

Studying for their HSC Exams!  
Callie, Ammy & Jenika



20

ANNUAL  
REPORT

25



Country  
Universities  
Centre

SNOWY MONARO



*I am able to come and study at the Centre while my kids are at school, giving me the perfect place to get things done.*



**Jack**  
Bachelor of Nursing  
Charles Sturt University



# 2013 – 2025

## SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL STUDENTS

**845**   
**STUDENTS**  
since 2013



**448**  
**UNIVERSITY  
COURSES**  
have been studied by our students

---

**& over 114 OTHER  
COURSES**  
since 2013

**3.2%**  
**ABORIGINAL OR  
TORRES STRAIT  
STUDENTS**  
2013 – 2025

CUC SNOWY  
MONARO 

Cooma has 2.8% people identifying as  
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ABS)  
174 students did not provide this  
information

**265** students were  
**FIRST IN FAMILY  
TO STUDY AT UNI**  
2013 – 2025

162 students did not provide this information

Our students  
have studied

with **46** **DIFFERENT  
UNIVERSITIES**

**& over 56 OTHER  
PROVIDERS**  
since 2013

# Message from The Chair

## Carolyn Ewart

**It has been another significant and busy year for CUC Snowy Monaro (CUCSM). It has been a year that demonstrates the power of local partnerships, thoughtful governance, and our continued commitment to ensuring that regional students can access and succeed in higher education.**



I begin by sincerely thanking our Board Directors for their dedication, strategic leadership, and unwavering support throughout the year. Their commitment ensures that CUCSM remains strong, locally led, and responsive to the needs of our community.

A special and heartfelt thank you goes to Frances Robertson, whose work as Secretary continues to set the benchmark for excellence. Her capacity to manage policy development, support employees when needed, and keep the organisation moving forward seems effortless but reflects her dedication and skill.

This year, the Board focused on futureproofing CUCSM through the development of succession planning policies, enhanced risk management frameworks, and a refined skills matrix. These steps ensure CUCSM is well positioned to meet future opportunities with strength and stability.

As part of this work, we were delighted to welcome Kerrie Harris to the Board. Kerrie is a local high school teacher with a special interest in law and politics, and her perspective will be a valuable asset to the Board's future decision-making.



### **Completion of the Common Ground Program**

2025 saw the completion of CUCSM's Regional Partnerships Project Pool Program (RPPPP) local project, Common Ground, an adult-focused program that fostered community connection, skill development, and pathways to learning.

With the program's finalisation, we also farewelled Han Worsley, who made an outstanding contribution as Education Coordinator. CUCSM has always proudly said it is a stepping stone to bigger things, and Han's departure reflects that belief. We thank Han for their commitment to CUCSM and wish them every success in their future career.

### **A New Chapter: The Student Engagement Program**

Following the conclusion of Common Ground and its associated funding, the Board took time to reflect on our Strategic Plan and identify a sustainable and flexible path forward. This process led to the development of the Student Engagement Program – a program designed to centre students in everything we do.

This initiative focuses on ensuring that students:

- feel supported in their studies;
- feel connected as part of a CUCSM student community;
- are supported to plan their study pathways and make informed decisions; and
- are confident in using the services provided by their university or course provider.

The program is delivered by the Centre Coordinator and a team of Student Engagement Officers (SEOs) – students who have studied at CUCSM themselves and can offer relatable, peer-based support.

The 2025 SEO team includes a medical placement student, a postgraduate psychology student, an undergraduate law student, an undergraduate STEM high school teacher, and an undergraduate business student. This structure not only supports current students but also demonstrates CUCSM's capacity to develop its own local talent.

### **Leadership and Growth**

Our achievements are a direct reflection of the dedication of our staff. Nadine Holland, our Centre Manager, has once again shown exceptional leadership and commitment to students and her team, to CUCSM's strategic direction, and to the Snowy Monaro community. Her ability to manage operations, foster relationships with other Centre Managers, and advocate for our students is central to CUCSM's success.

Bronte Tozer is an example of the CUCSM journey. A former CUCSM student who completed her Honours in Science at University of Canberra in 2023, Bronte began as a casual staff member and now flourishes as the Centre Coordinator. She leads the Student Engagement Program, supports the SEOs, and provides invaluable operational support to Nadine. Bronte's story reflects CUCSM's growing ability to nurture and empower its students, equipping them with practical skills and opportunities to lead.

### **Student Growth and Participation**

In 2025, CUCSM recorded its highest ever number of registered students, a testament to the strong foundation laid through widening participation activities earlier in the year and the leadership of Han Worsley.

