

Annual Update 2025



Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation Chair Update



It was a joy to welcome our 2025 scholarship recipients at the March Welcome Event. This inspiring group of scholars joins a growing community of bold, driven individuals ready to shape the future.

Thanks to the continued generosity of our Alumni, Donors, and Partners, we awarded five new undergraduate scholarships this year. We're also proud to

have awarded our first postgraduate scholarship, made possible by the Toyota Community Trust. The scholarship was awarded to Imarsha Pathirana, a University of Melbourne graduate now pursuing a Master of Public Health and completing a placement with the Department of Health and Aged Care.

This financial year, we also celebrated a major milestone: the Foundation's 20th anniversary. At our Annual Dinner, keynote speaker Mary Nega, CEO of the Youth Affairs Council Victoria, shared her powerful journey from student to sector leader, championing young voices across the state.

We also farewelled our retiring Scholarship Council Members Ms Gaye Morris, Ms Sally Capp AO, and Ms Deborah Beale with deep gratitude, and warmly welcomed our new Scholarship Council Members, Ms Sarah Ramantanis, Ms Melanie Treloar and Mr Ashnil Singh.

We're especially thankful for the generosity of our Alumni community, including those who have chosen to leave a legacy through gifts in their Wills. We acknowledge, with heartfelt thanks, the late John Alfred Talent (Dafydd Lewis Trust Alumnus), whose significant bequest continues his commitment to education.

To learn more about partnering with or supporting the Foundation, and our mission to uplift the next generation of inspiring young women, please reach out at info.lewisscholarships@gmail.com.

Warm regards,

Fiona Reed
Chair, Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship
Foundation

2025 MJL Scholars



5

new
scholars



1

new post
graduate scholar



22

continuing
scholars



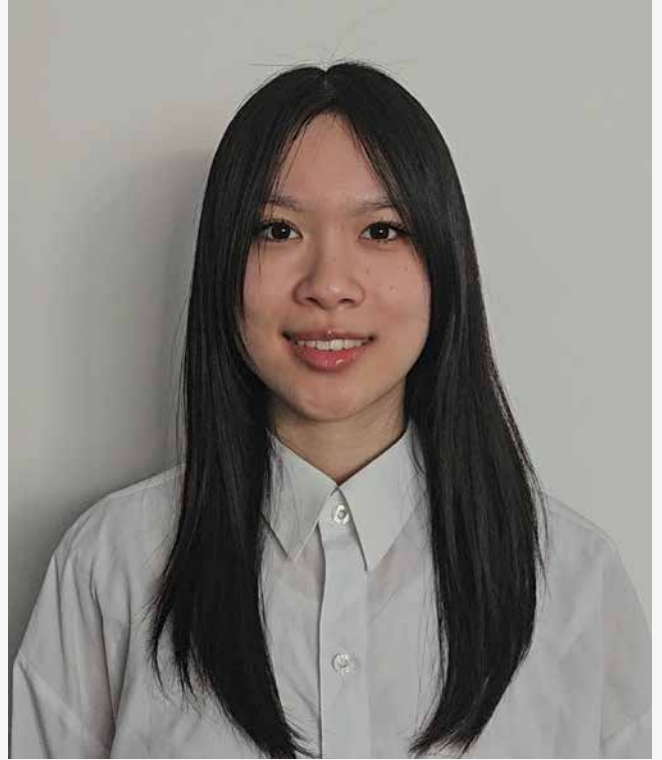
100+

scholars
since 2005

Visit of interest

This year, first year scholars were treated to a unique experience for their annual visit of interest. Hosted by Victorian social enterprise STREAT cofounder and Chief Impact Officer Dr Kate Barrelle and Deputy CEO Elise Bennetts, scholars took a deep dive into the story behind STREAT, its social, environment and economic impact and its leadership in the social enterprise field.

What was clear from the discussion around the table at lunch time, was that our scholars are deeply driven to make a positive change in the world. Reiterating again the positive ripple effect our scholars will have in their communities when they complete their studies.



Scholar profile

Natalie Lam
Degree: **Bachelor of Science (Computing and Software Systems), University of Melbourne**

> How did you find out about the Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation?

I first learned about MJLSF through an email from Western Chances.

Encouraged by the recommendation and the support of my careers counsellor, I decided to apply. Fortunately, my application was successful!

> What has it meant to you?

