

Learning Changes Lives Foundation prizes



Prize winner Ting Xu, Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre.

The Learning Changes Lives Foundation – ALA’s charitable organisation – supports people who need it most to gain access to the life-changing capacity of education.

In 2024, six recipients received prizes funded by the Foundation during Adult Learners Week.

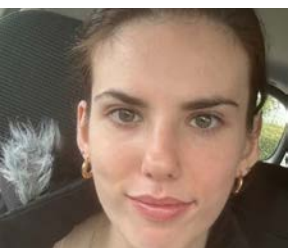
Mathew Bishop – PAE Libraries



Mathew began in the Adult Literacy Program at PAE Libraries in 2021, as one of the first participants in this Covid-19 recovery program. Prior to joining the program, Mathew relied on family members to help him with everyday reading and writing tasks.

Attending every week, Mathew proved to be a keen learner and quickly picked up skills he had set as his goals. As his confidence grew, Mathew started to read more independently and, more recently, he has been learning digital skills by using reading apps on iPads. As well as reinforcing his reading skills, this is assisting him to gain basic digital literacy understanding.

Melanie Cameron - Sunshine Coast Libraries



Since joining the Sunshine Coast Libraries’ Read and Write for Life program, Melanie has developed new communication skills which have led to her engaging more actively in class discussions, sharing her ideas with greater ease, and participating

in group activities without hesitation

Melanie is now keen to also extend her drawing skills by learning and producing digital art and media, with the goal of showcasing her creations on online platforms like Instagram and TikTok. She has a passion for creativity and technology, as well as her desire to connect with a broader audience.

Russell Constable - Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre

When Russell arrived at the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre, he had never previously considered adult education. After working long hours in a physically demanding job for 15 years, and then experiencing a life changing injury, Russell was worried he might never work again. Realising he needed digital skills, Russell enrolled in a Basic Computers and Beyond course. After enjoying that so much, he then completed an Intermediate Computers course in 2023.



Russell is a shining example of how an adult education journey can change your life.

From working in a factory to gaining new skills and confidence, Russell is now employed as a disability support worker after also completing a Certificate IV in Disability Support.

Piyanut (Nuk) Clear - Here2Help

Nuk is determined to reach her goals despite significant challenges, and this has impressed



Nuk, Here2Help, celebrating her win.

everyone at Here 2 Help, a literacy and numeracy collaboration between TAFE NSW Bega and the Bega Valley Shire Library.

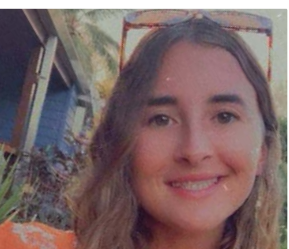


Nuk's family fled Myanmar when she was a child and, as a refugee living in Thailand, she received minimal education. Moving to Australia with her young son, Nuk studied English and, later, a Certificate II in Hospitality. With one on one support through Here

2 Help and hard work and determination, Nuk was able to obtain a driver's licence and achieve Australian citizenship.

Currently working as a kitchen hand, Nuk hopes to be able to combine her commitments as a single parent with more work and study so she can improve her written and spoken English and gain more skills and qualifications.

Ashleigh Bertram - Read Write Now



When Ashleigh was seeking information about Read Write Now's literacy program, she had some key requirements – the course needed to further improve the reading and spelling skills she had started to build in a previous literacy and numeracy course and it needed to be flexible

enough for her to access from her new home base on the remote Cocos Islands!

Ashleigh has been part of the Read Write Now program for eighteen months, meeting online each week with her WA based tutor.

As a lifelong learner, Ashleigh wants to keep

improving her reading and spelling skills so she can continue to advance her future employment opportunities.

Ashleigh has applied her improved literacy skills to update the marketing brochures and forms for her small business, Cocos Island Picnics, and she recently completed her Construction White card. Obtaining this qualification has enabled Ashleigh to gain employment cleaning a construction site on the island.

Ting Xu - Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre

Ting Xu connected with the Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre through the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP). Wanting to improve her English and then pursue other courses as she forged her new life in Australia, Ting has worked hard to also complete courses in employment and computer skills, Australian Studies and an Introduction to Early Childhood Education.



Ting sees education and applying it in her new home as a way to connect and explore her new identity in Australia. Ting's confidence has improved and she is now navigating life in Australia with direction and purpose. Her English has improved too, and this has given her the courage to join community groups, initiate conversations with her neighbours and feel part of a wider community.

Ting is now exploring volunteer opportunities in the primary education sector and community services.