

This is ThePinnacle Foundation newsletter. We have updates.



A message from our Executive Director, Sean Linkson

Our third full year of operation got off to an action-packed and event-filled start,

and our volunteers have been working overtime. There's so much to tell! In this newsletter you'll find:

- 14 Scholarship winners for 2012 announced by Kerry Phelps and Michael Kirby on February 24 at the Sydney office of new corporate partner, Accenture;
- Accenture announces a \$15,000 donation to support an LGBTIQ business student and to provide pro bono support through its world-leading diversity initiative;
- Freehills Foundation donates \$20,000 to Pinnacle after winning a landmark High Court case to protect the rights of transgender people;
- Pinnacle's message promoted to thousands at Mardi Gras Fair Day;
- Our first major bequest stimulates the establishment of an endowment framework to attract more bequests; Our first "named" scholarship is announced;
- Meet one of our Board members, and
- The dates for "Meet Pinnacle's Scholarship Winners" to be announced soon for Brisbane, Perth, Melbourne and Adelaide.

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Meet the new kids on the block: Pinnacle's 2012 scholars



More than 100 people turned out on a Friday evening in the middle of Mardi Gras season to this year's scholarship announcement, the Pyrmont venue for which was kindly provided by Pinnacle's new corporate partner,

Accenture. With both patrons, Kerryn Phelps and Michael Kirby, in attendance to welcome Pinnacle's supporters and hear first-hand from our inspirational NSW scholarship winners, this was a very successful event.

For more information on our amazing scholarship recipients from around Australia, check out our website: [CLICK HERE](#)

Selecting our scholars – how do we do it?

Becoming a Pinnacle scholarship recipient is tough: but don't worry, it's not as frightening as *The Hunger Games*. Applications close each year in late October and our Selection Committee follows strict policies and procedures. Unlike many other scholarships, our criteria balances helping students who have suffered from discrimination or marginalisation in their school years with consistent academic performance.

Our experience to date is most scholars do not have the support of families, sometimes have bouts of depression, and they work part-time and study full time. Applicants need to demonstrate a consistent academic record: they don't need to be straight-A students, but they need to have a proven record of effort over time, and offer good reasons for seeking funding from the Foundation.

For the 2012 group we had 36 applications and four late requests for inclusion, which were rejected. In all, 18 applicants were scheduled for interview either in person, by video conferencing or phone for rural applicants. We have a list of standard questions, then others tailored to their individual application.

Our selection criteria and equity considerations around rural/remote or indigenous applicants are foremost when determining scholarship outcomes.

Our 2012 applicants and scholars – where do they come from?

We made significant inroads to improve equity representations this year. Although, as the table below illustrates, we have more work to do to ensure we attract applicants from across Australia to represent the complexities of our culture.

2012 Profile breakdown	% of Applicants	% of Scholars
Physical, Sensory, Intellectual, Psychiatric disabilities	40.6%	53%
Ethnicity – first language	6.2%	6.6%
Aboriginal or of indigenous heritage	0%	0%
Gay	43.7%	27%
Lesbian	37.5%	53%
Transgender	8.75%	20%
Intersex or Queer	0%	0%
State – Vic	31%	27%
State – NSW	37.5%	47%
State – SA	12.5%	13%
State – WA	9.4%	6.5%
State – Qld	9.4%	6.5%
State and Territories – ACT, NT, Tasmania	0%	0%

We have a new partner – it could be love.....

We are delighted that world-leading consulting firm, Accenture, is now partnering with Pinnacle and is recognising the importance of a diverse and inclusive workforce.

The firm has donated \$15,000 over three years to sponsor a scholarship for a student of business or IT as well as staff to provide volunteer support throughout the year. Accenture will also provide pro bono business support services to Pinnacle along with hosting various events.

Accenture's stunning Sydney Head Office on the Pyrmont dockside was the venue for our February 24 event with Patrons Michael Kirby and Kerryn Phelps. Thank you Accenture – we love having you on board!

Freehills wins a case, gives us the \$20,000 award



In another extraordinary act of corporate generosity, the charitable foundation of leading law firm Freehills has donated to Pinnacle the proceeds of costs awarded in winning a landmark High Court case this month. The case related to the denial of rights to two transgender people in WA.

With Pinnacle supporting three transgender scholarship winners this year, their donation is particularly poignant. Freehills has played a very important part in Pinnacle's history and without the firm we may not be here today. Freehills provided pro bono legal advice to establish Pinnacle; created our corporate structure and constitution; obtained our tax exemption status *AND* provided our first corporate donation of \$5000!

