



| NSW Department of Education

16th Annual | 2021

Nanga Mai Awards

Nanga mai is an Eora/Sydney word meaning: **to dream**



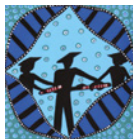


The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate respects and acknowledges all the traditional custodians of the land upon which our schools and workplaces stand.

We acknowledge Elders past and present and all Aboriginal people attending the awards ceremony today. Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships welcomes everyone to the 16th Annual Nanga Mai Awards.

Sponsorship

Thank you to all our award sponsors



Aboriginal
Education
Council (NSW) Inc



Welcome to the 16th Annual Nanga Mai Awards

The NSW Department of Education is proud to present the 16th Annual Nanga Mai Awards celebrating the outstanding achievements of Aboriginal students, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers, other departmental staff, Aboriginal community members and schools demonstrating outstanding achievement in a range of areas of endeavour.

We thank the members of our regional and state panels and express our appreciation for their time and commitment. It is through their dedication to Aboriginal education that we celebrate excellence today.

Presenters

Opening Address

Georgina Harrisson

Secretary, NSW Department of Education

Speakers

Karen Jones

Executive Director, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell

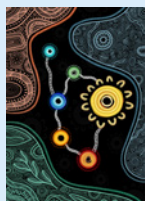
Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning

Catherine Trindall

President, NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc.

Michele Hall

Executive Director, Connected Communities

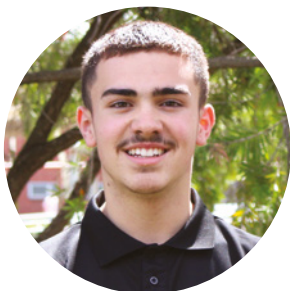


Cover and award title pages

The artwork was inspired by Country, representing Aboriginal students, staff and families and their wider school communities in a celebration of outstanding achievement in Aboriginal Education.

Artwork by Wallula Bethell.

Presenters



Wesley Bamblett **Narrandera High School**

Wesley is a proud Wiradjuri and Yorta Yorta man whose family come from Narrandera and the North Eastern Victoria region. He is a current Year 9 student at Narrandera High School. Wesley is very community-minded and is the current Deputy Mayor of the Narrandera Shire Youth Council.

Wesley also sits on the Student Representative Council and is proud to use this platform and his community involvement to help people understand and share more about his culture. Wesley's community involvement also extends to participation in the Narrandera NAIDOC Committee and the Wirramurri Aboriginal Dance Group. Wes is also a talented swimmer and is a Narrandera Bidgee Boxing committee member.



Tquile Donovan (Singh) **Orara High School**

Tquile Donovan is a proud Gumbaynggirr woman of the Coffs Harbour region, currently in Year 12 at Orara High School. Her passions in life are family, sport and being a great role model for her community and next generation. She plays rugby league, union and Oztag and feels proud to represent her Aboriginal culture.

Speakers



Jasmin Morrissey **Tweed River High School**

Jasmin is a proud Bundjalung woman, whose family lives in Tweed Heads. Jasmin is currently in Year 12 at Tweed River High School and is school captain and a member of the Student Representative Council where she is involved in the organisation and overseeing of many schooling events.

Jasmin is an outstanding sportswoman and has represented both her school and the state in various sports including Hockey, Touch and Athletics. This year, the North Coast hockey team which Jasmin captained went on to win the NSWCHS state championships where Jasmin was selected for the Opens women's NSW CHS team.



Kirralee Smith **Former Kirrawee High School Captain**

Kirralee is a proud Wonnarua woman from the NSW Hunter Valley. Born in Perth (Wajuk country), she is now based in the Sutherland Shire (land of the Gweagal people of the Dharawal nation).

Kirralee finished her studies in 2019. She was School Captain and studied a School Based-Traineeship at Qantas. Currently, Kirralee is now a second-year student studying a dual Bachelor of Aviation (Management)/Commerce at UNSW, as well as working for Qantas in the Regional Operations Centre. Kirralee continues to advocate for Aboriginal education and strives to give back to her community and make her mob proud.

Performers



Penelope Towney **Waniora Public School**

Penelope Larila Towney is a 7 year old Wiradjuri & Palawa kid based in the Illawarra on Dharawal & Yuin Country, and is in year 2 at Waniora Public School. She loves speaking in both Wiradjuri and palawa kani language, along with learning all about her culture, family and where she comes from.

Penelope has appeared on television, radio, newspapers and more, with her heart set on one day appearing on the Opera House stage. Penelope's first short film, 'The Land We're On with Penelope Towney' recently premiered on NITV.



Mariah Alone **Campbelltown Performing Arts High School**

Mariah Alone is a proud Kamilaroi young woman that was born and raised on Dharawal land. Her Aboriginality is from her paternal grandmother who is a part of the Cochrane family, residing in Goodooga and Brewarrina. Mariah also has Fijian, Tongan and Italian ancestry.

She is a Year 8 student at Campbelltown Performing Arts High School. Mariah enjoys all styles of music and writes her own songs. She has released 2 original songs under the name Riah in the past year and will be releasing more in the near future.



Jahna Lugnan **Karabar High School**

Jahna Lugnan is a young Bundjalung and Gumbayniggirr woman currently attending Karabar High School where she is in Year 10. Jahna was selected to join the NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company and enjoys choreographing her own performances. She dreams of one day dancing for the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association or NAISDA as its more commonly known and the acclaimed Bangarra.



Alaynah Quinlin-Naylor **Sydney Secondary College,** **Balmain Campus**

Alaynah Quinlin-Naylor is a proud Gumbayniggirr and Dhanggati woman. She was born in Sydney and is currently in Year 9 at Sydney Secondary College, Balmain Campus. Her interest in dance began from watching her older cousins perform corroborees. In 2021, Alaynah was selected to join the NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company, working alongside Bangarra Dance Company. Alaynah has enjoyed learning more about her culture and the power of storytelling through dance.

Nanga Mai Awards Partner



The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated

The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Incorporated (NSW AECG Inc.) is a non-for-profit Aboriginal organisation that provides advice on all matters relevant to education and training with the mandate that this advice represents the Aboriginal community viewpoint.

The NSW AECG Inc. promotes respect, empowerment and self-determination and believes the process of collaborative consultation is integral to equal partnership and is fundamental to the achievement of equality.

The NSW AECG Inc. advocates cultural affirmation, integrity and the pursuit of equality to ensure that the unique and diverse identity of Aboriginal students is recognised and valued.

For more information:

aecg.nsw.edu.au



**New South Wales
Aboriginal Education
Consultative Group Inc.**



Event Program

Opening

Acknowledgement of Country

Penelope Towney, Waniora Public School and various students, staff and NSW DoE executives

Memorial – Candle Lighting Ceremony

David Ella, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships

Masters of Ceremonies

Wesley Bamblett, Narrandera High School

Tquile Donovan (Singh), Orara High School

Opening Address

Georgina Harrison, Secretary, NSW Department of Education

Welcome – Executive Director Address

Karen Jones, Executive Director, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships

Student Awards

- AOPD Outstanding All Round Student Awards
- Outstanding Student Leadership Awards
- Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards

Guest Speakers

Jasmin Morrissey, Tweed River High School, School Captain
Kirralee Smith, former Kirrawee High School, School Captain

- Outstanding Academic Excellence Awards
- The NSW DoE School-Based Apprentice – Trainee of the Year Award

Minister's Address

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell, Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning

- Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Awards
- Outstanding Achievement in Performing, Creative and Visual Arts Awards
- NSW VET in Schools Student of the Year Award

Student Performance

Mariah Alone, Campbelltown Performing Arts High School

Staff Awards

- Award for Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Languages
- Award for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member
- Award for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-Aboriginal Staff Member
- Award for Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education

NSW AECG Inc. Address

Catherine Trindall, President NSW AECG Inc.

School and Community Awards

- Award for Outstanding Commitment to Increasing Knowledge and Understanding of Aboriginal Histories, Culture and Experiences of Aboriginal Peoples
- Award for Outstanding School and Community Partnership
- Award for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member

Event Program

Connected Communities Address

Michele Hall, Executive Director, Connected Communities

Recognition Awards

- Connected Communities Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education
- Kimberwalli Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education
- Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

Closing

Executive Director Closing Address

Karen Jones, Executive Director, Aboriginal Outcome Partnerships

Student Performance

Dance entitled – Cultural Healing

Jahna Lugnan, Karabar High School and Alaynah Quinlin-Naylor, Sydney Secondary College, Balmain Campus

Choreographed by Leisa Hicks to the song Culture Bleeding by Xavier Rudd



Student Awards

Outstanding All-Round Student Award

Presented to an Aboriginal student who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and excellence across a range of activities, including attendance, leadership, academic commitment and progress, community service, cultural commitments and a positive attitude to school.

