

Scholarship choice at SCU helps students to follow their dreams



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have many reasons to apply for Southern Cross University (northern NSW) with hundreds of scholarships on offer for 2022.

Anthony Olive, team leader of the Indigenous Australian Student Services (IASS) at Southern Cross, said the university was proud of its strong Indigenous cohort, and is continually working to increase Indigenous student participation in higher education through personalised support and decreasing financial barriers.

"On average our IASS team at Southern Cross University supports more than 400 Indigenous students annually with some form of scholarship," Mr Olive said.

"These scholarships are deeply appreciated and very meaningful to our Indigenous student cohort, ranging from textbook bursaries of \$150 right up to full-time educational and accommodation scholarships of \$2500 and \$5000, and in 2022 these will increase to a top of \$8000 a year over three years, with an increased Indigenous scholarship pool worth more than \$1 million.

"These scholarships make up part of the wider scholarship pool worth approximately \$3 million in 2022."

Mr Olive said the IASS team encourages all Indigenous Year 12 students to consider university as an option for further study, education and

knowledge. He said people who have been out of school for a while can also apply for university study.

"Regardless of someone's school success, we have a number of dedicated pathway options specifically for Indigenous students to enter into study at Southern Cross," Mr Olive said.

Current Bachelor of Midwifery student Rebecca Thorne is on her final placement and says she received two scholarships – one to attend the prestigious Australian College of Midwives 2021 Conference, and the other a cadetship through NSW Health, which has enabled her to work an additional 12 weeks at Tweed Hospital on top of her university placements.

"When I was in school, I was told I wouldn't be smart enough to study at university, but now that I'm here, the journey to achieving my midwifery degree has been incredible with Southern Cross Uni supporting me every step of the way," said Rebecca, a proud Kunja woman living on Bundjalung country.

"The scholarship and cadetship have been really amazing in helping me increase my clinical skills and professional networks and just solidifies why I want to be a midwife, delivering culturally safe woman-centred care."

To find out more visit scu.edu.au/scholarships or for application support and assistance visit scu.edu.au/iass



SCU Bachelor of Midwifery student Rebecca Thorne.

UNSW's Nura Gili put Shaun Wright on the right path to career success



Growing up in Alice Springs, Shaun Wright never dreamed of going to university in Australia's most

populous city. In fact, at the time, he "didn't really know anything about Sydney, except that it existed".

Today, the proud Nyul Nyul man is a successful UNSW Sydney graduate, passionate about using business as a tool to empower First Nations peoples.

But Wright's journey from the desert heart of Australia to postgraduate study at the UNSW Kensington Campus, and now employment, was one he never could have predicted.

"It was interesting growing up in Alice Springs," he said. "Particularly seeing the contrast between the two worlds; that of the Aboriginal community and then non-Aboriginal populations.

"There was also probably less to do there in Alice Springs than the big cities, but I knew that Mum had aspirations for us to move to a different city for my high schooling."

In his teens, Wright and his family moved to Adelaide. There he continued to foster his love for education.

However, even as he neared the end of high school, Sydney remained a 'foreign place' far from his mind.



UNSW Master of Commerce student Shaun Wright is passionate about Indigenous entrepreneurship.

Wright remembers how a web search changed all that.

"I didn't know that there were pre-programs or Indigenous pathways at universities," he said. "But I stumbled across UNSW's Indigenous Pre-program website after doing a search online and that really grabbed my interest."

The complex world of higher education was daunting for

Wright, particularly as the first member of his family to attend university. But, after a call with Nura Gili and Indigenous Program staff, Wright knew UNSW was the perfect place for him.

The Indigenous Pre-programs, run by Nura Gili: Centre for Indigenous Programs and UNSW faculties, offers Indigenous students a taste of academic life

at UNSW with subjects in business, education, law, medicine, social work, or science and engineering.

The program acts as a valuable stepping stone for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students on the pathway to their dream degree.

"Those early stages of university are a big determining

factor for the rest of a person's journey," Wright said.

"When people find their true passions, they go on to become future game-changing leaders."

Indigenous Pre-programs was the perfect platform to explore his passions and prep him for university study.

Wright successfully completed the Pre-program in Business and soon packed his bags for Sydney to start a Bachelor of Commerce.

Today, having graduated with both a Bachelor and Master of Commerce, Wright works as a consultant. Over the years, he has also been supported by Indigitek, a platform for educational institutions and the corporate world to connect with ambitious Indigenous professionals, students and entrepreneurs.

Looking back at his journey at UNSW, Wright can't believe some of the unique opportunities he has gained, including travelling to Vancouver, Canada.

It may have been a long road across the country to get to where he is today, but with an insatiable desire to drive real change, there is no slowing Shaun Wright down anytime soon.

Applications for the Indigenous Pre-programs close 5pm, October 11, 2021. This year, Pre-programs run for two weeks and are fully online. Find out more: indigenous.unsw.edu.au