



Chief Executive Women

Women leaders enabling women leaders

MEDIA RELEASE

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2019 CEW Scholar: Donna Bridge wins scholarship to Harvard

Chief Executive Women (CEW) in partnership with Roberta Sykes Indigenous Education Foundation (RSIEF) announce **Donna Bridge** as the winner of a scholarship to attend the highly regarded Harvard Kennedy School.

The scholarship, which was offered to middle and senior women managers who are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Heritage, will allow Donna to attend the *Creating Collaborative Solutions* program at Harvard in October.

CEW Scholarships Committee Chair, Colleen Harris, says: "CEW is proud to support talented Indigenous women take their leadership skills to the next level.

"CEW's scholarships provide opportunities for women to advance their careers through study at some of the world's leading business schools.

"Improving the representation and diversity of women in senior leadership roles will deliver better decisions and more equitable outcomes for Australia."

Richard Potok, Executive Director of the RSIEF and CEO of the Aurora Education Foundation, says: "These scholarships provide a terrific opportunity for Indigenous women who are leaders in their field to further develop the skills that are essential for leadership success.

"Donna is a remarkable leader who works across sectors and her community to design local responses to challenges and opportunities. As an Aboriginal Principal, she is delivering benefits to students, families and communities, and represents what Indigenous leadership can achieve. I am confident this whole-of-community approach will deliver further positive education outcomes as her career progresses and the impact of her work grows," says Richard.

The winner

Donna Bridge is Principal of Fitzroy Valley District High School in the northeast of Western Australia. Donna has over 20 years of teaching experience, mostly in remote communities, and has received several awards for leadership in teaching.

In 2005, Donna was awarded a Churchill Fellowship. She travelled to the US and Canada to study the role external agencies, schools and community members play in establishing effective networks in disadvantaged communities to succeed economically, socially, culturally and academically.

A proud Yamatji woman from the Geraldton region, Donna is also an Executive Member of the National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Principals Association.

Donna says: "For much of my career I've been developing and trialling new models of secondary school delivery to meet the needs of the 21st-century learner in remote communities, where barriers to success are often overwhelming.

"My goal is to develop as a leader so I can validate new ways of learning and broaden our idea of what works in education, particularly for secondary Aboriginal students.

"I'm confident that I can use the skills I learn at Harvard to have a positive impact on reconciliation in this country."

The scholarship

The CEW and RSIEF scholarship will enable Donna to attend the *Creating Collaborative Solutions: Innovations in Governance* program at Harvard Kennedy School, Boston, Massachusetts, in October this year.

Harvard Kennedy School is a graduate and professional school that brings together students, scholars and practitioners who combine thought and action to make the world a better place.

Creating Collaborative Solutions is designed for leaders in the public, non-profit and corporate sectors who see their roles as reaching across these traditionally separate spheres to build new structures that can produce significant, valuable change.

The scholarships are part of the 2019 CEW Scholars program, which is providing 19 talented Australian women with the opportunity to take their careers to the next level by supporting executive education at internationally acclaimed business schools.

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About Chief Executive Women (www.cew.org.au)

Chief Executive Women is the pre-eminent organisation representing more than 550 of Australia's most senior women from the corporate, public, academic and not-for-profit sectors. Its mission is "women leaders enabling women leaders". Through advocacy, targeted programs and scholarships, CEW works to remove the barriers to women's progression and ensure equal opportunity for prosperity.

About CEW Scholars (www.cew.org.au/scholarships)

The CEW Scholars program enables women leaders by supporting them at critical junctures in their careers, from their first management roles to top executive positions. More than 150 women have been awarded scholarships to business schools in Australia and internationally since CEW commenced its executive program for women leaders in 1992. In 2019, 19 scholarships will be offered for talented women to attend leadership courses at international business schools.

About Roberta Sykes Indigenous Education Foundation

(www.robertasykesfoundation.com)

In 1983, Roberta Sykes became the first black Australian to graduate from an American university with a PhD in Education from Harvard. She returned to Australia to take up the reins of Black Women's Action in Education, the group that had raised the funds to enable her to attend Harvard. Over the next 15 years, under Roberta's stewardship, Black Women's Action in Education continued to encourage and support Indigenous students to study in Australia and overseas, before being renamed in Roberta's honour in 2008. The Foundation was the first to offer overseas postgraduate scholarships to Indigenous Australians. Roberta died in 2010, but the Foundation has continued her amazing legacy and has supported over 45 Indigenous students in their pursuit of academic achievement.

CEW Scholars program is funded through the CEW Annual Dinner and the generosity of sponsors including: PLATINUM SPONSOR: KING & WOOD MALLESONS. OFFICIAL AIRLINE SPONSOR: QANTAS. PREMISES PARTNER: CBRE. GOLD SPONSORS: ANZ, BHP, KPMG, QBE, TELSTRA. SILVER SPONSORS: ALLENS LINKLATERS, AMP, ASHURST, BCG, COMMONWEALTH BANK, CELLARMASTERS, EGON ZEHNDER, EY, GILBERT + TOBIN, GPT, HARVEY NORMAN, HEIDRICK & STRUGGLES, IAG, LENDLEASE, MACQUARIE, MICROSOFT, MIRVAC, NAB, SPENCER STUART, SYDNEY AIRPORT, SUNCORP, WESFARMERS, WESTPAC GROUP and NINE ENTERTAINMENT

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