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Please ensure that TAFE system is appropriately and effectively funded to meet the needs of our diverse community. Investing in quality publicly funded education is the key to giving people the best opportunity in life. It offers second chance for the disadvantaged in our community. Also Outreach programs offer easier access for people who would otherwise miss out due to social isolation, poverty, language and other barriers.

A personal example of the value of second chance education is the experience of my daughter who missed most of her high school education due to family breakdown and other misfortunes. She welcomed the opportunity and completed her HSC at Ultimo TAFE, Sydney where she did very well and went on to further studies at the same college. She currently has a full time position in the Commonwealth Public Service, but without the educational opportunity at TAFE this may not have been possible.

I have also seen migrant womens' lives transformed by Outreach English and other classes at my workplace in south-west Sydney. I have observed many of them becoming more confident, happy and engaged people enabling them to contribute to our community and for some to go on to further studies. Free childcare also made this possible.

Distant Learning has also allowed access for many people experiencing geographical and other barriers to pursuing an Education. I have TAFE to thank for giving me the chance to complete Community Services Welfare Cert IV and this provided the pathway to my current position in a welfare agency where I have worked for the past 8 years. I had excellent, caring and inspiring teachers who I shall never forget. With increasing casualisation of teaching positions I have concerns that the insecurity will undermine staff morale and have a detrimental effect on the students. For this reason teachers should be offered good conditions and permanency to ensure they can do the best job possible.

Jo Errey