Providing prestigious scholarships for high-achieving South Australians

Playford Trust

Playford Trust TAFE SA Awards Presentation 2026


Darcee Anker


Fatemeh Zarei


Tom Jalleh


Amanda Mudge


Hamilton Lloyd-Finch


Shengcai (Max) Li

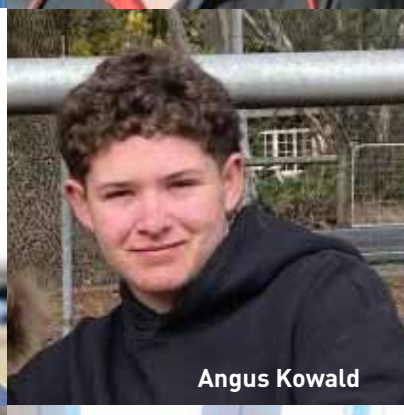

Molly Watters


Ryan Radus


Shabnoor Lateefnavar


Kirti Verma


Rebecca Clark


Angus Kowald


Samuel Bettany


Caitlyn Walker


Kailee Stoppa


Raphael Redin

Investing in South Australia's future

The Playford Trust supports high-achieving tertiary students contributing to South Australia's skills, knowledge and research base.

With partners and supporters across industry, government, education and the community, it assists students studying at Adelaide or Flinders universities or through TAFE SA. There is a focus on areas of strategic and economic importance to the State.

A key aim is to actively encourage outstanding students into science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers, complementing Federal and State Government programs.

The Trust is governed by a voluntary board and administered with assistance from the Department of State Development.

Priority areas

- Advanced manufacturing and new technologies
- Water, energy and climate change
- Agriculture, aquaculture and food production
- Space and defence technologies
- Resources, energy and sustainability
- Enabling technologies in health

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TAFE SA Award Recipients

Modern Industries and New Technology

Provided by TAFE SA

Hamilton Lloyd-Finch
Diploma of Information Technology, Adelaide

Hamilton has a strong interest in offensive cybersecurity – particularly penetration testing, vulnerability research and practical security testing – and is keen to explore how Agentic AI can support cybersecurity research, automation and operations. He has twice qualified for the Cyber Battle Australia Grand Final and this year was team leader for his TAFE SA team, which placed ninth nationally. He also competed in the 2026 WorldSkills Australia Regional Cyber Security competition, placing eighth out of 58 competitors. Hamilton hopes to build a career in cybersecurity while developing his technical skills, leadership experience and understanding of emerging technologies.

Shengcai (Max) Li
Associate Degree in Civil and Structural Engineering, Regency

Max has a solid understanding of construction processes, having spent six years as a formwork carpenter. He has achieved High Distinctions in most of his TAFE subjects, developed strong technical and communication skills, and earned a reputation for working collaboratively with peers and lecturers on challenging problems. After graduating Max plans to pursue a professional drafting role and continue his studies at Adelaide University. His long-term goal is to combine his practical construction experience with engineering knowledge and contribute to South Australia's construction industry. Max is an active member of Triathlon Australia.

Provided by the Herzig Family

Raphael Redin
Associate Degree in Civil & Structural Engineering, Regency

Raphael has a particular interest in civil and structural engineering. Through his studies, he is developing skills in mathematics, problem-solving, engineering mechanics and structural design, while building the knowledge and contacts required for a career in engineering. He hopes to work his way up within the industry, taking on greater responsibilities and continuing to develop his technical and professional skills. He is motivated by the opportunity to apply engineering knowledge to practical, real-world projects. Raphael has developed leadership and teamwork skills through sport and community involvement, including serving as a football and Surf Lifesaving Patrol captain.

Provided by the Playford Trust

Rebecca Clark
Associate Degree in Biomedical Engineering, Regency

Rebecca's interest in biomedical engineering stems from an appreciation of the relationship between medical technology, diagnostic accuracy and patient safety. With more than eight years' experience in SA Pathology laboratories across the State, she adds her foundation in laboratory medicine to an understanding of the clinical implications of equipment performance. Working in industry, Rebecca applies this perspective to the assessment and reliability of biomedical equipment. She is particularly interested in analytical problem solving, measurement accuracy and the principles underpinning safe, effective medical instrumentation.