This growth has also been supported by partnerships with local high schools, most notably Monaro High School. Principal, James Armitage, has actively encouraged Year 12 students to use CUCSM as a study space. This initiative reflects a shared goal: to break down barriers for school leavers who are considering post-secondary study and to build early trust between young learners and CUCSM staff.

By studying at CUCSM, these students gained access to a quiet, structured environment and were expected to follow the same policies and behaviours as adult learners. This approach not only supports study discipline but also helps ease the transition from school to tertiary education, building confidence and familiarity well before enrolment.

Although student numbers naturally stabilised after the conclusion of the Common Ground program, they remain strong and aligned with CUCSM's available resources and demonstrate both sustainable growth and meaningful community connection.

### **Speak Up: Empowering Young People of Snowy Monaro**

2025 also began with great momentum through the delivery of the Speak Up: Empowering Young People of Snowy Monaro Program. This initiative demonstrated how a regional university study hub can successfully partner with a university to deliver programs that develop the skills and confidence of young people – the future university students of our region.

The program was delivered in partnership with University of Canberra and funded through Snowy Hydro Community Grants, as well as a generous personal donation from Narelle Davis, former Mayor of Snowy Monaro Regional Council and current CUCSM Board Director.



The Speak Up program gave local young people the opportunity to develop public speaking, leadership, and communication skills, while building their confidence to pursue further education and leadership opportunities. CUCSM is proud to have played a role in shaping these future leaders and hopes to provide the same opportunity to ten more young people in 2026.

### **Looking Forward**

As we look to 2026, CUCSM's core priority will be to further embed and strengthen the Student Engagement Program. We are taking a back-to-basics approach by putting our current registered students at the centre of our focus. By deepening the quality and consistency of the support we provide to students already with us, we will continue to foster meaningful relationships, enhance student success, and build trust in our services.

We will, of course, continue to welcome opportunities to develop widening participation initiatives that connect with new and future students. However, without the larger grant funding that previously supported these programs through Country Universities Centre Central, we will endeavour to deliver this work within our means ensuring our efforts are strategic, sustainable, and community driven.

CUCSM is proud to be part of the national network of Regional University Study Hubs and to demonstrate how a small, local Centre can make a big impact. Our vision remains clear: to support our students to succeed, to work in genuine partnership with our community, and to continue shaping futures across the Snowy Monaro region.

To our Board Directors, staff, students, partners, and community, thank you. Your dedication and belief in the power of education make CUCSM what it is today.

# Centre Manager Report



## Nadine Holland

**2025 has been a year of both transition and consolidation. While CUCSM has experienced change, it has also grown stronger, more focused, and more connected to its students than ever before.**

At the heart of CUCSM is its people – our staff and students. This year, I am particularly proud of the strength, adaptability, and dedication of our team. Together, we have navigated change, maintained stability, and continued to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for our students.

### **A Strong and Supportive Team**

CUCSM is fortunate to have an excellent team that genuinely believes in the mission of the Centre. Bronte Tozer has been exceptional in her role as Centre Coordinator. Having begun her CUCSM journey as a student, she brings deep insight into what it means to study in a

regional area. Over the past year, Bronte has stepped confidently into greater responsibility, coordinating the Student Engagement Program, supporting the Student Engagement Officers (SEOs), and providing invaluable operational and administrative support.

Her leadership has allowed me to focus more strategically on Centre operations, partnerships, and student outcomes, knowing that the day-to-day functioning of the Centre is in capable hands. Bronte exemplifies how CUCSM nurtures its own talent and creates pathways for students to grow professionally.



We have also embraced a more flexible staffing model through the SEOs. This casual team structure allows us to provide high-quality, student-centred support while remaining adaptable to our available resources. The SEO team is made up of students who know firsthand the challenges and rewards of studying regionally. They bring warmth, relatability, and authenticity to their roles, making them an integral part of the CUCSM experience for their peers.

### **Moving Forward**

This year also marked the departure of Han Worsley, who played a pivotal role as Education Coordinator for more than two and a half years. Han's work through the Regional Partnerships Project Pool Program (RPPPP) and the Common Ground project expanded CUCSM's reach, helped build trust with the community, and contributed significantly to our growth in student numbers.

Han is not being "replaced" in the traditional sense. Instead, we have restructured and refocused our efforts within the resources available to us. Our direction is now firmly centred on supporting the students who are already here, strengthening their experience, their connections, and their outcomes. This is a deliberate, strategic shift: a back-to-basics approach that puts the wellbeing and success of our current students at the centre of everything we do.

### **Focusing on Wellbeing and Sustainability**

Supporting staff wellbeing has been a clear priority this year. A healthy, supported team creates a positive, stable environment for students. We have encouraged flexibility, shared responsibility, and open communication, recognising that these elements are vital in a small team.

