

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"Anything is possible when you have the right people there to support you" - Misty Copeland

As I begin writing this report, it is the night before mini school starts at our distance education school and as I sit in my cabin with two of my little girls asleep, I am reminded how important these get togethers are and, as a whole, how important our rural and remote communities are. Whether you are a part of a DE/SOTA community, a small rural school, a boarding school family or anything in between, it is these communities that keep us going, support us, as we work together to give our children the best possible educational opportunities.

Now more than ever we are connected in so many aspects of our lives through technology, yet actually spending time together in person is still as important as ever. Whether it is having a cuppa together while the kids are at school, sleeping in a shed in swags at a sports camp, at a P&C function at the school or anything in between, not only for us as parents, but also for our kids, it is vitally important



that we interact with each other, support each other and work together, because, let's face it, if we haven't got each other in our rural and remote schooling situations, who do we have?

As so many in our ICPA community are hurting now, through crippling drought, as at any time of hardship, it is essential that we work together to focus on continuing our endeavours to ensure educational equity for our children. With this in mind, I am pleased to say that during our delegations in Canberra in October, my first as Federal President, our voice on behalf of all of you was well and truly heard in the halls of Parliament House. Even though

as I write this, we are still awaiting further action, it was so very encouraging to see our call for a Rural Hardship Education Fund (RHEF) to support our members educating their children in times of rural hardship was put as a motion in the Senate by Senator Pauline Hanson, for which Federal Council is immensely grateful. I also acknowledge that the motion was given unanimous support in the Senate.

This was an incredibly pleasing outcome of my first face to face meetings and delegations as Federal President, however I acknowledge it is a testament to the longstanding advocacy and the combined efforts of past Federal Councils and I thank them for this. I feel so fortunate to be able to continue to take this and other advocacy forward on behalf of our ICPA community and welcome every opportunity to put forward our aims and objectives.

I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight the hard work of our current Federal Council over the past months working on our ICPA Australia business. At our first face to face meetings and delegations, where I spent four full and busy days with nine other Federal Councillors in Canberra, it was a privilege to work so closely with these ladies as we discussed, planned and organised our Federal Council year ahead, as well as put



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forward your motions to federal MPs and Senators. With 33 meetings in total on our delegation day, we certainly gave our all to highlighting the challenges faced by our members and their families. Not forgetting those who were unable to attend face to face meetings this time, however are still working hard in the background on your motions and ICPA business. I can assure members that we are all working together to advocate on your behalf. Personally I would also like to thank my fellow Federal Councillors for their support and encouragement for myself.

In the past few months, we have had the opportunity to participate in a range of other activities, including teleconferences, webinars and submissions as well as attending a number of meetings and gatherings across the country. We have had conversations with the National Farmers' Federation (NFF) and AgForce Queensland on national drought policy, as well as the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) on how we can work together on our similar advocacies. Kristen Coggan represented us at the NBN Announcement in Toowoomba, Suzanne Wilson was a panellist at the Digital Health for the Bush workshop in Darwin and Sally Sullivan had the opportunity to meet with Minister for Education Dan Tehan in Katherine and discuss a range of topics. Wendy Hick and myself travelled to Brisbane recently to meet with the Australian Boarding Schools Association (ABSA) and Dolly's Dream to discuss how we can work together to assist our members and all geographically isolated families, especially those with children who are boarding. To have positive and valuable

relationships with many other organisations and individuals who support and assist ICPA further helps us to support our ICPA community and work to achieve equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for our children.

Over the next few months, branches will receive their motion updates off the back of the 2019 Federal Conference and Councillors will be attending State Conferences throughout Australia, amongst other things. I am eager to see what the next few months holds.

I realise you will be reading this in the New Year, so may I take this opportunity to wish you all a successful, enjoyable and prosperous 2020 (and just the right amount of rain for all of us). I would also like to thank all of those who have renewed their membership for 2020 and a hearty welcome to our new members. To both old members and new, your support is so important to us and it is a pleasure to have you as part of our ICPA community. I hope to catch up with many of you throughout the year.

As I have said before, we are here anytime to help you out in any way we can so please do not hesitate to make contact.

Being isolated does not mean you are alone.

Alanna Moller
Federal President

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Save the Date

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Yaraka / Isisford ICPA branch will turn 40 on 18/2/20.

To celebrate this amazing occasion a celebration luncheon is planned for Saturday 22/02/20.

This will be held in the Yaraka Hall commencing at 11.30 am.

Everyone is welcome.

Members are particularly keen to hear from anyone who may have been involved with the branch over the years.

All enquiries to: Mary Killeen phone: 07 46 57 55 63

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