Joining Cranbrook from Nowra High School, Tom Berry was awarded an Indigenous Scholarship in 2010 for his Senior School Years and completed his HSC in 2012. To learn more about his experiences at the Cranbrook School we took the opportunity of interviewing Tom who gave us a unique insight into life as a boarder at the School.

What experiences did you gain from Cranbrook which you would not have had otherwise?

The mere fact that I went to Cranbrook makes me very proud! Whenever I tell people that I went to Cranbrook they are very impressed. The staff and other students were all really motivational and made me aware of the full extent of my abilities. I do not believe I would have lasted until Year 12 at my old school but Cranbrook’s staff made me want to do well and be the best I can be.

What was the hardest part of joining the School?

The hardest part was being away from family and from what you know. The transition from country to city life was also difficult at first. That quickly fades though as you become immersed into School life. It really didn’t take long to feel part of the School. You have a core base of people around you that help you settle in very quickly. I would say I settled in within 6 weeks of joining.

What helped you adjust so quickly?

The other students were all really welcoming and make you feel part of the community very, very quickly.

Would you recommend boarding?

Yes absolutely. Boarding ensures you grow up very quickly. It shows you that you can move away from home and that it is really not that hard. You become very independent and able to self-manage your work which are important attributes to have in life after School. Everyone is very welcoming and you develop a close relationship with fellow boarders across all year groups and your boarding Housemasters.

How has the School prepared you for life beyond Cranbrook?

The School made me accept everyone for who they are and that life is not only about yourself. Everyone has their own attributes and a role in life.

What are you doing now you’ve left School?

I work for Riverview Global Partners which is a family based business and am Director of the Foundation arm of the business. I am responsible for helping young aboriginal students transition from school to the workforce. My goal is to ensure they have the training they need whether vocational or academic to ensure they can be the best they can be. Just as Cranbrook helped me transition from School to the working world, my aim is to do the same for these students. I want them to have the confidence to hold their own in corporate meetings just as I do now.