This collaborative culture has not only strengthened our internal operations but also enhanced the student experience. Our staff genuinely care about the students who walk through our doors, and that care translates into daily actions—whether it's Bronte offering quiet guidance, an SEO sharing a study tip, or a simple cup of tea and a reassuring conversation.

### **Looking Ahead**

As we look toward 2026, our team is united by a shared goal: to further engage and support our students at the centre. While we will continue to seek opportunities to widen participation, our primary focus will be on nurturing and supporting our existing students so they can thrive in their studies and beyond.

I am proud of the team we have built and the direction we are heading. CUCSM is more than a study hub – it's a community.

# 2025 SNAPSHOT



**37%**

are the first in  
their family  
to study

**4%**

of students identify  
as Indigenous



**218 STUDENTS**

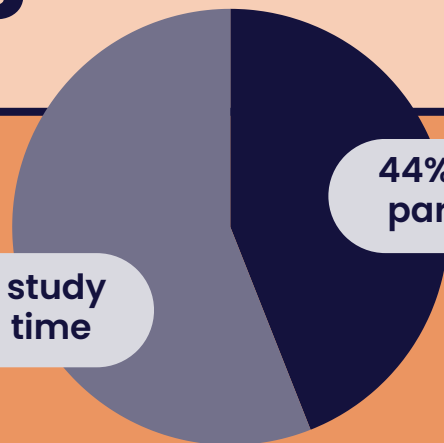
**40<sup>+</sup>**

UNIVERSITIES  
& NUHEPS



56% study  
full time

44% study  
part time



**22%**

Health

**19%**

Education

**9%**

Psychology,  
Social Work &  
Community  
Services

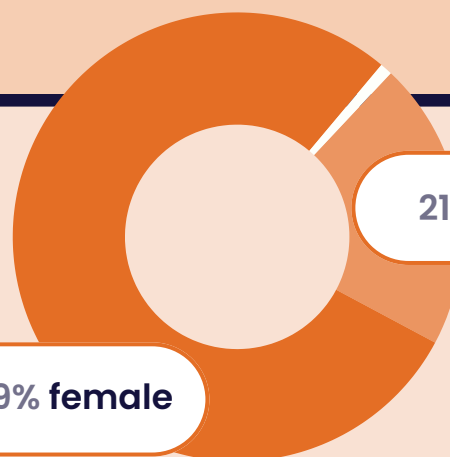
**TOP AREAS  
OF STUDY**

**20<sup>+</sup>**

different  
areas of  
study

79% female

21% male





## Common Ground (RPPPP)

Common Ground aimed to increase awareness of higher education options among prospective mature-aged learners and support participants to explore flexible and accessible pathways. In the long term, Common Ground sought to increase engagement from adult learners and the young people they influence by embedding aspiration within the broader community.

## Speak UP: Empowering Young People of Snowy Monaro

The 2025 SPEAK UP Program, a collaborative initiative between CUC Snowy Monaro and the University of Canberra, provided ten senior high school students from the Snowy Monaro region with a unique opportunity to engage meaningfully with their local community. Through mentorship and structured activities, participants developed essential public speaking and leadership skills, culminating in the delivery of thought-provoking speeches at the Cooma Little Theatre. The program was proudly supported by the Snowy Hydro Community Grant and former Mayor Narelle Davis.

## Student Engagement Program

The CUCSM Student Engagement Program provides support to students to achieve study and professional success through proactive, tailored, and localised support to access and use their university's services effectively. Five new SEOs were employed to support the students of CUC Snowy Monaro.



# 2025 Highlights

# Jacob Suthern

**Bachelor of Pharmacy**  
*University of Canberra*



## **What advice would you give to new students starting their higher education journey?**

One thing I can't stress enough is being organised. University is much more self-directed than high school, with a lot of the responsibility of completing the work on yourself. The workload is much heavier, and there is always a deadline that must be met. Using calendars and apps to help track assignments and exams is essential. Another super important thing is to set aside time for socialising with friends and family, as well as time to focus on yourself to avoid burnout.

## **How do you balance your academic responsibilities with other aspects of your life?**

I sit down at the beginning of every week and make a schedule of everything I need to do that week for uni, prioritising assignments and exam study first. Time blocking is the best way I have found to balance school from personal life. I set aside specific blocks of time for studying and stick to them, while not getting distracted. I also do the same for personal time to relax, hang out with my friends and work. Personal time is just as important as it keeps me feeling refreshed.



