

Irene on

cue for kids' culture

'A ballerina, a lawyer... I even wanted to be an archaeologist'

WHEN Irene Carbone thinks of Kwinana, she thinks of opportunity.

The 22 year-old, who has lived on a farm in Mandogalup her whole life, believes she would not be in the position she is today if it weren't for the opportunities the town has given her.

From being school president and Citizen of the Year to running Kwinana Theatre workshop at the age of 19, Irene has been a shining star in the area since discovering theatre and performing at the age of 15.

She had continually changed her mind as she got older about what career path she would eventually follow.

"A ballerina, a lawyer... I even wanted to be an archaeologist at one stage," she said. "It wasn't until I was 15 that I discovered my love for theatre and performing - and I have never looked back."

Irene studied drama at Kwinana High School and was encouraged to

pursue her passion by her inspiring teacher Michelle King (nee Longo).

It was around this time that she became part of a project where a director, Sally Richardson, worked with a team of young people to create a play about contemporary youth issues.

"Through this, I got to know Ivy Penny and Kerry Shaw, who were the instigators for turning Short Fuse Youth Theatre into a professional theatre company," Irene said.

"I was asked to join the team and we changed the history of Kwinana by creating the first youth theatre workshops that lasted longer than a few months.

"I was the director for five years and it is still running to this day."

The list of Irene's achievements does not stop there.

During her teen years, Imagine Kwinana nominated Irene for an international summer school and study tour for young leaders.

"I was the only West Australian picked, and one of only 12 people in Australia," Irene said. "I was flown to London and America - it would have to be one of the greatest experiences of my life."

Irene has also been the MC for various events and concerts in Kwinana, a chairperson for the Youth Advisory Council and was the organiser for Kwinana's Freakfest youth arts festival for a year.

After graduating from high school, she moved on to study performance at Curtin University. Through this she was offered work as a tutor with Barking Gecko Theatre Company and a job as director of the Joondalup Academy of Performing Arts.

But don't think this caused Irene to slow down - she continued acting, directing and being an MC around Perth at the same time.

Irene still lives on the farm in Mandogalup, and has recently taken on what she describes as her "dream job" - coordinator and host of a new children's entertainment group called The Lulus Show.

"I miss all my old jobs, I miss teaching and I miss my old students, but I have made a decision to completely focus on The Lulus Show," she said.

"I am just loving it - it is exciting and challenging, and I can't wait to share it with the public."

The Lulus Show will embark on its first

WA tour this October, with a stop in Rockingham on October 6.

Irene describes The Lulus Show as a "high energy, all-singing, all-dancing" interactive show, with fun and lovable characters.

"The characters have been developed and designed using an early childhood specialist to ensure that there is always an underlying educational message," she said.

"Children will be learning but won't realise it - The Lulus team believes theatre and performance is an ideal avenue to educate."

Irene said the themes addressed in the show would be issues affecting Australia today, such as childhood obesity and water safety.

While the show is only just starting out, Irene and her co-workers have high expectations for its future.

"The opportunities are endless, which is what makes it so exciting," she said.

"We hope to produce DVDs, tour the East coast and eventually have a regular slot on television."

Katherine Weston



Irene Carbone with Lu-Girl and Lu-Boy

