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2023 Graduation and alumni event

# THIRTY YEARS OF BUILDING FUTURES

by David Lugton

In this special issue of our newsletter, we have put together some stories of our past and present cadets (in their own words) to illustrate their talents and celebrate their achievements. It would be almost impossible to adequately express the invaluable support of our many, many sponsors, but the article from Dennis Family (p. 2) typifies the way they get involved and the passion with which they do it.

Over its thirty years of operation the Cadetship has assisted hundreds of people to achieve a successful university education and helped launch some amazing careers. We will be formally celebrating this with an event in November. We hope you can make it, so please make sure your contact details are up to date (see "HELLO?" on p.2) so that you can receive an invitation.

In my current role I am also very grateful to the creative and dedicated work of all of the previous Cadetship staff over the

Cont. p.5

**2023** marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Cadetship Program. We will be celebrating it with a special alumni event on Thursday 30 November in Chloe's Room at the historic Young and Jackson's Hotel.

Many will have fond memories of the twentieth anniversary, and we aim to make this one equally special.

Please make sure we have your current contact details so you don't miss out.

See page 2 (HELLO?) for an update form



**Dennis Family Corporation** has enjoyed a long and successful association with Doxa spanning more than 20 years.

DFC Founder, Bert Dennis personally mentored the company's first cadet after his friend Peter Scanlon, who was Chairman of Doxa at that time, asked the company to participate in the program. The prospect of offering young students the opportunity to attend university and help set them on the pathway to a future career resonated strongly with Bert, who felt that an education is the single most valuable and life-changing gift you can give someone.

DFC's most recent Doxa cadet is Ali Haidari, who joined the company's Developments Marketing team in 2018. Ali first learnt about the Doxa program during his Year 12 studies after migrating to Australia from Pakistan with little English and a

challenging school history. With drive and determination, he learnt English and flourished in his academic endeavours.

During his time at the company, Ali successfully completed a Bachelor of Business (Marketing) at RMIT in 2020. His employment status has progressed from cadet to firstly casual work and now full-time staff member since 2021.

Upon his arrival at DFC in 2018, Ali was mentored by Marketing Manager, Melissa Munro, who has encouraged his progression within the business

Cont. p.3

## HELLO?

The Doxa Cadetship family is a unique and special group of people that works best as a networked community. We would like to know what you are up to now, and keep you in touch with our plans and activities.

We have set up a simple online form to maintain your preferred contact details. Access the form through the QR code below or via the Doxa Cadetship Alumni group on Facebook.

Perhaps you know somebody who could benefit, or you may even want to become a sponsor. Or add your expertise as a mentor. We invite involvement at many levels. You may even wish to become a member of Doxa Youth Foundation.



**James Whitford** joined the Cadetship Program in 2022, and is already establishing his future as an engineer . . .

"I'm James! I'm from Myrtleford in North-East Victoria, at the foot of the snow. In 2022 I moved to Melbourne to study, I am currently in my second year at Monash, specialising in Civil Engineering.

I recently completed the first year of my Doxa cadetship at ATOM (Australian Terminals Operations Management) and I am excited to be continuing my position there.

My time at ATOM has been invaluable, helping me develop professionally and personally. My mentor Shawn particularly has been a wealth of

knowledge, support and Excel shortcuts. Cyclically, Chris Gatt, ATOM's CEO was also a Doxa cadet. He gives a lot for us going through the program to aspire to.

I'm not a particularly certain person and more or less just fell into engineering at first. But the real-world insight I have gained through DOXA has provided me with a confidence in myself that I can apply to my studies. I really enjoy my work at ATOM and that thought is reassuring when I'm struggling through a particularly long calculus problem.

Moving to the city was pretty surreal at first; I had no family or friends. It took me about a year to figure out how Myki works.

So, the networking opportunities I had with other cadets in a similar situation were of great significance to me. I am hoping one day, like Chris, to perpetuate Doxa so others can benefit as I have".

**"The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary"**

– Fr Joe Giacobbe

From. p.2 Dennis Family

and helped to open considerable opportunities for him by widening his exposure to different aspects of Marketing and Sales.

“Working across different segments of the company at DFC has helped me to develop my personal and professional skills,” he comments.

Ali is presently a Sales Associate based at DFC’s Westbrook estate and is also acting Sales Consultant for the last of the remaining land sales on the company’s almost completed Donnybrae project.

“The Doxa Cadetship program has been exceptionally rewarding for me personally,” Ali reflects.

“Looking back at my career development journey, I consider

myself extremely fortunate to have had Doxa’s continuous support in every step along the way. Particularly, I am very thankful to Doxa for introducing me to Dennis Family Corporation, and in turn, I have been made to feel welcome and valued at the company from the beginning of my initial interview right up until today. I am very grateful to both Doxa and DFC for their ongoing support,” he adds.

