



DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS...

DOCTORS DOING GOOD

BURSARIES TO JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY STUDENTS KEEN TO PURSUE RURAL MEDICINE CAREERS HAVE BEEN JUST ONE INITIATIVE THE AMA QUEENSLAND FOUNDATION HAS PUT IN PLACE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE. ANNA MALAN AND BRETT QUABBA GRADUATED AT THE END OF 2012, AND ANNA TELLS US ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE THE BURSARY MADE TO HER STUDIES.

Having the AMA Queensland Foundation scholarship was a blessing. I moved from Cairns to Townsville straight from high school. In the first three years, I temped as a secretary during holidays, saving for the term costs. My parents were already under financial pressure supporting my brother at uni.

After third year, I realised the need to use semester breaks to rejuvenate so that I was fresh for another year of dedicated study. Without the scholarship, I don't doubt I would have had to take a year off to earn enough to support my studies. Instead the bursary helped pay for textbooks, rent and medical equipment (like my stethoscope).

That \$5,000 became such a stress reliever in terms of the reassurance that I had some 'income' and I could focus my energy on studying; not stressing about finances.

Medical rotations saw me travel to Longreach in second year for four weeks, Bowen and Proserpine each for eight weeks and a two week stint in Sarina. I spent the last two years of my degree based in Mackay. Being a smaller hospital than Townsville,

Mackay was a fantastic learning environment and all the doctors were wonderful teachers, willing to have us there. I'm very happy to be continuing my internship at Mackay and plan to follow the Rural Generalist Pathway, undergo an advanced specialist training year in anaesthetics and pursue a career in rural health.

I believe the absolutely defining moment when I knew I would love what I was doing was in my first year placement at Cairns Base Hospital during my weeks in obstetrics and gynaecology. I had spent the whole year at uni learning basic sciences and broad medical topics and then on placement, my eyes were opened to the wonderful world of clinical practice and what it was really like to be a doctor. I was given opportunities to see patients, scrubbed in for an up-close observation of a C-section and witnessed a natural birth. It was inspiring to see the doctors' problem-solving skills and their knowledge. From that point, I was ready to be a sponge for all the medical knowledge I could soak up! **Q**



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ABOVE LEFT: Anna, as a second year student in Longreach, chuffed at successfully getting her first blood sample.

ABOVE RIGHT: Anna learns plastering, medical style.