

MEDIA RELEASE

15 May 2013

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Heidelberg West Student Aims Sky High Wins Sir Reginald Ansett Scholarship for Aviation at Swinburne University

Heidelberg West student George Nishihama-Koch's dream to be a captain for a major airline was brought a little closer by winning the Sir Reginald Ansett Scholarship for Aviation at Swinburne University.

The scholarship, established to honour the legacy of aviation pioneer Sir Reginald Ansett, is worth \$30,000 over the three years of study.

The scholarship will ease the financial hardship for George and his family, whose father is unable to work.

"This scholarship will see my passion for flying realized and it will also help my mother and father enormously."

George's passion to take to the skies took off in Year 9 at Melbourne High School when he chose to do the Australian Air Force cadets as his co-curricular activity.

"I wanted to see if I really wanted to fly or not. A five-hour flying course at RAAF Point Cook confirmed my wish to pursue aviation as a career," he said.

"The complete freedom appeals to me. There is nothing like it".

He completed his VCE in 2012 and was accepted by Swinburne University for its Aviation degree.

"The aviation course is competitive and getting into it was not easy at all," said George.

For him, the course's long hours with lectures are to be expected but three days a week he is at the CAE Oxford Aviation Academy at Moorabbin Airport putting the theory into practice – and getting closer to his dream job.

"I've logged a further eight hours of flying time this year and hope to have around 30 to 40 hours flight time by the end of the year".

“To become a commercial airline pilot I will need to build up my flying hours after I leave Swinburne at the end of 2016. This could include flying for the CFA, a skydiving operator or chartered flying. Alternatively, if I secure a cadetship at an airline I will not need to build up my hours”.

Tabitha Lovett, Head of Philanthropy at Equity Trustees, said: “George’s enthusiasm for aviation, his VCE results, and his dedication to become a pilot made him an outstanding winner of the scholarship”.

“From a young age he has been pursuing his dream and winning the scholarship will help fund the cost of his course as well as alleviate financial pressure on his family,” Ms Lovett added.

The scholarship is administered by Equity Trustees Limited (EQT), through its role as trustee of the R.M. Ansett Trust, and is awarded to students undertaking the Swinburne University aviation degree who have outstanding academic achievements, show real aptitude for aviation and can demonstrate financial need.

The R.M. Ansett Trust was established under Sir Reginald’s will with the aim of “helping children to take their place in life”. Since 2010, the Ansett Trust has distributed more than \$1 million through scholarships to financially disadvantaged secondary and tertiary school students, and with grants to charities supporting children in Victoria.

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Photograph:

George Nishihama-Koch receives the 2013 Sir Reginald Ansett Aviation Scholarship from Carolyn Munckton, Philanthropy Development Manager at Equity Trustees.

Background:

Established under an act of the Victorian Parliament in 1888 to provide trustee and executor services, Equity Trustees Limited (EQT) has evolved into a highly respected financial services company that currently manages 206 charitable trusts and distributes more than \$15 million every year to charities, following the directions and wishes of the trusts’ founders.