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K A Richards Scholarship to fund promising LNG research

The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association has awarded its prestigious K A Richards Scholarship to Mr Paul Hofman to continue his promising research into increasing LNG production efficiency through cryogenic pressure swing adsorption. WA Premier Colin Barnett presented Mr Hofman with his award at an APPEA event in Perth last night.

Mr Hofman's research could lead to the successful development of new technology that will increase the production efficiency of LNG and consequently reduce the environmental impact and cost of LNG production.

This technology also potentially means that many gas fields that are currently economically and environmentally marginal fields will become commercially viable

Accepting his award from Premier Barnett, Mr Hofman said that while it is quite exciting to receive the award's associated prize, the additional opportunities and experiences that the award provides are the most exciting aspect of winning the award.

The K A Richards Scholarship aims to promote post-graduate studies in Australia in the fields of petroleum engineering and petroleum geoscience.

The scholarship provides funding to a one year for Masters study or three years full-time or appropriate part time study for a Doctoral degree. The funds can support living expenses, travel, materials, laboratory or computer services fees.

K A (Ken) Richards was a geologist with a cheerful demeanour and willingness to share his experience, particularly in offshore operations. He was an oil explorer, a gifted geological strategist and one who thought outside the square.

He joined the APEA Council (now APPEA) in March 1973, was elected vice-chairman of the Association in 1979 and Chairman in May 1981. He was particularly keen to help the younger generation and became a strong advocate for education programs. The push included work at both tertiary and secondary education levels. Richards, along with fellow councillor Dave McGarry, oversaw the assembly of a school slide/information kit sent out to 1,800 secondary schools around the country. He was also involved in organising an exhibit for the association at the Royal Melbourne Show in 1982 which featured a career's day for school children. At the tertiary level he was behind the association's comprehensive manpower survey in 1983 to quantify the Australian petroleum industry's needs.

In recognition of his contribution to the association and the industry he was posthumously awarded the Lewis G. Weeks Gold Medal in 1988, in 1989 the Ken Richards post-graduate scholarship fund was established.

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