Outstanding All-Round Student Award

Karalee Clarke York Public School

Karalee Clarke, a Year 6 student at York Public School, epitomises what the outstanding all-rounder award is all about. Throughout her seven years at the school, Karalee has also had impeccable attendance.

When you meet Karalee, you'll be met with her smile and her kind caring nature. It is this exemplary behaviour that saw Karalee elected by her peers and staff members to represent York as our 2021 school prefect.

In this leadership role, Karalee has been an outstanding role model for not only her classmates and younger peers but for the entire wider York community. During lockdown, she has created inspirational videos which have been shared on our York Facebook page, promoting positivity whilst completing remote learning. Karalee is also one of York's peer support leaders, where she works with a group of students weekly from K-6 promoting resilience strategies and how to build strong friendship ties.

In the area of arts, Karalee is an active member of the senior dance troop which performs at the Penrith Valley Music Festival annually and she has also been a part of our multicultural dance group over the years. Karalee is a proud Aboriginal student who openly shares her knowledge about the clan that she derives from.

Academically, Karalee is a student who gives 100% effort across all key learning areas and this positive commitment is clear with the solid grades she has been awarded since kindergarten. Whilst learning remotely Karalee's engagement has been outstanding, completing all set tasks and attending daily zoom sessions.

Karalee is also a very handy person to have on your sporting team. She has represented York in the interschool competitions, participating in both netball and tee ball over the past four years. She shows such fantastic sportsmanship both on and off the field and is extremely proud when she wears York's Indigenous netball dress on the court.

Bella Way

Cardiff South Public School

Bella is a proud Gamilaroi girl and she continually displays resilience and determination in all areas of her family and school life.

In the last two years, Bella has been a member of the Junior AECG at our school. She attends all meetings, speaks with pride about her culture, and has taken on the responsibility of organising herself and other students to deliver the Acknowledgment of Country each week at assembly. Bella shares and discusses many ideas on how our school can be inclusive and welcoming for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families, and for all students to recognise and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history.

Bella works tirelessly on her artworks and this year, as a member of our school Junior AECG, assisted our visiting artist whilst conducting art workshops for all our students at our NAIDOC celebrations.

Bella is a house captain and takes on this role with great dedication and willingness to support her peers and younger house team members to instil in them a love of sport and physical activity. She enjoys participating in all sports and is an outstanding sportsperson on and off the field. Bella plays competitive soccer outside of school and is a member of our school soccer team.

She is a dedicated student in all areas of the classroom. She excels in mathematics and this year was invited to join the stage 3 extension maths group. She participates in the group with enthusiasm and always shares her ideas collaboratively with her peers.

Bella is an exemplary student who sets a positive example for all other students in the classroom, in the playground and in the broader community.

Outstanding All-Round Student Award

Malika Reeves

Tenterfield High School

Malika Reeves is an outstanding all-around student who has shown commitment and dedication to her studies and is actively involved in many extra-curricular activities in the school. She is also actively involved with the community.

In particular, Malika:

- has received numerous school awards for commitment and effort to her studies
- is leading her year group in receiving over 100 positive entries in the school wellbeing system
- has attendance for the year of over 93%
- is Aboriginal Representative on the SRC
- is part of the Tenterfield Youth Advisory committee
- is a member of the school debating team
- volunteers for community radio and has her own weekly show
- is an active and enthusiastic participant in school sport and PDHPE
- enters artwork in the local show
- represented the school on ABC regional radio and was interviewed about an Aboriginal music video that she had been a part of in the school
- is a keen participant in academic challenges such as the Premiers Reading Challenge and the Big Science Competition
- has read and performed to preschool children at the Tenterfield National Simultaneous Storytime.

Brianna Wassell

Northern Beaches Secondary College, Mackellar Girls Campus

Brianna is a mature student who leads by example. She has capably performed the role of prefect, peer support leader, and Project Penguin leader. She represented Mackellar at events including the First Nations Youth Leadership Day in 2020 and the 2019 Department of Education's Principal Forum.

In addition, Brianna led the Mackellar Aboriginal Dance Group from 2017–2021, choreographing group performances. Brianna volunteers at Biala Aboriginal Hostel, providing tutoring and cultural leadership through teaching dance. Brianna is a senior member of the school's orchestra, concert band, performance band and vocal ensemble. Her high level of skill in music is also evident in the achievement of her 7th grade AMEB saxophone examination and 6th grade AMEB piano examination.

Brianna's dedication to her study is evidenced in her selection into Mackellar's gifted and talented program where she has been awarded an Academic Gold Merit certificate every semester, Blues Banner awards every year, attendance awards, and a Gold Blues Medallion in 2020 to recognise her effort to achieve her personal best. In 2020, she was ranked 2nd place in Year 11 and she has achieved first place in many subjects during her time at Mackellar, including for Year 12 Physics, Mathematics Extension, Mathematics Advanced, Music 2 and Entertainment Industry. She achieved a Band 6 in HSC Accelerated Aboriginal Studies in 2020.

Brianna's social responsibility is evident in her ongoing involvement in various activities including fundraising for Stage Artz and Westmead Children's Hospital. She regularly attends Aboriginal support networks such as Connected Mobs Northern Beaches and Manly Warringah Pittwater Aboriginal Support Group, where she has helped organise a number of community events.



Student Awards

Outstanding Student Leadership Award

This award is presented to Aboriginal students who have demonstrated exceptional skills in promoting, encouraging and supporting student participation across their school and in their community.

Outstanding Student Leadership Award

Zachary Rowswell

Jerrabomberra Public School

Zachary Rowswell may only be in Year 3, but he has certainly made his mark as a young leader. Over 18 months, Zachary has undertaken initiatives to help support people in need in the surrounding community. These have all been his ideas, planned and executed with parental support.

Last year, during COVID lockdown when people were out of work, Zachary organised a food drive for The Smith Family to distribute. It was appreciated by the organisation and the recipients.

At Christmas, he collected toys and gifts for families. He encouraged students to donate gifts and then delivered them to charities for distribution. This winter, he organised a coat drive in a tremendous effort to keep families warm.

His best achievement was organising the Sleepbus, a bus fitted out to allow homeless people a safe night's sleep to come to the school. Students wore beanies and donated \$900 to this charity. Zachary is a regular visitor to the bus to support people who use this facility.

Zachary, despite his tender years, has had an enormous impact on the lives of others. He has demonstrated exceptional skills in promoting, encouraging and supporting students to work together and support others in our community.

Outstanding Student Leadership Award

Tyleaha Tompkins Briar Road Public School

Tyleaha is a proud Wiradjuri girl who displays outstanding leadership, citizenship and community service at Briar Road. Tyleaha is the school captain and president of the Junior AECG. She shows immense commitment in both roles and is an asset for the school leadership team.

Tyleaha is an advocate for her school and community. As Junior AECG president, Tyleaha helped lead the project to deliver hampers to Elders in the community since they were unable to attend an important community event at school. As a student leader and representative, Tyleaha was interviewed by the Narragunnawali panel about our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and the critical role students played in the process of writing the Briar Road RAP.

She leads school-wide cultural workshops, Traditional Indigenous Games, weaving workshops, formal assemblies and the Aboriginal Dance Group, where she led the performance at the 2021 LEAP conference in front of hundreds of people. Tyleaha's passion for school and her culture is recognised by the whole school community, resulting in Tyleaha being successful in receiving multiple regional Aboriginal Student Achievement awards. Her leadership skills ensure she will leave a legacy behind her at Briar Road as she moves onto high school in 2022.

Wesley Bamblett

Narrandera High School

Wesley is a proud young Wiradjuri man. He is passionate about his Aboriginal culture and is actively involved in both school and community events. Wesley is a member of the School Representative Council and regularly offers support to staff and students when required. He has proudly stood before various audiences and spoke in language to deliver Welcome to Country at school and community events. Wesley is a dedicated member of the Narrandera Aboriginal dance group 'Wirramarri' and has performed at local events and cultural festivals.

