

## We Give Life-Changing Scholarships

BARAA OMAR



**“Your support has a life-changing impact. It is changing lives for the better, creating a better and more effective society. It all matters and it’s doing more than what you think, one thing leads to another, from a simple laptop to a civil engineer.”**

BARAA OMAR

Dear

I’m writing today to share the remarkable stories of two former Public Education Foundation (PEF) scholars, Baraa and Narayan, and to ask for your help in enabling us to support even more such students.

Every year, we experience the joy of sharing news with students that they are new PEF scholars, including the 709 new scholarships we recently awarded this school year. On the other hand, we share the unfortunate news with many more students that we’re unable to assist them.

PEF’s 2024 scholarships are now open to students and we’re expecting a record number of applications given difficulties many have been experiencing, which have an even more pronounced effect on those from disadvantaged backgrounds. These include cost-of-living pressures, floods, COVID-19 and a whole lot more. Many parents and carers worry about basic school expenses. According to a recent poll by The Guardian, three quarters of the population are finding it difficult to afford education costs such as excursion fees and uniforms.<sup>1</sup>

**A donation from you can help.** I was surprised when I first joined the organisation at how much a small investment can go a long way. The average PEF scholarship is \$1,500 a year, with 96% of PEF students reporting that they believed it was enough to make a difference to their schooling. With your donation, we guarantee at least 90% of it will go directly to scholarship funds. Your support enables us to do what we do best

in providing life-changing scholarships (and more) to students like Narayan, Baraa and so many others which impacts not only their lives but also that of their parents, carers, siblings and our broader community.

I'm happy to share Narayan's and Baraa's stories.

"My name is **Narayan Khanal** and I am a former recipient of the Friends of Zainab Scholarship. I was born in a Bhutanese refugee camp in Nepal before coming to Australia as a 12-year-old, who could not speak a word of English. I am now studying to become a doctor at the University of Wollongong (UOW), having just 6 months left before commencing work as a doctor.

The scholarship from PEF has had a huge impact in my life and has helped me transform into who I have become today. In the time that I've studied at UOW, I have had opportunities to volunteer and give back in many ways."

There are **three articles published by UOW** that give you more details about Narayan's achievements and recognitions for his contribution to the community. **You may find them on our website.**



NARAYAN KHANAL



BARAA OMAR

"I'm **Baraa Omar** and I graduated from Holroyd High School in Sydney. I came from Syria due to war in 2013. I'm now in my 5th year at University of Technology Sydney studying Civil Engineering. I would like to thank all the people who are responsible for offering the scholarships that are supporting students and easing the challenges and the obstacles facing us.

The scholarship had a very positive effect on me. I'm able to use my own laptop and finish my assessments without fighting over a shared laptop between my siblings. My parents are very pleased and proud of the scholarship. Because of this scholarship, I don't have to worry about putting financial stress on them. They feel very fortunate to have the scholarship to help their daughter.

The scholarship is helping me to achieve what I've always dreamed of. Without this scholarship, my dream to go university would be shattered, because when I came to Australia I thought I wouldn't be able to go university due to the expense.

**Opportunities like this that make us feel welcomed, lucky and happy to call Australia home. Thanks to all the supporters who are always thinking about us and motivating us to achieve our goals and contributing to a better future for Australia and its people."**

PEF scholarships make a huge difference in people's lives. Not just for the student but for their parents, carers, and even donors. One of our supporters wrote us about why he donates to PEF.

"I guess part of the reason why I donate to the Public Education Foundation's scholarships is because neither my wife nor I were from particularly well off backgrounds growing up. My father migrated to Australia on an educational scholarship, and both my wife and I attended public schools (and my wife continues to teach in a public school). With that background, **I have always thought that one of the best ways that I could help other people is to open doorways for them to succeed. To me, one of the best doorways that can be opened for a person is education because (under the right conditions) it can be a means through which a person can alter the trajectory of their life.** Also, it's been my experience that quite often the reason people don't succeed in education isn't because of a lack of ability or effort, but because of something small that throws them off course (essentially bad luck). Hopefully, the PEF scholarships give the recipients a form of safety net to survive some of those things that might otherwise stop them from achieving what they are capable of. **Finally, sometimes in order to succeed, people just need another person to show belief in them. I think the PEF scholarships would go a long way to showing that confidence in the recipients."**

Our goal is to raise \$100,000 so we can give 70 more life-changing scholarships to students. Your generosity will go far in helping children with big dreams and a bright future ahead of them. **Please donate now and invest in a child's future.**

Best wishes,  
Paul Somers  
COO

PS - Please help us make more dreams come true. A gift of \$25 can help buy a textbook so a child can learn better and be able to study at home. A gift of \$60 can help fund an excursion so a child does not feel left out. \$150 can help buy a new uniforms, because children typically outgrow them each year.

**Donate to support scholarships. Invest in a child's future.**



**“Education is a way to give hope to students who have lost everything.”**

DOROTHY HODDINOTT AO

Your support enables the Foundation to give life-changing scholarships.

Donations of two dollars (\$2) or more are tax deductible.



**DONATE NOW**

#### SOURCES

1 See: <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/commentisfree/2023/apr/04/theres-nothing-natural-about-australias-cost-of-living-crisis-its-time-we-had-systemic-change>