



# Songwriter Sydney-bound

SCHOOL students from around Australia will be singing a song co-written by a young songwriter from Albany later this year.

Albany Senior High School student 14-year-old Bonnie Staude has been selected as one of only four young songwriters from around the country to visit Sydney for the Music: Count Us In (MCUI) writing workshop to be held next week.

Later this year MCUI will see up to 600,000 students from more than 2,100 schools participate in a nationwide simulcast performance of the song penned by the young songwriters.

Bonnie said she has participated in MCUI for many years at Flinders Park Primary School under the guidance of music teacher, and her father, Mike Staude.

"They have a song writing competition," Bonnie said. "It has to be upbeat, catchy, and positive and you send it off. I called it 'With Music All Around'."

"They got back to me a few weeks after to say I had been selected to go to Sydney.

"This was off my own back – it is something I have done all through primary school at Flin-

ders Park – Dad always got into it.

"So I have known about it for a long time, and I thought it was about time to have a go at it."

Bonnie is no stranger to Sydney having visited the city for the past three years as part of the national youth choir "Gondwana Voices".

The MCUI song writing workshop will be mentored by Jay Laga'aia, a well-known stage and screen per-

former, who is perhaps most recognised for his work on long-running children's TV program, "Play School".

"I'm very excited about that," Bonnie said.

"I used to watch him on Play School all the time. Dad will be coming with me so it will be really nice for him to meet him as well."

Head of Arts at ASHS Dave Marshall said Bonnie is an "exceptional talent but she offsets that with incredibly hard work

"She deserves it absolutely," Mr Marshall said.

"Very proud that she is representing not only herself, but also the school, and WA.

"Bonnie sang a solo at the Albany Sinfonia Launch recently.

She just looked so composed and mature beyond her years, and

you don't get that level of performance without putting in a lot of hard work."

Bonnie has not made any firm plans for what she will do in the future, but she said music will always be a part of her life.

"I just like the way it makes me feel," Bonnie said.

"I sing all the time at home. I've had music in my life my whole life – I've grown up with it."

Music: Count Us In exists to advocate for improved access to music education for all students across Australia.

ASHS has had a somewhat disproportionately high success rate in sending students to Sydney for the MCUI workshops, with alumni Maddi Bignell and Taylor Pomery taking part in recent years.



● Albany Senior High School student Bonnie Staude is one of four young songwriters from around the country to visit Sydney for the "Count Us In" writing workshop.