



MORGAN SETTE

Kirrah Stothers, 16, a scholarship student at Adelaide's Seymour College originally from Katherine, has her sights set on studying law

Friend's father ignited a longing for the law

ELIAS VISONTAY

Kirrah Stothers was 11 years old, growing up in a remote Northern Territory town when she decided she wanted to become a lawyer.

She had set the ambition after looking up to the father of one of her best friends at school, a lawyer who intervened in custody removal cases for families in their local Katherine community.

"I got a first-hand view of what he did for our community," Ms Stothers told *The Australian*.

"He dealt with a lot of children being removed from their homes. I guess that triggered my first interest in law, and human rights, because it was really inspiring."

The now 16-year-old has her sights set on studying law at university, after participating in a summer camp at the University of Sydney Law School.

For now, she is about to finish her Year 10 exams, and is excited about enrolling in legal studies as an elective in 2020 at her school, Seymour College in Adelaide.

She left her family and classmates at Katherine High School at the beginning of the year to move to her boarding school after becoming a recipient of the Australian Indigenous Education Fund scholarship.

The program provides tuition and boarding costs at private schools for 450 indigenous high school students around the coun-



try, with more than 650 past graduates since it was established in 2008.

"I was very excited to come to Seymour College because I knew what great opportunities there would be here, but I was so nervous because I'd never come to a school where I didn't know anyone. I'd grown up with the same kids my entire life," Kirrah said.

Despite "the dread of homesickness", she has been able to

thrive at Seymour College while staying in constant mobile communication with her family and returning to Katherine to visit them during each school holiday break.

"I love it here, I've made some amazing friends," she said.

"Some of my best friends are in my clan (a school house).

"I've gotten so close and bonded with some of the girls, it's like a family.

"I also play netball for Seymour College, and it's a lot bigger than the competition in Katherine, where we played the same team over and over again."

Kirrah is also looking forward to her electives of business studies and modern history next year, as

well as English, which she has grown fond of out of her love of reading.

AIEF executive director Andrew Penfold said: "AIEF scholarships help to facilitate parental choice by removing the financial barriers that may prevent indigenous students who want to pursue their education with our partner schools from doing so."

"Scholarship students like Kirrah are continuing to realise outstanding outcomes in indigenous education.

"AIEF aspires to make a sustained and significant, positive impact by helping indigenous students complete Year 12 and make a successful transition from their education to their careers."