

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

DATE: WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2007

ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Major funding boost to help disadvantaged students attend University

The UTAS Springboard to Higher Education bursary program, aimed at helping disadvantaged and “at risk” students move into senior secondary and tertiary education, will be more than doubled this year to cover more than 40 high schools across Tasmania.

The dramatic expansion of the program follows a significant funding boost from its two key supporters, the Sylvia and Charles Viertel Foundation and the MyState Financial Community Foundation, totalling almost \$500,000 for the next five years.

Since it began in 2002, the program has already helped more than 100 students to complete years 11 and 12 and then move into tertiary education, often as the first member of their family to do so. The funding increase will allow a further 200 students to benefit through this unique program.

Springboard to Higher Education was developed by the University to address the ongoing crisis in school retention levels in Tasmania, where years 11 and 12 retention rates are the lowest in Australia. Only 65 per cent of Tasmanian students complete year 12.

University Vice-Chancellor Professor Daryl Le Grew, who will formally announce the program’s expansion at a function this morning, said the University was committed to helping students at every level of their education to achieve their full potential.

“Through the modelling and support provided by the Springboard Program, access to senior secondary and tertiary education is viewed as achievable to all students,” he said.

“While it is unusual for university programs to target students still in high school, we believe the situation calls for an innovative solution and our aim is to establish at least one Springboard scholarship in every high school in Tasmania. To this end, we recognise and value the generous support of our sponsors in ensuring this program continues to thrive,” he said.

To date, 90 per cent of Springboard recipients have gone on to complete year 11 and 60 per cent have continued on to University study.

Media opportunity:

WHEN: Today, Wednesday 12 December at 11.30 am

WHERE: University Council Room, First Floor, University Administration Building, Sandy Bay campus.

WHO: Vice-Chancellor Professor Daryl Le Grew, Education Minister The Honorable David Bartlett, together with school principals, previous recipients of the Springboard to Higher Education program, parents and representatives of the MyState Financial Community Foundation.

*** Further details on the Springboard program and the selection process are attached below**

Information Released by:

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Springboard fast facts:

The Springboard to Higher Education Program operates by:

- recognising, rewarding and supporting deserving young students who are at risk of leaving the education system and not realising their full educational potential.
- establishing a partnership between the sponsors, young people from the target group, participating schools, parents, and the University of Tasmania.
- focusing on the value of continued education in high schools and colleges in Tasmania and so encouraging many other students to undertake further education through their own efforts.
- building and maintaining the program to offer ongoing bursaries and scholarships to the participating students.
- working to break the cycle of low continuing education rates by changing the community culture, reversing the loss of intellectual capital from Tasmania and the development of the 'can do' attitude necessary to create wealth, economic renewal and personal and community growth.

Students are identified by their schools for bursaries on the basis that they:

- need financial assistance to continue to further education.
- are likely to be successful in years 11 and 12 and university, if given support and encouragement.
- are from a family with no tradition of participation in tertiary education.
- merit the support, in the opinion of the schools.