIVICS LEADERSHIP DAY FOR ABORIGINAL YOUTH

Eighteen Follow the Dream students from across Australia attended The Law Society of Western Australia - Youth Civics Leadership Day for Aboriginal Youth at Supreme Court Gardens. The year 10 students were awarded places based on their civic awareness and desire to be future leaders; values which form a large part of what it means to be a Polly Farmer FTD student.

Throughout the day, students listened to Elders, met mentors, role models and members of the legal fraternity, participated in cultural activities, and attended a leadership session with our very own Kim Farmer, alongside panelists Wayne Nannup, Sasha Greenoff and Roy Blurton from the Aboriginal Legal Service of WA.

It was great as always to have so many FTD alumni involved including Bree Yarran, Taleah Ugle, Cherokee Ugle, Isaiah McKenna and MC for the event Marleigh Zada.

THANK YOU to the Sara Halvedene Foundation who sponsored our regional students travel and accommodation so they could attend, the Law Society and everyone who participated including Kulbardi Aboriginal Centre Youth Ambassadors, Dr Hannah McGlade, City of Perth Elders and senior members of the WA Justice Department.



Next year's date set for  
Tues 19 August. Email  
alumni@pff.com.au if  
you'd like to be involved





# WORLEY 2024 INNOVATION CHALLENGE MELBOURNE

Follow the Dream students from Centralian Senior College (Alice Springs), St Mary's College (Broome), Fremantle, Governor Stirling, and Geelong programs had the trip of a lifetime, travelling to Melbourne for a Worley STEM Innovation Challenge in late 2024. Students were joined by alumni Wendy Torres, Aaron Haji Ali, Brittney Andrews and Emily McGuinness.

Challenge one: Students were hosted by Origin Energy where they enjoyed lunch with Origin employees who shared their exciting STEM education and career journeys. Students then engaged in building hands on, real-world renewable energy projects including a wind turbine and water filtration system.

Challenge two: Students were hosted at Worley's Melbourne office, participating in a 'STEM Shark Tank' activity. Working in groups, students investigated and developed solutions to real world environmental issues in different regions across Australia.

Challenge three: INCO Academy invited students to become 'Solar Buddies', working together to assemble portable solar power battery light kits that will be delivered to developing communities in Papua New Guinea. Each kit has a 10 year portal light life span and will be gifted to school students who live with homes without electricity so they have light to study with. Students also wrote a personal letter of support to accompany each kit!

Students also had the opportunity to visit Melbourne Zoo, the MCG where Polly Farmer's portrait hangs in the Hall of Fame, and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology university. Fremantle FTD students visited their program partner Zenith Interiors Sandringham factory to learn about career paths in interior and furniture design.

Massive THANK YOU to partner Worley for sponsoring this amazing camp for our students, and to INCO Academy and Origin for their inspiring challenges. Also many thanks to partners Rio Tinto, Zenith RBA and NIAA for contributing to travel and accommodation costs.





# FOLLOW THE DREAM FAMILY

## COURTNEY UGLE NEWTON MOORE FOLLOW THE DREAM ALUMNI



*check her out on ig*

[@courtneyugle](#)  
[@waangkiny](#)

Courtney Ugle is a proud Ballardong Wardandi Noongar woman with a moorditj voice. After losing both her parents in tragic circumstances early in life, Courtney has turned a nightmare into a dream.

She is now the face of resilience; an example of overcoming adversity. She is an advocate for breaking the cycle of domestic violence. She has turned adversity into influence through the power of story-telling through her company Waangkiny (talking/speaking).



*Courtney visited female students from Bunbury  
Follow the Dream earlier this year*

Aaliyah Nestoridis is a proud Noongar yorga with connections to Boorloo and Narrogin. She is from the Culbong family who has inspired her to be a voice for Aboriginal youth. She has already begun making waves of change through her voice.

An upcoming leader of Indigenous youth, she is a well-spoken advocate on Indigenous issues and recently spoke at TEDxKingsPark as a youth speaker. Aaliyah spoke about the Stolen Generation, Intergenerational trauma and how all youth in Australia can contribute to Reconciliation Australia.



*Aaliyah with Kim Farmer at the Department of Education WA awards breakfast in November, where Sevenoaks FTD were a finalist.*

## AALIYAH NESTORIDIS SEVENOAKS FOLLOW THE DREAM ALUMNI





# FOLLOW THE DREAM FAMILY

Kim Farmer (daughter of Polly Farmer and PFF Board Vice Chair) has been appointed as a Magistrate of the Children's Court of Western Australia. An enormous achievement and we know she will make a significant impact in her new role. Kim is a passionate advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. Kim was admitted to the practice of law in 2004 and is a former lawyer for the Aboriginal Legal Service of WA. Kim is also an active advocate for the Foundation and the Follow the Dream program and a regular attendee and guest speaker at our events.



## **KIM FARMER** **PFF BOARD MEMBER**



*Kim Farmer above and pictured left with Marleigh Zada (alumni Mt Lawley FTD) at the WA Law Society Aboriginal Youth Civics Leadership Day earlier this year.*

## **MADDISON BYRON** **MT LAWLEY FOLLOW** **THE DREAM ALUMNI**



***check her out on ig***

***@maddi b artworks***

Maddi Byron is a proud Whadjuk Noongar woman from Perth developing her deadly art skills and at UWA, where she is currently studying art. Maddi was one of the talented artists who helped bring together our iconic Polly Farmer community canvas. She also recently designed a collection of our coveted painted footballs, pictured below.



