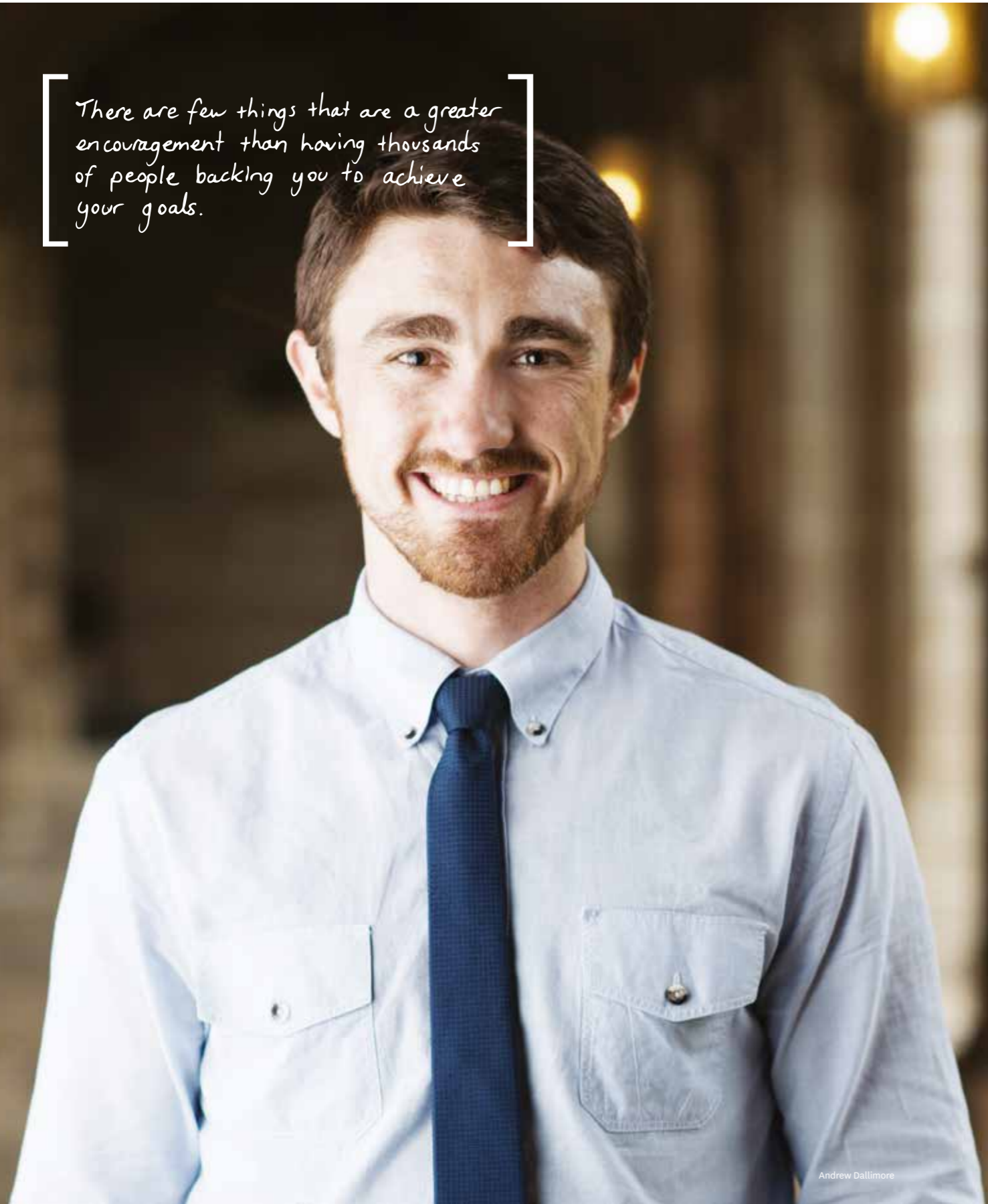


*There are few things that are a greater encouragement than having thousands of people backing you to achieve your goals.*



Andrew Dallimore

## Doctor of Veterinary Medicine student Andrew Dallimore has a bright future ahead of him – but without the support of donors, things could have been very different.

As a young boy in rural South Australia, Andrew dreamed of becoming a vet.

*“Animals have always been an important part of my life,” he said. “My first pets were a silky bantam rooster that I used to carry around with me as a kid, a cat whose rough tongue hurt more than his bite, and an Aussie terrier-cross mongrel called Toby that will forever be referred to as my hairy little brother. My family were forever fostering stumpy lizards and birds back from the brink.”*

Andrew’s path to his dream career was not an easy one. He dropped out of high school after being badly bullied, and almost lost an arm when he suffered a severe injury in a judo accident.

But having overcome these obstacles and secured a place on the highly competitive Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) program at Melbourne, Andrew found himself facing one more barrier: money. The costs of moving interstate, in addition to the expenses of his study, were overwhelming.

*“It was a huge factor,” he said. “I didn’t have work here and as a student it’s very difficult to get a position in another state before you are there.”*

As a student from a rural area, he was eligible for a bursary through the University’s Graduate Access Scheme. This, and his savings, lasted a while, but it wasn’t long before he realised he was headed for trouble. In the end, it was a housing grant, funded through gifts to the University, that made the difference between staying on or dropping out.

*“That \$50 a week was enough to keep me off the streets. It’s as simple as that,” he said.*

*“No matter how hard I worked I was always either on the brink of being unable to pay my expenses or of not being able to dedicate enough time to study. The housing bursary removed me from this knife edge. \$50 per week provided me with enough cash to be able to work fewer hours, stress less about finding more jobs, and enabled me to focus on becoming the best vet I can be and someone who will be able to invest in the community I live in.”*

Andrew’s experience of receiving financial support inspired him to seek employment with the Telethon, chatting to alumni about the University and the Annual Appeal. He loved it.

*“The alumni I spoke to were just so empathetic. Without even asking I was constantly offered opportunities, from work experience and placements to just meeting up and having a chat. People bent over backwards to help, and not just by donating,” he said.*

*“It’s extraordinary. You don’t know these people but they feel a sense of connection with you and the University. It makes me feel proud to be a student at the University. It’s a positive community to be part of.”*

With his financial situation under control, Andrew turned his attention to supporting others in need. With fellow students, he established a peer mentoring program to help those struggling in the DVM, and raised funds for vets helping Indigenous communities.

He hopes to continue giving back after graduation. *“I really want to be a dairy vet, settle down in a rural community, and be able to use these skills that I’ve developed to help disadvantaged members of whatever community I’m in, whether it’s within an existing organisation or by creating a new one,”* he said.

And he has nothing but sincere thanks for all those who donate to support students.

*“Alumni have told me that it’s wrong that something like money should limit some of the brightest young members of our society from getting an education, and while I don’t see myself as one of the brightest, I couldn’t agree more with their words.”*

*“There are few things that are a greater encouragement than having thousands of people backing you to achieve your goals.”*

*‘It makes me feel proud to be a student at the University. It’s a positive community to be part of.’*