Dennis Family Corporation General Manager – HR, Tony Grey says the Doxa program provides a platform for cadets to reach their full potential and increase their professional

Cont. p.4



**Kristy Ng**

was part of the Doxa Cadetship Program from 2016, and graduated in 2020. She has used her questing enthusiasm to build her career in a different direction . . .

“In 2016, I studied Bachelor of Business (Marketing) and Arts (Psychology, International Studies) and completed my 4 years of undergraduate at Monash University. The company that sponsored my Doxa Cadetship was Urban Maintenance Systems (UMS) and I rotated through the Human Resources and Marketing team. I was very grateful for the opportunities offered by UMS and Doxa.

However, I realised my heart

lies in healthcare as I wanted to help people and make a positive difference in people’s life.

During the pandemic, I gained experience in community pharmacies and was offered the opportunity to upskill to become a Dispensary Technician working alongside pharmacists. Then in 2021, I started Master of Occupational Therapy (OT) at Swinburne University and have since completed clinical placements at an

inpatient hospital, a primary school and a private firm servicing participants in the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). I finish my course next week and will soon become a qualified community OT servicing people with disabilities across the lifespan. OT is a very in-demand, rewarding and flexible career with many opportunities to grow your career.

Finally, I just want to leave my favourite quote here by Brené Brown:

**“ . . . stay awkward, brave and kind, y’all !”**



## In March

we welcomed the uniquely skilled Effie Maniatis to our team as Cadetship Coordinator. She joins us after more than 20 years as Business Manager of Medley Hall college at the University of Melbourne. She is known for her ability to build a safe, supportive and interactive student community:

"I feel fortunate this role is similar and matches my personality. I enjoy the challenge working with the team to enhance the lives of



our future leaders. When I'm not working, you'll find me spending quality time with friends and family cooking, at a good restaurant or at the park with Teddy the Bichon.

I'm always up for a coffee and a chat".

From. p.3 Dennis Family

development opportunities.

"Ali is the latest of numerous Doxa cadets we have welcomed at Dennis Family over the past two decades. Our partnership with Doxa has been a very rewarding and successful one and I am sure the association will continue for many more years to come," he states.

"The program provides a meaningful and practical way we can support disadvantaged young people complete their tertiary studies, gain business experience and get a head start in life."



### Lily Day

joined the Doxa Cadetship Program in 2018 as she started university, and through the trials of Covid lockdowns still managed to graduate in 2022. She has continued at KPMG to build her career . . .

"When I was in year 12 in 2017, I was in the same confusing position as thousands of other students across the country, trying to work out what I wanted to do after school. Hunting through the many piles of pamphlets that were sitting in the corner of the maths classroom, I found a booklet about Doxa. Being a farm kid about to relocate to Melbourne it seemed like a great opportunity, so good Mum at first couldn't believe it was real . . . but I applied anyway.

I remember my first interview, the next year just after I'd started Uni. I was at KPMG, on floor 37, wearing a cheap, cheap suit I had gotten for High

school mock job interviews, looking around at a world very different from the cattle farm I called home.

Getting the cadetship was a turning point in my life, I had spent so little time in Melbourne and knew so little about cybersecurity in the corporate world. The training I got from Doxa and KPMG gave me so much confidence and security while I was already learning to navigate such a different world from the small farm life I was raised in.

Apparently knowing how to drive a front-end loader or help bring in a Ewe's milk during lambing season does not help you when you are trying to navigate peak hour on public transport or trying to work out what business casual vs business formal means.

I now work in Business Resilience in Tech Risk at KPMG and love my life in the big smoke, and I can thank those at Doxa for helping me get to where I am now."

thirty year journey. We are the beneficiaries of their efforts and what they have created as we move into a future that in many ways is quite different to that when the program commenced.

In 1993 we had a very rudimentary version of the internet (Netscape anyone?), not much email and mostly dial up (28.8k) modems that shared your home landline telephone. Five terrestrial TV channels. International conferencing meant getting on an aeroplane or sitting around one of those three legged speakerphone things. The university I was lecturing in at the time was operating in that social and technological environment. It was a top university, but there was very little recognition of what a possible future might look like and how we would prepare students for it. Fast forward to now, and many of those students are well into their careers; many of them in management roles or running their own business. Along the way they have had to adapt to an eye-watering amount of change. But they have; and

that is largely due to an attitude of life-long learning which more often than not comes from study and enquiry habits developed at university.

We can't predict the future, but we can prepare for it. Doxa has always been guided by the maxim of providing opportunity to those who might not otherwise be able to access it. Many of you reading this will have been beneficiaries.

Doxa Cadetship Program may be different to the one you experienced, but the purpose is identical. If you see a way where you can contribute, or be involved we would love to hear from you.



**Heshan Inamaluwa**  
joined the Doxa Cadetship Program in 2018. During his engagement he developed a feeling for his true calling which is building into a successful career . . .

# HESHAN ENGINEERING BECOMES PUBLIC POLICY

"I started my undergraduate studies with a Bachelor of Engineering to be an engineer. I was lucky enough to get an engineering internship in 2018 through the Doxa Cadetship program at Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP), my sponsor company. That internship made me realise I like working in the Public Sector/Government.

