

ANNUAL REPORT



Country
Universities
Centre
SNOWY MONARO

20 23



**WE AIM TO PROVIDE REGIONAL PEOPLE WITH
THE SPACE AND TOOLS THEY NEED TO CREATE A
VIBRANT AND MORE PROSPEROUS FUTURE FOR
THEMSELVES AND THEIR WIDER COMMUNITY.**



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

CAROLYN EWART

FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW



As I reflect not only on 2023 but the last 10 years, I am filled with pride and excitement. Pride in a vision that became a reality, supported with foresight from Snowy Hydro and the then Cooma Monaro Council and excitement for what the future holds for CUC Snowy Monaro and local regional education.

This year we see CUC Snowy Monaro, the first Centre established in the CUC network, reach a milestone to be celebrated. 10 years of service to our community to ensure equity for regional, rural and remote learning by providing an educational space of excellence for people to live work, and study in their Region.

It was my absolute privilege to have addressed the audience at the 10th birthday celebration of CUC Snowy Monaro, particularly as an inaugural board member. This birthday event also signalled a milestone for the growth and recognition of rural and remote education for Australia.... our milestone is shared with the CUC network story.

However, it is a time for us to stop, pause and reflect on the past 10 years and look to our next decade as we take our place as a bonafide affiliated Centre within the network. To quote Duncan Taylor, our first Chair and CEO, "it is the beginning of the end". This growth is to be embraced and as CUC Snowy Monaro continues to evolve and address the ever changing education landscape, at the heart, will always be the students, their welfare and maintaining excellence in practice.

We have had 601 students use the Centre, who have studied 411 different university courses plus 60 other courses including professional development for businesses in the Region. They have studied at 41 different universities and 117 other RTOs. 364 of these students are first in family with 5% identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander even though recent Census data indicates that Cooma has 2.8% First Nations population. Impressive statistics, to continue to grow.

The Centre is in safe hands with our wonderful Centre Manager Nadine Holland at the helm, while our Education Coordinator, Han Worsley is forging ahead with outreach activities including the RPPPP program, as well as supporting students in their studies. Of note, Han created a children's book that asked local primary school students this question, "what do you want to be when you grow up?" Their answers and illustrations fill the book with aspirations and dreams. CUCSM will be there to support their journeys of the future. We also welcomed our newly appointed administration support Dr Ruwandika Perera. They work very closely to achieve great initiatives with positive outcomes for our region and provide input into the network. Together they are a formidable team and we look forward to 2024.

It is exciting times ahead as Federal and State Governments continue to see the advantages in a model such as CUC with investment in regional, rural and remote education, we thank them for their clarity of thinking.

People often say it takes a village to raise a child but I believe this sentiment can also be applied to the nurturing of an idea, through a collective belief in a vision, great things can happen. Our community has been the beneficiary of this thinking, enabling growth, and achieving outcomes for local students. Over the past 10 years, along with our wonderful Centre Managers and learning support staff, we have always had at the core a very dedicated CUC Snowy Monaro board, bringing with them a tapestry of thinking.

I wish to acknowledge, thank and honour every board member for their contribution to the CUC Snowy Monaro and celebrate together in what we have built, today and in our future.

To my fellow current board members thank you for your passion:

- Gabrielle Curtin
- Iain Elliot
- Darren Davis
- Narelle Davis
- Frances Robertson

I would like to extend a very special thank you to Frances Robertson for all her support of Centre happenings and her exceptional support of me as Chair.

Accolades to the inaugural board members with foresight, passion and stars in their eyes reaching for the unknown:

- Duncan Taylor
- Mick Boyce
- Dean Lynch
- Dave Hogan
- Anne Maslin
- Adrian Bell
- And myself

Thank you to all the subsequent board members, that each contributed to the vision in their own ways:

- Richard Clarke
- Anja Badger
- Neil Threw
- John Rooney
- Peter Beer
- Monica Davis

As we move into our next decade with a clear focus on students and community, I am reminded that it all began with a phone call over 10 years ago.

“From little things big things grow”





In 2023, we asked everyone,
**what do you
want to be
when you
grow up?**



OUR STORY

COUNTRY UNIVERSITIES CENTRE'S ORIGINS WERE IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COOMA UNIVERSITIES CENTRE IN 2013. THE CENTRE WAS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE SUPPORTED EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE REGION'S HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

WHAT WE DO

CUC Snowy Monaro is a dedicated learning and study space that supports any student, studying any course, at any Australian university. Students can connect with like-minded people and engage in a learning community while they study locally. We are focused on supporting the academic success of students and ensuring they have the tools to succeed in their higher education journey.

STUDENT STORY



Alanah Hain

Bachelor of Education (Prim & E.Child)
University of New England

This year, we are asking everyone, 'what do you want to be when you grow up?'

I want to be a teacher. I want to have a positive impact on students and strong connections within my community.

How is completing this study helping you to achieve your goals?

Through study I am able to receive the qualification I need to work in a school as a teacher.

How do you find completing tertiary study as a regional student?

I feel extremely lucky to have found the Country University Centre as studying as a regional student comes with many logistical challenges. The Centre has made these challenges far easier to overcome and continue my tertiary education while staying regional.

What advice would you now give your younger self?

Enjoy each phase of being a teenager and a young adult... it doesn't last for as long as you think. And to not let the opinions of others frighten or dishearten you from what you truly want to do.

"You are only as pretty as you treat people"

PARTNERSHIPS

GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Essential to the success of the CUC has been the support of our partners, including the Commonwealth Government, NSW State Government, university partners, local government and community partners.