In 2019, Wesley joined the local Narrandera Shire Youth Advisory Council, aspiring to be a voice to help make Narrandera a stronger and better place for youth to live. He demonstrated excellent leadership qualities and in 2020 was elected as the Deputy Youth Council Mayor. With strong connections to the community Wesley continually provides ideas and advice to Council on Youth related issues. He is a valuable member of the Youth council who has contributed largely to the organisation of local community and family events including movie nights and youth week activities. He promoted the art competition for the new youth food trailer and recently the Narrandera Shire Council Cultural Plan and Youth Strategic Plan. This year Wesley proudly represented Narrandera High School at the flag-raising ceremony during the ANZAC Day ceremony.

Outstanding Student Leadership Award

Hunter Blunden Lambton High School

As a proud, young Awabakal man, Hunter has distinguished himself through the leadership of Aboriginal culture in our school, delivering inspiring speeches and Acknowledgement of Country, in Awabakal Language and English. In 2020, Hunter received the Les Elvin Cultural award, recognising his mentorship of young Indigenous students in building their leadership skills. His extensive leadership experience includes membership of the Junior AECG since 2015, vice president in 2021 and secretary in 2020, vice captain of his sport house and senior prefect in 2021.

In the community, Hunter has developed his leadership skills through the ADF Indigenous Leadership Camp Program, selection to the Youth Council for NSW (Aboriginal Affairs Committee) and continued membership of the Newcastle City Youth Council.

Hunter's prominent advocacy is seen through his role in the Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations, consulting on policy reforms for Closing the Gap programs in April 2021, and through his leadership of Invasion Day rallies each year in Newcastle. He epitomises leadership within our school community and in the wider Aboriginal community, demonstrating the characteristics of a socially aware global citizen.

Ella Warrall

Newcastle High School

Ella has been an exemplary School Captain and is a proud Wiradjuri woman. Her leadership skills have involved competently representing our school at many community events, most significantly, her involvement in the combined High School's Anzac Commemoration Service. Ella was also selected to shadow dignitaries in her role as Secretary for the Day at Parliament House. This prestigious opportunity allowed Ella to demonstrate her maturity, leadership skills and ability to work confidently and collegially. Her poised and self-assured nature, along with her caring disposition, has ensured that she is a highly valued, trusted and amiable leader amongst her peers.

Ella has consistently achieved outstanding academic results that have led to her recent early entry selection to Bond University where she plans on studying a Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science. Her academic achievements have been complemented via acknowledgment of her community and civic contributions. Ella has been a continued member of our Junior AECG where she has contributed valued insights and assisted in the maintenance of this successful and cohesive organisation. Along with this role, Ella is also a member of the SRC, continually demonstrating her passion for citizenship, voice and teamwork and notably making Ella the perfect candidate to receive the award of Outstanding Student Leadership.



Student Awards

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Award

This award is presented to Aboriginal students who have represented their school and community, demonstrated fairness, integrity and outstanding achievement in their chosen sporting fields.

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Award

Sienna Gordon Dungog Public School

Sienna Gordon is a proud Wiradjuri descendent currently in Year 5 at Dungog Public School. She has represented her school at a large variety of PSSA sports including netball, touch football, boys rugby league, basketball and rugby sevens. Sienna showed outstanding performance and was selected at the trials as part of the Maitland Zone representative teams to participate in the Hunter PSSA knockouts for netball, touch football, rugby sevens and basketball.

Sienna was also successful in receiving the Swimming Champion Award for her school and Maitland Zone for the 11 years age group. She was the School Athletics Champion and was selected in the Maitland Zone Team to participate at the Hunter Regional Athletics Carnival. She was also awarded Sportsperson of the Year 2020 at Dungog Public School.

She has represented her Aboriginal community and family through her selection in the NSW Echidna's u12 Representative State Netball Team, where she attended the Gold Coast Netball Centre and participated in a 6-day competition with teams from across Australia. She was awarded the best and fairest player at this competition. She was successful in being selected in the u12 Australian Budgies Representative Netball Team to play at the Netball All States National Tournament.

Sienna was also successful in the Maitland Mustangs u12 Girls Representative Basketball Team and participated in the NSW State League Basketball Competition and NSW Country Basketball Tournament to represent her club and community.

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Award

Jai Jones

Wauchope Public School

Jai Jones is a proud young Kamilaroi boy who has grown up on Birpai Country. Jai competes in the AWD (athletes with a disability) events. Jai always competes with a high level of pride, sportsmanship, determination and gives every event his best. He is an all-rounder in Athletics and will give every event his full focus.

2020 saw the cancellation of all competitions due to COVID. This year Jai achieved at the highest standard at all carnivals, both the Lower North Coast (Athletics) and State (Cross Country). In the previous year of 2019, Jai had gone right through from school level to represent NSW at Nationals for Cross Country. Jai competed in 6 events at state level after placing 15th in all six North Coast events for Athletics.

Jai is very dedicated to his sport and is always keen to participate. Jai embraces his culture through involvement in cultural events at school and within the community. He is respectful and very polite.

Breeanna Martin

Blue Haven Public School

Breeanna is an outstanding sportsperson and is a member of many community sporting teams. She is a member of the Toukley Titans Swimming Club and has competed for them at state championships both individually and in their relay team. She is a member of Lake's Surf Club where she competes at state level for her age in Nippers. Breeanna studies at GKR Karate Martial arts where she is a regional medal holder, state medal holder and gold medalist at national level.

She represents the school in a number of areas including on the girl's soccer and touch football teams and has represented the school at the Zone Cross Country each year since turning 8. Breeanna has been named the school's Junior Female Swimming Age Champion as a 9 and 10-year-old, the 11 Years Female Swimming Champion and Senior Swimming Champion as a 12-year-old. She consistently qualifies for Sydney North Swimming, representing her region for 4 years in a row.

She has been awarded the school's Athlete of the Year in 2019 and 2020. She demonstrates sportsmanship, supporting other students on school teams and encouraging them to be their best.

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Award

Milan Hammond Hunter Sports High School

Milan is a proud Aboriginal and African-American woman currently completing Year 12 through Hunter Sports High School's Big Picture Program and is an elite soccer player.

Her selections and achievements include being a part of the Newcastle Jets W-League Pre-Season squad, being a first grade Female Jets Team Member, gaining selection for the Hunter Region CHS Soccer Team and the Combined High School 1's team. Milan is also a part of the Women's Indigenous National Team, where she has played and won the National Indigenous Championship in Brisbane, was selected to attend three Australian training camps and played two elite Australian matches.

In 2019, as part of the Indigenous Koalas, she won gold at the Arafura Games when she was 15. The Arafura Games is an inclusive multi-sport event where athletes with a disability compete in the same program as able-bodied athletes. Competitors from around the world compete in the games every two years in the Northern Territory.

Milan's strength is her ability to engage in learning and capacity to set individual goals that translate into opportunities: as an elite athlete she strides towards consistent selections into national teams, she has a part-time job, is a member of the school's Minimbah cultural group and is finalizing her senior thesis for graduate portfolio entry into university. An overall positive Aboriginal role model within our community and the country.