# Celebrating Our Students

*Our greatest achievements*



Jasmin has just completed her last assignment for her Bachelor of Business Studies degree with Charles Sturt University. Jasmin is a regular here at CUC Snowy Monaro, having spent the last 6 years studying alongside work. Throughout that time, she has been a strong advocate for the Centre, proudly spreading the word wherever she goes about how great the Centre is for rural students. More recently, Jasmin has joined the CUCSM team as a Student Engagement Officer (SEO), helping to run the Centre efficiently throughout the semester.

**Jasmin Statham-Smith**  
**Bachelor of Business Studies**  
*Charles Sturt University*

Soojin is currently in her third year of her postgraduate degree, Doctor of Medicine and Surgery with the Australian National University. As part of this degree, students had to complete a regional/rural placement, and lucky for us, Soojin chose Cooma! Between her busy schedule of studying, working in doctor surgeries and the hospital, Soojin became one of our new SEOs. She has helped an array of CUCSM students with topics ranging from digital literacy to essay writing and addressing assignment rubrics. She also encourages all the other medical students here on placement to come and utilise the Centre while they're here in town.



**Soojin Lee**  
**Doctor of Medicine & Surgery**  
*Australian National University*

**Our partners are essential to our success. These include the Commonwealth Government, the NSW Government, local government, FRRR, and university and community partners.**

### **The Australian Government**

The Australian Government is investing more than \$150 million to assist in the establishment and operation of community-owned, Regional University Centres at sites across regional Australia. CUC is a successful recipient of the Commonwealth's Regional University Centres Program and gratefully acknowledges the support received to date.

### **NSW Government**

The NSW Government has supported CUC through multiple funding grants exceeding \$18 million, which facilitated its successful expansion. The NSW Government's Higher Education Strategy focuses on increasing participation in higher education, CUC is proud to assist the government to achieve this by supporting people in our region to pursue higher education in their local community.

### **Foundation for Regional Rural and Renewal (FRRR)**

The FRRR is supporting the CUC through its not-for-profit fundraising account.

### **Snowy Monaro Regional Council**

Keeping the focus on being local and community centred, Snowy Monaro Regional Council continue to provide our students with a comfortable facility.

# **Partnerships: Government & Community**

The success of this Centre depends on the support from our local community.

# Community Engagement

## Snowy Hydro

CUC Snowy Monaro's Speak Up program, in partnership with the University of Canberra, is a dynamic leadership and public speaking initiative designed for young people aged 16-18 in the Snowy Monaro region.

It provides young locals with the skills, confidence and connections necessary to become tomorrow's local leaders, and equip them with the skills to engage in meaningful discussions and contribute effectively to future academic and professional settings.



The inaugural program kicked off in early February comprising of ten young local aspiring leaders. The program includes a series of workshops, hands-on training sessions and one-on-one mentorships from experienced leaders across government, community and public speaking.

At the completion of the program in April, members of the public were invited to come and hear the future leaders speak at Cooma Little Theatre.

*How Snowy Hydro is helping:* Snowy Hydro's funding is making the Speak Up program possible by covering essential costs such as venue hire, event marketing, and accommodation for mentors. Without this support, the program wouldn't be able to take place at the scale needed to create real impact.

*"The Snowy Hydro Community Grant has made it possible for us to establish the Speak Up: Empowering Future Leaders of Snowy Monaro program. The impact of this initiative is already evident, as participants are emerging as motivated, engaged, and proactive contributors to our community, ready to drive positive change and shape the future of our region."*



Max  
Bachelor of Education  
(Secondary)  
CQU

*CUC Snowy Monaro  
assisted me in getting  
my practical placement  
here in town and  
I am very grateful!*





## Here For Our Students

With the support of CUCSM, our local students can follow their dreams when it comes to study. CUCSM has responded to student needs and created an innovative model that allows choice by supporting any student, studying any course, at any education provider. Recognising the community's large number of international families that have moved here to work for the Snowy 2.0 Project, we also open the facility to those completing study with international education providers.

The wrap-around model of student services provides face-to-face academic, wellbeing, technology, administrative support in a learning community in addition to what each student's university already provides. These extra layers of support are crucial for many students who study with CUCSM.

Regional students are often at greater risk of attrition. Many students are from low SES backgrounds, are the first in their family to attend university, or have caring responsibilities and multiple other commitments. CUCSM offers a free, safe and welcoming environment to study with flexible and personalised face-to-face support. We understand that students are individuals that require a variety of services to meet their needs so that we meet students where they are in their education journey.

The implementation of the Student Engagement Program this year aims to further support CUCSM students with personalised and tailored support. Maintaining academic integrity is of utmost importance when assisting students, therefore our Student Engagement Officers focus on building study skills, confidence and access to resources.