At this point, I was considering moving to a less specialised and much broader degree. That

engineering internship solidified my idea, and I then transferred to a Bachelor of Science degree at Monash University. I enjoyed studying for a broader degree, enabling me to explore various subjects.

I subsequently completed another internship at the Department of the Premier and Cabinet Victoria/Victorian Public Sector Commission in 2019, leading to a part-time role in 2020 while completing my science degree's final year.

I was lucky to get into the Australian Government Graduate Program at the Department of Veterans Affairs afterwards.

I also completed the Parliament of Australia graduate program through the Parliamentary Budget Office and am currently working at the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Most of those experiences have been in Public Policy and Project Management space.

When I started my LXRP internship through the Doxa Cadetship in 2018, I had minimal work experience behind me. So that cadetship is where this all started, and it helped me immensely to get subsequent roles. I am grateful for the Doxa Foundation and all the Doxa staff who helped me along the way, and I would like to congratulate the foundation for the 30 years of the cadetship program".

This is one of a continuing series of newsletters aimed at keeping our many generous past, present and future Cadetship supporters in touch. It is an occasional publication and will vary in length and content. If you have any comments, or something you would like to add, please contact us at: [info@doxa.org.au](mailto:info@doxa.org.au) Previous issues are available at: [doxa.org.au/cadetship/newsletter](http://doxa.org.au/cadetship/newsletter)

My name is Tran Nguyen, and I am currently a Cadet at Pinsent Masons. I am in my third year at Deakin University, pursuing a Bachelor of Laws and Commerce degree.

It was during the University Pathways Program that I first learned about Doxa's Cadetship Program. Joining this program has been an enriching experience that has significantly contributed to my journey of becoming a Solicitor. Doxa and my sponsor company, Pinsent Masons, have provided unwavering support, and I feel privileged to have a platform where I can express my university experience vulnerably and candidly. I am grateful for the invaluable experience I have gained while working at Pinsent Masons, which has further reinforced my passion for law.

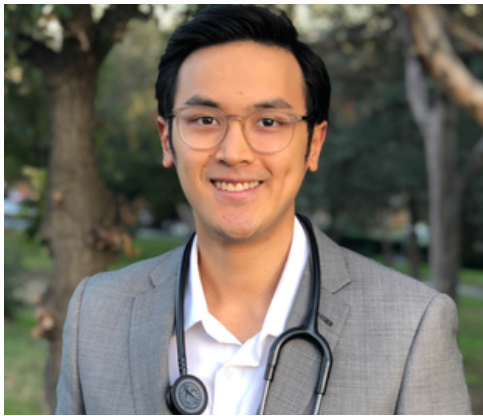
The team at Pinsent Masons has been exceptionally supportive, hosting catch-up meetings, and sharing their professional experiences to guide and inspire me. Doxa's encouragement has helped me build my confidence in pursuing my career aspirations with conviction.

I am so incredibly fortunate to be a part of the Doxa and Pinsent Masons family, and I look forward to continuing my journey with them.



**Tran Nguyen**

joined the Doxa Cadetship Program in 2022 during university, working on a double degree to build her career ambition to become a solicitor . . .



**Rooj Kitisarn**

joined the Doxa Cadetship Program in 2016, and through personal endeavour has conquered a difficult path to university, and on to a career in medicine . . .

"Before attending university, I lived in Ballarat and had to commute to Melbourne for high school. In 2015, as I reached the end of high school, my Smith Family coordinator recommended that I apply for the Doxa Cadetship program.

Recognizing the importance of accountability and excellence, my family understood the significance of supporting my educational journey. Unfortunately, due to financial hardships and other circumstances, they were unable to fully assist with this endeavour.

Fortunately, Doxa and my sponsor,

ROOJ

KITISARN, stepped in to bridge this gap. Thanks to the bursary and cadetship they offered, my financial stress of moving out of Ballarat for university was essentially removed. To add, carbonTRACK, not only offered me a place to work alongside them but also provided me with mentors and people I can rely upon as I transitioned from being a high school student to somewhat of an adult.

My first mentor, Catherine, was a former cadet with Doxa as well. She proved to be an incredibly inspiring individual during that phase of my life, and I aspired to emulate her focus and work ethic. It was truly remarkable that she had recently graduated from Doxa's cadetship program and still took me under her wing as a mentee.

In hindsight, it is hard to stress how much the support from people like Catherine helped me to flourish during these years. By far the most valuable things gained were the people I met, along with the support and knowledge they shared with me. I'd also like to mention Kumari, Pip, Lindsey and Michael as people that inspired me through my time with Doxa.

In terms of my own journey so far, I studied an undergraduate degree in Bachelor of Science and subsequently pursued postgraduate medicine; both at The University of Melbourne.

Currently, I am a doctor in regional Victoria, with aspirations of practicing medicine in various parts of Australia before eventually settling down and pursuing a specific specialty".