

Scholarship students from AIEF embark on a big city adventure

It's been another year of significant growth and expansion, says CEO Andrew Penfold

The Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) hosted almost 60 Indigenous students from all over Australia to celebrate the launch of the 2011 Annual Report in Sydney.

One of the students was Jesse, who embarked on one of the biggest adventures of his life.

It was the first time for the Year 10 student from Scotch College in Perth to visit the country's east coast.

"I have never even been on a plane before and now I am here looking at the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, I can't believe it!" said Jesse while he was exploring Sydney with his fellow students.

The Indigenous students joined staff from partner schools and colleges, as well as government, business, media and sporting leaders and supporters aboard the P&O cruise ship Pacific Jewel to celebrate the achievements and successes of AIEF programs over the previous 12 month period, recognise major donors and allow all partners and stakeholders to celebrate in the hard work of the students.

"2011 has been another year of significant growth and expansion in all aspects of AIEF's operations," AIEF Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Penfold said.

"We now partner with 26 leading boarding schools and colleges across

NSW, QLD and WA.

"Since AIEF was formed in 2007 we have assisted 240 Indigenous youth attend school and a further 32 attend university.

"We have already seen 50 secondary school and two university graduates through our programs, and we look forward to many more in the future.

"We believe marginalised Indigenous children in financial need should have access to some of the leading schools and universities and pursue productive and fulfilling career opportunities with some of the leading companies in the country.

"Our business strategy has always been to firstly raise the funds to operate our business in a long-term and sustainable way and then build and develop our two interconnected programs - education and careers.

"During 2011 AIEF reached its funding target of \$40 million - almost 18 years ahead of schedule.

"The question now is - having come so far so soon, where do we go next?"

For Jesse, the answer to this question is easy.

"Well, first I'm going back home and finish school so one day I'll be successful and can travel the whole world!"

- by Alexandra Pitzing

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AIEF student Jesse made the most of his first visit to Sydney. Images supplied

Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) 2011 Annual Report Launch

All images: Nikki Easterbrook



Above: Andrew Penfold, CEO of the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation with one of the students who is a recipient of an AIEF scholarship, at the 2011 Annual Report Launch

