



Wilkins
Family Foundation

'DEVELOPING FUTURE LEADERS THROUGH EDUCATION'



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Message from the Chair

"As we reach our 5 year Anniversary we can look back with some satisfaction at having achieved our first set of goals"

I'm delighted to introduce our Annual Report for 2023, which actually covers the past two years, as a number of constraints, including the continuing disruption of the pandemic, prevented us from formally reporting on the previous year.

The last two years have seen significant growth for our small organisation. Our 5 year Anniversary is upon us and we can look back with some satisfaction at having achieved our first set of goals, which were to establish our organisation on a firm footing with a sustainable scholarship program in place and the potential for serious growth over the coming period.

In short:

- The Foundation is now fully registered as a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in both Vanuatu and Australia , and we have Australian tax deductibility status for donations
- The Foundation's Vanuatu Committee has been appointed, with responsibility for supporting and developing our scholarship program
- We are supporting 17 scholars, all of whom are progressing successfully through their learning and development journey, supported by structured mentoring, leadership and career coaching
- We begin 2023/24 with a healthy financial surplus to support our planned growth

Our experience to date has confirmed and highlighted both the challenges girls and young women experience in their journey through to adulthood, and also the measurable and dramatic impact targeted interventions like ours can have in helping them address those challenges. I hope that in our Report that impact comes to life in the accounts of the students we're supporting and the progress they're making. From the solid foundations we've built, we have ambitious plans to extend and expand our program to be able to offer more opportunities to increasing numbers of talented girls who would otherwise not be able to progress their education and achieve their full potential.

The first 5 years have been almost entirely funded by family and friends, and the design and delivery of our program made possible by staff working entirely voluntarily. We now need to move forward on a more formal basis, which will include establishing an office in Port Vila and employing local paid staff. We're very conscious of the need to significantly increase our support base, and I've been greatly encouraged by the positive response we've received both from our long-term supporters and the growing number of new donors and partners, particularly in Vanuatu. On behalf of the Foundation and our scholars, I thank you all for your continuing support and commitment.

I'll leave our Director and our Country Manager to speak more about our achievements and challenges, but in closing I want to pay tribute to their exceptional diligence and professionalism that, together with contributions from a small but committed group of friends and family, have brought us to a very successful 5-year point and given us the confidence to continue on to even greater achievements.

Simon Wilkins - Chair

Director's Report

"Two years on from our last Report we find ourselves in good shape and ready to write the next chapter"

In our last Annual Report I wrote about how much we'd achieved through 2019 and 2020, working with only modest financial resources, but benefiting hugely from the goodwill and encouragement of a growing number of supportive individuals and organisations. Over subsequent years that support has grown into a network of robust and mutually beneficial associations and partnerships through which we've been able to really develop and expand our work.

We now support 17 girls and young women, who are pursuing their studies in 9 schools and colleges in Vanuatu, and we're delighted to report that one scholar is now studying at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji. Later in this Report our Country Manager Sallie gives a lively account of how she and her small team are working to provide continuous support to each scholar, from selection through to graduation and beyond. It's an uplifting story, and one which provides the motivation for all of us to push forward to achieve even more.

Equally rewarding has been the tremendous collaboration with the growing number of teaching institutions. We now have great partnerships with all of the schools and colleges where our scholars are enrolled, extending into other areas including IT support, equipment and supplies, as well as solar-powered lights for evening study, all of which are positively contributing to the learning outcomes for those wider school communities.

We also give airtime in this Report to the outstanding contributions of a number of collaborators, including the Vanuatu Skills Partnership, who have been alongside us from Day 1, and also the British Friends of Vanuatu, with whom we inaugurated an agreement in 2022, which we hope and expect will be of great mutual benefit for years to come.

Central to the Foundation's ambitions is the empowerment of ni-Vanuatu women, which we are pursuing through increasing access to education for girls with the potential for leadership in the careers they choose to pursue. We need to reflect this in the governance and management of the Foundation as it grows. For this reason we've appointed a Vanuatu Committee, with a majority membership of accomplished and professional ni-Vanuatu women, who over the coming period will take on the oversight and direction of the Foundation's work in conjunction with our Australian Board. This is an important and exciting move, and will be underpinned by our establishing a Vila office, and recruiting ni-Vanuatu staff to run our program.

Finally, it's important to note that our confidence in the future is only made possible by the growth and stability of our finances, which we're happy to set out in this Report. This is a result of the loyalty of our core supporters and the steady increase in new ones, individual and corporate, for which we are most grateful.

Jerry Marston - Director

Expanding our Scholarship Program

"We're really motivated to support the growing ambitions of our scholars as they move through their learning journey, and at the same time excited by the potential of our new intake"

The Foundation Team ended 2022 on a high with the event of our first Leadership Development/Mentoring 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.

