

Scholarship fund receives boost from Farm Institute Award

John Ralph Essay Competition

The 2019 winner of a prestigious Australian Farm Institute competition has dedicated her award to the memory of a former colleague and donated the prizemoney to a scholarship in her name.

Jessica Ramsden, Corporate and Government Affairs Manager at Elanco Animal Health and PhD student at the Australian National University, was presented with the John Ralph Essay Competition prize at the AFI Roundtable event at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra on October 15, 2019.

"Kristina was my mentor from the time I arrived at Elanco. She inspired excellence, integrity and purposeful collaborations, and was a thoughtful and generous friend. She would have been so proud of this achievement."

In the essay, Jessica explores the future for animal agriculture in Australia and the sector's challenges including public perceptions about environmental costs, changing animal welfare expectations and the emergence of alternative proteins.

"I was really struck by how old some of these issues are, there is very little that's new – from alarm about the ecological expense of meat to predictions about the rise of synthetic alternatives. This doesn't suggest room for complacency, but helps to sharpen our sights on what exactly is different now, to be clear about why animal agriculture is worthy of a significant future, and to help us sort through the complexities of creating futures we can be proud of."

The Kristina Hacket Memorial Scholarship honours the Clinical Research Manager at Elanco who passed away in November 2017 after a year-long battle with brain cancer. Kristina's friends, family and colleagues have since raised over three quarters of the \$140,000 target which will endow a perpetual scholarship for women leaders in the fields of agriculture, veterinary and animal sciences at The University of Sydney.

While there is gender parity at undergraduate level, only 16% of key management personnel are female and the overall proportion of women employed in agriculture actually declined in 2018, according to WGEA[1] data.

Graduating with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (Animal Husbandry), Kristina was a passionate advocate for careers in animal health, research and agricultural science. Her work was instrumental in bringing to market innovative technologies and products for both livestock and companion animals.

An initiative which assists women who demonstrate collaborative leadership skills to succeed in management roles is an apt memorial for this quiet and purposeful friend, leader and colleague.

This prizemoney and a matched donation from the animal health industry peak body, Animal Medicines Australia, brings the balance required below \$30,000.

Executive Director of Animal Medicines Australia Ben Stapley said the industry association was pleased to support the scholarship.

“Kristina’s contribution to the animal agriculture sector continues not only through those who knew and worked with her, but also through this scholarship which will help support leaders in the future.

“I extend my congratulations to Jessica for receiving this prestigious award and for her impressive contribution to our collective understanding of the positive future of animal agriculture.”

To donate to the Kristina Hacket Memorial Scholarship, visit The University of Sydney dedicated page at crowdfunding.sydney.edu.au/project/9117

[1] https://data.wgea.gov.au/industries/282#gender_comp_content

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