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Scholarship honours director

By **Sandra Siagian**

IN A fitting tribute to end a teaching career spanning 36 years, a former band director from Woollooware High School will be remembered in the performing arts with a new scholarship created in his name.

Ray Avard of Lugarno received the surprise at his retirement dinner when former colleague Alison Hunter announced the news.

"Ray has been my mentor and friend since we both started working together in the creative and performing arts faculty 14 years ago," Miss Hunter said. "I wanted to create a gift celebrating his retirement, with something he would truly appreciate."

The Ray Avard Arts Scholarship will help teenage girls with an opportunity to pursue a career in performing arts.

The applicants will be chosen from the Sister to Sister program run by the Life Changing Experiences Foundation.

This pairs teenage girls at risk of abuse or neglect with a positive female role model to inspire and motivate them through a goal-setting and achieving program.

"The chosen applicants will receive money they can apply to anything from instrument, singing, photography, or art lessons," Miss Hunter said.

"The unique thing is that it's not a one-off lump sum, because the candidates will receive continuing support until they complete their studies."

Jessica Brown, CEO of the Life Changing

Experiences Foundation, will join Miss Hunter and Mr Avard on the judging panel.

Ms Brown said the applicants needed to have completed the 12-month program, demonstrated they could make a commitment and stick to something, have a talent and a clear goal of where they want to be in five years.

Applications will be accepted between July 1 and August 31 every year. The first scholarship will be awarded at the Sister to Sister graduation in November.

Donations: www.lifechangingexperiences.org



Lasting legacy: Alison Hunter has made sure Ray Avard's name will live on with a performing arts scholarship named in his honour.