Such a commitment to human rights is a rare and wonderful thing and we at Pinnacle are very proud and honoured to be the recipients of this generous donation.

Our Mardi Gras moment in the sun



For once the sun was shining and the great, the good and yes, even the grubby of Sydney's LGBTIQ came out in force to enjoy the annual Mardi Gras Fair Day at Sydney's Victoria Park. For the second year running Pinnacle had a stall to promote community awareness and spread the word about Pinnacle's aims to help disadvantaged or marginalised LGBTIQ youth.

Four volunteer staff from corporate partner Accenture helped to hand out thousands of brochures amongst the thronging crowd, most of whom had never heard of Pinnacle. It was a great day of promotion and publicity – until the heavens opened and deluged the event at 4.30pm, at which point we upped stumps and scurried home.

Sometimes there's a limit to the lengths we'll go to in order to get the message out there!

Where there's a will, there's a way to donate

A recent generous bequest – when someone leaves us something in their will – was the impetus to create a comprehensive "how-to" guide for those wishing to financially support Pinnacle, and to establish an Endowment Fund for large contributions.

You can find the guide on our website: just download from the link "donor information". [DONATE HERE](#)

Our website has lots of information about ways members of our community can financially support us, both in the short- and long-term. Contributions to our Endowment Fund will be carefully invested to earn interest and fund future scholarships.

The message is getting through and recently an overseas supporter sent us this message: "... am

very moved by the inspired work you do. I am not in a position to make a decent financial contribution at present, but I would like to make the foundation one of the beneficiaries of my life insurance policy to the tune of \$50K."

It just goes to show that anyone and everyone can help, and we thank all our supporters who continue to make regular donations to us as well as those making provision for us in the long-term.

Have a scholarship named after you – just like Clark!

For donors who make a financial commitment of \$50,000 or more in cash over three years, we now offer Cornerstone Membership. This comes with a lot of benefits, but the BIG benefit is being able to "name" a scholarship. The *Clark Walton Pinnacle Scholarship* for architecture, design and planning or visual and creative arts is the first named scholarship to be announced by The Pinnacle Foundation.

Clark was an out and proud gay man from his early 20s until his death aged 61 in March 2011. He was an award-winning architect, and many of his designs appeared in leading style magazines. In 2002 he was awarded the Energy Efficiency/ESD Award Architecture Award for the Interactive Learning Centre at Charles Sturt University. He was a member of the RAlA and the Master Builders, a rare achievement in itself. Clark started painting when he was at high school and he achieved a very high result in art for the HSC.

He continued to paint throughout his working life, something from which he derived great pleasure and recognition from friends, family and colleagues. In later years, Clark devoted more time to painting, his artistic expression based on the land and seascape around Coledale, where he spent his retirement. Close friends of Clark's, Ian Dickson and his partner Reg Holloway, said they created an endowment because it was the best way they could celebrate his life and contribution to urban planning and design.

Ian says: *"Clark Walton was an out gay man in the 70s before homosexuality had been legalised in NSW. He was lucky in that he had supportive and understanding family members who were proud of who he was and what he had achieved. His family understood the importance of education and encouraged his interest in architecture. He was also a great supporter of the LGBTIQ community. So my partner Reg Holloway and I knew that he would be happy that his name was being linked to a scholarship to help those in the community who had not had his advantages. We think he would have been especially enthusiastic about the concept of each scholarship recipient having a mentor to advise and encourage them in their special field of interest.*

We are delighted that this scholarship can both assist those who might otherwise not have had the chance to make the most of their abilities and keep the memory of our dear friend alive." We hope Ian and Reg's generous move to honour Clark's legacy inspires others to do the same.

Other benefits for Cornerstone members are free invitations to our regular social functions attended by our patron/s and scholars; the option of having their name added to our Cornerstone Honour List, as well as receiving regular reports on the progress of our scholars and the Foundation itself.

Look, here's what we're doing with your money

Accountability, transparency and the right management expertise are critically important when it comes to handling other people's money. We post our audited financial reports on our website, along with our Constitution and Process & Policies document.

When we undertook a recent survey to ascertain what our supporters considered to be important they said, among other things, that they needed to know the Foundation was run by a strong management team including respected persons from the community, and that accountability and transparency was evident in our published material. Well, we listen and we deliver.

We're in the press.....

Pinnacle doesn't get as much press as Lady Gaga, but we love what we do get. Read all about it! [CLICK HERE](#)

Want to meet the scholars in QLD, Vic, SA and WA?

After February's successful event to announce and introduce our NSW scholars, similar events are being planned for Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth. Stay tuned for dates in your city!

