

# ACN FOUNDATION

## Newsletter

### AUTUMN 2026

YOUR IMPACT, SUPPORTING AUSTRALIAN NURSES

SUPPORTER NEWSLETTER

The Australian College of Nursing (ACN) Foundation provides access, through funding, to support initiatives that enhance, develop and recognise contributions made by Australian nurses that will improve the health of the Australian community and secure nursing history.



### FROM THE CEO

As we approach the end of the tax year, I would like to extend a warm welcome and heartfelt thanks to all who continue to support the ACN Foundation.

Your generosity and commitment make a difference in advancing our mission, and I encourage you to consider supporting the Foundation during this important time. Every contribution helps us continue our vital work in developing and supporting the nursing profession.

I would also like to sincerely thank everyone who participated in the Grill'd Local Matters national fundraising program, as well as those who joined us for the International Women's Day High Tea in Sydney. Your involvement and enthusiasm were truly inspiring.

Looking ahead, the ACN Foundation has several activities in May to celebrate International Nurses Day which is on 12 May. The team look forward to seeing many of you at the premiere of The Bullwinkel Scholars Documentary in Canberra. It promises to be a special occasion celebrating the impact of the Project and our scholars. I also hope our Brisbane supporters can attend the Luncheon on 17 May in celebration of International Nurses Day. There will be a fabulous panel of nurse speakers

In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to the Eric Murray Family for their generous support of the Eric Murray Achiever Award, which will be announced during International Nurses Day. Their contribution plays a significant role in recognising excellence within our nursing community.

Thank you once again for your ongoing support. Together, we are making a lasting difference.

Warm regards,  
Adjunct Professor Kathryn Zeitz PhD FACN,  
CEO ACN Foundation

## CELEBRATE OUR HEALTHCARE HEROES AT THE INTERNATIONAL NURSES DAY LUNCHEON

Nurses are the enduring heartbeat of our healthcare system, providing unwavering care, compassion, and expertise when we need it most. This year, we invite you to help us honour their incredible contributions by attending the International Nurses Day Charity Luncheon.

Hosted by the ACN Foundation, this special event is more than just a lunch, it is an opportunity to come together as a community, share inspiring stories, and raise vital funds to support the future of nursing. Set against the elegant backdrop of the historic Tattersall's Club Brisbane, guests will enjoy a beautiful afternoon of celebration, connection, and gratitude/.

Whether you are a healthcare professional, a supporter of the foundation, or simply someone who wants to say a heartfelt "thank you" to our nurses, your presence makes a meaningful difference.

Australian College of Nursing  
**FOUNDATION**  
*Strengthening Australian health care*

Join us for the Australian College of Nursing Foundation's  
**International Nurses Day**  
*Charity Luncheon*

**Special guest speakers, Pop ups, Fashion Parade, Raffle, Auctions**

**Sunday 17 May 2026 • 11:00 am – 4:30 pm**  
Tattersall's Club • 215 Queen St, Brisbane City QLD 4000  
\$140 pp includes two course meal + welcome beverage

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY bankfirst, Guild INSURANCE, HESTA, VENUE SPONSOR Tattersall's Club

Purchase tickets here: <https://app.galabid.com/acnfoundationind2026>

# THE BULLWINKEL PROJECT DOCUMENTARY PREMIERE

The legacy of Lieutenant Colonel Vivian Bullwinkel AO, MBE, ARRC, ED, FNM, FRCNA—alongside the 21 courageous Australian nurses who tragically lost their lives in the 1942 Bangka Island massacre, is a profoundly moving chapter in our nation's history. Her extraordinary story of survival, leadership, and lifelong dedication to the nursing profession has long been a source of inspiration for the healthcare community and all Australians.

This May her remarkable journey and enduring impact will be vividly brought to the screen with the highly anticipated premiere of The Bullwinkel Project Documentary.

Produced by South Australian film maker Ashley Starkey in partnership with the ACN Foundation, this powerful film chronicles the solemn pilgrimage to Indonesia, the historic unveiling of the nation's first statue dedicated to a woman and a nurse at the Australian War Memorial, and the ongoing impact of the Bullwinkel Scholars Program.

The official premiere is set to take place on Saturday, 9 May 2026, fittingly hosted at the deeply symbolic Australian War Memorial Theatre.