Lauchlyn Spicer

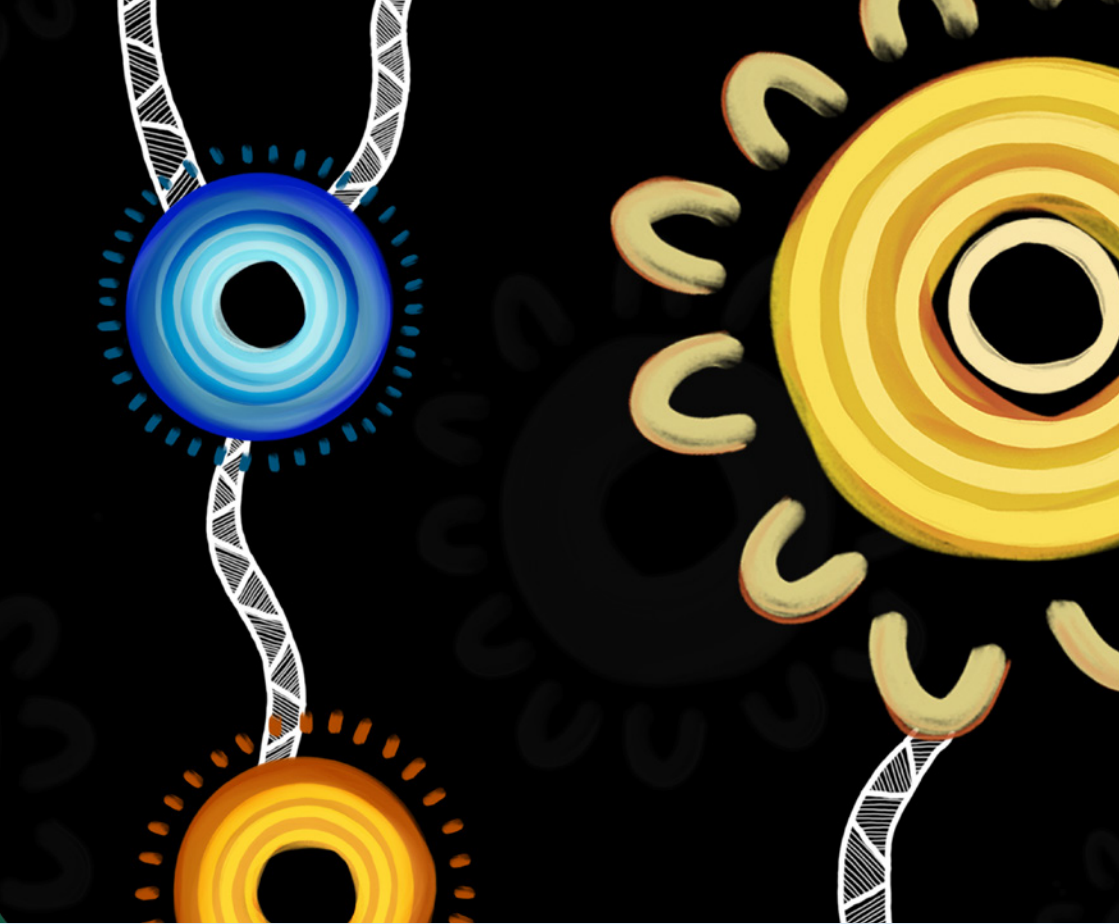
Hunter Sports High School

Lauchlyn is a proud young Aboriginal man living on Awabakal lands in Newcastle NSW. He is an all-round talented athlete in the fields of rugby union, rugby league and touch football. He is also a member of the Hunter Sports High School's Talented Sports Academy for Rugby League.

Lauchlyn's achievements include:

- Member of the Hunter Wildfires Representative Rugby Union Team
- Selection into the NSW Country Rugby Team, Member of the 1st place NSW Combined High Schools Opens Rugby Team, representing Hunter CHS
- 2020 Newcastle Knights Harold Matthews 16s Team
- 2021 Newcastle Knights Harold Matthews 17s Squad
- Newcastle Junior Rugby League Representative 14s in 2018 and 15s in 2019
- Wallsend Wolves Touch Football Representative Under 12's–U'18s
- Hunter Western Hornets Regional Touch Football squad selections
- 2021 club co-captain for his rugby union club team Southern Beaches JRUC
- Club Rugby Union Team Southern Beaches JRUC.

He is an overall role model in and out of school and on and off the sporting fields.



Student Awards

Outstanding Academic Excellence Award

This award is presented to Aboriginal students who have demonstrated outstanding academic excellence in any curriculum area in 2021 and who have displayed a positive attitude to school and a commitment to their future.

Outstanding Academic Excellence Award

Mateo Toetu

Alexandria Park Community School

Mateo has demonstrated academic excellence across the curriculum and is a valued member of the Opportunity Class. His academic excellence has been further demonstrated by his acceptance into the Selective Stream for year 7 in 2022.

Mateo is an enthusiastic learner, always engaging in whole-class discussions to ask questions and share his ideas and opinions with his peers. Mateo is a collaborative learner who values the ideas of others and is always seeking ways to expand his own knowledge. He is a positive and enthusiastic learner who brings joy to the classroom.

Mateo seeks out connection to his Aboriginal culture through being an enthusiastic member of Tribal Warrior, and sharing this with his peers. During a novel study of the book *Black Cockatoo* by Carl Merrison, Hakea Hustler, Mateo shared his journey to learning about his own totem animal. Mateo is a fantastic leader and friend with a strong connection to his identity and culture.

Outstanding Academic Excellence Award

Angus McLean Mosman High School

Angus has consistently achieved academic excellence. Angus has motivation, focus and continuously strives to improve. Furthermore, he is goal-oriented and has a dedicated mindset to achieve his personal best. His academic achievements include receiving the Principal's Award for academic excellence for each reporting period from Year 7 to Year 12. Over the last six years he has achieved several first places in many subjects, including mathematics, science, music and a variety of technology and applied studies courses.

He has earned the prestigious Rolf Adams Award as dux of Year 9 in 2018. In 2019, he received the distinguished Sydney University Medal for Year 10 Academic Achievement. This award recognises Angus's high performance in academic studies and his capacity to inspire others in their academic pursuits. In 2020, he completed accelerated HSC Design and Technology, achieving an impressive Band 6 as a Year 11 student. In 2021, he was elected by his peers to the school leadership council with the portfolio of sport.

Angus's consistent dedication is inspiring and highlights Angus's exceptional qualities to combine academic pursuits with leadership roles and responsibilities and community involvement.

Tameka Murray

Toronto High School

Tameka is an exceptionally hard-working and determined student. She has written a beautiful series of poems about Aboriginal experiences and she has worked this into her HSC dance project. She is always working hard: submitting drafts and eagerly seeking (and clarifying) feedback in her efforts to improve.

She has the goal of studying medicine at university in her sights. Tameka is applying for medicine through UCAT and the Wollotuka Institute (University of Newcastle). Tameka Murray is an extremely hardworking and driven student in all classes. Many teachers have commented on her tenacity and drive and feel that she is truly deserving of being recognised as a talented and dedicated student.

Tameka has had 44 positive referrals this year that range from excellent submissions, attendance, engaged learning and positive behaviour for learning. Tameka also won an award in 2021 for the Principal's Honour Roll. In previous years she has won the Federal Member's Community Services Award and the Principal's Honour Roll, as well as Academic Excellence in PDHPE and Dance and First in Course in Dance. Tameka has achieved over 90% attendance this year and is a model student.

Outstanding Academic Excellence Award

Bella Needham

Elizabeth Macarthur High School

Bella is a diligent student who has consistently performed to a high academic standard. She is a selective student who has worked extremely hard to achieve her best, actively seeking teacher feedback and utilising the school-run Deadly Homework Centre. Her commitment to learning has allowed her to maintain a ranking in the top ten of four HSC courses.

Bella is extremely career-driven, with outstanding results in Legal Studies and Dance. She has demonstrated her ability to apply herself both academically and also creatively. This reflects her future career path with Bella having received early entry for both Macquarie University and the University of Wollongong to study a Bachelor of Marketing and Media. Her goal is to become a social media or public relations manager.

Bella has been recognised for her extraordinary commitment to her education by being part of the school prefecture team and our schools senior Aboriginal ambassador, placing focus on her leadership of the educational outcomes of Aboriginal students in our school, with a particular emphasis on literacy.



Student Awards

NSW Department of Education School-Based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year Award

This award is presented to an Aboriginal student who has maintained outstanding commitment, effort and application in completing their School Based Traineeship, which includes high application to workplace training and VET course, alongside their HSC.

NSW Department of Education School-Based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year Award

Kade King Vincentia High School

Kade is an inspiring future leader of our community. He is currently completing Year 12 at Vincentia High School and as part of his student pathway plan he studied a Certificate II in Animal Studies and holds a traineeship with a local farmer.

At the end of Year 9, Kade identified he would like a career in the animal industry and worked out a plan to make it happen. First, he sought some work experience with Steve & Susan Nicholas from Nicolstoke Salers Nowra. Kade worked with Steve one morning a week and then attended TAFE in the afternoon to complete the requirements of his animals studies course. He has now finished his studies at TAFE and holds a Certificate II in Animal Studies.

Kade has also recently been awarded an excellence award for vocational education and training. Due to his success in the 2020 South Coast Beef School Steer Spectacular, Kade was asked to take on a leadership role with students from the agricultural course at Ulladulla High School. This role involves being a mentor to the students on all things related to raising steers for show, providing support and advice and meeting with them regularly in order to provide practical assessment of their progress. Kade is also currently a leader at Clontarf Aboriginal Unit, which involves being a positive role model for other students and attending different extracurricular activities.

