

WFF NEWS

The latest news and updates from the Wilkins Family Foundation



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Welcome to our year end Newsletter! So much has happened since we last communicated two months back that we felt it would be good to get our friends and supporters up to speed.



Welcome



NEW SCHOLARS FOR 2023

In late November our Country Manager Sallie and Sherol George from our great partners Vanuatu Skills Partnership held a very successful series of candidate interviews from our partner schools on Malekula, and we're delighted to announce the selection of six new scholars for 2023! In an extract from her report, Sallie reports on a very successful trip characterised by great commitment from our school partners.

“Sherol and I interviewed 10 students in all, from Lakatoro, Rensarie and the Lycée de Norsup. The Rensarie girls and their Principal only just got through to the interviews by wading across the flooded river, water up to their waists. They arrived 3 hours late and were anxious to get back in case the river rose further. So, we interviewed the Rensarie candidates immediately and sent them on their way. We identified a number of outstanding candidates – two from Norsup, one from Rensarie, and three from Lakatoro, all of whom have been offered scholarships for 2023”

Lakatoro School Principal John Kampai was effusive in his praise of the Foundation's support. He said, "Thank you so much Wilkins Family Foundation. Everyone is so thankful for your valuable contributions in the education of our girls. May the legacies of the late Darvall Wilkins last, in the land he once walked."

This brings the total number of Foundation scholars to 17 for 2023 onwards

OUR FIRST SUMMER CAMP

In early December we held our first Leadership Development Camp at Paradise Cove in Port Vila, bringing together all our current scholars for a two and half day workshop designed to provide coaching in leadership, self-care and resilience. The event was a grand success, brilliantly facilitated by life coach Jinny Ruben, who described the experience as “An absolute joy, privilege and wonderful opportunity to work with a Family Foundation with incredible heart, passion and vision to see young girls given the opportunity to be educated and supported in their journey. 11 outstanding Malekula girls....some who'd never been to Vila before.... 4 half day workshops with a range of leadership topics.... it was like watching a garden of flowers enriched with fertiliser, grow overnight. We shared heart-breaking stories, fun and laughter and finished on a finale dinner where they all had the confidence to share their stories with 40 invited guests.” The Camp was attended by partners, supporters and funders all of whom commented positively on the quality of the event. Most importantly, the feedback from our scholars was universally favourable.

Our scholars at the camp were all presented with an iPad, courtesy of a very generous donation from Brindabella Christian College, in Canberra. This will assist the girls with their school work, and accessing the internet for assignments.

“I don't know how to express my feelings because this camp was too much to me. I was so impressed and amazed at all the wonderful and encouraging messages and activities. The camp helps me a lot to know who I am and strengthen my belief and trust that I can be someone in the future”

“The thing I like most about this camp is learning to communicate with each other and share challenges we face. The camp was really helpful to us young women building courage and knowing that if others can do things we can also do it and this helps us become a leader in our community or village or workplace.”

We're already planning the next Camp for 2023!



Arriving at camp



Cutting the ribbon to open the camp



Receiving their goody bags



Dinner time



A few games were included



Coaching session

ANNOUNCING EXCITING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

One of the great strengths of our approach underpinning the progress and success we've achieved to date is in our ability to establish and build effective partnerships with a number of key agencies both in Vanuatu and abroad. Throughout 2022 we have worked consistently and with great success on this front, and we're really excited to announce:

We now have a Record of Understanding with Australian Volunteers International, who match skilled Australians to volunteer with partner organisations through volunteer assignments. We're in active discussion with them on a number of projects connected to our program with schools and colleges, which we hope to initiate and roll out throughout 2023. More on this in future newsletters.

We have also agreed a formal partnership with the British Friends of Vanuatu (BFOV), which was formed in 1986 and now has a membership of around 400 expatriates of many nationalities, all of whom enjoyed the experience of living or working in Vanuatu and wish to continue their connection. The association is active in the education field and has in the past funded secondary scholarship fees of young people who would otherwise receive no higher education. Given that their objectives reflect ours, from 2023 onwards BFOV will provide annual funding for us to increase the number of scholars we can select. BFOV's Chairman Gordon Dickinson commented, "This is a hugely positive step forward for us; and we are delighted to be working with the Wilkins Family Foundation to the good of Vanuatu".



British Friends of Vanuatu

As we close a very successful 2022 and look forward to expanding our work in 2023 we are as always really grateful for your interest and continuing support, which helps make it all possible.

We wish all our friends a safe and enjoyable festive season and a prosperous and successful 2023.

You can find out more about our work on our website, and how to donate by visiting our website - <https://www.wilkinsfamilyfoundation.com.au/> and also on Facebook