As we approach this significant milestone, the documentary stands as a moving tribute to the strength, sacrifice, and compassion that define the nursing spirit, ensuring that the memory of these extraordinary women is preserved for generations to come.

Australian College of Nursing  
**FOUNDATION**  
— Strengthening Australian health care —

JOIN US FOR THE SCREENING OF THE  
**Bullwinkel Project Documentary**

PRODUCED BY ASH STARKEY  
This powerful documentary follows the nursing journey of Lieutenant Colonel Vivian Bullwinkel AO, MBE, ARRC, ED, FNM, FRCNA, DLF and the Australian College of Nursing Foundation's work to build a lasting legacy for her and the 21 nurses who died at Radji Beach on 16 February 1942.

**Saturday 9 May 2026**  
**2:30 pm**  
**Australian War Memorial, Canberra**

SCAN TO REGISTER YOUR FREE TICKET

EVENT SPONSOR: serco  
VENUE SPONSOR: Australian War Memorial  
PROUDLY FUNDED BY: Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs

THANK YOU TO OUR FOUNDING PARTNERS: aspermedical, BDEIND, leidos, serco

Secure your free seat today at <https://members.acn.edu.au/EventDetail?EventKey=VBD090526>

## NEW PHD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO ADVANCE NURSING LEADERSHIP IN DIGITAL HEALTH

The ACN Foundation is proud to announce the launch of a PhD scholarship program in partnership with Australian Catholic University (ACU), Ausmed, and Monash Health, designed to advance nursing leadership in digital health and drive innovation in electronic health records.

The ACN Foundation scholarship is named the Cynthea Wellings PhD Scholarship – Advancing nursing research and building Australia's digital health capabilities. The \$90,000 top-up scholarship, to be delivered over three years, has been kindly supported by sponsorship from leading healthcare education provider Ausmed, demonstrating the industry's commitment to advancing nursing research and digital health capabilities.

Cynthea Wellings founded Ausmed in 1987. From its beginnings as a small publishing house, Ausmed became a pioneer in digital education and has grown into one of Australia's largest online libraries of clinical and care education. Cynthea was educated as a registered nurse at the Royal London Hospital, England, and in 2014 was named one of Australia's '100 Women of Influence' by the Australian Financial Review.

ACN CEO, Adjunct Professor Kathryn Zeitz PhD FACN, described Cynthea as a leading champion of nursing education and an outstanding example of nursing leadership in digital transformations.

Director of ACU's Graduate Research School, Ms Michelle Lopez, said the university's scholarship program brings together talented PhD candidates, experienced academics, and industry partners to deliver evidence-based solutions to real-world challenges.

The PhD scholarship will support research in informatics and digital health, with the exact project to be determined by the successful candidate's interests, experience, and prior education.

Professor Stephen Guinea, Associate Dean of Learning, Teaching and Professional Experience at ACU's Faculty of Health Sciences, is leading the working group responsible for implementing this initiative.



Cynthea Wellings FACN

# SECOND ROUND OF SCHOLARSHIP, GRANTS AND AWARDS RECIPIENTS 2025

| Endometriosis Australia Scholarship |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Belinda Connolly                    | Jess Davis             |
| Isabella Fleet                      | Rachel Hawkes-Bennett  |
| Natasha Haynes                      | Lauren Hwang           |
| Jennifer Jackson                    | Dolly John             |
| Yen Shan Lee                        | Hannah McCall          |
| Johanna McShane                     | Natasha Mutombe        |
| Caroline Newell                     | Sophie Newman          |
| Lauren Renshaw                      | Julia Sharp            |
| Ruby Shevlin                        | Jennifer Singleton     |
| Sarah Soewarno                      | Jennifer Waterson MACN |
| Michelle Woods                      | Li Yan                 |

| Pacific Nations Nursing Scholarship |               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Losena Adimaimua                    | Ana Koliniwai |

| Emerging Policy Leader Program |                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Jade Chen MACN                 | Rachael Ferris MACN |
| Elsie Manyau MACN              | Mark Novak MACN     |
| Lele Xu MACN                   |                     |

| Emerging Research Leader Program |                             |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Kathy Chapman MACN               | Elizabeth (Lisa) Evans MACN |
| Yangyang Fan MACN                | Thi Thuy Tien Nguyen MACN   |
| Geraldine Roderick MACN          | Alison Trivella MACN        |
| Aleena Varughese MACN            | William Wallace MACN        |

