

## PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Young flautist who never had a face-to-face lesson wins prestigious music award

**Contact:** Sandy Shaw, CEO Newsboys Foundation  
[sandyshaw@newsboys.org.au](mailto:sandyshaw@newsboys.org.au)

A young flautist who has never had a face-to-face flute lesson has won a prestigious music award hosted by the Melbourne Recital Centre.

The Newsboys Foundation Regional Music Award prize will provide Eliza Creek, 17, with mentoring and lessons from some of the best classical musicians in Australia and access to some of the country's best classical music companies.

Eliza is from the small town of Nhill near the border between Victoria and South Australia.

Living in a rural town, access to teachers is an issue and Eliza has never had an opportunity to have a “face to face” flute lesson.

Instead, she has weekly lessons with her flute teacher Brisbane-based Kate Lawson, who is a principal with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, via Skype.

Eliza plans to meet her flute teacher for the first time just before Christmas, when she and her family plan to travel to Queensland.

Eliza studies music performance as part of VCE. She is a member of the Senior School Band and gives her time to younger school children, assisting with the Junior Band.

Last year she participated in the Wimmera Music Eisteddfod and came first place in the “Woodwind - 4 years and over category”.

As part of the Newsboys prize, Eliza will receive an all-expenses paid musical week in Melbourne in 2021.

Prize sponsor, the Newsboys Foundation was originally created as the Melbourne Newsboys Club in 1893 to help support the children who sold newspapers on Melbourne's streets. Newsboys continues to support young people across Victoria.

Newsboys Foundation CEO Sandy Shaw says the Regional Music Award “has been life changing and career changing” for the young winners since the inauguration award in 2015.

“It is a prize that can't be bought. The winner has access to the Melbourne Recital Centre every day for a week, goes to concerts every night, has master classes, individual lessons and meets people who are highly accomplished in the classical music industry.”

Winners also get the opportunity to visit other organisations, such Australian National Academy of Music and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Ms Shaw said the Newsboys award seeks to create opportunities for young regional musicians to reach their full potential.

“We know that young musicians from regional Victoria already have that extra bit of magic because they have had to face the challenge of geographical isolation and being isolated from the music world.”

“They have to play on their own, can’t connect with peers in the way that young people in the city can, and must push themselves harder to get on top of their discipline and learn to play at such a high level.”

Mr Euan Murdoch, CEO Melbourne Recital Centre said: “We are delighted to be partnering with the Newsboys Foundation to offer this unique opportunity; helping to build valuable musical connections and create inspiring lifelong memories for young musicians in Regional Victoria.”

### **Interview with Eliza Creek**

*Eliza was 12 when she was first introduced to the flute.*

#### **Why did you choose the flute, and how long have you been playing?**

I have been playing flute for 5 ½ years. I originally started learning piano but fell in love with the sound of the flute and thought it was a beautiful instrument, so changed from piano to flute.

#### **Who are your musical heroes?**

My musical heroes are my school music teacher and my flute teacher. My school music teacher, Catherine Bates, inspires me so much with her enthusiasm for all things music and my flute teacher, Kate Lawson, is always encouraging me to do my best.

#### **What was it like to win the 2020 Newsboys Foundation Regional Music Award?**

I was so excited to hear that I had won the Newsboys Foundation Regional Music Award. Living in a rural town it is not easy to access opportunities to participate in music programs. I feel like I have been given a once in a lifetime chance to further my musical journey and can’t wait to head to Melbourne.

#### **What do you hope to gain from the award?**

It will be a fantastic opportunity to meet with professional instrumentalists and learn more about the world of music.

#### **What has been your performance highlight so far?**

Unfortunately performance opportunities are a little scarce in Nhill, but I did particularly enjoy competing in the Wimmera Eisteddford in 2019 and was fortunate enough to win the “Woodwind – 4 years and over” category.

#### **Where do you hope to take your music in the long term?**

I hope maybe one day to teach the flute and would love to inspire younger flautists to learn this wonderful instrument.

#### **What do you like to do outside of practicing music?**

I enjoy playing sport, and particularly enjoy swimming in the warmer months. I also enjoy cooking up a storm in the kitchen.