Shabnoor Lateefnavar
Certificate IV in Cybersecurity, Adelaide

Shabnoor holds a Bachelor of Engineering in Computer Science and spent six years as a Software Systems Developer, managing enterprise systems and application vulnerability lifecycles. Following a career break to raise her children, she transitioned into Australian infrastructure defence via a Certificate IV in Cyber Security at TAFE. She also has earned a formal certification badge for completing the official Cisco Introduction to Cybersecurity curriculum. Shabnoor is working as the student Project Manager for a collaborative Cyber Security Operations Centre project, orchestrating peer milestones for a security architecture framework.

Ryan Radus
Certificate IV in Information Technology, Adelaide

Ryan is making great progress towards a career in IT and networking. He has completed his Certificate III in IT, is currently studying for his Certificate IV, and already is working as a junior IT technician. At Stellar Tech he supports local businesses and community members with technical issues and inquiries. This has provided exposure to a variety of systems and challenges, allowing him to apply the information he is learning through TAFE. Ryan aims to complete a Diploma of IT in Advanced Networking, leading to a Bachelor of Networking and Cyber Security Systems at Flinders University.

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Environment, Conservation and Horticulture

Provided by Open Gardens SA

Amanda Mudge
Certificate III in Conservation & Ecosytem Management, Barossa

Amanda left a 15-year career in HR to pursue her passion for Australia's natural environment. Her goal is to build a career in natural resource management, combining her organisational, project management and leadership experience with practical environmental expertise. Through TAFE, she has developed technical knowledge and practical skills in landcare, water and biodiversity monitoring, weed identification and management, revegetation and ecological restoration. As a Field Officer with Trees For Life, Amanda supports bush regeneration across Bush For Life conservation sites in the State's north. She also volunteers with the SA Country Fire Service, Cleland Wildlife Park and Barossa Wildlife Rescue.

Samuel Bettany
Diploma of Landscape Design, Urrbrae

Sam has had a lifelong interest in nature, sustainability and creating meaningful connections between people and the environment. His educational background includes conservation, land management, horticulture, permaculture design and aged care. He hopes to expand his garden maintenance business to include landscape design services, creating environmentally conscious, sustainable and productive gardens that are accessible, inclusive and meaningful to everyone. Inspired by leading bushwalks across SA and observing the intricate designs of natural landscapes, his vision is to design gardens that foster connection with nature, inspire curiosity and bring people together.

Provided by Friends of the Adelaide Botanic Gardens

Kirti Verma
Certificate III in Horticulture, Urrbrae

Kirti transitioned from IT to pursue her passion for gardens and the environment. She says her horticultural journey developed through community workshops and conservation volunteering. She is the proud founder of Green Mind Gardens Adelaide, using gardening to foster wellbeing, connection and inclusion, and leads her local Buy Nothing community, championing a 'reuse before recycle' philosophy and sustainable sharing. Her extensive volunteer service with Red Nose, Australian Red Cross, Lutheran Care, Beyond Blindness and Raise Foundation has demonstrated community gardening's unique power to bridge generational divides and unite people of all abilities.

Provided by the Playford Trust

Tom Jalleh
Diploma of Landscape Design, Urrbrae

Tom previously completed a Certificate III in Horticulture and works as a landscaper with Urban Habitats Group in Adelaide. He hopes to move further into landscape design, creating gardens and green spaces that support biodiversity and encourage people to spend more time outdoors. He also is involved in revegetating his family's property on the Fleurieu Peninsula, where about 18 hectares is protected under a Heritage Agreement. This is Tom's second career with links to TAFE SA. After completing a Certificate III in Commercial Cookery, he spent 18 years as a chef, leading kitchen teams of up to 40 people in Australia and overseas.

