

TEACH FOR AUSTRALIA WELCOMES ‘CLASS OF 2010’

Teach For Australia today unveiled its 45 Associates who will be placed in rural and metropolitan educationally disadvantaged Victorian secondary schools in 2010.

The group are among the nation’s most well-rounded university graduates, selected from an elite pool of more than 750 applicants from all over Australia, Teach For Australia CEO Melodie Potts Rosevear said.

“We are incredibly excited about our hand-picked Associates and the journey they are about to embark on, and we believe they have the qualities to make exceptional teachers,” Ms Potts Rosevear said.

“Teach For Australia has attracted 45 of the most passionate and high-achieving young Australians to teaching – a path they might not have ever considered without the help of this program.”

“Our inaugural cohort represents a commitment to addressing the issue of educational disadvantage through an innovative model of teacher training in conjunction with Melbourne University’s Graduate School of Education.

Of the 45 outstanding young people selected:

- The majority come from Victoria (34), with 11 from interstate – New South Wales (3), ACT (3), Western Australia (2), Queensland (2), South Australia (1)
- Sixty per cent of the Associates are women (27) and forty per cent are men (18)
- 21 have completed double degrees, many with a high distinction and distinction average
- Their average ENTER/TER/UAI score was 95.4.

The Associates, who come from a broad range of backgrounds including arts, law, business, maths, science, engineering, media and IT, on Saturday embarked on their two years of extensive study and teaching.

Some Associates, like Libby Buckingham from Melbourne, are going back to the classroom straight after graduating from university.

Ms Buckingham, a former University of Melbourne Student Union president, delegate to the Youth 2020 summit and intern with the Department of Premier and Cabinet, is graduating from a Bachelor of Arts this year. Through the Teach for Australia program she will teach History and Humanities/SOSE subjects in 2010.

“I am excited about the challenge of being a Teach for Australia associate teacher. Not only do I hope to be a positive influence on the lives and education of my students, but I also look forward to the impact that the students, mentoring teachers and school community will have on me,” she said.

Others like Charlie Williams, originally from Tasmania but now calls Melbourne home, have previously worked in their fields of original study but have since felt a call to teaching.

After graduating with a Bachelor of Commerce/Information Systems, Mr Williams worked as business analyst for five years with large organisations such as Coles and Victoria Police, and recently completed an Australian Youth Ambassador for Development placement in Vietnam.

“I found myself at a point in my career where I wanted to give something back and had considered being a teacher when I was younger. Using my skills and experience to teach IT

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and Business Management subjects to kids in disadvantaged schools is a huge motivation," he said.

While classes have started at the University of Melbourne, the Associates will enter educationally disadvantaged schools throughout the state from Term One, 2010.

Associates will teach on a 0.8 load, which will enable them to concurrently complete their studies through a combination of on-campus study, off-campus learning and ongoing mentoring from experienced teachers within their placement school as well as community leaders.

On completion of the two years, Associates will earn a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching from Melbourne Graduate School of Education, a qualification that allows them to teach in any school in Australia.

The Victorian Institute of Teaching has granted the Associates 'Permission to Teach' while they are completing their degree.

Teach For Australia is an independent not-for-profit organisation committed to addressing educational disadvantage and improving outcomes for students in disadvantaged schools.

Teach For Australia is the National Coordinating body for the Commonwealth Government's New Pathway into Teaching (NPT) part of the Smarter Schools National Partnership, agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) last November.

Teach For Australia is supported by, and delivers the program in conjunction with, the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

Teach For Australia is partnered with the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and business and employer partners.

Victoria is the first state operating the organisation's program, with plans to roll out to other states from next year.

The schools Teach For Australia Associates will teach in will be finalised in January 2010.

To apply for Teach For Australia or find out more, visit www.teachforaustralia.org

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