

30 May 2012

## Media Release

### Leadership scholarships for rural & regional Queenslanders

Rural and regional business, community and government leaders have until 9<sup>th</sup> July to apply for a scholarship to participate in one of the most dynamic and highly regarded leadership programs in Australia today.

Six scholarships for participants from rural, remote and regional Queensland in *Queensland Leadership*—the acclaimed nine-month leadership program run by Social Leadership Australia (SLA), which starts this September—have been made possible with the support of the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation. Designed to benefit country Queensland and offered to individuals who are motivated to make a difference in their communities, the scholarships are valued at \$16,000 each and cover all costs associated with the program including travel, meals and accommodation.

The *Queensland Leadership* program is unique in Australia. Combining a powerful Harvard University leadership model with rigorous community engagement, it develops the skills to lead through change and create lasting social impact. Working together across the business, government and community sectors is integral to how it works. Based on the award-winning Sydney Leadership (est 1999), the program was launched three years ago with support from the Queensland Government.

More than 600 leaders from government, non-government and Top 500 companies take part in one of Social Leadership Australia's open or customised programs each year. Up to 30 participants will be selected for *Queensland Leadership 2012-13*.

The director of rural and remote consultancy Mulga Solutions, **Karen Tully**, from Charleville, says *Queensland Leadership* has given her new understanding of the complexity of the many challenges faced in rural Queensland; greatly improved her skills as a facilitator of tough group conversations and helped create breakthroughs on 'stuck' issues. As a director of several boards, including the National Rural Women's Coalition, Tully is actively involved in rural advocacy. Pointing to her new skills in influencing, working politically and lobbying that she gained on *Queensland Leadership*, she says, "I now approach lobbying from a new stance. I understand and respect the internal and external world of politics and power, and how to advocate and campaign within this world."

Manager of Carbrooke Farms in Goondiwindi, **Stephen Page**, who will graduate from the 2011-12 program in July, sees *Queensland Leadership* as developing the key leadership skills needed to build community in regional areas. For Page, the critical new skill in his leadership work—whether that be within a community or an organisation—is "the ability to understand the dynamics of the group, how it reacts with others in the region and how you can pull it all together."

Page says, "There are so many challenges ahead of rural communities at the moment—the water issues, the Murray Darling Basin; the coal seam gas mining and the demise of these small communities—I see *Queensland Leadership* assisting in all these things."

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Regional Executive of ANZ Commercial & Agribusiness, Central Queensland, Clark Thompson, based in Rockhampton, says he continues to apply what he learnt on the 2007 *Sydney Leadership* program in his work, five years on. Thompson says the program helped him develop more compassion for the plight of marginalised communities and that, “applying this learning in business today has helped me see the value and power of partnership, relationships and collaboration for success and long term sustainability.”

**Find out more and apply for a Queensland Leadership scholarship**

Contact Social Leadership Australia in Brisbane on (07) 3170 4618 or visit the website [www.benevolent.org.au/leadership](http://www.benevolent.org.au/leadership).

**MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

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**About Social Leadership Australia**

Social Leadership Australia is a specialist leadership development centre at Australia’s first charity, The Benevolent Society. Its purpose is to shift the thinking and practice of leadership in Australia to create positive social impact. Established in 1999 with a single program for 30 people (Sydney Leadership), Social Leadership Australia now teaches more than 600 corporate, government and NGO leaders a year across the country.

**About The Benevolent Society**

Established in 1813, The Benevolent Society is Australia’s first charity. We act as a catalyst for social change, helping thousands of vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians every year. From financial hardship to mental health issues, child protection to independent living for the aged and more, we aim to fix the underlying problems - not just treat the symptoms We spend 89 per cent of our revenue on our community operations, doing whatever it takes to make a difference. We believe that Australia will be a better place if everyone has a fair go, and they all feel they belong. Website: [www.benevolent.org.au](http://www.benevolent.org.au)