



Apology, Achievements and Bright Futures

From the Development Desk

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When Prime Minister Kevin Rudd apologised to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people on February 13, he threw down the mantle for the rest of us to join in a partnership with the government to right the wrongs.

It will be easy to hold the Government to account but it will be the actions of everyday Australians that will ultimately decide whether Justice for Australia's Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people is a pipedream or reality.

Your commitment to a truly great Australia with justice for all, through your support for the Opening the Doors Foundation is to be highly commended.

Together we are able to offer a hand of friendship and practical assistance to Aboriginal people who are determined to ensure that their families are best placed to move forward with the broader community to advance Australia fair.

We have been working hard to strengthen and consolidate the wonderful achievements so far and are blessed with strong partnerships with:

St Vincent De Paul Society, Portland House, Telstra Foundation, the Victorian Catholic Bishops, Blessed Sacrament Fathers, the Redemptorists' Congregation and Cabrini Health.

The Foundation is also forming exciting new partnerships with The Brotherhood of St Laurence, the AFL and Reconciliation Victoria

Some of the feedback from families, which makes our jobs so rewarding!!!

- *We got his uniform on Friday, I think he tried it on every hour over the weekend. I just wanted to cry this morning, he looked so smart and proud.*
- *We have three grand children in secondary college and two in primary school. Thank you so much for your help.*
- *Although he required lots of help – HE GOT THERE!!!! - Thank you so much.*
- *The best thing was that he was able to go on camp which he really needed to do. He has had separation issues since his dad died and to go on camp was great.*
- *She has had a very busy year studying at school and home. It has been exciting for her to pick out her Year 11 subjects. She has decided to work toward being a social worker or helping people in hard situations. She is doing very well and we are all very proud of her.*



The Next Generation

Looking forward to a bright future.

This beautiful little tot's mum and nan have both helped the Foundation.

When she goes to school, we want to be able to support her.

John Arthur — Chair of Trustees

As well as Prime Minister Rudd's national apology on behalf of all Australians in February, the 2020 Summit in April also gave grounds for hope that the future of our fellow Indigenous Australians will be freed of the shackles of the past. 2020 identified many issues of concern. One was the need to get Indigenous children into schools. However, the education agenda is far deeper than mere attendance. The culture and experience that children bring to school is an essential part of the framework of learning. Indigenous children bring a rich culture to their schools. This must be encouraged and developed.

The Foundation endeavors to support this outcome by assisting Indigenous families choose the school and education of their choice. Kevin Rudd speaks passionately about the power of education, describing it as the engine room of equity. Retention of Indigenous children in the education system supports this quest for equity.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge, with sadness, the death of our Patron, Archbishop Sir Frank Little. Archbishop Frank was a dedicated supporter of Indigenous Australians in their quest for recognition and equality in life. He saw the Foundation as a positive contributor towards this goal.

END OF FINANCIAL YEAR Yes, it is that time of year again!!!

A donation slip is enclosed with this Newsletter just in case you would like to take the opportunity to make a donation for the 2007/08 Tax Year!
Donations to the Foundation are critical to our work and are tax deductible.

The Statistics Sheet illustrates a great need which we can only partly meet. Your continued support is critically important to the lives and futures for all the Aboriginal students we support.

THANK YOU!!

Special points of interest:

- Number of Primary and Secondary students assisted
- Funds distributed
- Distribution of assistance in Victorian Regions
- Creative Ideas and Fundraising Events

2008 Applications are closed! 1st Round Applications for 2009 will be available October 2008

Important Statistics

The second round of applications from Aboriginal students enrolled in independent educational institutions in Victoria was completed in April.

- Nearly 300 students from 82 primary schools and Secondary Colleges were assisted with educational grants.
- *While all applications that met the criteria were able to be supported, once again, we were not able to grant the total amount requested. We were only able to support families for less than 50% of total requests.*
- \$140,000 (approx) was distributed to students this year.
- The students are represented across the four dioceses/regions of Victoria: 20% from Ballarat, 14% from Melbourne, 46% from Sandhurst and 20% from Sale.
- The majority of requests concerned books 30%, uniforms 29% and excursions 21%.

FUN AT SCHOOL



Senior School



Sporty Girls

(We play Footy & Basketball)

Just getting started

Fundraising Opportunities

Following the hosting of the "Message Stick" and in response to the 'Apology', an increasing number of parishes are supporting the Foundation with presentations and collections during Mass.

Groups are also supporting our fundraising Gala Dinner by purchasing a table and encouraging others to attend.

Back to Our Paperbark

Gala Fundraising Dinner, Art Auction and DVD Launch

Friday 5 September 2008

Opening the Doors Foundation is holding its second Gala Fundraising Dinner and Aboriginal Art Auction, *Back to Our Paperbark* on 5 September 2008.

- Come along and enjoy a night of culture, giving and fun.
- View art for auction while enjoying canapés and drinks.
- Enjoy a delicious 3 course meal and the launch of a new DVD showcasing the Foundation's work in Victorian schools.
- Be entertained, bid for Aboriginal art and rub shoulders with mystery guests.

One hundred percent of monies raised through ticket sales, the art auction and other fundraising initiatives on the evening will go directly to students and families.

Contact Felicity at the Foundation on 9443 9070 or by e-mail: otdfgaladinner@optusnet.com.au for more information.