

The AVCAT Advocate

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The quarterly newsletter of the Australian Veteran's Children Assistance Trust—also online www.avcat.org.au



**AUSTRALIAN VETERANS'
CHILDREN ASSISTANCE TRUST**

*A national independent charity
Helping students to a better future*

Australian Veterans'
Children Assistance Trust
ABN 50 008 609 032
ACN 008 609 032

Patron: His Excellency, General the
Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC
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Governor-General of the Commonwealth
of Australia.

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All donations to AVCAT are
tax deductible.

DISCLAIMER: The material in this
newsletter has been checked thoroughly
and to the best of our knowledge is correct.

A word from AVCAT CEO



Joan Hughes

I am a strong believer in the transformative effect of education on lives. The confidence, skills, self-reliance, and of course the qualification itself are powerful catalysts for a better life.

Few people outside of the veteran community are aware of the ongoing effects of conflict on veterans and their families. In Australia, the children and grandchildren of veterans are less likely to attend university than their peers. Jessica Duncan, a former AVCAT scholarship recipient said, "The story of veterans, their children and their grandchildren is one of intergenerational disadvantage. I believe that education has the potential to break this. That is what makes these bursaries so important."

A strong advocate for education, Julia Gillard, former Prime Minister, once said "Our future growth relies on competitiveness and innovation, skills and productivity....and these in turn rely on the education of our people"

AVCAT assists the children and grandchildren of veterans in forging their own pathways through education.

We are doing important work at AVCAT, thanks to the generosity of funders, sponsors, individual donors and bequests. Each year AVCAT receives more applications for a scholarship than we have scholarships to offer. It is disappointing not to be able offer a scholarship to every eligible student. With this in mind we are planning and working even harder at AVCAT so that more people can be supported through an AVCAT managed scholarship!

Joan Hughes

However, errors may occur which are beyond our control. If this should happen, we apologise most sincerely.

Get To Know AVCAT Staff

Meet AVCAT Scholarships Officer Ashley Leek

AVCAT's scholarships administrative officer Ashley Leek commenced with AVCAT in August 2017. She holds a Bachelor of Science from Macquarie University, a Postgraduate Certificate in Indigenous Health from the University of Wollongong and Certificate IV in Community Services. Ashley has previously worked in student services at Macquarie University and volunteers for The Salvation Army. Ash is likely to be your first point of contact at AVCAT.

You can contact Ashley and the AVCAT team on 02 9213 7999, or by email at avcat@dva.gov.au.

A Trip to Tassie



L-R: Anne James, Executive Officer, DVA Tasmania; Nick Fraser, scholarship recipient; Scholarship Sponsors - Graham Halton OAM, President, TPI Tasmania; Rod Patmore, Treasurer - Tasmania Navy Network - Hobart; Joan Hughes, CEO AVCAT.

Returned & Services League of Queensland

RSL Queensland is the largest ex-service organisation in Queensland, with over 240 sub-branches across ten districts. The mission of the RSL, since 1916, is to ensure help is always available to the men and women of the Australian Defence Forces.

Today RSL Queensland continues to honour their mission in multiple ways, providing support, assistance, advice and camaraderie. Some of their specific programs are:

- Partner Education and Training Scholarships - \$4, 000 a year – for the partners of current or ex-service men and women.
- Employment programs, including Employment Ready – a program that offers services such as career counselling, training and development, interview coaching, and Supporting Partners in Employment – a program that offers services such as training and development, active job searching and more.
- Short Term and Crisis accommodation - Owned and operated by RSL Queensland, Angus House in Brisbane and Nui Dat House on the Gold Coast provide emergency accommodation if you need a place to rest, recover, or get away for a while.

The generous sponsorship of scholarships means thirty-five scholarship recipients are financially assisted as they strive to complete tertiary education. Mr Rob Skoda, Veteran Services Manager, RSL Queensland said, "This is the second year we are offering scholarships to the children and grandchildren of ex-serving ADF members. Families provide vital support to Defence personnel, both while they are serving and when they transition out of the military. RSL Queensland stands behind our military families with practical programs to build resilience, provide advice and assistance, and support education and employment."

RSL scholarship recipient Susan Benton is in her final year of a Bachelor of Veterinary Science. In a thank you note to RSL Queensland she said. "Finally, I am

The final scholarship presentation for the year was held in Hobart, Tasmania at the TPI Tasmania Office - North Hobart Football Oval, North Hobart, on Friday September 15. A beautiful venue overlooking sports fields with a view across historic rooftops. A lovely group of people gathered to congratulate Nicholas Fraser as AVCAT CEO Joan Hughes presented him with his Tasmanian Naval Network/TPI Tasmania Scholarship.

Nicholas Fraser is one of two scholarship recipients from Tasmania this year. He is enrolled in a Bachelor of Environmental Design at the University of Tasmania.

in my last semester and will graduate at the end of this year. It has been a long and trying road but your help has been invaluable in getting me this far. It has allowed me to take placement opportunities I would not otherwise be able to afford, and has been a huge help this year as the entire year is spent on rotations so a lot of travel costs are required... This scholarship has helped me be able to achieve all of this without placing any further burden on my family, which means the world to me.

I cannot thank you enough for your support, it really does make a big difference. I am looking forward to graduating, being employed and putting your investment in me to good use!"



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