Empowering Indigenous children through education

My father was a Rotarian and our family was always involved in Rotary activities. I joined Southport Rotary in 2005 so I too could give back to my community – locally, nationally and internationally.

I am now Business Manager with Yalari Ltd. Yalari provides secondary boarding school scholarships to Indigenous children from regional, rural and remote communities. The values of Yalara have a strong synergy with Rotary’s values that I now support through the Southport Rotary.

Solid numeric and literacy skills are the pathway to future success and a good education provides the skills and tools needed for young people to make their way in employment, self-determination and equality.

In 2005 Yalari was founded by educationalist Waverley Stanley and his wife Llew Mullins. Waverley grew up in Murgon, 300 km north-west of Brisbane and attended Murgon State School. Waverley’s grade 7 teacher, Mrs Rosemary Bishop, recognised Waverley’s potential and knew he deserved the chance of a brighter future. Mrs Bishop was instrumental in Waverley gaining a scholarship to attend Toowoomba Grammar School for his high school education. It was this opportunity that started him on the Yalari journey.

Yalari provides Indigenous children with full scholarships for their entire secondary school education. The cornerstone of Yalari’s success is strong and productive partnerships with 27 of Australia’s leading boarding schools, including St Hilda’s and The Southport School.

At Yalari, we believe education is the key to generational change and a brighter future by empowering Indigenous children from remote, rural and regional areas of Australia and Torres Strait to dream big and achieve.

Yalari selects children who are doing well at primary school and offers them the opportunity to be educated at some of the best boarding schools in Australia. This education provides young Indigenous people with the ideas and skills to help them pursue their goals and dreams.

The home page of Rotary International’s website (https://new.rotary.org/en) says: “PEOPLE OF ACTION. Rotary is where neighbors, friends, and problem solvers share ideas, join leaders and take action to create lasting change”. Yalari is a group of neighbours, friends and problem solvers who share the vision of making a lasting change to the landscape of Australian through education.

District 9640 covers a large geographic and diverse region in which Indigenous families in regional and rural areas would be eligible for a Yalari scholarship. I invite you to help spread the word about Yalari in your community and to encourage/assist an Indigenous family to submit an application for the 2019 school year.

Rotarians have a wealth of experience and knowledge to share with others. Yalari also needs volunteers to assist with tutoring, driving students to appointments and general assistance in our head office.

It takes a whole community to educate a child – we hope you can assist Yalari.

Contact Rotarian LEANDA COOPER, 07 5665 8688 or 0414 378 786 for more information.