



chances dare to dream



**“Investing in the future of children
and young people of our community...”**



Wendy Miller

After completing her VCE at Mildura Senior College in 2000, Wendy Miller was accepted into a Bachelor of Laws / Bachelor of Arts course at the University of Melbourne. Her excitement was immediately dampened however, by the reality of her financial situation. There was simply no way she could afford to move to Melbourne and support herself while studying unless she deferred for a year to save some money. Fortunately, one of her teachers put her in contact with the newly formed Chances for Children program. Wendy became one of Chances' first recipients and received support and assistance that ultimately enabled her to move to Melbourne without the need for a deferral.

Wendy loved her university experience (except, perhaps, for the exams) and gained a lot from her exposure to the incredible intelligence of some of the academics and students she encountered along the way. "I learned countless skills both inside and outside the lecture theatres."

Graduating in 2006, Wendy commenced articles with Herbert Geer in 2007. Herbert Geer is a mid-tier legal practice with offices in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Deciding she enjoyed corporate law she has been in the Corporate / Mergers & Acquisitions team at Herbert Geer ever since being admitted in 2008. The challenges have been endless but deeply rewarding.

"There are new legal problems to solve every day and as I have become more senior I have also needed to learn how to manage people and clients (which is sometimes harder than the legal work!). Being a lawyer has also enabled me to give back to the community through pro bono work. I spend a lot of time providing free legal advice to charities and have recently taken up a board position with a not-for-profit organisation."

Wendy has no doubt that Chances for Children played a big part in helping her to get to where she is today.



Liz Hender

Born in Israel, Elizabeth Hender arrived in Australia with her family when she was seven, settling in Mildura. With a passion for piano, Liz began lessons when she was 11, under the tutelage of June Missen. Chances first met Liz when they provided her with financial support to continue her lessons with June. Her skills quickly developed and it was clear that her love of and talent for piano would determine her future.

In Liz's final year of school, she studied with well-known pianist Caroline Almonte, before being accepted into the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music to complete a Bachelor of Music. Chances again provided assistance for Liz to live in Melbourne whilst completing her University degree. After which, Liz completed an Honours Degree in Performance, under the guidance of Janine Sowden. In 2014, Liz hopes to continue her studies, this time to gain her Masters Degree in Performance.

Liz is an accomplished performer, both as a soloist and as a chamber musician and loves both 20th and 21st century music. One of her long-term goals is to travel through Australia's more remote regions, offering master classes and lessons to students who would not normally have access to such opportunities.

I have no idea what the future holds (at this point the options are going for partnership or quitting law and trying to be an author) but regardless of where I end up in another 13 years, I will remain grateful to Chances for their contribution to the experiences I have enjoyed."

WENDY MILLER



Damien Ditchburn

Born in Mildura in 1988, Damien Ditchburn went to Irymple South Primary followed by St Joseph's College. Finishing Year 12 in 2006, he obtained the support of Chances for Children, which enabled him to move to Adelaide to study Nursing at Flinders University in 2007.

"The financial assistance Chances offered me was invaluable in allowing me to study for three years in Adelaide, as was the support I received through their Peer Support Program. This program linked me with other students in Adelaide, making my transition to university and my first year away from home much easier."

"During this time, my father became seriously ill and the additional support Chances gave me was crucial, in what was an incredibly stressful time for both me and my family."

With Chances' support Damien was able to commit to fulltime study and on completion of his Degree, in 2009, he returned to Mildura to begin a Graduate Nursing Program at the Mildura Base Hospital.

In 2010, after finishing this program, Damien took up a position within the Emergency Department, whilst also completing a Hospital Coronary Care Course and Respiratory Course.

This year, Damien has returned to university in Adelaide to complete a Graduate Certificate in Critical Care Nursing and to work in the Intensive Care and Emergency Departments. At the end of this course, he plans to work in the Emergency Department as a Senior Registered Nurse.

Longer term, Damien hopes to have an educational or a management role.



Angela Gowers

Beginning piano lessons at the age of five, Angela Gowers quickly discovered a love for music that has followed her throughout her life, thus far. At 13, she started at Red Cliffs Secondary College and began to play the flute, under the tutelage of local flautist and teacher, Anne Webster and the flute has been with her ever since.

Performing at local eisteddfods and sitting exams throughout secondary school, a tertiary qualification in music was the logical next step for Angela. Through the support from Chances for Children, Angela completed a three-year Bachelor of Music degree at Monash University in Melbourne, finding the transition to city life much easier, thanks to her connection with her Chances mentor, Rhianon.

In 2012, Angela transferred to The Melbourne Conservatorium of Music to complete her Honours year, under the guidance of Professor and flautist Derek Jones.

During this time, Angela has also performed both nationally and internationally and has been a participating member of Fresco, a Melbourne-based flute quartet focused on performing Australian works but also premiering compositions from round the world.

Angela recently travelled to Europe where she undertook private lessons with Italian musician, Luciano Tristaino and German Flute Professor, Imme-Jeanne Klett. After a very intense period, she has decided to take a break from study, to work and travel but her future plans include completing her Masters in Music Performance. Alternative career paths would include the teaching of music or music therapy.

Angela plays a Verne Q. Powell flute (Aurumite CH-2251).



Kristen McDougall

In year 12, I studied Studio Art, Textiles, Graphic Design, English and Literature. Fashion and design has always been my passion. Moving away from home was incredibly different as I'd never lived away from home or really spent more than a few weeks in Melbourne, so it was interesting to get used to a whole new city, new friends and being on my own all at once. However, I loved every minute of it and looking back now I'm proud of how well I did to get through that adjustment period. One of the best things about Uni would have to be the amount I've learnt through my course and how much more skilled I am in the fashion field now.

