

## MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

2<sup>nd</sup> March, 2023

### **Record number of graduates entering the regional NSW Workforce.**

In 2022, the Country Universities Centre (CUC) supported a record 156 new graduates across regional NSW to complete their university degree and enter the workforce.

The record number of graduates are being employed locally and Acting CUC CEO, Chris Ronan, emphasised there is more to come with a pipeline of students preparing to enter the regional NSW workforce in coming years.

“The CUC currently supports over 1200 students across regional NSW. These students are deeply connected to their local community and will go on to become the next generation of local teachers, nurses, and professionals, filling vital workforce shortages that all regional communities are currently facing,” said Acting CEO Chris Ronan.

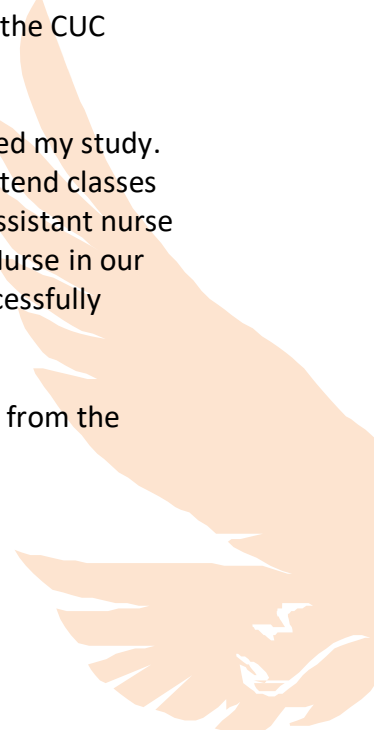
Across regional NSW there are currently 286 CUC students enrolled in health and education related courses; 206 in education and, 156 in community and social work who will go on to graduate with the support of the CUC and develop their career locally.

The CUC provides local face-to-face support for any student, regardless of their university, enabling them to pursue their preferred course without having to leave their local community. There are 11 Centres across regional NSW which have opened access to higher education to people who never previously imagined higher education to be possible.

Nine students recently graduated with Nursing and Midwifery Degrees and while being supported by CUC Far West in Broken Hill. University of South Australia and Bachelor of Nursing Graduate Nikola Chrisakis attributes a large component of her success to the CUC Centre and Student Services.

“The CUC was a massive part of my university journey and was the reason I finished my study. Access to the Centre and endless support from staff gave me the motivation to attend classes and succeed. Studying in the community then allowed me to work locally as an assistant nurse after my first year of study and continue through as a New Graduate Registered Nurse in our local health service. I’m so grateful for what the CUC provided me in order to successfully complete my degree”, said Nikola.

The CUC Far West, Centre Manager, Sarah Rolton, is proud of what the graduates from the Broken Hill community have achieved.



“In Broken Hill, university study is now a real possibility for local people with the support of the CUC. Many of our students are first in family to attend university and I’m so proud to have 29 local graduates in 2022 finish their degree and meet the skills gaps in Broken Hill”

Manager of Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Leadership and Workforce Development at NSW Health, Far West Local Health District, Corey Sclater, is thrilled about the possibilities the CUC provides the local health workforce.

“The partnership between the Far West Local Health District and the CUC benefits the entire community. In 2023, all our local graduates who studied at the CUC and applied for graduate positions were successful, demonstrating the ability for the partnership between Far West Local Health District and CUC to meet our workforce needs,” said Mr Sclater.

Supported by the NSW Government and the Australian Government Regional University Centre program, the CUC makes higher education accessible to all students regardless of their location.

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**CUC Far West Graduation Video:** <https://player.vimeo.com/video/801101442>

**Images Credit:** Tim Gimbert [Images Available Here](#)