We began 2023 welcoming six new year 10 students who Sherol George (Vanuatu Skills Partnership) and I interviewed at the Malampa Skills Partnership office at Norsup Malekula, in November 2022. Scholarships were awarded to two promising young women from Lycee de Norsup, three from Lakatoro Junior Secondary School and one from Rensarie College. This brought our total number of secondary students to sixteen, who attend the following schools: Rensarie, Lakatoro, Norsup, Matevulu, Malapoa, Central, Onesua, Lycee LAB and Epauto. We have our first scholar Jassinda studying accounting at the University of the South Pacific(USP), soon to transfer to Fiji.

An exciting and also challenging event was the move of three of our boarding students to day student status at Central School in Vila; one Year 13 Malapoa student and two Year 12 Rensarie students. The challenge has been financing the greater cost of day students in Vila and finding safe, supportive accommodation. We are thankful we have managed to achieve this and the girls are thriving in their new environment.

Sallie Latella- Country Manager

Expanding our Scholarship Program

"The Foundation places huge importance on building close relationships with the girls and their families and providing regular mentoring support to the girls. We believe the Mentoring Program is key to our scholars achieving their highest potential in life."

In June 2023 Jinny Ruben and I travelled to Santo and Malekula. In Santo, we visited Yr 13 students Madlen and Evelyn at rural Matevulu College and enjoyed individual mentoring sessions with each girl and spoke with school staff regarding their progress and well being. A flat tire on the way to the airport and a hitched ride gave us lots of laughs, finally arriving safely on Malekula. After giving Jinny a tour of our beloved Lakatoro, family home and Father's grave, we were privileged to enjoy a traditional 'laplap sosor' meal in the home of Jinny's cousin in nearby Litslits village. The following day we gathered our 6 students and their parents at the Vanuatu Skills Partnership centre at Norsup -the first time we have brought the parents together for an information/ sharing session. It was a resounding success, and one which we will build on. The sessions with the girls focussed on gaining trust, relationship building and leadership skills. A highlight was Joyline's admirable grandmother Minnie bringing Joyline's 7 month old baby James to meet us. James was born when Joyline was in Yr 11 and we are so proud of her academic effort and determination to succeed.

Joyline's journey is inspiring. Her potential was noticed when selected for a scholarship at the beginning of Year 10 in 2021. She was achieving well at school until she became pregnant in Year 11 and by year's end when she gave birth to baby James, her grades had fallen dramatically. The school board asked her to leave, despite repeated requests by her grandfather to give Joyline a chance. The Foundation requested that the school allow Joyline to prove herself, pointing out that despite coming from a broken home, Joyline has great support from her determined grandparents and the added financial and mentoring support from the Foundation. The school agreed and at the end of term 1, Yr 12, Joyline has dramatically improved her results.

The hugely successful trip underlined the importance the Foundation is placing on building close relationships with the girls and their families and providing regular mentoring to the girls. We believe the Mentoring Program is key to our scholars achieving their highest potential in life. We aim to visit the students twice a year in addition to the mentoring that happens at the annual leadership development camp in Vila.

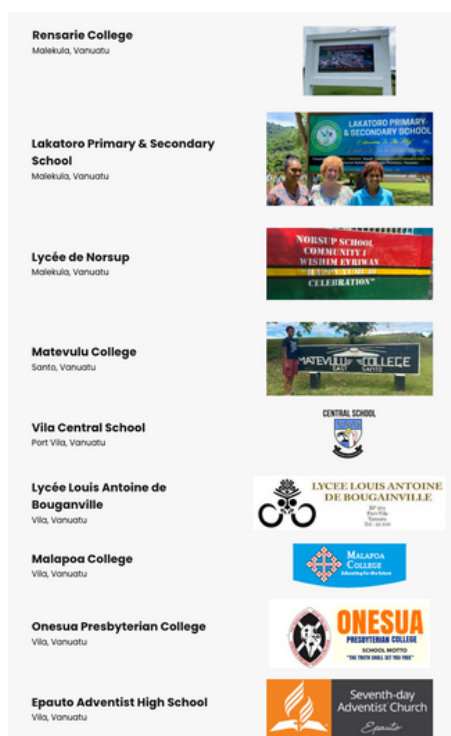
Our programs are expanding and adapting to meet the needs of our students as they mature. An exciting example was the introduction of our work experience program. A number of our students took up placements in businesses and organisations such as The Ombudsman Department and The Medical Centre, Nambatu. Students and employers gave favourable feedback, and we plan to include work experience training in our developing mentoring program.

We also have six Yr 13 and 14 students graduating this year from Matevulu, Onesua, Central and Lycee LAB. In response to this the Foundation team is focusing on exploring tertiary career pathways and developing relationships with relevant educational providers.

