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Perth Convention Bureau Scholarship Turns Fashion Dream into Reality

When passionate WA fashion industry promoter Carol Hanlon won the 2009 'City of Perth' Convention Scholarship, she never imagined it would turn her dreams into reality and catapult her onto the world stage.

A 40-year veteran of the Australian fashion industry, in 1998 Carol broke new ground in Perth when she founded the Textile Clothing Footwear Resource Centre of WA (TCFWA), a not for profit association which provides information, resources and networks to assist new and emerging fashion designers.

"When I came to Perth I recognised a need to create an industry organisation that could not only support small and growing fashion businesses, but potentially run projects and programs that would pave the way for the industry in WA and beyond," Ms Hanlon said.

In the years that followed, Ms Hanlon and a band of other dedicated volunteers had transformed TCFWA into the leading fashion small business support network in Australia.

Not content to rest on her laurels in Australia, Carol then established TCF Global Village Community Projects, which sets up community sewing centres that allow countries and designers to adopt a sewing village in a third world country, creating on-going income for its residents who are taught to sew.

"With all this going on, I felt inspired to think outside the square and see what the rest of the world was doing and maybe showcase what we can do too," Ms Hanlon said.

Eager to expand TCFWA's global network, Ms Hanlon applied for a Perth Convention Bureau

Scholarship, which sees the City of Perth grant \$10,000 to an individual from a non-profit association to assist in their personal and professional development, either through attendance at an international conference, or undertaking further study.

"I applied to attend and speak at the 2nd International Fashion Incubator Conference in Atlanta, USA, which I hoped might be a launching pad to bring the 3rd International Fashion Incubator Conference to Perth in 2011," Ms Hanlon said.

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"When I learned I'd won the scholarship we had our goal in sight, so we worked closely with the PCB team to prepare a Perth bid.

"We'd be competing with other potential host cities around the world, so our bid included testimonials, promotional packages showcasing WA, show bags and presentations. We also included a boarding pass to the 2011 Fashion Conference in Perth.

With funding to attend the conference in place and the support of the scholarship behind her, Ms Hanlon then took a leap of faith, deciding to expand her conference travel plans to see just how far she could expand the TCFWA network.



LIFE CHANGING: Winning a PCB Scholarship turned Carol Hanlon's fashion dreams into reality.

"I decided to take long service leave and conduct a tour of fashion and small business incubators across the world, as well as visiting our

"For me, winning the Scholarship was not just about attending an international conference; it was a catalyst that allowed me to travel the world creating new global fashion networks and bid to host a major international fashion conference in Perth.

"This process has shown me that with a little assistance, you can use your skills and talents to make a difference in your industry, whether locally, nationally or around the globe."

For more information on scholarships or hosting a conference contact Luana MacDermott: luana@pcb.com.au

community sewing centres and linking in to more than 50 relevant networks in 21 different countries," Ms Hanlon explained.

When she returned home armed with a raft of new contacts, Ms Hanlon was thrilled to announce that Perth had won the bid to host the 3rd International Fashion Incubator conference.

"This event, which is timed to coincide perfectly with next year's Perth Fashion Festival, will attract hundreds of delegates and showcase the WA fashion industry to the world – we already have speakers coming in from Toronto, Los Angeles, London and Amsterdam.


PERTH CONVENTION BUREAU

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