| Bullwinkel Leadership Scholarship                 |  |
|---|--|
| Recipient   | In honour of                                   |
| Captain Krezeil Lacorte                           | Lieutenant Florence 'Flo' Rebecca Casson FACN  |
| Dr Amanda Graf MACN                               | Sister Bessie Wilmott FACN                     |
| Emily Mishal                                      | Sister Elaine Balfour-Ogilvy FACN              |
| Emma Smith  | Sister Minnie Ivy Hodgson FACN                 |
| Fang Liu  | Sister Mary Elizabeth 'Beth' Cuthbertson FACN  |
| James Somerville                                  | Lieutenant Lorna Florence Fairweather FACN     |
| Jazmyn Bambie                                     | Sister Mona Margaret Anderson Tait FACN        |
| Jenifer Barreto Arroyave                          | Sister Janet 'Jenny' Kerr FACN                 |
| Jessica Heath                                     | Sister Nancy Harris FACN                       |
| Katie Gregory                                     | Sister Mary Eleanor Ellie McGlade FACN         |
| Khushdeep Randhawa                                | Sister Clarice Halligan FACN                   |
| Kylee Ross MACN                                   | Sister Dorothy Gwendoline 'Buddy' Elmes FACN   |
| Major Lee-Ann Pine                                | Sister Florence Aubin Salmon FACN              |
| Nyn Parthan                                       | Sister Alma May Beard FACN                     |
| Odette Teerink                                    | Sister Peggy Everett Farmaner FACN             |
| Olga Novak MACN                                   | Sister Kathleen Margaret Neuss FACN            |
| Renee Deleuil MACN                                | Sister Ada Joyce Bridge FACN                   |
| Samantha Elrick MACN                              | Sister Rosetta Joan Wight FACN                 |
| Squadron Leader Koryn Roberts MACN                | Sister Esther Sarah Jean 'Stewie' Stewart FACN |
| Lt Col Vivian Bullwinkel Study Travel Scholarship |  |
| Karen Tuqiri MACN                                 | Lieutenant Colonel Vivian Bullwinkel DLF       |

Group Captain Kath Stein FACN (ACN Foundation President) with Lt Col Vivian Bullwinkel Study Travel Scholarship Recipient 2026 Karen Tuqiri FACN





L to R – Rebecca Davis (Theatre 180), Marrienne McGhee (Scrub Up), Donna Ciccia (Endometriosis Australia), Adjunct Professor Kathryn Zeitz PhD FACN (ACN CEO), Felicity Wilson MP, Morgan Houston (HESTA)

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The ACN Foundation International Women's Day High Tea was held on Sunday, 1 March 2026 at Rydges World Square, Sydney. The event aligned to the IWD 2026 theme "Give to Gain" and supported fundraising for the Bullwinkle Scholars Program.

Proceedings included a Welcome Address by Felicity Wilson MP, followed by a moderated panel discussion with Adjunct Professor Kathryn Zeitz PhD FACN, Morgan Houston (HESTA), Donna Ciccia (Endometriosis Australia) and Marrienne McGhee MACN (2025 Bullwinkle Scholar). Rebecca Davis (THEATRE 180) served as Master of Ceremonies.

The Vivian Bullwinkle Study Travel Scholarship (2026) was presented to Karen Tuquiri FACN. Fundraising activities (raffle, silent auction and direct donations), supported by event sponsors, generated sufficient funds to fully sponsor a future Bullwinkle Scholar.



Felicity Wilson MP.  
NSW Shadow Minister for Women

## GRILL'D SUPPORTS THE ACN FOUNDATION IN 2026

We are thrilled to announce that thanks to your incredible support during the Grill'd Local Matters National Takeover in January, the ACN Foundation has received a generous donation of \$17,800, coming in second after St Johns Ambulance. The ACN Foundation want to send a massive thank you to everyone who visited a Grill'd restaurant last month and voted for us with their bottle caps. Your support truly matters. A special acknowledgement goes to Arun Thomas MACN for doing a fantastic job representing our profession as the face of this campaign, We are proud to have been involved alongside St John Ambulance and Police Care Australia! Thanks again to everyone who has been involved and supported us!

**Pictured: Arun Thomas MACN – ACN Foundation Fundraising Committee Chair & ACN Foundation Scholarship Recipient**