NSW GOVERNMENT

The NSW Government has supported the CUC through multiple funding grants exceeding \$16 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.

THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

The Australian Government is investing more than \$74 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.

PARTNERSHIPS

UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

The CUC has formal partnerships with the following universities:

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY (UTS)

UTS have partnered with the CUC to develop the Regional Partnerships Project Pool Program (RPPP). This program brings together 19 universities and 16 Regional University Centres to design tailored school outreach programmes for the local community.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND (UNE)

As Australia's oldest provider of distance and online education, the expertise of UNE has been highly valued by the CUC. Sharing of knowledge between UNE Support Staff, CUC Centre Managers and LSAs has provided a valuable resource for CUC students and developed an enhanced understanding of the challenges online regional students face. UNE are also an Outreach and Widening Participation partner with the CUC.

CQ UNIVERSITY

The CUC and CQUniversity have a shared mission in supporting regional students to succeed, irrespective of where they live. The university has been a close partner of the CUC since its establishment and continues to provide expertise and support to students across the CUC network. CQUniversity are also an Outreach and Widening Participation partner with the CUC.

CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY (CSU)

In a collaboration between industry, community and university, the CUC works with CSU to provide connections between students and the university. CSU are also an Outreach and Widening Participation partner with the CUC.

FEDERATION UNIVERSITY

This partnership provides the framework for future collaborations to share knowledge, expertise, and support students across the CUC network. Federation are also an Outreach and Widening Participation partner on the RPPP.

20
23

10 YEARS SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL STUDENTS

601 
STUDENTS
over 10 years

5% ABORIGINAL OR
TORRES STRAIT
STUDENTS

CUC SNOWY
MONARO 

Cooma has 2.8% people identifying as
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ABS)
5% of CUC Snowy Monaro students identify
as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

411 
**UNIVERSITY
COURSES**
have been studied by our students

& **60** OTHER
COURSES

364 students were
**FIRST IN FAMILY
TO STUDY AT UNI**
2013 – 2023

Our students
have studied
41 DIFFERENT
UNIVERSITIES
with

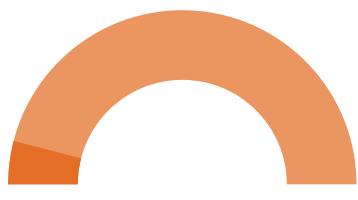
and **117** OTHER
PROVIDERS

SNAPSHOT OF OUR NETWORK

2078 STUDENTS ACROSS THE CUC NETWORK



47%
are the first in
their family
to study

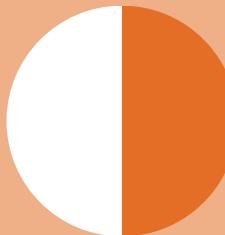


8 %
of students
identify as
Indigenous



41
UNIVERSITIES
& NUHEPS

50%
study
full
time



50%
study
part
time

30%

Health

20%

Education

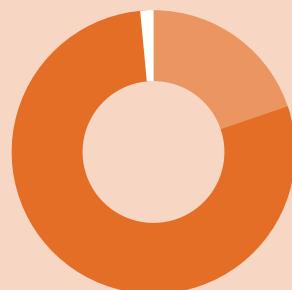
10%

Psychology,
social work &
Community
Services

TOP AREAS OF STUDY

20 different
areas of
study

78.8%
female



19.8%
male

STUDENT SUPPORT

HERE FOR OUR STUDENTS

CUC students choose to study a diverse range of courses from over 40 different Australian universities. CUC has responded to student needs and created an innovative model that can support any student, studying any course, at any Australian education provider.

The wrap-around model of student support provides face-to-face academic, wellbeing, technology, and administrative support in addition to what each student's university already provides.

These extra layers of support are crucial for many students who study with CUC. It is widely acknowledged that regional and online students are often at greater risk of attrition with a higher number of students from low SES backgrounds, being the first in their family to complete higher education, or having caring responsibilities. CUC offers a free and welcoming place to study with flexible and personalised face-to-face support within a local learning community. This environment aims to empower students to enrol in the course of their choice from any Australian education provider with the knowledge they will be supported locally.

The focus on face-to-face support provided by CUC staff is highly valued by students. In the 2022 Student Experience Survey, 92% of students indicated they are more likely to continue with their studies because of the help they received from CUC, while 87% of CUC students experienced a sense of belonging to CUC, and 99% of students found the staff to be very or extremely helpful.

STUDENT STORY



Ben Hammann

Graduate Diploma in Divinity
Morling College

This year, we are asking everyone, 'what do you want to be when you grow up?'

I am currently extending on my current work as an Engineer with some post-graduate study at Morling Bible College. This is to help build and develop a meaningful local community youth group. I've always enjoyed jobs that mix the technical and people aspects and this study enables me to learn how to be more effective to invest in people around me by exploring personality, leadership, service and growth in the community from a biblical perspective.

How is completing this study helping you to achieve your goals?

I am studying at Bible college primarily to be able to relate the Bible and Jesus better to my family and the youth in the Cooma community. By being able to study and learn at the CUC, I can be present and stay in the community locally to do this work better.

How do you find completing tertiary study as a regional student?

Being at the CUC recreates a professional on-campus experience as well as being around other students also learning. It provides a 'workplace' that you can go to, meaning you are not working from home, cafes and hotspots, all of the time.

What advice would you now give your younger self?

Don't wait until your second year of study to discover the support you can get at the CUC!

"I think I may have already "grown up" but I have realised recently that I still have plenty of career opportunities in my life"

live locally
STUDY LOCALLY
work locally

Supported by



Australian Government
Department of Education