Mekayla Peacock

Coonamble High School

Mekayla is an outstanding example of a school based trainee. She is currently completing her Certificate III in Health Services Assistance via TAFE Western Gunnedah (blended learning) whilst working one day per week at the Coonamble Multi-Purpose Service. She successfully manages these commitments with her other senior subjects and her part time job. Mekayla is required to start her shifts at the MPS at 7am - whilst this may be a problem for most Year 11 students, Mekayla embraces these early starts.

Mekayla's calm and caring nature makes her a fantastic nursing student. She is eager to develop her skills and knowledge in the profession and is determined to be the first person in her immediate family to undertake a university qualification. Naturally, she would like to study a Bachelor of Nursing. She has a genuine interest in the care of each of her patients and is well respected by her colleagues. She exhibits maturity and professionalism well beyond her years and will be a wonderful asset to the healthcare industry.

She is passionate about bridging the health gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians and has a genuine desire to improve the health outcomes of those in her community.



Student Awards

Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Award

This award is presented to Aboriginal students who have demonstrated exemplary skills in public speaking. The award recognises Aboriginal students' ability to speak with authority and confidence and the ability to maintain audience interest.

Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Award

Ellie Sibir

Eastern Creek Public School

As a proud Gamilaroi girl who facilitates respect for the traditional Aboriginal land and family heritage, Ellie Sibir participates actively in the school community in cultural, academic and sporting opportunities.

Ellie first represented the school in public speaking in Year 3. Through practice and effort, she has honed her skills, and her current achievements are something she has applied herself to develop and improve over time. After being elected to a leadership position in 2021, she has had the opportunity to lead school assemblies, welcome distinguished visitors and warmly presents Acknowledgment of Country.

Ellie's latest achievement has been to win the local area Premier's Multicultural Public Speaking competition with an inspirational and informative speech titled, 'January 26', followed by an impromptu speech titled, 'Money'. She is now going to compete at the state level. In her own words, Ellie epitomises Australian values when she said that, "as a proud Aboriginal girl I am so thankful that I have equal rights like anyone else. And it is all because of my ancestors who stood up for what was right" and "one thing we can't deny is that Australia is a great country, we are stronger together and united as one".

Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Award

Bridie Woodbridge

Jerrabomberra Public School

Bridie has excelled in both the Rostrum Public Speaking and the NSW Multicultural Perspectives Public Speaking competitions, consistently reaching the school finals over these years. Her speeches are well-constructed, knowledgeable and have a message for the listener, reaching a level of excellence.

Bridie has built on her skills through consistent preparation and a strong determination to improve in each speech competition, each year. She has also taken on the role of chairperson in the district Rostrum semi-finals.

She has been a wonderful role model to her peers and is revered and respected for her talent as a speaker. She has shone in delivering Acknowledgements of Country and Value of the Week messages during zoom assemblies in her role as school vice captain. She speaks with authority and confidence, maintaining audience interest and always in an entertaining way with excellent voice modulation and gesture.

Briannan Eggert

Elderslie High School

Briannan has been involved in many public speaking competitions, mock trials, debating teams, presentation evenings and regularly performs Acknowledgement of Country at school events. She has also chaired and hosted many regional events, NAIDOC Week events, been involved in the Junior AECG and was a participant in the UWS Pathways to Dreaming program.

In Year 7, Briannan won the Speak Up Aboriginal Public Speaking competition held at NSW Parliament House and has now gone on to the Year 12 debating team, making the state quarter finals (top 8 in the state) after beating Sydney Boys High School.

In Year 11, Briannan was a school prefect and as a Year 12 vice captain Briannan has been instrumental in leading the development of a senior study space. Briannan did much of the background research for this, liaising with relevant staff and running a bake sale to raise funds. She has also used her leadership skills to help organise a Domestic Violence Awareness Week.

Briannan eagerly participates in all opportunities presented to her and regularly takes initiative in terms of volunteering for leadership duties.

Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Award

Toby Smith

Whitebridge High School

Toby is an optimistic student who strives to share the importance of culture with his peers. He is a member of the Junior AECG and SRC, taking on a leadership role within both teams and mentoring Stage 4 students.

Toby has demonstrated skills in organisation and communication, coordinating cultural activities during NAIDOC Week celebrations. As a member of the Yuelarbah Aboriginal Dance Group, Toby has performed for partner primary schools. He addresses the whole school, regularly making the Acknowledgement of Country for weekly assemblies and during formal presentations.

Toby was commended by local retired servicemen for his poignant speech addressing the whole school and special guests for ANZAC Day commemorations. National Sorry Day and Harmony Week are another two significant events where Toby demonstrated his sensitive and mature approach to public speaking.

Toby also takes a mature attitude to learning and has been involved with the school's Academic Enrichment program since 2019. He has also participated in the Whitebridge Television (WTV) program over the past 3 years, leading interviews and networking with the wider school community. He was recently involved in a student interview, sharing the importance of NAIDOC Week and the significance of the activities run within the school.



Student Awards

Outstanding Achievement in Performing/Creative/Visual Arts Award

This award is presented to Aboriginal students who have demonstrated outstanding talent and application in the Performing, Creative and/or Visual Arts.

Outstanding Achievement in Performing/Creative/Visual Arts Award

Shaelah Saunders Briar Road Public School

Shaelah is a proud Kamileroi and Biripi girl in Year 6 at Briar Road Public School. She has natural talent and passion in creative arts – in particular, visual arts. Shaelah creates artworks for the school and mentors her peers to develop their visual arts skills, as a strong leader in this field. Shaelah has led student groups for whole school artworks during Reconciliation and NAIDOC Weeks.

When Aboriginal artist Danielle Mate facilitated workshops with the students, Shaelah took a leading role in the group artwork that they created together for display in the school. Shaelah has completed multiple visual arts assessments where she has achieved the highest academic ranking across Stage 3.

During learning from home, Shaelah has attended zoom art workshops with Aboriginal artists to help her to continue to develop her skills during this time. Shaelah regularly enters community art competitions because of the true passion she has to share her artwork with others. She aspires to go to university to study Creative Arts and be an influential Aboriginal artist when she finishes school. It is inspiring to see Shaelah be so motivated and passionate about not only creating artwork, but artwork that connects her with her Aboriginal culture.

Grace Sayle

Cambridge Public School

Grace participates in all areas of the arts with enthusiasm. She is a passionate member of the dance ensemble, listening to advice and supporting her peers where possible. Grace has represented her community at the School Spectacular, Penrith Dance Festival and the Cranebrook Learning Community Performing Arts Festival. She has displayed outstanding sportsmanship and a positive attitude throughout these events. Furthermore, Grace has an incredible talent for the creative arts. She is always willing to take creative risks and listens to and implements advice.

In visual arts, Grace takes her time and layers her work in order to create superb artwork. She embraces new challenges with excitement and thrives when assisting others in their own creative endeavours. She is respectful to adults and peers and is a positive influence to have within the classroom.

Grace's artistic achievement has seen her thrive in other areas based on the confidence that she has developed. This confidence has seen her take on a mentorship role when participating in cultural activities, which she is very passionate about. In her last report, Grace was awarded a high achievement (B) grade based on her performance in drama lessons, and for her ability to express her emotions and feelings through the visual arts.

Outstanding Achievement in Performing/Creative/Visual Arts Award

Cassidy Roberts Winmalee High School

Cassidy has demonstrated outstanding determination to complete her HSC in 2021. She has always been an active participant in educational opportunities that are presented to her, whether it is a study skills program or a cultural development program.

She demonstrates outstanding commitment to extra-curricular activities, including school drama productions and school musicals. She held a lead role in The Wizard of Oz in 2021. She was also the lead make-up designer and coordinator of the make-up team for this production. Cassidy has expertly led the Junior Drama Ensemble. This program ran as a co-curricular program outside of school hours. Cassidy was highly praised by the supervising Drama teacher for her leadership skills, compassion towards younger students and her capacity to be creative and deliver valuable drama experiences to her younger peers. Cassidy has performed at Rotary events including Music Among the Autumn Leaves, is a school Vocal Ensemble member and has sung the Australian National Anthem at the Valvoline Raceway Parramatta.

Cassidy is a music student and an accomplished singer-songwriter/guitarist, regularly performing at school events. She is also studying drama for her HSC. Her Individual Performance was a self-devised and highly detailed piece, utilising her talents in guitar and vocals to produce a very strong and emotive performance. She has been identified as an outstanding group member and has assisted her teacher immensely through a challenging year.

