



JANE DEMPSTER

AIEF scholarship recipients Eliza Shaw and Harry Doolan in Sydney yesterday for their Year 12 graduation ceremony

Graduation the start of a dream run

JESSICA CORTIS

They may have just graduated from high school but that's just the beginning for Harry Doolan and Eliza Shaw, who are destined "to change the nation".

Ms Shaw and Mr Doolan were among 60 Australian Indigenous Education Foundation students recognised at a graduation ceremony in Sydney last night.

Ms Shaw, 17, from the Pilbara region of Western Australia, completed her studies at Presbyterian Ladies College in Perth on an AIEF scholarship. She will be the



first of her five siblings to study at university.

It was in a village in Tanzania, where Ms Shaw was helping build a school, that she found her passion for human rights and decided she wanted to be an international aid worker.

"People should always feel safe where they live and know what

rights they have," Ms Shaw said.

Mr Doolan, 18, decided to follow his passion for performing arts when he realised "I shouldn't compare myself to others".

He grew up in Mount Isa with his seven brothers and sisters before boarding at The Cathedral School in Townsville.

Mr Doolan was inspired by comedians such as Adam Sandler who, he said, brought "colour and laughter" to people's lives.

"I realised I wanted to be someone like that so I put my head down and sought out the knowledge to help me be the best version of myself," he said.

Mr Doolan said he planned to take a year off to volunteer with the Police and Community Youth Club organisation before studying to be a performing arts teacher.

Speaking at their graduation ceremony last night, Andrew Penfold AM, the executive director of the AIEF, said he was proud of what the graduates of 2019 had brought to the community.

"AIEF started with the aim of educating a generation of young indigenous people like those in the class of 2019 who are going on to change the nation," Mr Penfold said.