The scholarship has been extremely helpful in easing my financial burden and allowing me to focus on my academic and career goals. I now have the funds necessary to cover essential costs such as university amenity fees, textbooks, and most notably, travel fares. MJLSF has also connected me with a community of welcoming and inspiring individuals, motivating me to strive further.



> **What career direction are you hoping to pursue once completing your studies?**

Thanks to the financial support, I also had more time to dedicate to securing an internship, which I completed over the summer. That experience led to a graduate position as a software engineer, which I am very excited for! Moving forward, I hope to expand my skills into other growing fields, such as AI and cybersecurity.

> **What is your favourite experience at university?**

One of my favourite aspects of this journey has been joining various student tech clubs.

These groups have not only enhanced my technical skills but also introduced me to a supportive network of peers. Having a community to discuss challenges and share knowledge with has been incredibly reassuring in difficult times.

> **What advice would you give to first-year scholars or those completing their secondary education?**

My advice to others would be to take every opportunity you find but also **create your own**. If something interests you, even if it seems out of reach, don't hesitate to ask.



2025 Scholars (left to right): Syazwani Saifudin, Molly Fredericks, Veronica Mazzetti, Kushi Malleshaiah, Keely Xia, Chair MJLSF Fiona Reed

2026 Scholarship applications

The 2026 Scholarship application period is now open.

To support the launch of our 2026 scholarship application round, we encourage our current scholars and Alumni to connect with your former Schools to share your experience as a recipient of a Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship. Further information our 2026 scholarship application round can be found here.

Please reach out to Scholarships Program Manager on info.lewisscholarships@gmail.com to obtain some promotional resources to hand out to prospective scholarship applicants.

Funding partners

We are delighted to announce our partnership with the Phyllis Connor Memorial Trust.

Cecile Phyllis Connor was one of Australia's first female philanthropic trailblazers: a smart investor who gave during her lifetime and ensured her charitable legacy would live on through her foundation. After completing her college education in the 1920s, she began her career at the State Electricity Commission, before enlisting in the army as a driver during World War II. She later became involved in intelligence-gathering for the military secret service.

In the spirit of Phyllis's legacy, the Phyllis Connor Memorial Trust have generously supported a scholarship for a young scholar to pursue their education dreams and inspire a new generation of trail blazing leaders.

Partner organisations

We wish to acknowledge the generosity of all our funding partners. Your ongoing support enables us to continue to offer life changing opportunities to aspiring young scholars, for this, we thank you.

If your organisation would like to partner with the Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation, please contact Equity Trustees on 03 8623 5000 or charities@eqt.com.au



TOYOTA



**Jenkins
Foundation**



Department
of Transport
and Planning

Save the date!

Dafydd Lewis Trust and Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation Annual Dinner

When Thursday, 16 October 2025

Where Isabella Fraser Room, State Library Victoria

MJL Financials 2025

Equity Trustees is the Corporate Trustee of the Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation and responsible for the prudent investment of the Foundation's assets. It works in collaboration with the Scholarship Council members to give young aspiring women the opportunity to embark upon a university education.

As at 30 June 2025 the portfolio had a market value of **\$3,772,747**.

A full financial summary can be viewed **here**

Join us to invest in the next generation of aspirational young Victorian women

There are many meaningful ways to support the Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation in helping pave the way forward for high-achieving young Victorian women from disadvantaged backgrounds who aspire to pursue a university education.

Partner with us

For a discussion about you or your organisations interest in partnering with the foundation please contact **info.lewisscholarships@gmail.com**

Leave a legacy through a gift in your Will

A gift in your will is an enduring legacy, that can continue to support Mary Jane Lewis scholarships for many generations to come.

To find out more about leaving a gift in your will to the Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation, please contact Equity Trustees **charities@eqt.com.au**

Making a once off or regular donation

You can make a tax deductible gift to the Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation by:

Direct deposit

Account Name: Mary Jane Lewis Scholarship Foundation

Bank: National Australia Bank

BSB: 082-395

Account Number: 000005026

Reference: "Insert your name"

Donating online

<https://maryjanelewis.com.au/donate/>

A gift of your time

By sharing your experiences, offering guidance, or connecting others through your network, you can make a meaningful impact on the next generation of scholars.

To explore volunteering opportunities, please contact our Scholarships Program Manager at **info.lewisscholarships@gmail.com**.