My studies have enabled me to understand so much more about the fashion industry and see what's really behind it all and it's made me fall in love with it all even more! Another highlight was the people I have met. I'm now closer with some of my Uni friends than people I've known my whole entire life.

"Chances helped me 'sooo' much through my time at university. There were so many times when Uni life and work life became a struggle and there was that worry that I may not be able to pay rent or buy school supplies, and Chances was there for me every single time when I needed it. I honestly don't think I could have gotten through the tough times without them and I'm forever grateful for the amazing things they've done for me. I really

"There are so many memories from not only my trip to East Timor but the last four years as a whole, which can be credited to the assistance I have received."

ASH CREDLIN



Ash Credlin

For the past four years Ash Credlin has been completing a Degree in Adventure Ecotourism at Charles Sturt University in Albury. With a passion for the outdoors and adventure education, the Degree has provided Ash with a range of opportunities to extend his knowledge and skills base.

Chances for Children has supported Ash through his university degree by providing financial assistance to enable him to participate in and get the most from, his chosen course, which includes adventure experiences. One of the more recent university opportunities that Ash has undertaken was a three-week expedition to East Timor. The aim of that tour was to research the effects of tourism on a developing country and to be able to provide guidance for local villages to further develop their own tourism ventures and formed a part of a compulsory international field trip required for his graduation. Whilst in East Timor, the group of 12 students and one lecturer visited the town of Maubisse up in the mountains and became the first tourists to spend more than a day in the town. They also visited the country's capital Dili and spent a week on Atauro Island.

Ash loved East Timor and learnt a lot from his experience. He was struck by their style of evolving tourism that offers an experience that is personal, environmentally friendly and culturally appropriate, in total contrast to that which is offered by one of its nearest neighbours, Bali.

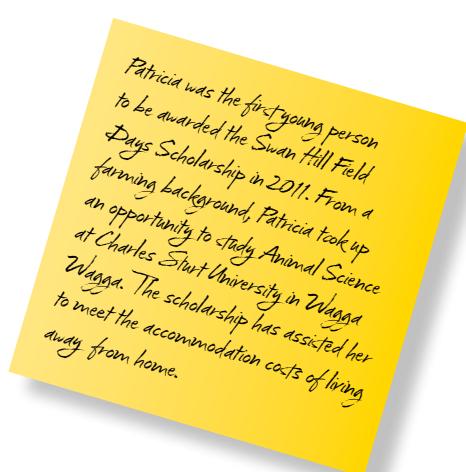
Ash will be forever grateful to Chances for Children for the support they gave him and the opportunities that support has allowed him to embrace.



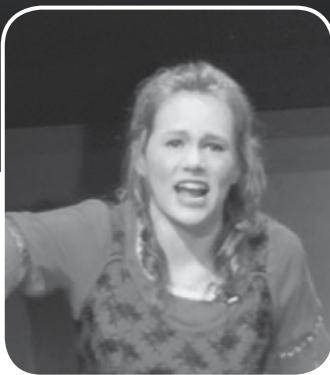
Patricia Coleman

In November 2010, Chances were very fortunate to receive a large sum of money from the Swan Hill Field Days Committee. The Committee had resolved not to run the field days again and gave the balance of their bank account to Chances to be used to establish a scholarship.

The money was invested for the program, with a scholarship drawn annually in the name of "The Swan Hill Field Days Scholarship." The scholarship is matched to a Chances recipient who is studying Agriculture or a related industry that supports the rural economy.



Patricia is well on her way to developing expertise in the sheep and wool industry, where she will later be able to work in artificial insemination, genetics or a veterinary practice. During semester breaks, Patricia usually works on properties, gaining valuable experience and helping to pay her way. In two years time, Patricia will finish her degree and will then consider post-graduate study.



Feather Fellows

Many people wonder about the type of job they would like or how they will break into the area of their dreams. Not Feather Fellows. Feather is well on track to pursuing her dreams of becoming a professional musical theatre actor and is currently studying singing, acting and dance at the Swan Hill College as part of her VCE.

Having appeared in various productions locally since first being assisted by Chances, Feather has also gained valuable experience overseas. She recently returned from the Czech Republic after being selected as part of a nine strong ensemble to work with a local amateur theatre company. Organised largely by the students themselves, Feather said it was an amazing experience.



chances dare to dream

When not honing her tap, jazz and vocal skills with local teachers, you'll find Feather studying for her Grade 4 Music exams. She hopes to be accepted into the Victorian College of Arts after she completes her VCE.

"The support from Chances has allowed me to have additional singing lessons with a teacher in Melbourne who works with professionals in the industry, who are currently working in shows like Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. It is definitely this support that has helped me excel in my music exams."

When it comes to Feather Fellows, it's a case of 'Watch this space'.

How you can find out more about Chances?

Education Training & Research
PO Box 1870, Mildura 3502
Telephone (03) 5021 7480
Facsimile (03) 5021 4455

Mildura Office 94 Lemon Avenue
Swan Hill Office 229 Beveridge Street
Robinvale Office 33 Herbert Street

www.chancesforchildren.com.au

how you can support chances

I am interested in knowing more about how I can assist Chances by:

- Becoming a Sustaining Supporter (yearly donation)
 Including Chances for Children in my Will
 Sponsoring the quarterly production of the **Chances** Newsletter
 Becoming a mentor or volunteer
 I would like to make a donation for the amount of \$ _____

Please debit my Master Card | Visa | AMEX

Card No: / / / Expiry Date: /

Name on Card: _____

Card holders Signature: _____

Name: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Email: _____

How did you come across our Chances Newsletter?

e t h