Cassidy has juggled the demands of studying for her HSC and studies to complete a Cert III Beauty & Make Up at TAFE, demonstrating her capacity to succeed in an adult learning environment.

Cassidy has aspirations to attend and study at the Country Music Academy in Tamworth and also work in theatre.

Olivia Scott

Holsworthy High School

Olivia Scott is a Year 11 student who has demonstrated outstanding talent and application in dance. Olivia has a keen passion for dance and over the last three years Olivia has participated in over 15 regional competitions, placing either first, second or third in numerous competitions. She has completed her RAD Intermediate Ballet exams with a merit and is now working on her advanced exams.

Olivia is a featured dancer with Southern Stars (SSPC), is a regional champion in the Spotlight Championship and a regional runner up in the Theatre Arts title championship. Olivia is also regional champion in the Dynamic Song and Dance Festival and placed first in the National Dance Duo Competition in Duo Lyrical.

Olivia was part of the Aboriginal Dance ensemble for the Schools Spectacular. Her ambition is to pursue her dance interest into a possible career. She has attended the Arts Unit Aboriginal workshop, where she was shortlisted in 2020. In 2021, Olivia became a member of the NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company.

Olivia's accomplishments in dance, her talent and pursuit of her dream and her knowledge and willingness to embrace and pass on her Aboriginal culture to others through her passion for dance makes her an extremely worthy candidate for this award.

Outstanding Achievement in Performing/Creative/Visual Arts Award

Tom Woods

Northern Beaches Secondary College, Manly Campus

Tom has demonstrated exceptional talent and application of performing and creative arts at NBSC Manly Campus. He excels in all areas of music within school and has highly perceptive score analysis and aural skills. Tom has an outstanding academic record and pursues a variety of subjects outside of music including History and Engineering Technology. He is an integral member of co-curricular band programs such as the Big Band, the string ensemble, the wind ensemble and the chamber orchestra.

Tom represented the school through the State Senior Music Camp this year and is part of the NSW DoE Arts Unit Symphony Orchestra. In 2020, he contributed both a drum and cello solo piece for the NAIDOC Week collaboration with Uncle Archie Roach. This year Tom showed the whole state his incredible talent by playing Bach on his cello as a solo artist for the 2020 Nanga Mai Awards.

He auditioned for the school musical 'Legally Blonde', but upon finding out that there were no cello parts he successfully tried his luck at comedic acting. He moved out of his comfort zone with ease and resilience, taking on a lead role as a junior who was required to sing and dance Irish jigs, drawing on his tap dancing experience from the local eisteddfod tap ensemble. Tom is also a much admired and highly valued member of the Student Representative Council and confidently Acknowledges Country to both internal and external audiences. Tom is an outstanding role model for all students.





Student Awards

NSW VET in Schools Student of the Year Award

This award is presented to an Aboriginal student who has demonstrated outstanding achievement, commitment, effort and application to completing their VET and HSC commitments.

NSW VET in Schools Student of the Year Award

Georgia Marchbank

Campbelltown Performing Arts High School

Georgia Marchbank has demonstrated outstanding culinary skills throughout the Hospitality Food and Beverage Vocational Education Training (VET) course that she has undertaken these past two years. In addition, she has also made pleasing progress in VET Retail Services. This year, Georgia will complete the Higher School Certificate, having also achieved a Certificate II in Hospitality and a Certificate III in Retail.

Georgia is working beyond expectations in the units studied in these courses. She always follows safe work practices and displays a good understanding as to why they are necessary. Throughout work placement and practical lessons at school, Georgia has demonstrated professionalism and maturity beyond her 17 years. Her interaction with customers is exceptional and her commitment to food service and presentation is exemplary.

Georgia has always been a committed member of the Campbelltown Performing High School's cafe and catering team. She is the first to volunteer her time and go the extra mile for staff and fellow students. During work placement, her conduct was no exception; she held herself accountable to her actions and displayed such maturity, punctuality and professionalism. She "demonstrates a professional image as a food and beverage attendant" and has "developed the essential skills needed to be a successful retail worker".



Staff Awards

Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Languages Award

This award is presented to a NSW Department of Education employee who has demonstrated strong commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students through the implementation of a school Aboriginal languages program.

Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Languages Award

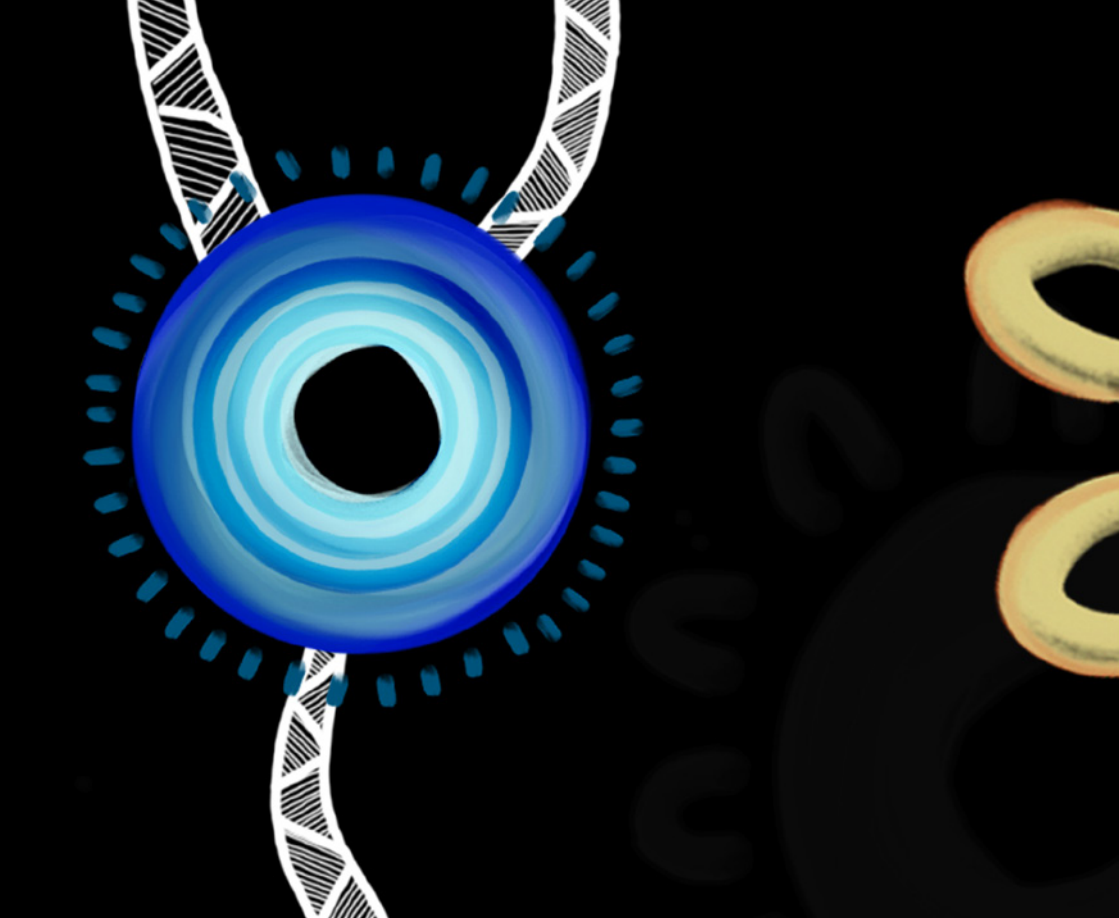
Jasmine Seymour Riverstone Public School

Jasmine Seymour completed the Master of Indigenous Languages Education (MILE) program at the University of Sydney in 2020. She was motivated to complete this qualification for the benefit of her school, community, language, culture, ancestors, Elders and future generations of Dharug children.

Jasmine developed a Dharug language program, making all the student resources at Riverstone Public School. Jasmine's teaching provides Aboriginal students with a strong sense of pride and connection to their history and culture. Learning knowledge to take home and share with their families to strengthen Dharug in all generations.

Jasmine is one of the Dharug women (along with Leanne Watson, Erin Wilkins and Rhiannon Wright) who collaborated with the University of New South Wales Historian Grace Karskens on a research project that uncovered detailed information about Dharug knowledge and life associated with the Hawkesbury River and region. All of the information in this project has been made available through a website with multi-layered digital mapping and beautiful photos of Dharug Country, people and community, art and story. It also became the basis of an exhibition hosted by the State Library of NSW.