Darcee Anker
Certificate III in Horticulture, Urrbrae

Darcee is a final-year trainee with the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium of South Australia and has enjoyed the opportunity to learn from professionals at TAFE and through her work at the Adelaide, Wittunga and Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens. She is keen to continue developing her botanical knowledge and her practical skills through study, work experience and professional development opportunities in Australia and overseas. Darcee wants to develop a career focused on native flora, conservation, sustainability, and community education and engagement.

Kailee Stoppa
Certificate III in Horticulture, Urrbrae

Kailee is building a solid foundation in plant propagation, cultivation and soil science. Driven by a keen interest in plant biology, she plans to specialise in plant tissue culture after completing her course, with the aim of supporting commercial nursery production and environmental conservation projects across South Australia. She has developed strong leadership skills through her management experience which includes guiding team workflows, mentoring others, and keeping operations running smoothly. Kailee's passion for plants extends far beyond the classroom; she has spent years cultivating an extensive collection of rare indoor houseplants.

Caitlyn Walker
Certificate III in Conservation & Ecosystem Management, Aboriginal Access Centre, Salisbury

A proud Ngarrindjeri, Narungga and Noongar woman living on Kaurna Yarta, Adelaide, Caitlyn is developing her knowledge and skills in caring for Country, land management and environmental conservation. She also is committed to supporting and uplifting her community through her work in Aboriginal education. She is a National Leader for SEED mob, Australia's first Indigenous youth-led climate justice network. Caitlyn hopes to combine her cultural knowledge, connections, education and community leadership to care for Country, strengthen First Nations voices in environmental spaces, and help protect the environment for future generations.

Agriculture, Agribusiness and Food Technology

Provided by the Playford Trust

Molly Watters
Certificate III in Aquaculture, Pt Lincoln

Molly recently completed her course while also managing a school barramundi farm on Kangaroo Island. This allowed her to develop skills in fish husbandry, water quality, problem-solving, organisation and leadership. Molly enjoyed sharing her knowledge with students and creating practical learning opportunities that introduce young people to aquaculture and agriculture. Her goal is to complete a Bachelor of Education. She hopes to combine her passion for teaching, aquaculture and agriculture to provide engaging, hands-on learning opportunities for students, particularly in rural communities.

Fatemeh Zarei
Diploma of Food Science & Technology Industries, Regency

Fatemeh has a background in Environmental Health and many years of laboratory experience. Her TAFE studies will allow her to bring together her knowledge and experience and further build a career in South Australia's food industry. She hopes to use her qualification to contribute to the industry through food safety, quality and innovation, while continuing to support her local community. Fatemeh is an active member of Rotary Club Adelaide Light and volunteers with Fred's Van, preparing food for people experiencing homelessness. She also has supported Rotary fundraising activities and volunteered at Science Alive.

Angus Kowald
Certificate III in Agriculture, Barossa

Growing up around agriculture and working on farms has given Angus a passion for the industry and a practical understanding of farm life. Throughout his studies, he has developed knowledge and skills across a range of areas, while strengthening his understanding of safe and efficient farming practices. He has gained valuable hands-on experience through his farm work. Angus plans to use his qualification to further develop a career in agriculture and grow his agricultural contracting work, with a focus on providing safe, reliable and efficient services to local farmers.

Supporting South Australia's next generation

Corporate and community support helps the Playford Trust significantly increase the reach and impact of its work.

Companies, institutions, foundations, families and individuals make a difference in three main ways. In each case, all funds go directly to the students.

Partners fund specific scholarships and/or awards, which usually carry their names and are presented jointly with the Trust. Partner-student relationships can involve work experience and networking.

Supporters provide tax-deductible funding to support scholarships and/or awards in line with Trust priorities. Some choose to fund specific awards, areas of study or academic levels.

Donors make one-off or annual contributions to support the Trust's work. Donations over $2 are tax deductible.

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