Lucky Rabel, scholarship recipient

In Year 9 I had to do a project on a family relative – and kinda like their journey through life. I picked my uncle. I actually had no idea of his journey. When I learnt about his financial difficulties – coming from Sri Lanka, which at that time was strife with civil war; and he came from a very, very local town, no electricity at his house – to get into the field of medicine first and then progress into dentistry in a country like Sri Lanka is extremely hard. So the journey he took, the amount of hours of work, study, etcetera, it’s just absolutely unreal. To think that if he could do that, and get to that kind of field, and he’s my uncle, I should be able to do it too.

The scholarship was great for me personally because of the fact that it enabled me to study at La Trobe. It was especially tough for my family because of the fact that I was moving to Bendigo and the travel expenses would start to accumulate over time.

I have two younger brothers who are going through school and my parents are trying to focus their attention on them, to put them through school financially. So it was pretty tough with all these external pressures. We were really stressed out because we didn’t know what to do.

And then the scholarship came. It enabled me not only to buy my dental equipment – I did the costs and all together it would cost $6000 – it allowed me to stay on campus and allowed me to have money to pay for travel. The scholarship … it saved my life, really. It’s great because it would have been really, really tough on my family if it wasn’t for the scholarship.