All of Jasmine's work for her language and culture has integrity because she works through and with community and Elders, especially Aunty Edna Watson. In a collaboration between Darug Ngura Aboriginal Corporation (DNAC) and Darug Custodians Aboriginal Corporation (DCAC), Jasmine teaches a Dharug class for adults on Sunday mornings. The most recent call for expressions of interest received responses from 130 people. Dharug adults are as enthusiastic as children are about Dharug language learning.



Staff Awards

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award

This award is presented to an Aboriginal employee of the NSW Department of Education who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students, their families and communities.

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award

Aunty Veronica Camp Coleambally Central School

Aunty Veronica Camp has worked tirelessly as a School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) at Tirkandi Inaburra for over 15 years, just after its inception. A unique rural campus, 17km out from Coleambally Central School (CCS), offering 12-to-15-year-old First Nations boys a 10-week culturally-based residential program each term aimed at reducing future contact with the criminal justice system.

As a Wiradjuri matriarch, she is dearly loved and deeply respected by all the boys, their extended families and staff. She has been the one constant at Tirkandi over the years. Her warmth, genuine and non-judgemental love, interest, care and concern are invaluable in raising the boys' self-esteem and resilience, often in difficult and complex circumstances.

83% of Tirkandi graduates are actively engaged in education or work and 92% have zero convictions since graduation – the vast majority of whom would openly thank Aunty V for her help in turning their lives around.



Staff Awards

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-Aboriginal Staff Member Award

This award is presented to a non-Aboriginal employee of the NSW Department of Education who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students and a commitment to working with Aboriginal students, their families and communities.

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-Aboriginal Staff Member Award

Jasmine Marczan

Tullimbar Public School

In 2015, Jasmine Marczan commenced employment at Tullimbar Public School. With a passion for eco-sustainability, caring for Country and ensuring that local cultural knowledge is shared and celebrated by the entire community, she commenced her advocacy for greater authentic engagement in Aboriginal Education.

Jasmine was committed to working with local Aboriginal community members to embed language, art, dance and knowledge of Country into the very soul of Tullimbar Public School. In 2020 her principal supported her to launch a whole-school Aboriginal Education Strategy.

She has led the involvement of 60 students in the Language Art and Dance program with Gumaara, consulted community and installed a bush tucker garden, launched an innovative PDP process for 100% of Aboriginal students through Storylines/MGoals, worked with local Elders to create a mural including the totems of our Aboriginal students and increased engagement in the Reconciliation Walk, NAIDOC Week celebrations and Sorry Day recognition.

Jasmine is leading the Albion Park Community of Schools in whole of community professional learning and event planning and organisation and is now seen as a leader and pioneer in the area for relevant, contemporary, respectful and authentic engagement with Aboriginal culture.



Staff Awards

Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education Award

This award is presented to a NSW Department of Education employee who has demonstrated exemplary leadership and capacity building among staff, schools and the school community and an ongoing commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students.

Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education Award

Dyonne Anderson

Cabbage Tree Island Public School

Dyonne Anderson is a Githabul woman and the principal of Cabbage Tree Island Public School. Throughout her career she has worked for the NSW Department of Education, teaching and designing state-wide education programs. Her work focuses on Aboriginal languages, embedding Aboriginal perspectives and content within school programs and facilitating the design and delivery of initiatives in Aboriginal Education Policy.

Dyonne has worked with a range of Aboriginal language groups, building an Aboriginal language network and delivering professional development. Dyonne works with the Stronger and Smarter Institute and STEM learning network to address the professional development needs in Indigenous knowledges, while mentoring Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers in schools to better teach Aboriginal students. Dyonne collaborated in, designed, and facilitated the first professional development programs for regional teachers around Australia to improve learning.

She is co-founder of the Deadly Leaders Alliance and is the Chair of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Principals Association, as well as an advisory member for developing the cultural competency framework for the Australian teaching workforce. Finally, she is the founder of the Aboriginal Teachers' Network and during the pandemic has been providing weekly online support to NSW DoE Aboriginal teaching staff.

Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education Award

Adrian Bell

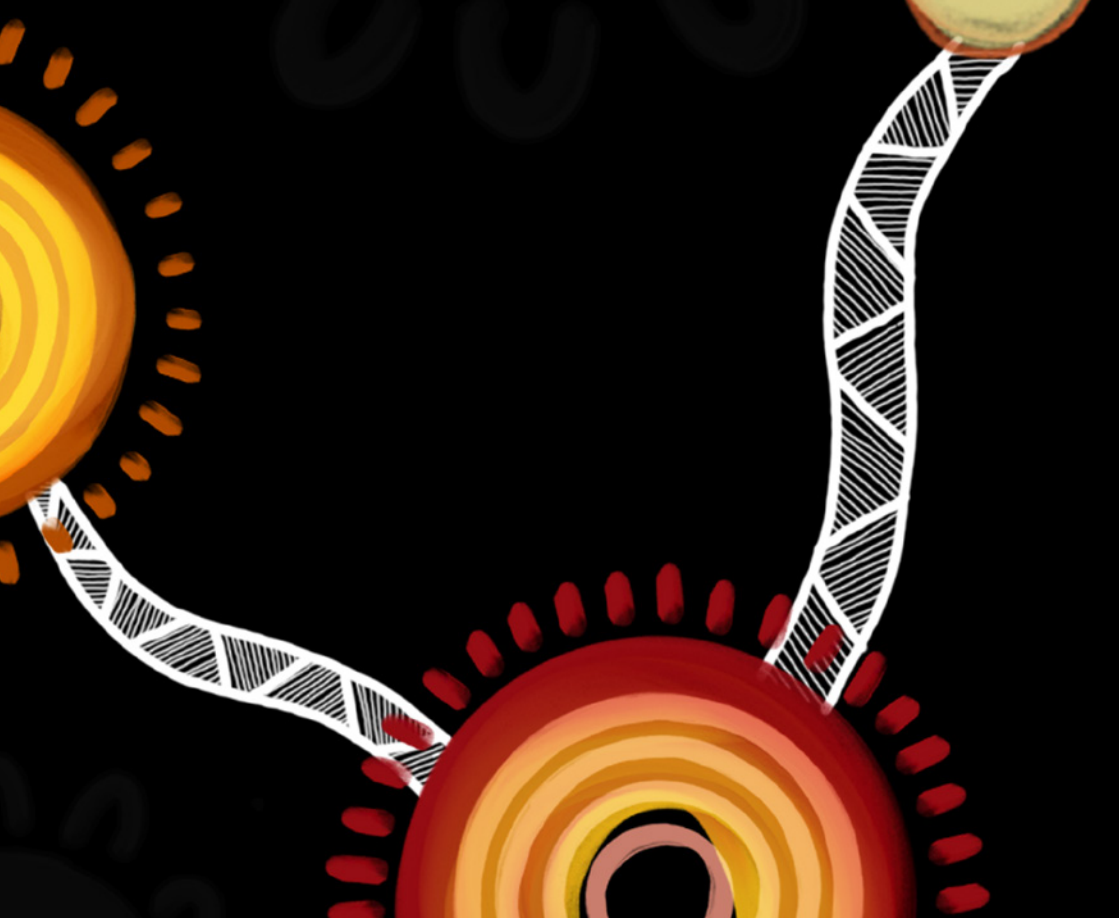
Adrian is one of only a small number of Aboriginal secondary principals in the Department of Education. Recently, Adrian was presented with the NSW Secondary Principals Council Life Membership Citation. Adrian has been a tireless advocate for Public Education throughout his 37-year career. He has actively sought to bring his high expectations to all facets of school life and has always challenged the inequity faced by rural and remote students. This moral imperative is perhaps most keenly seen in his commitment to Aboriginal students, staff and community.

During this time, he has implemented numerous programs that have had a huge success for First Nation students' educational outcomes. Adrian also served 5 years as Chair of the NSWPC Aboriginal Education Reference Group. He has developed a model of mentoring and coaching along with another principal to help support our students.

Adrian is a strong leader who has worked tirelessly to build the capacity of his staff and to create genuine links for the school and the local Aboriginal community that has helped bridge the gap between school and the community. Adrian is currently involved in our local Eden AECG and Far South Coast Regional AECG and has been an active member of the AECG for many years. In recent times he was presented with a distinguished Service Award at the NSW Secondary Principals Council for outstanding leadership in developing the Secondary Principals Council Aboriginal Education position paper.

