

MURDOCH PUTS WORLD IN REACH

CLAIRE BICKERS

THE jump from a WA university to the United Nations, the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund just got smaller for some local students.

A new Murdoch University scholarship will allow one student every year to travel with an international delegation to work with key world policy makers, starting this year.

Sir Walter Murdoch School of Public Policy and International Affairs dean Benjamin Reilly said the Mal and Karyl Nairn Global Voices scholarship could help the school's best students have an influence on the world stage.

"Many Sir Walter Murdoch students already pursue valuable research internships with Parliament or the State Government here in Perth," Professor Reilly said.

"But this program opens up

the possibility of completing their degree at a national and global level of decision making."

For public policy student Sean Simpson and international affairs student Courtney Pelkowitz, it could be a stepping stone to working in human rights, education and climate change on a world scale.

Both plan to apply for the scholarship which would require them to meet Australian politicians in Canberra, produce a research paper on an international policy issue, and get an opinion feature published in local media.

Mr Simpson plans to research climate change policy and the suitability of measures such as carbon capture in WA if he is awarded the scholarship.

Ms Pelkowitz, who works for the Walk Free Foundation which battles slavery, wants to work with the UN on women's and children's human rights.

Aim high: Courtney Pelkowitz and Sean Simpson hope the new Murdoch scholarship could lead to the top. Picture: Will Russell

It's raining cats, dogs

CLAIRE BICKERS

A RECORD number of dogs have been dumped at shelters this month, with pet rescue organisations blaming the rising cost of living.

Animal welfare and rehoming groups said a tougher economic climate, more people moving house, a seasonal increase in the number of dogs and a rising number of people seeking to get a rescue dog as a new pet had caused the spike – the biggest in 10 years.

Shenton Park Dogs Refuge Home president Karen Rhodes said the refuge's kennels and quarantine area had been at or near full capacity for a month and many other organisations were also feeling "overwhelmed".

Ms Rhodes said there were more dogs being rehomed and more being surrendered or res-

cued from pounds than any other January in the past decade.

She attributed the higher surrender rate to more people being unable to afford their pet's food and medical bills and the higher adoption rate to more people being comfortable with taking on rescued animals.

"We normally rehouse 15 or 20 dogs a week," Ms Rhodes said.

"In one week we did 29 dogs. We could then go and save more from pounds."

The refuge is appealing to anyone in the market for a new dog to consider adopting a rescued animal first.

The facility is currently gearing up for the busy March-April period, when many people realise they are not able to care for the puppy they received at Christmas.

Ms Rhodes said the refuge could often take on an extra 10 young dogs a month over that period.

Pet Rescue director John Bishop said January was a busy time for all animal rescue groups as the puppy and kitten breeding season took off over the warmer months.

Mr Bishop said it would be a good month for young families considering adopting a pet to take the plunge before school went back.

RSPCA WA chief executive David van Ooran said the society had about the same number of animals in care as previous years but other refuges, such as the Cat Haven, were "bursting at the seams".

Mr van Ooran said there had, however, been a noticeable increase in deliberate cruelty to pets over the past six months.



Canine capers: Sue Horn and Hilary Brown with Barney, Jezabel and Bella at Shenton Park Dogs' Refuge Home, which is reporting record numbers of dogs at the centre this month. Picture: Stewart Allen



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