*Maddi with Jim Bell, former WA Education Department Director General, at the PFF community canvas unveiling in August this year*



# NEW KWINANA FOLLOW THE DREAM PRIMARY SCHOOL PROGRAM



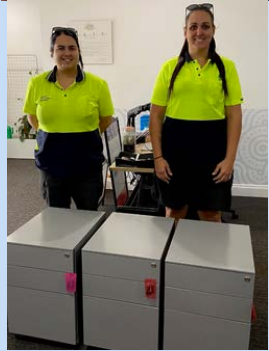
Earlier this year, the Foundation welcomed primary students to our first WA metro-based Follow the Dream program for primary school aged students.

Kim Farmer (daughter of Polly Farmer and Vice Chair of the PFF Board) visited the program to welcome students, talking about her late father's vision, saying "dad established the Foundation over 25 years ago so Aboriginal people could become leaders and take their rightful place in society".

The new Kwinana FTD program will focus on STEM learning for students in years 5 to 6, operating from Gilmore Secondary College (a few rooms down from our existing secondary students FTD program). Five primary schools are already on board, including: Bertram Primary School, Orelia Primary School, Wellard Village Primary School, Leda Primary School and Calista Primary School. With more schools soon to join!

A big THANK YOU to BHP for fully funding our new Kwinana primary students Follow the Dream program.

# BHP



Thankyou ZENITH for  
your donation of cabinets  
for our new Kwinana FTD  
primary program!

Zenith RBA

# NEW GEELONG FOLLOW THE DREAM SCHOOL PROGRAM

This year the Foundation commenced official delivery of its first program in Victoria, Geelong Follow the Dream. The program operates at Northern Bay College, supporting Year 9-12 students at the school's Goldsworthy Campus and it set to welcome students in Years 7&8 next year. Geelong FTD is strongly supported by the program's local Guidance Group, representing a range of key stakeholders including Wadawurrung traditional owners, members of the local Aboriginal education consultative group (LAECG), Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, elders and community members. The Foundation holds a deep connection with Geelong; Polly's history and legacy is very much alive in the region and it is the Foundation's privilege to deliver his vision on Wadawurrung country. We look forward to expanding the program to support students at Western Heights College next year. The Geelong FTD program is kindly supported by program sponsors, Woomera Education Scholarships Trust (WEST) and the Bertalli Family Trust.





# KEY DATES FOR 2025

- **25 January:** Applications open for Polly Farmer alumni scholarships up to \$3,000, and Motorola Solutions Foundation Technology/Engineering Scholarships valued up to \$10,000. If you are studying at university/TAFE in 2025 contact Ray to find out how to apply [ray.garrett@pff.com.au](mailto:ray.garrett@pff.com.au)
- **15 February:** Indigenous All Stars vs Freo game - more info to come
- **14 March:** Applications close for all scholarships. Please note you must be a registered Polly Farmer alumni before applying for a scholarship.

\*\*\*Please note that recipients will be required to attend a scholarship presentation if studying in Perth\*\*\*

- **20 August:** Polly Farmer Follow the Dream careers Expo at RAC Arena. This is a great opportunity to meet current Follow the Dream senior students plus network with other alumni and key staff from big employers such as Rio Tinto, BHP, Worley, Woodside and Motorola.

Over \$100k worth of scholarships available in 2025 thanks to our alumni partners

## 2024 Alumni Survey Update

Many thanks to everyone who responded to our alumni survey earlier this year. Thanks to your suggestions, next year we will be building a brand new 'Follow the Dream' alumni portal which will include:

- PFF news
- Job Opportunities
- Contacts info for big employers
- Tertiary education institution contacts and info
- Scholarship information

## 2024 ALUMNI PRIZE WINNERS!

Welcome to all the Follow the Dream graduates who have signed up to our alumni network this year, and congratulations to those who won a \$250 gift card!

Drum roll... the winners are:

- \$250 Visa Gift Voucher (alumni survey participant winner) | **Tyler Kelly** (Warwick Senior High School)
- \$250 Visa Gift Voucher (alumni sign up winner) | **Shimmilliah-Rose Simpson** (Merriden College)
- \$250 Visa Gift Voucher (alumni sign up winner) | **Lateisha McGowan** (Swan View Senior High School)
- \$500 Visa Gift Card (program sign up winner) | **Sevenoaks Follow the Dream**

If you know a former Follow the Dream student who has not signed up they can join via our website

<https://pff.com.au/get-involved/alumni-network/>

*Jennet Hansen from Sevenoaks FTD receiving her \$500 Visa gift card with 2024 alumni Nyeemah Gonzalez-Tammen at our Bankwest laptop presentation.*





# THANK YOU REBEKAH!

A huge thank you to Sevenoaks Follow the Dream alumni Rebekah Delaney who has worked with the Foundation during November and December to produce this fantastic newsletter.

Rebekah has been in FTD since Year 7 and has tutored for FTD. She currently works as a DeadlySistaGirlz mentor at Sevenoaks and Yule Brook College.

Bek is a Kamilaroi Murri woman born in Western Sydney and is also an artist. You can check out her work [@murriwa.yinarr](https://www.instagram.com/murriwa.yinarr)



**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND SEE YOU IN 2025**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR ALUMNI SPONSORS**

**BHP**



**worley**  
DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

**RioTinto**



**Monadelphous**



**MITSUI IRON ORE  
DEVELOPMENT PTY. LTD.**

We would like to thank our sponsors and partners for providing opportunities, pathways, and experiences that enable our students and alumni to pursue their aspirations.

The Foundation hopes you have a wonderful Christmas and a happy new year. We are looking forward to see what dreams you pursue in the coming year of 2025!



**Polly  
Farmer**  
Follow the Dream

## **Contact**

Polly Farmer Foundation  
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[pff.com.au](http://pff.com.au)