

## NEWS RELEASE

### Two Australian Women Awarded Harvard Business Scholarships

#### *The time is ripe for more Australian women to take up leadership positions*

**xx March 2012, Australia:** The high calibre of Australian executive women's scholarship applications, for the Harvard Women in Leadership Forum, resulted in two scholarships being awarded this year instead of just one.

Chief Executive Women and the Women's Leadership Institute Australia have partnered to offer this prestigious scholarship to Australian business women for the second consecutive year.

Chief Executive Women's President, Belinda Hutchinson said, "We were thrilled with the high level of scholarship applications from executive women in a wide range of industries, from across Australia. Our goal is to support senior and executive women to increase their leadership capability and from the applications, it appears that the time is ripe for more Australian women to take up leadership roles".

The founder of Women's Leadership Institute Australia, Carol Schwartz said, "There were many exceptional applicants for the scholarship this year. Indeed, we were so impressed that we decided to offer two scholarships: one to the commercial sector and one to the not for profit sector.

"The two recipients, Suzanne Dvorak and Bronwyn Evans, are both talented, engaging women who are respected for their thought leadership. And importantly, both the women are strong advocates and mentors for other women," said Ms Schwartz.

Suzanne Dvorak is CEO of Save the Children, an international organization that has helped protect and educate children around the world for over 90 years. She has been a c-suite executive in the not-for profit sector for almost 15 years and is well aware of the other 600,000 entities in the not-for profit sector clamouring for donations, grants and volunteers.

"My biggest challenge is achieving a level of collaboration with other like-minded charities that will allow us to thrive instead of competing for much needed funds and talent," said the Harvard scholarship recipient.

"I am excited about the opportunity to attend the Harvard Women's Leadership Forum," she says. It will equip me to inspire and lead my colleagues in their much needed collaboration efforts.

Her vision is for a corporate Australia where women will be on an equal playing field with men.

"Australia is trailing behind the USA, UK, New Zealand and Canada with the number women in senior positions. In the so called "lucky country", Australian women deserve better," said Ms Dvorak.

Bronwyn Evans is an engineer who is passionate about giving Australian executive women "a seat at the table" as leaders, particularly in industries where women are severely under-represented.

“For young women engineers it is very challenging to progress into engineering leadership positions because this sector has few senior women role models and a dominant male culture, with almost 90 percent of engineers being men,” said Dr Evans.

Dr Evans is in a leadership position at Australian medical device company, Cochlear Limited, as Senior Vice President, Quality Clinical and Regulatory. Since being appointed to this role over six years ago, Dr Evans has actively mentored young female engineers whilst managing a team of over 70 engineers, scientists and administration staff.

“It is a huge honour to be awarded this Harvard Women’s Leadership Forum scholarship. It will give me a unique opportunity to reflect on my impact on Cochlear’s business and how I can be a major contributor in leading us through future challenges” she said.

In 2012, Chief Executive Women (CEW) along with various partner organizations, is offering executive women 20 scholarships to attend leadership programs in Australia and overseas including Harvard Business School, INSEAD’s Business School in Singapore, The Australian Graduate School of Management in Sydney, the Australian Institute of Company Directors and CEW’s Leaders Program.

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**About Chief Executive Women**

Chief Executive Women (CEW) is one of Australia’s leading organisations supporting female leadership in Australia. Its members include over 250 of Australia’s senior women leaders. CEW’s goal is to facilitate greater representation of women at senior levels of Australian business, government and the not-for-profit sectors. CEW provides scholarship, mentoring and networking to talented women to help them attain important leadership roles in Australia and undertakes research and provides diagnostic tools to assist organisations improve the development and retention of women talent. For more information visit: [www.cew.org.au](http://www.cew.org.au)

**About Women’s Leadership Institute Australia (WLIA)**

The Women’s Leadership Institute Australia was established by Carol Schwartz, AM in order to provide a focal point for the challenge of limited representation of women in leadership positions in Australia. It is dedicated to breaking through the uniquely Australian barriers of expectations, unconscious bias and structural issues to ensure equality of opportunity for women into leadership positions. WLIA seeks to achieve this by catalysing and inspiring innovative partnerships, actions and system changing solutions to address this imbalance. <http://www.wlia.org.au/> “