

## **MEDIA RELEASE 22 AUGUST 2006**

### **Innovative mining industry investment in local students**

Students from towns across the Central West of NSW including Orange, Canowindra and Bathurst will receive funding to support their secondary and tertiary studies thanks to the NSW Minerals Council, Newcrest Cadia Valley Operations and Northparkes Mines.

The funding is the result of an innovative program to promote careers in the mining industry and to encourage local students to gain the necessary skills to forge their own career in one of the thriving local mining operations. The scheme, which is being trialled in the Central-West of NSW, will issue thirty bursaries in all, totalling more than \$20,000.

NSW Minerals Council Chief Executive, Dr Nikki Williams, said the program - known as the Minerals Education Bursary Scheme (MEBS) - was another example of the industry investing in the future of its local communities.

"Cadia Valley Operations and Northparkes Mines have been extremely enthusiastic in their support of this pilot program," she said.

"The industry is committed not only to providing jobs for local people, but in providing them with opportunities and skills to achieve their individual career goals. Through the Minerals Education Bursary Scheme, it has extended its investment in the young people of Central West NSW," said Dr Williams.

As part of the program, Cadia Valley Operations and Northparkes Mines will also provide mentors for the bursary recipients. Mentors will provide students with a long-term contact within the industry, offering career advice, study assistance and access to work experience.

To be eligible for the program, students must be enrolled at a school within the Central-West region as nominated by the two companies. They must then participate in a minimum of two MEBS related activities hosted by the NSW Minerals Council or local mining companies. These activities include open days at mine sites or universities, career expos or work experience initiatives within the industry.

Successful Year 11 students receive a cash grant of \$500, while Year 12 students receive \$1,000.

Secondary school bursary holders who go on to complete the first year of an undergraduate degree in a designated minerals industry tertiary course within 12 months of completing their studies, will be eligible to receive an additional \$2,000 undergraduate bursary. The program does not prevent students applying for other scholarships at university.

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