



OPENING THE DOORS FOUNDATION

Keeping Koorie Kids in an Education of their Choice

June 2017

Web: www.openingthedoors.org.au Phone: (03) 9443 9070

LATEST NEWS FROM THE TEAM LEADER



I came across this quote from Wes Beavis, *"Belief is the fuel that propels potential into reality"* that struck a chord with me regarding some of our previous recipients who because of their belief in themselves, have gone beyond their potential and have pursued their dreams and achieved amazing results.

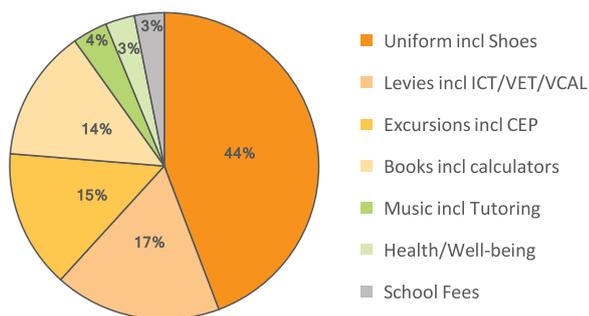
"... Year 12: she continues to love school and all that it offers. She is committed and motivated to do her very best to receive her highest standards in Year 12 in 2017. We are always very grateful for the help and support OTDF has generously provided us over the years. She was selected as a Prefect for 2017 ..."

"... He is going great. He is going to be in Year 10. So proud of this boy!"

"... She had a fabulous year last year in Yr 7 ... she was class captain and took on many challenges in sport and academically. She received the award for Year 7 Outstanding School Spirit, Generosity and Citizenship. She also received 6 academic distinctions...."

"... She had an excellent year fulfilling an SRC role, participating in sport, debating and academic life. She received 5 academic distinctions and will be Athletics house Captain in 2017"

Category Distribution



2017 student breakdown:

For the 2017 school year, we have distributed over \$570,000 to support 758 students. There are 49% primary school students and 51% secondary school students of which 57% are female and 43% are male.

Meeting the needs as expressed by families

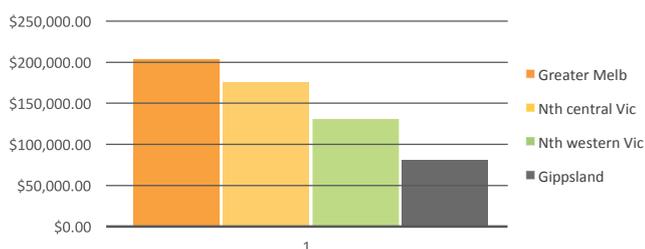
The voices of our families and their expressed needs are important. We have found that other than the

usual requests for uniforms, books, IT Levies, excursions and camps, we have had an increase in requests for Music and Curriculum Extension Programs (CEP).

While we were able to support all the families who applied to us, we were able to cover 70% of the amounts requested, an improvement on previous years!

The regional breakdown is shown below. Although we are supporting more students in the Greater Melbourne area, the country cousins are making families more aware of OTDF and the support available in a range of supportive and excellent Independent schools.

Regional Distribution



From a grandparent: *"Our sincere thanks to the Trustees as our grandchildren would not have been able to continue with their music lessons without this grant. I'm pleased to advise that our granddaughter has been selected to play in the Junior School Band which she is very excited about. It has been a wonderful boost to her confidence and motivating her to continue to practice and progress further with her music."*

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From a parent: *"I cannot thank you enough for this support provided by Opening the Doors! The payment of the costs for books means that we have the finance to offer the girls more opportunities for activities and for assistance where it is needed."*



This young man is in Grade 6 and is from Nyungar-Yamatji in WA, although born on Wathaurong Country. Here he stands tall and proud next to a bollard he painted that tells the story of his families journey.

One of his major achievements was being selected as a member of the Dhunghala Children's Choir and performing with the Short Black Opera company in the children's chorus of Deborah Cheetham's Pecan Summer alongside his sister at the Sydney Opera House last year. He has also had the opportunity to record and perform with Uncle Archie Roach at the Melbourne Recital Centre and the Melbourne Arts Centres Playhouse theatre. *(Story & photo used with permission from parent)*

From a primary school principal: *".... (the family) sincerely appreciates your support (they) have been experiencing many challenges and your support comes at a time that is really important On behalf of the school community I thank the Foundation for the ongoing support of Koorie Children in our Education system and assure you that we are striving to provide the best possible education for the children."*

Remembering Joyce Smith

In February this year, Aunty Joyce Smith passed into the Dreaming, her wisdom, presence and passion for her family and for justice will be sorely missed.

Joyce was one of seven remarkable people who founded the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Melbourne in 1988; the ACMV has gone from strength to strength and now plays a vital role not only in the life Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Victoria, but also in the life of the Victorian Catholic Church. Joyce's work and passion was also centred on the well-being of and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, their right to a safe and nurturing home, believing totally in the difference that a positive, culturally appropriate educational experience could make in their lives. Joyce was a founding Trustee of Opening the Doors Foundation, helping to guide the Foundation within its founding vision and mission. Even as Joyce walked her last journey, she continued to take great pride in the work of Opening the Doors Foundation and the difference it had and continues to make in the lives of young ATSI students in Victoria. Her legacy will continue to inspire and challenge that there is still much work to be done, many young people to be encouraged to aspire to achieve in their education, and for the wider community to commit to support all initiatives that work towards the goal that Joyce held to so firmly: that young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be nurtured, encouraged and supported in all aspects of their lives, but especially in their education.

May she rest in love and peace in the Dreaming.
(Written by Carol Messer, Trustee of OTDF)

Donations to Opening the Doors

In order to maintain our support to these outstanding students we need your on-going help.

We are enclosing a donation slip in case you would like to make a donation for the 2016/17 tax year.

We thank you if you have already made a donation, perhaps you could pass on the donation slip to family and friends.

On-line donations are also available through our website:

<http://www.openingthedoors.org.au/donations-for-education/make-a-donation-to-aboriginal-education/>

Our students and families greatly appreciate your support!

We thank you for your generous support on this wonderful journey and bless you for making a difference!

The Opening the Doors Foundation acknowledges the traditional owners of ancestral lands across Australia.

Respecting Elders past and present and local Aboriginal Custodians.