



Rural

Winchester Foundation scholarships for remote youth bearing fruit for Queensland philanthropist

ABC Rural By [Jodie Gunders](#)

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A central Queensland woman is spending her estate while she is living to make the dreams of young rural and remote students come true.

When widow Beryl Neilsen sold her large stake in the property Winchester Downs, near Moranbah, she had intended to bequeath the proceeds in her estate.

But instead, a friend advised her to spend the money now and enjoy watching it benefit others.

Mrs Neilsen decided to take that advice and in 2011 [established the Winchester Foundation](#) to support the education of rural and remote Queensland students.

"I didn't have children and my husband died quite a while ago now, so I have a real purpose in life now," she said.

The Winchester Foundation has supported more than 100 students get a great education and currently has 156 scholarship holders.

Mrs Neilsen said the foundation is a dream come true.

"[The students] do appreciate it and I get letters from them all the time."

The foundation counts among its successful graduates several veterinarians, an electrical



[Beryl Neilsen started the Winchester Foundation to give educational opportunities to rural students.](#) (ABC Rural: Jodie Gunders)

engineer, and its first surgeon will graduate later this year.

"Kids need their education. So many have gone though now and they've turned out marvellously," Mrs Neilsen said.

"There are very talented kids out there and why should they miss out?"

Mrs Neilsen said the need in rural Queensland is great, particularly among families on the land educating their children at home.

"Those people that school their children at home, they need a medal because it's just so hard. So if somebody can help them out to keep their kids at school, that's great," she said.

"When you're isolated, you're up against it so badly.

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35yo remote education service to close



Volunteers for Isolated Students' Education (VISE) will fold after more than 35 years of service bringing education to outback children.