Building long-term Partnerships

"Strong partnerships are essential to the Foundation's growth and purpose, and we work continuously to build and nurture them"

Central to our success is building strong relationships with schools, and we've taken the time to consult with our partner schools, to understand their situation and the challenges they face. At the same time we share our philosophy and aims, and from that discuss how we can most effectively work together for the benefit of the girls we select for support. We're really encouraged by the positive response we receive. As scholars move from their island schools to senior schools and colleges in Vila and Santo, we've been equally successful in creating productive relationships with Principals and Administrators, always recognising that our primary interest is in one or two scholars in school populations of several hundreds. In the words of Principal Rossie Caleb, **Onesua Presbyterian College**: "It is a pleasure having WFF - sponsored student Georgia in our school. She is currently the only sponsored student out of 530 students and is increasing in confidence and emerging as a real leader."



Building long-term Partnerships

"A big thank you to all our partners, who have been central to what we've achieved so far, and are crucial to our future success "

Other partnerships feature prominently in our story and we can report on a number that have been critical to our success to date. Managers and office teams from the **Vanuatu Skills Partnership** have given us great support over the years - on selection panels, with logistics and transport, funding for our leadership camps, and much more. We're in regular discussion with them on a range of ideas, including work experience, schools-based enterprises, and remote mentoring. We have a signed agreement with **Australian Volunteers International** and are hoping to initiate our first of many volunteer assignments with them in mid-2024.

SolarBuddy is an Australian-based charity working to address energy poverty across the world. Their '*Light Up Vanuatu*' campaign aims to provide an individual solar-powered light to every student in the country to extend their evening and out-of-school study time. Our partnership came to life in June 2023 when we distributed 550 SolarBuddy lights to Onesua Presbyterian College on North Efate.

We have long been associated with the **British Friends of Vanuatu**, and in 2022 we signed an agreement with them to work collaboratively to improve education outcomes for young people in Vanuatu. This will result in their annual funding of a number of scholarships proposed and supported by us. The first two students were selected and began their scholarship in February 2023. We're delighted to be collaborating with BFoV and we're looking forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship.

Brindabella Christian College in Canberra is generously supplying us with their used but serviceable iPads, which we're refurbishing and distributing to schools and scholars



Strengthening our Organisation

"Good governance and transparent reporting systems provide the solid foundations for effective management, and for us to stay accountable into the future"

We've recently refreshed and strengthened our Australian Board to provide for additional expertise and to assist in succession planning. Our Board meets formally at least three times a year to give strategic direction and oversight to the Foundation's work and progress. Board members also have unpaid executive roles in directing, managing and advising the Foundation.

Board Members

- Simon Wilkins, Chair
- Ros Wilkins, Treasurer
- Jerry Marston
- Sallie Latella
- Cherie Wilkins (Appointed September 2022)
- Ian Marston (Appointed September 2022)
- Jill Gustave-Marston (Resigned March 2022)

The Foundation has also progressed on the commitment to improving and increasing our Vanuatu-based governance and representation by registering ourselves as an NGO in Vanuatu, and appointing and activating our Vanuatu Committee with a majority of suitably qualified and experienced ni-Vanuatu women. The Committee held its first meeting in April 2023 and will meet at least three times a year with delegated responsibilities to support our Vanuatu programs, including advising on policy and practice, overseeing the scholarship process, making award recommendations, assisting in the recruitment and appointment of local staff, reviewing the progress of our program, assisting in the resolving of local issues and representing the Foundation as appropriate.

Committee Members

- Presila Simo (Chair)
- Sherol George
- Jilda Shem
- Minnie Takaro
- Dorosday Kenneth
- Fremden Yanhambath
- Simon Wilkins (Chair, WFF Australia)
- Cherie Wilkins (Board member WFF Australia)



Both the Board and the Committee have established and operate in accordance with a suite of policies covering ethical standards and practices, codes of conduct in the workplace, child protection, non-discrimination and gender equity.

Growing our Fundraising

"Our year-on-year fundraising success needs to continue so we can fully resource our plans to expand our coverage and initiate new projects"

In the 12 months to June 2023 we benefited from significant additional income from a number of sources, including the British Friends of Vanuatu partnership, and our first and very successful fundraising campaign in Vanuatu. We've also been fortunate to retain the continuing support of all of our existing individual supporters as well as secure new ones.

Sustaining our current program and embarking on our planned expansion towards a Vanuatu-wide program will require us to significantly increase our fundraising efforts. With that in mind, we have in place the groundwork for a strategy across all sources, including government, private foundations, individual giving and corporate sponsorship.

