



# ACTION4YOUTH CASE-STUDY:

## EXPLORE PHASE TRAINING - CREATING CAREERS WITH COWS



During the Explore phase of [Action4Youth](#) students get exposure to a diverse range of agricultural industries. Creating awareness for dairy is the acclaimed Cows Create Careers program.

[Cows Create Careers](#), run by Deanne Kennedy and John Hutchison at [Jaydee Events](#), brings dairy farmers, industry advocates and real-life calves into schools, to showcase the dairy industry and agricultural careers in general.

Dairy farmers involved with the program donate two calves to each participating school for a period of three weeks. Students become responsible for feeding and caring for the calves and in the process gain valuable insights into dairy industry. Dairy professionals then talk with the students, discussing careers and potential career pathways.

*The program benefits all its stakeholders; schools have a hands-on learning program that engages students and fits their curriculum requirements; the advocate and farmers get to share their passion and love of the dairy industry with potential entrants. We use the saying if you love what you do, then share it; your passion will inspire others," Deanne says.*

### ALEXANDRA BROSANAN - A CCC SUCCESS STORY

*During my time as a student at Marymount College on the Gold Coast, the arrival of the newly born dairy calves as part of the Cows Create Careers program was always a momentous occasion.*

*Organised by our incredible Agricultural Science teacher, Mr Christopher Larkin, the calves provided by Farmer Greg Dennis would arrive at the school during term three and remain in residence for several weeks. This was always an exciting time, and word would quickly spread through the college and the primary school that 'the cows were here' and before and after school and in break times there would be a steady stream of students visiting the calves.*

*Bringing the country to the coast provided an important connection for us city kids to get involved, learn about where our food comes from, and understand the importance of agriculture. For Mr Larkin, and the college, the calves promoted Agricultural Science and encouraged students to consider a career in this field.*

*I studied Agricultural Science with Mr Larkin for three years and this included spending about 5 weeks in Year 12 caring for three calves. The hands-on role required teamwork and commitment as the feeding and care requirements included outside school hours and weekend work as the calves transitioned from bottle feeding to bucket feeding, and we became proficient in mucking out, halter training and filling water buckets. It wasn't always fun, but we learned responsibility and became very attached to our girls.*

*Cows Create Careers also provided industry visits with speakers attending our school to promote the Australian dairy industry and career pathways in agriculture. Toward the end of Year 12 our Agriculture teacher suggested students studying Agricultural Science could consider attending the open day at UQ Gatton campus which offers a variety of agricultural pathways. I went to the open day and am now nearing the end of a double degree - Sustainable Agriculture and Agribusiness.*

*Cows Create Careers definitely contributed to influencing my decision to pursue an agricultural pathway and as I have progressed through my degree, I have continued to develop my passion for sustainability, land management, pasture science, soil health, and food security."*



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Students work in teams of 4-5 to complete assessment tasks and assignments and join together for an end-of-project presentation and awards day. Cows Create Careers debuted in 2004 and is annually working with up to 230 schools and 15,000 students; not even COVID could slow down the program.

*COVID has been fantastic for the program, as it made us think outside the box. We now have a new 'Light Curriculum' and two online calves called 'Bright & Future'. The schools and students love the online program, and the resilience when we converted the program online was a testament to the program's long-term success; everyone got on board our boat, and together we kept on rowing. So today, in 2022, post-pandemic, we now have more choices for schools to be able to participate in the CCC program."*

Cows Create Careers graduates have gone on to work in the dairy industry and others have gone on to become teachers who are now teaching the program to a new generation of students.

*Another highlight for me is seeing the creativity of the student's submissions at the end of the program, some of the entries are outstanding, and there is always something different, even after 19 years. And lastly, I am proud of what a dedicated group of volunteers can achieve with hard work and persistence. The volunteers are very much the face of the program, and their love of this program has contributed to the program's success,"* Deanne says.

### A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

**CHRISTOPHER LARKIN IS A TEACHER AT MARYMOUNT COLLEGE ON THE GOLD COAST.**

*Marymount College is situated in the beautiful Gold Coast and is not the typical location to find a school offering Agricultural Science. Traditionally this region had a vibrant agricultural community, but urbanisation has largely pushed this away. There are still dairy farms in the Gold Coast hinterland and the Norco processing plant still operates at Labrador.*

*Students at Marymount College have enjoyed participating in the Cows Create Careers program for the last 7 years. It has promoted a great deal of interest in not only the dairy industry but has given students a realistic view that there are meaningful career opportunities in agriculture. Since we have participated in the program there have been students go on to do certificate courses in animal care, university courses in agronomy, animal production and agribusiness, work in remote Australia as a jillaroo and now some are looking to spend their gap year working on farms using the AgCAREERSTART program.*

*There is always great anticipation from the whole school about the arrival of our calves for this program with no shortage of students wanting to get involved.*

*In recent times we have been presented with lots of challenges, which have meant we have been unable to get calves in 2022 but the students are already looking forward to 2023 when we might be able to navigate through all these obstacles to again have calves at the school. Cows Create Careers provides an exciting learning experience for my students bringing a bit of the country to the city."*