

Pride in the past

Case IH has awarded its annual Marcus Oldham College scholarship to nineteen-year-old Victorian grain grower Glenden Watts. The scholarship will help Glenden undertake a Bachelor of Business (Agricultural Management) degree at the Geelong-based College starting in 2009.

A keen farmer, Glenden is proud and honoured to work the land that has been in his family since the 1870s. He will take over 'Glengower', the 1619 hectare family farm in northern central Victoria, near Charlton, when his father eventually retires.

"I've always absolutely loved farming," said Glenden. "I'd rather be outside, working hard and getting dirt on my hands. I love everything about it and I always wanted to do it. I never even considered an office job."

"We implemented the Case IH scholarship in 2004 to nurture talent in the younger generation of farmers," said Case IH Marketing Manager, Stuart Brown. "All nine of our Marcus Oldham scholarship recipients have been outstanding young farmers. Glenden struck me as a very well presented, professional and mature young man who had clearly researched every aspect of the scholarship. Glenden comes from a property in the Southern Mallee and it was a particular pleasure to assist someone from an area that has seen tough times recently."

Glenden had always planned to attend an agricultural college and chose Marcus Oldham based on the course objectives.

"This Case IH scholarship is a huge help to reduce some of the burden on my parents for my education. I know their investment will really pay off once I've finished the course," he said. "I'm really excited about learning about the industry in more depth. Meeting other young farmers will be fantastic, too. Spending time with people my age, with a similar background, will be fun and I hope to make some lifelong friends."

"From consulting to managing or co-managing properties, all of the previous Case IH scholarship recipients have gone on to carve strong careers in the agricultural industry, which makes us very proud to have played a role in their education," said Stuart.

Glenden has spent the past year travelling and working on farms in Australia and New Zealand.

Once Glenden finishes his degree he'll be back at 'Glengower' working the land his family has worked for more than 130 years.



He has no plans to make big changes once his father eventually retires.

"Dad runs a really neat boat, and I'm happy to follow in his footsteps. He's always taken my thoughts on board anyway so I don't feel the need to make change just for the sake of change," said Glenden. "I'm just looking forward to watching the crops grow – just me, my ute and my dog." ■

Glenden Watts.

Aussie recipient of KT&T award

A Queensland farmer is the 2008 recipient of the Dean Kleckner Trade & Technology Advancement Award. The award was made to Jeff Bidstrup in Des Moines, Iowa in October 2008.



Jeff Bidstrup.

The organisation Truth about Trade and Technology (TATT) established the prize in honour of its founder and chairman. It seeks to recognise "strong leadership, vision, and resolve in advancing the rights of all farmers to choose the technology and tools that will improve the quality, quantity, and availability of agricultural products around the world."

Jeff lives up to every word in that description.

TATT board member and North Dakota farmer Terry Wanzek, met Jeff three years ago at the first Farmer to Farmer Roundtable. "When I first met Jeff, I was impressed in his energy, enthusiasm, and passion. He lives a world away, but I share his frustrations with bans based on political science, not real science."

Terry, a wheat farmer, has dealt with trade bans on GM (genetically modified) wheat – for Jeff, the challenge was political obstruction for many Australian farmers who wanted to plant GM cotton, canola and other grains.

"We've had biotech cotton for more than a decade," says Jeff, who grows grain and cotton on about 5000 hectares in southern Queensland. "I immediately saw the difference it made and understood that this was a wonderful technology for farmers."

GM cotton helped farmers overcome pest problems. Jeff began to imagine how additional GM research in Australia could help farmers battle salinity and drought, as well as reduce chemical usage. But then the anti-GM activists struck his country. "One of Australia's states banned GM food crops, then all of them – but Queensland passed their own moratoriums in a matter of weeks," says Jeff. "There was almost no discussion. We were caught off guard, completely flat-footed."

For a while, nobody did much of anything. "We all thought someone else would take care of the problem."

As professional activists began getting more media attention, Jeff thought about the future of his family in agriculture. "I have two sons who want to be farmers. I started worrying about their future in this business. I realised that they aren't going to have one unless somebody does something about all of this anti-biotech nonsense."

So Jeff founded *Producers Forum*, a coalition of livestock and grain farmers who work to educate Australians about the benefits of biotechnology and to repeal moratoriums based on ignorance. They succeeded in persuading the governments of New South Wales and Victoria to lift their bans and came close to convincing South Australia to do the same.

"We've made a lot of progress," says Jeff. "We're going to make even more in 2009 and beyond. But the workload is shared by many, and those people I believe share this award with me. They are the McKays, Kellys, Baldocks, Snookes, Staleys, Fitzgeralds, Crabtrees, Roushs, Prestons, Tribes, and many others of the world who have given their all to see good prevail." ■