



Speech By
Jennifer Howard

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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ADJOURNMENT

Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (10.07 pm): I rise to speak about the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation, or QATSIF. Recently I was privileged to represent the Treasurer in his capacity as Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships at a very special event. The QATSIF graduation ceremony at the University of Queensland on 22 October was a fantastic event to celebrate the year 12 graduation this year of hundreds of QATSIF scholarship recipients from 47 state, Catholic and independent schools from the greater Brisbane area.

QATSIF is an independent public foundation established by the Bligh government in 2008 to provide scholarships for Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. I was pleased to see QATSIF scholarship recipient Javier Thompson from Bremer State High School in my electorate speak about his passion to become a teacher to help make Indigenous studies a subject for all students. Javier has served his school this year as a vice captain and is an Indigenous mentor at the school. He was chosen to attend the National Schools Constitutional Convention in Canberra earlier this year. Javier is a role model among his peers at Bremer and his fantastic achievements are a testament to the great work done at this Ipswich state school, as well as to the conscientiousness and dedication of Javier himself. I was very pleased to hear about the support QATSIF has provided to Javier in his senior schooling.

QATSIF is supported by the funds remaining from the former Aborigines Welfare Fund and the Indigenous Wages and Savings Reparation Scheme after the distribution of stolen wages money to claimants. The interest earned from this fund, as well as funds from donations, is used to provide scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander year 11 and 12 students. The scholarships currently provide \$1,000 per year and are intended to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student retention in the senior years of schooling, to help close the gap in year 12 attainment.

I congratulate Bremer State High School for producing outstanding year 12 graduates like Javier, and I wish Javier well in his quest to become a teacher. I commend QATSIF for providing valuable support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people like Javier who are the leaders and role models of tomorrow.