

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Peter Underwood Centre wins grant to equip schools, parents and communities

The Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment will roll out a new program designed to strengthen school, parent and community partnerships, after receiving a grant from the Ian Potter Foundation.

The Foundation has provided \$250,000 over two years for the program, which will include a series of workshops designed to support school leaders to engage effectively with parents, care-givers and community members, and to boost educational outcomes for young Tasmanians.

Centre Director Professor Elaine Stratford said the workshops to design engagement plans would include school leaders such as principals and senior staff, Parents and Friends Associations, School Councils and community members.

Up to 12 school communities will be mentored while implementing their plans, and the final stage of the project will share the collective knowledge and experience of schools, parents and communities working together to improve educational outcomes.

“From our research, we know parental engagement is one of the keys to young Tasmanians achieving their educational potential,” Professor Stratford said.

“If we can better support parents and care-givers to engage with their children’s school life, this will have a direct impact on their long-term ability to aspire to further education.”

Chief Investigator Professor Sue Kilpatrick said the project was one of several by the University which aim to better engage parents in their children’s education.

“This complements a Tasmanian Community Fund project working with local government and community organisations in northern Tasmania to provide parents with information on post-year 10 options for their children, and another exploring

how universities can better include parents in their outreach programs,” Professor Kilpatrick said.

Launched in February 2015, the Peter Underwood Centre is a partnership between the University of Tasmania, the Tasmanian State Government and Government House.

Its purpose is to support transformation in Tasmanian education, leading to increased levels of educational attainment and economic and social benefit for the state.

The Centre’s mission is to inspire Tasmanians to embrace learning and prosper from investing their time in education, and provides expert independent and non-partisan research and policy advice focused on raising educational attainment.

The Ian Potter Foundation is a major Australian philanthropic foundation that supports and promotes excellence and innovation. The Foundation was established in 1964 by Australian financier, businessman and philanthropist, Sir Ian Potter (1902 – 1994).

Grants are made through 10 program areas which reflect Sir Ian’s interest in the arts, and his visionary approach to issues including the environment, science, medical research, education and community wellbeing, as well as the importance of investing in Australia’s intellectual capital.

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