# Student Services



SEMESTER  
ONE

# 2025



## 183

REGISTERED  
STUDENTS  
TOTAL

## 71

NEW STUDENT  
REGISTRATIONS

## 29%

UNDERGRADUATE

## 32%

VET & HIGH SCHOOL

## 36%

POSTGRADUATE

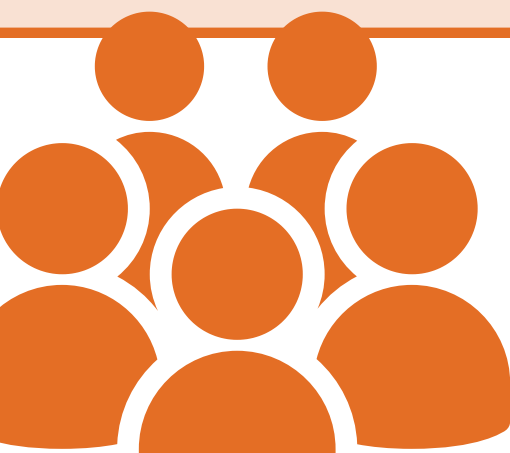
## 34%

FIRST IN FAMILY TO STUDY AT UNI



## 3%

PATHWAY  
PROGRAMS



## 178

HOURS

INDIVIDUAL  
STUDENT  
SUPPORT

SEMESTER  
TWO

2025



136

REGISTERED  
STUDENTS  
TOTAL

33

NEW STUDENT  
REGISTRATIONS

29%

UNDERGRADUATE

36%

VET & HIGH SCHOOL

31%

POSTGRADUATE

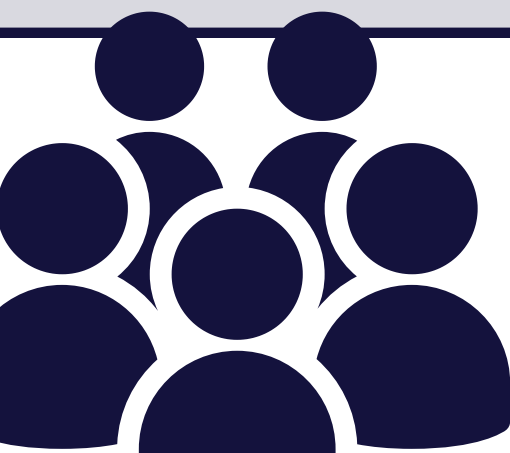
36%

FIRST IN FAMILY TO STUDY AT UNI



4%

PATHWAY  
PROGRAMS



93 HOURS

INDIVIDUAL  
STUDENT  
SUPPORT





**Nurse** Park ranger Garbageman Paleontologist  
McDonalds **Gamer** Makeup artist Hair artist  
Pro mountain biker Librarian **Neurosurgeon** Fashion designer  
**Pro rugby player** Circus performer Hunter  
Interior designer **Photographer** Athlete  
**Race car driver** Professional poker  
**Flying doctor** Farmer Developer  
Aerospace engineer Paediatrician Radiologist  
Engineer **Firefighter** Marine biologist 3 games  
Dolphin trainer **Artist** Cricket player Astronomer  
Acrobat **Scientist** Film director  
Ecologist Inventor **Builder**  
**SNOWY kids in MONARO 2024** Astronaut Police Officer  
Electrician Doctor Conservationist





# 2025 ALUMNI

CUC Snowy Monaro



**Katrina Moxon**  
**Bachelor of Nursing**  
*University of Canberra*

**Charmaine McIlvenny**  
**Bachelor of Laws**  
*Charles Sturt University*

**Jasmin Statham-Smith**  
**Bachelor of Business Studies**  
*Charles Sturt University*

**Stuart Wood**  
**Master of Education**  
*University of Newcastle*

**Sashrika Chandrawansha**  
**Certificate IV in Procurement and Contracting**  
*TAFE*

**Sonya Creary**  
**Diploma of Business**  
*University of New England*

**Kadee Laird**  
**Bachelor of Paramedicine**  
*Charles Sturt University*

**Paddy McCraw**  
**Graduate Diploma in Psychology (Advanced)**  
*University of Adelaide*

**Emily Perkin**  
**Master of Education (Special Education)**  
*University of Wollongong*

**Jacqueline Pritchard**  
**Diploma of Modern Languages**  
*University of New England*

**Raynare Ware**  
**Bachelor of Global Security**  
*Murdoch University*

**Alison Male**  
**UC Prep**  
*University of Canberra*



live locally  
**LEARN LOCALLY**  
work locally

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Australian Government  
Department of Education

