

# Media Release

June 2022

## Alcoa backs women in engineering with financial, real-world support

To celebrate Women in Engineering Day (June 23), Alcoa has announced the latest recipients of its annual women in engineering scholarships, which support female students and help drive greater diversity and equality in the profession.

Vicki Cheah, from Murdoch, and Mari Conradie, from Warnbro, have both been awarded 2022 Alcoa Bev Corless Women in Engineering Scholarships.

Each student will receive \$7,500 to put towards their engineering studies at Curtin University as well as the opportunity to get hands-on work experience with Alcoa.

Mari, who is studying a double degree in Mechatronic Engineering and Computer Science, said she was grateful for the financial support from Alcoa as it would help relieve some of her educational expenses.

Vicki, who is studying a double degree in Mechanical Engineering and Finance, said she was honoured to be awarded the scholarship and was hopeful that as well as financial support she could prioritise her professional development.

Kate Leekong, who received the same scholarship for the last two years, now works part-time at the company's Kwinana Alumina Refinery while she completes her final year of study at Curtin. She was offered the role after undertaking three-months work at the refinery as part of the scholarship.

Kate said the scholarship had given her invaluable support as well as hands-on experience, opening up other opportunities to develop her career.

"My work experience was great," Kate said. "I had lots of freedom to explore different projects and areas of the refinery and I could use the time to concentrate on areas that I wanted to pursue.

"Now that I work with Alcoa part-time, it helps me develop my skills for my final year of study as well as life beyond university."

Alcoa, which operates bauxite mines and alumina refineries in the south west of WA, was the first company to initiate scholarships for women studying engineering at Curtin 16 years ago – a move that inspired other companies to offer similar opportunities.

The scholarship, named in honour of a former Alcoa engineer, aims to encourage and support female university students studying full-time who are enrolled in their second, third, fourth or fifth year in an engineering degree at Curtin.

Curtin University Director of Student Management Damon Wasserman said Alcoa had a longstanding commitment to building a female engineering workforce.

“The financial and industry experience support provided by Alcoa through the Bev Corless Scholarship helps build a diverse professional body, enables our students to focus on their studies while also connecting their learning with real world practical experience,” Mr Wasserman said.

Alcoa of Australia Corporate Affairs Manager Suellen Jerrard said the Company was committed to providing a supportive community and workplace that fostered and valued the strength and opportunity that came from diversity.

**ENDS**



**Photo caption:** Curtin University engineering students Vicki Cheah (left) and Mari Conradie (right) both won the 2022 Alcoa Bev Corless Women in Engineering Scholarship.

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**Editor's note:**

**About Alcoa in Australia**

Alcoa has a proud history in Australia which it aims to continue by remaining internationally competitive, attracting ongoing investment and providing jobs for future generations.

- Alcoa's Australian operations have been contributing to the nation's economy since 1963, investing \$14.5 billion over 58 years.
- Alcoa employs nearly 4,400 people in Australia. About 3,900 live in Western Australia.
- In our 58 years, Alcoa has taken on more than 2000 apprentices, trainees and graduates.
- In 2020, 83 per cent of Alcoa Australia's revenue stayed in Australia through wages, local purchasing, taxes, royalties and dividends to Australian shareholders.

**Our operations:**

- Invested \$2.2 billion with 1340 Australian suppliers;
- Paid more than \$340 million in federal, state and local government taxes and royalties;
- Paid \$706 million in Australian wages, salaries and associated benefits; and
- Made \$4.6 million in community contributions.

**About Alcoa Corporation**

Alcoa (NYSE: AA) is a global industry leader in bauxite, alumina and aluminium products, and is built on a foundation of strong values and operating excellence dating back 135 years to the world-changing discovery that made aluminium an affordable and vital part of modern life. Since developing the aluminium industry, and throughout the company's history, talented employees have followed on with breakthrough innovations and best practices that have led to efficiency, safety, sustainability and

stronger communities wherever we operate. Visit us online on [www.alcoa.com](http://www.alcoa.com), follow @Alcoa on Twitter and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/Alcoa](http://www.facebook.com/Alcoa).