- We've developed productive links and had great conversations with all the main overseas Missions in Vanuatu, emphasising our common objectives around addressing gender imbalance and discrimination, creating educational opportunities for girls and young women, and empowering rural communities. We're confident that this will lead to substantive funding opportunities over the coming period
- We systematically approach every private foundation with grants policies and programs that align with ours, with modest but growing success
- Our annual Appeal goes out to our rapidly growing supporter database and is providing us with an increasing proportion of the regular income on which our operations depend
- Finally, we're achieving exciting breakthroughs in the corporate field with our first two sizeable company sponsorships, one in Australia and one in Vanuatu

We really want to thank everyone who has supported us with their investments of funding, resources and time which have together enabled us to achieve the success we're reporting on here. We hope that the achievements we outline in this Report and our plans for the future will inspire and motivate others to get involved.



Our Finances

"2022/23 saw a very welcome improvement in our financial position, which we aim to build on in the coming two years"

Our financial position improved significantly in 2022/23, thanks to some very generous donations from individuals, businesses and other not-for-profit charitable institutions, as well as our regular givers. This has enabled the Foundation to finish the year with a healthy surplus. This together with the anticipated income for 2023/24 will enable the Foundation to continue to fully fund our current seventeen scholars, provisionally support the selection of new girls, and also to fund some necessary staffing and administration costs in relation to our increased operational workload.

Wilkins Family Foundation Ltd. For the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023	2022	2021
Income			
Donations	52,723.30	13,865.87	6,652.27
Grant Funding	1,848.00	-	-
Other Revenue	-	-	148.79
Sales	24.90	-	-
Total Income	54,596.20	13,865.87	6,801.06
Less Expenses			
Bank Fees	44.00	22.00	50.00
Consulting	-	3,850.00	120.00
Freight & Courier	187.76	-	-
General Expenses	1,590.00	-	-
Legal expenses	-	88.00	-
Office Expenses	368.00	472.00	436.00
Printing & Stationery	199.98	-	-
Scholarship Costs	15,500.00	2,200.00	12,100.00
Telephone & Internet	364.03	595.90	166.35
Travel - International	902.20	-	-
Travel - National	320.00	-	-
Total Expenses	19,475.97	7,227.90	12,872.35
Surplus (Deficit)	35,120.23	6,637.97	(6,071.29)
Plus Other Cash Movements			
Fixed Assets	-	156.00	-
Total Other Cash Movements	-	156.00	-
Net Cash Movement	35,120.23	6,793.97	(6,071.29)
Summary			
Opening Balance	8,424.92	1,630.95	7,702.24
Plus Net Cash Movement	35,120.23	6,793.97	(6,071.29)
Cash Balance	43,545.15	8,424.92	1,630.95

Looking Forward

"Through our first five years we feel we've developed a successful model which is effectively supporting talented girls to progress through their learning journey into young adulthood and on to successful lives..... and we're fully committed to continue to improve and extend the program"

Scholarships are at the heart of what we do, and we're passionate about the positive and long-term impact they can have on participants, their families and communities. Over the coming years we'll be giving our energies over to:

- Deepening our mentoring support, providing more frequent individual as well as group sessions
- Increasing our focus on helping scholars progress beyond school, through to tertiary courses and employment opportunities
- Opening selection up to all Malampa secondary schools
- Extending our program into new Provinces
- Identifying and bringing on new education-related initiatives which add value to our core program

And we will achieve this through:

Strengthening our Vanuatu operations and presence:

- Setting up an office base for our staff, and also as a meeting point for the growing number of our Vila-based scholars
- Appointing additional support staff to assist the Country Manager
- Fully activating the newly-formed Vanuatu Committee to oversee and guide the program

Significantly extending our fundraising to underpin necessary core staffing and overheads, and also to initiate specific projects:

- Pursuing ongoing core funding which will enable us to create a national scholarship program
- Nurturing and expanding our current funding partnerships
- Building and consolidating our supporter base of individuals and companies

Maximising the benefits from our partnerships:

- Formalising and further strengthening current partnerships which have been crucial to our progress to date
- Actively pursuing new strategic alliances which will deliver mutual benefits

Continuously communicating and promoting our work:

- Driving forward with a more active, regular and effective social media presence
- Distributing quarterly newsletters to keep our supporters abreast of our achievements and plans
- Building a contemporary digital video library to promote our work to a wider audience



ABOUT THE WILKINS FAMILY FOUNDATION (WFF)

We are a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) promoting education and leadership through long term scholarships and mentoring for marginalised girls in Vanuatu

DONATE

A donation no matter how small will assist us alter the course of a young person's life today!

(Australian donations are fully tax deductible)

WWW.WILKINSFAMILYFOUNDATION.COM.AU/DONATE

