

Welcome to VOW

Welcome to [vow.org.au](http://www.vow.org.au), where you can find out all you need to know on who we are, what we do, and how you can get involved.

VOW is a not for profit non-governmental organisation seeking to engage with disadvantaged youth. We believe it is here, with today's youth, that grass roots changes can prosper the most, growing into life-impacting changes. We do this by primarily though supporting education initiatives. All our works are funded by performance fundraising: Music is Our Method. Read more about VOW [here](#).

Our current projects are;

- The **Desert Feet Tour** – Musical workshops and community concerts servicing remote areas of WA. You can find out more, including on-the-road blogs and our tweets at our [DFT page](#).
- Back to School: Bali – It may be an appealing holiday destination, but Bali is also home to approximately 2000 disadvantaged orphaned kids. VOW is proud to be coordinating the sponsorship for 26 Balinese children working with [YKIP](#) as the beneficiary agency in Bali.
- Bio-latrines - We are particularly enthusiastic of utilising the [Bio-latrine](#) to improve school or doctor facilities. As the waste decomposes it creates methane gas which can be piped up to a 200 meter radius under its own pressure. This can be used for heating, cooking or used to run generators that function on gas.
- Artists for Education – This volunteer-run event is a fundraiser for the Desert Feet Tour. A broad spectrum of Perth's music scene donate their time to perform among multiple stages, performance artists, and socially involved patrons. This [multi-media fest](#) is run once a year.
- Donation and CDs – All donations are recognised as being a gesture on your part, and we say thanks to all by giving you complimentary music downloads! Visit our [donations](#) and [music shop](#) page, where you can see [Music is Our Method!](#) Physical CDs also available.

We hope you find what you need here. Please consider subscribing to our [newsletter](#) (6-10 per year) if you wish to stay in touch. Feel free to [contact us](#) if you have any questions.

View the webpage here: <http://www.vow.org.au/>

History

It began on the island nation of the Philippines.

During December 2005 Damien Thornber visited the Philippines. Here he was moved by the resilience of those he saw living in poverty. Feeling it was his responsibility, as an individual fortunate enough to be living in a wealthy society, to help those that needed it he set up VOW (originally Vocational Orphanages of the World) with a colleague, [Burnadette Poynter](#), who now runs [Prosperous Future](#).

With this in place, Damien began to look for a way to incorporate his love music, song-writing and performing. This was the genesis for his [philanthropic band](#) of like-minded musicians. Ever since, 100% of CD sales and performance fees are donated to VOW's charity causes.

His travels next brought him to Indonesia. While filming for a video clip, he chanced upon a simple village called Karangasem. Here he met a small group of local children who could not afford to attend school, would never receive any education, and would continue in a perpetual cycle of poverty. Moved, he offered his support via independent organisation [YKIP](#) to send a young girl to school. Upon his return he worked through VOW and it's supporters, eventually securing sponsors for all the youths of Karangasem.

The next important step in VOW's progression occurred in Africa while Damien was looking into how [bio-latrines](#) might be used to help supplement essential services such as health care and schools. During a chance meeting with an UN rep, surrounded by people struggling to get by day-to-day, Damien learned of the disturbing infant mortality rates of Indigenous peoples right here - in Australia. Even in comparison to those around him to whom his heart went out to, what he heard moved him.

Damien was told to look to his own; this he did.

Returning home to Western Australia he got in touch with friend, fellow musician, and indigenous representative [Patrick Davies](#), who invited him out to the Kimberley to meet some of the elders. He saw then all that he was once blind to.

When he asked them over a campfire, under the stars, what he, an ordinary citizen wanting to connect, could do he was asked in return, what **could** he do?

He could play music. He was running a fledgling charity group. Those he spoke to suggested he use these resources to encourage young people to participate creatively in song writing, dance and music. This was the seed for remote community music workshops, the [Desert Feet Tour](#).

These workshops now encompass poetry, spoken word, song structure, musical performance, rapping and beat boxing.

As this project started taking shape it was apparent these communities did not receive visiting performers often, if at all. As a gesture to their hosts, the Desert Feet Tour also began to provide live concerts; supportive, family-friendly, non-smoking, drug and alcohol free. This is a safe place for locals to gather and even perform. The program is flexible enough to adapt to each town, as needed.

As a fundraiser for this, VOW also establish the annual [Artists for Education](#), a musical festival comprised of socially conscious musicians and performers, run by volunteers and funded by sponsors. All profits go to the Desert Feet Tour project.

Today VOW is privileged to have an enthusiastic [steering committee](#), an ability to attract volunteers into interesting fund raising adventures, and some [fantastic sponsors](#).

Damien Thornber and the Orphans have written and recorded over 35 songs, built a recording studio and are currently recording their second album.

View the webpage here:

http://www.vow.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1240&Itemid=639