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## Media Release

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### **Two more grain growers join the CBH Group's Growing Leaders Scholarships alumni**

Two growers from Western Australia's grain sector are set to become the recipients of the 2024 CBH Group and Grower Group Alliance (GGA) Growing Leaders Scholarship.

This initiative, supported by CBH Group and managed by GGA, facilitates the participation of recipients in the esteemed Leadership WA Signature Leadership Program.

As part of the 2024 cohort, the upcoming scholarship awardees Gemma Walker and Sam Messina will refine their leadership capabilities over a 10-month period within the \$16,445-valued Signature Leadership Program offered by Leadership WA.

Dominique Mecoy, the Chief Executive Officer of Leadership WA, commended Gemma and Sam for securing a place in this prestigious and highly competitive Program.

"The Signature Leadership Program takes established leaders on a journey of growth, reflection, experiential learning, diversity of perspective and deep connection, one that our graduates constantly tell us is transformational," she said.

"In addition, 2024 is a milestone year for them to be a part of the Program, with Leadership WA and Signature celebrating 20 years of creating courageous Western Australian leaders.

"We can offer the Growing Leaders Scholarship thanks to the enduring support of CBH and GGA.

"Their generosity ensures that we can extend the impact of the Program into the regions to develop the capacity of our regional leaders, while ensuring the wider cohort gains a greater awareness of the often-challenging environment in which our rural and grower communities operate."

Munglinup grower Gemma Walker brings extensive leadership experience with current roles on eight committees, for which three she is a Non-Executive Director.

Ms Walker said she was keen to fortify her contributions to the Australian grains sector and glean insights from leaders across other WA sectors with shared aspirations for their industries.

"As a grain grower and experienced Non-Executive Director passionate about contributing to the Australian grains industry, I'm excited to participate in the Signature Leadership Program through a Growing Leaders Scholarship to positively lead and influence Australian agriculture," she said.



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“It is a valuable opportunity to consolidate knowledge and skills acquired through roles within industry, to step into new roles that will make a difference to the community and strengthen my linkages with CBH.”

Fellow recipient Sam Messina’s work is entrenched in the Mullewa community with positions on five boards ranging from secretary, treasurer and member roles.

Ms Messina said she was most looking forward to the exchange experience the program offers with its cross-sector approach.

“It was the diversity of people who complete this program also who inspired me to apply as I believe we can learn a lot from other communities and industry to improve those that I am already involved in,” she said.

“I am hoping to expand my network of colleagues and draw on their knowledge and experience to improve my skill set to better serve the communities and organisations I am currently involved in.”

CBH Group Chief Stakeholder Relations, Sustainability and Strategy Officer, Brianna Peake said the grower-owned co-operative is proud to support Gemma and Sam on their leadership journey.

“The scholarships provide a valuable opportunity for individuals in the grain industry to elevate their leadership development while simultaneously representing the broader industry,” Ms Peake said.

“Funding these scholarships is part of CBH’s continued commitment to support and amplify the exceptional leadership capacity that resides in our Western Australian grain growing communities, and provides opportunities for recipients to create leadership networks.”

GGA Chief Executive Officer Rikki Foss emphasised the organisation’s unwavering commitment to enhancing human capital in Western Australia’s agriculture sector.

“GGA is proud to endorse the Growing Leaders Scholarship Program for its eighth iteration,” she said.

“This program is significant in fostering leadership skills among individuals engaged in the grains industry.”

More information on the Growing Leaders Scholarship is on the GGA and CBH Group websites.

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Caption: [Headshots attached] Ms Gemma Walker and Ms Sam Messina.

#### **Contact**

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