



MEDIA RELEASE: 19th January 2026

Chances for Children scholarship recipients announced

Mallee Family Care is proud to announce the latest round of Chances for Children Foundation scholarship recipients, supporting local young people across the Mallee to continue their education and chase their dreams.

11 students have been awarded scholarships through the program for this round, including 7 Tertiary scholarships, 2 Non-tertiary scholarships, and 2 Keeping Kids at Secondary School (KK@SS) scholarships.

The Chances for Children Foundation (Chances) is the philanthropic arm of Mallee Family Care. Established in 2000, Chances recently celebrated a significant milestone, having supported more than 2,250 young people aged 24 and under throughout its 25-year legacy.

Mallee Family Care Chief Executive Officer Teresa Jayet said the scholarships play a vital role in removing barriers to education for young people in regional and remote communities.

“Chances scholarships do more than provide financial support, they give young people the confidence to pursue pathways they may not have otherwise considered,” she said.

“By investing in education, we are investing in the future of our region, empowering young people to develop skills, build independence and contribute back to their communities over the long term.”

Ms Jayet said the programs impact would not be possible without the ongoing support of donors and the wider community.

“Every scholarship awarded represents the generosity of our community and donors who believe in creating opportunities for young people,” she said.

“Their support helps ensure young people across the Mallee can access education regardless of their circumstances.”

More than half of Chances scholarships support tertiary education, which often requires young people from our community to move away from their family home and support themselves for the first time.

20-year-old Kaiden Wilkie from Irymple is in his final year of an Advanced Diploma of Game and Art Animation at the Academy of Interactive Entertainment in Melbourne, with a Chances Tertiary scholarship helping him cover the cost of rent so he can focus on his studies.

Chances also supports young people develop their talents and pursue their passions in areas such as sport, music, leadership and the arts with non-tertiary scholarships.



Media enquiries

Nicole Manthorpe | Communications Manager

T: 03 5023 5966

E: nmanthorpemalleefamilycare.com.au



KK@SS scholarships provide targeted support for students in Years 11 and 12 to help them complete their VCE schooling.

17-year-old Aydin Gunn from Mildura is thrilled to be receiving a KK@SS scholarship after being nominated by his teacher at Mildura Senior College.

“Never in my life did I feel like I’d be nominated for something like this. I’ve had a rough last two years with everything, given workload and personal health issues,” he said.

“This opportunity has given me a boost in confidence in the idea that I can graduate and that I am heard from others.”

Aydin hopes to one day attend university, where he plans to study computer science, history or political science.

18-year-old Madeline Walker from Swan Hill is on her way to achieving her dreams with thanks to a Chances KK@SS scholarship

“Receiving this scholarship is massive for me, as the funding will allow me to study with resources I may not have had,” she said.

“After graduating year 12 I wish to study medicine at Charles Stuart University and move back to Swan Hill and support the local community as a general practitioner, it would be really meaningful to be able to give back to a community that has helped and supported me throughout my education.”

Applications for Keeping Kids at Secondary School scholarships and nominations are open year-round. Applications for Tertiary and Non-tertiary scholarships will reopen later this year. For eligibility criteria and further information, visit chancesforchildren.com.au or call Mallee Family Care on 1300 417 618.

Mallee Family Care congratulates all 2026 Chances scholarship recipients and wishes them every success in their educational journeys.

Tertiary scholarships

Recipient	Hometown	Scholarship
Jessica Burge	Swan Hill	Bachelor of Creative Arts (Acting) JMC Academy, Melbourne
Toby Morello	Mildura	Bachelor of Commerce (Finance and Banking) Adelaide University, Adelaide
Louise Richardson	Mildura	Diploma of Nursing SuniTAFE, Mildura
Kaiden Wilkie	Irymple	Advanced Diploma Game and Art Animation Academy of Interactive Entertainment, Melbourne
Alara Basibuyuk	Nichols Point	Bachelor of Nursing La Trobe University, Mildura



Media enquiries

Nicole Manthorpe | Communications Manager

T: 03 5023 5966

E: nmanthorpemalleefamilycare.com.au



Lilly Bell	Gol Gol	Bachelor of Arts (Politics and International Development) University of Adelaide, Adelaide
Thurstton Watson	Mildura	Bachelor of Science University of Melbourne, Parkville

Non-Tertiary scholarships

Recipient	Hometown	Scholarship
Nate Lawn	Mildura	Tennis athlete (state/national level)
Eliza Sheehan	Irymple	Violinist, Melbourne Youth Orchestra Youth Camp (state level)

Keeping Kids at Secondary School scholarships

Recipient	Hometown	Scholarship
Aydin Gunn	Mildura	Year 12 VCE, Mildura
Madeline Walker	Swan Hill	Year 12 VCE, Swan Hill

ENDS

Media enquiries

Nicole Manthorpe | Communications Manager

T: 03 5023 5966

E: nmanthorpemalleefamilycare.com.au