

# Locals to benefit from tertiary scholarship

**TARA FRY**

THERE is often little reliability when it comes to income from farming, so when Woorndoo farmer, Peter Coy, received the all clear for the windfarm on his property, it gave him the idea to give back to the community he loves.

Mr Coy is a third-generation farmer at the Salt Creek Merino Stud and in July 2018, a wind farm on his property commenced operation, offering him a stable and consistent income for the first time in his working life.

"We saw the possibility of a regular income, regardless of whether it rains, and thought about starting up a scholarship," Mr Coy told *The Spectator*.

The establishment of the wind farm at Salt Creek guaranteed Mr Coy income for at least 25 years, while the turbines are operational, which gave him the idea of donating payments from one turbine to the academic scholarship provided by the Salt Creek Charitable Trust.

Tilt Renewables, who built and now operate the Salt Creek Windfarm on the Coy's property saw the benefit in Mr Coy's idea, matching the donation.

The scholarship, open to students in the Western District, will provide \$30,000 to the successful

student, helping fund their tertiary study, either at university, agricultural college or TAFE.

Given the limited number of tertiary education providers in the region, Mr Coy said the scholarship would aid students having to move away to complete their chosen studies.

"It's something I'm very aware of having four kids myself to send off for tertiary education," Mr Coy said.

"I know the expenses involved in moving away ... who knows who it could help."

Mr Coy said the \$30,000 would be allocated to a student across their tertiary studies, meaning if the recipient was studying a three-year course, they would receive \$10,000 a year to ease the financial pressures of studying away from home.

"Most of the universities have got residential accommodation and it would mean you'd have \$10,000 a year to pay that or it would certainly help with lodging with someone or renting," Mr Coy said.

"All the money will be tax free."

Mr Coy recognised the financial pressures on regional families when children finish school and hope to continue to tertiary studies.

Looking for a grounded, intelligent student with impeccable leadership qualities, Mr Coy said he

had faith the team in charge of interviews would pick an appropriate candidate.

"I've got three very smart young ladies who are going to administer this scholarship for me," he said.

"They will interview the top applicants and we will have the applications finalised in January so the student can plan their 2019 year.

"It won't be just academic (the scholarship criteria) it will be based on leadership qualities and the way they present themselves and tell us what they want to do.

"We have drawn a rough 100km radius around Woorndoo (for students to be eligible)."

Mr Coy said he would be in contact with local schools to advise their students about the scholarship, with more information about the application process becoming available shortly.

The official Salt Creek Wind Farm open day will take place on Sunday, October 21 from 10am to 2pm.

Mr Coy and his family will be on site and able to answer any questions about the scholarship throughout the day.

For more information about the scholarship, contact Sally on [towellsally@gmail.com](mailto:towellsally@gmail.com) or 0412 382 717.