But his most significant achievement would be his appointment to the role of principal in residence in the Aboriginal Education Unit. Currently in this role, he is leading a project to increase the number of Aboriginal people in leadership positions in our schools. He has made our culture a first priority within the school through his leadership, high expectations and his heartfelt approach, making a real difference to our students at Eden Marine High School.





School & Community Awards

Outstanding Commitment to Increasing Knowledge and Understanding of Aboriginal Histories, Culture and Experiences of Aboriginal Peoples Award

This award is presented to a school or a community of schools that have demonstrated a strong commitment to establishing a culture of respect, caring and inclusive teaching practices which recognise, value and meet the diverse needs of Aboriginal students.

Outstanding Commitment to Increasing Knowledge and Understanding of Aboriginal Histories, Culture and Experiences of Aboriginal Peoples Award

Oxley Park Public School

Participation in the Nurragannawali Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) allowed our school, through consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community members, to identify 14 Reconciliation Action Priorities. These priorities outline our whole school approach to working towards authentic reconciliation by building relationships, respect and opportunities in our classrooms, around the school and within the broader community.

This has a clear and driven agenda to close the disadvantage gap between our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

- Connection to Country – we excel in making these connections through:
 - our outdoor learning spaces, Koori and bush tucker gardens, yarning circle and bilingual use of the local Darug language throughout our school.
 - our Student Representative Council (SRC), which each year participates in Acknowledgement of Country writing workshops. This has led to the development of authentic embedded practices of Acknowledgement of Country occurring in each classroom. The acknowledgment is personalised to demonstrate our respect to the land on which we learn and work.
- We aim to strengthen our relationships with community, working together for a reconciled future. Student and family voice is prioritised through shared goal setting during Personal Learning Pathway meetings with our Aboriginal Education Officer, teachers, students and families twice a year. These goals are authentic to the student and inform their interests and experiences.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families are supportive of our school. Our most recent achievement was our gathering to unpack the 2020–2030 AECG Partnership Agreement – we sought feedback, input and future directions on how our school can best cater for the needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families.



School & Community Awards

Outstanding School and Community Partnership Award

This award is presented to a school that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to respectful and productive partnerships with students, staff, parents and their local Aboriginal communities.

Outstanding School and Community Partnership Award

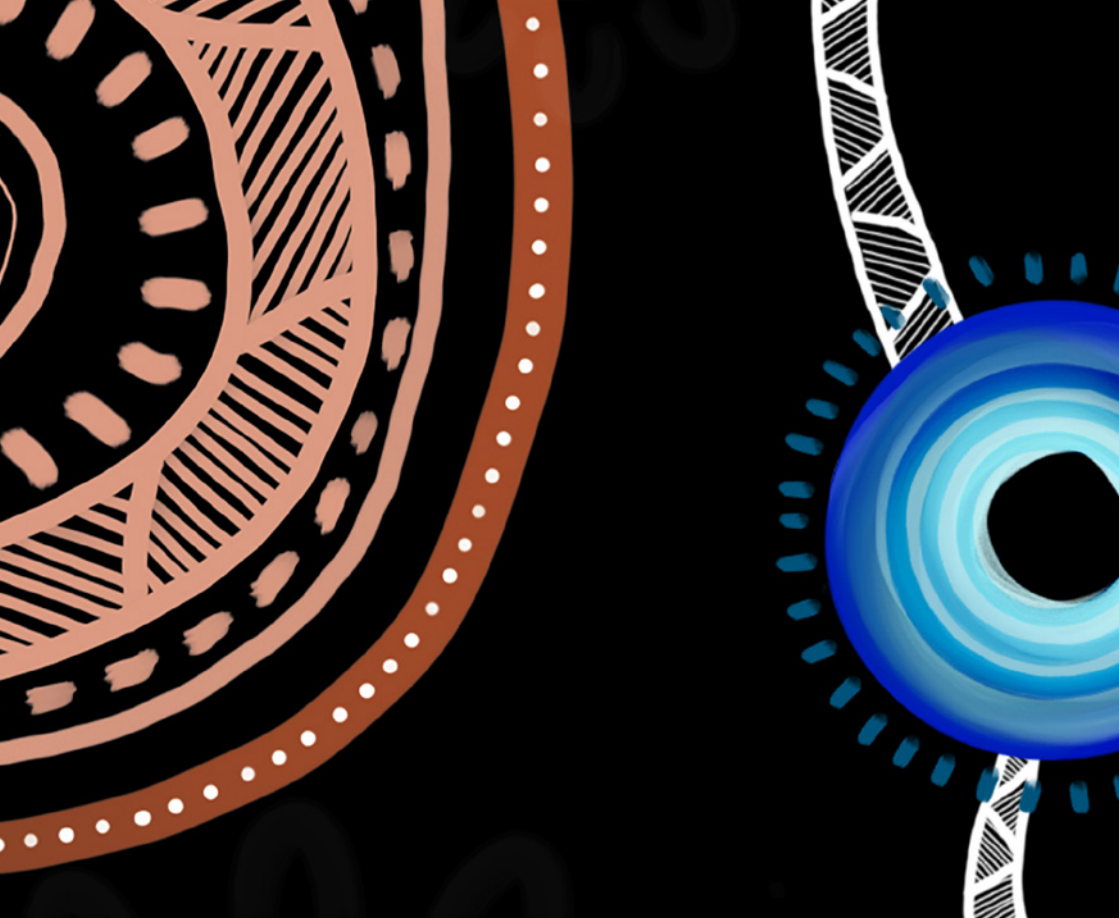
Vincentia High School – Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community

Vincentia High School is home to 187 Aboriginal students, many of whom come from the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community. Throughout 2020 and 2021, the school has achieved some exceptional results through its strong connection with Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community.

Consistent staff and community support saw the development of several initiatives to assist Aboriginal students' engagement at school, as well as outcomes and plans for their futures post school. This has included:

- development of an Aboriginal Youth Leadership team, which is run by community members who work with and mentor the students
- placement of 6 school-based trainees within Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community and Booderee National Park
- the design and completion of two community spaces/gardens within our school grounds, dedicated to members of the Wreck Bay Community
- community hosting Aboriginal Student forums which focus on students' needs at school, as well as support they would like in order to reach their future goals post school
- the development of 'cultural counselling' in which Elders spend time with students who are at-risk to discuss the importance of education and offer cultural support
- The 2nd Annual NAIDOC Indigenous Careers Expo, held at VHS and hosted by Wreck Bay Community.

These opportunities and the dedication of the partnership between Vincentia High School and Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community have seen an increase in student and family engagement within our school and with students' educational outcomes and wellbeing.



School & Community Awards

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member

This award is presented to a school that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to respectful and productive partnerships with students, staff, parents and their local Aboriginal communities.

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member

Uncle Pat Connolly

Uncle Pat is a dedicated and passionate Elder who has worked with our local schools and community for over twenty years. He shares his knowledge about culture and how to care for Country to ensure that our Wiradjuri Systems are preserved for generations to come.

Uncle Pat left school at 14 with a Year 3 education. He often tells stories of his schooling days and his fight for a basic education. One of Uncle Pat's proudest moments in life is when he graduated from university, having completed a Graduate Certificate in Wiradjuri Language and Culture. He says, "not bad for a Year 3 education!"

Uncle Pat continues to support university students who are completing the course by volunteering his time for each residential school. He provides guidance and shares his authentic cultural knowledge, handing it down the "proper way".

Uncle Pat is equally committed to educating our future. He has supported Franklin Public School from the time it opened in 1976. He has spent many years working in preschools, primary and high schools engaging with our young people and teaching them about Wiradjuri ways of being, knowing and doing. He is dedicated to teaching students about their true-shared histories and culture.

Uncle Pat supports the Department of Education with cultural immersion activities and did so for 17 directors. He took them out on Country, sharing his personal stories, telling them of the impacts past government policies have had on Aboriginal people since colonisation. The directors all commented that the impact from this day has driven them to ensure that Aboriginal Education is at the forefront of their directive to schools and that they strive to ensure their schools are culturally-safe places. Uncle Pat reminded the directors, "in order to move forward, we need to look to the past for true healing to happen". Uncle Pat is a true ambassador for his culture, community and people with a strong focus on closing the gap for Aboriginal Australians.



Recognition Awards

Connected Communities Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

This award has been nominated by the Executive Director, Connected Communities and is presented to either a NSW Department of Education employee or a community member who has displayed a strong commitment in collaborating with the Connected Communities Directorate.

Connected Communities Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

Anne Dennis

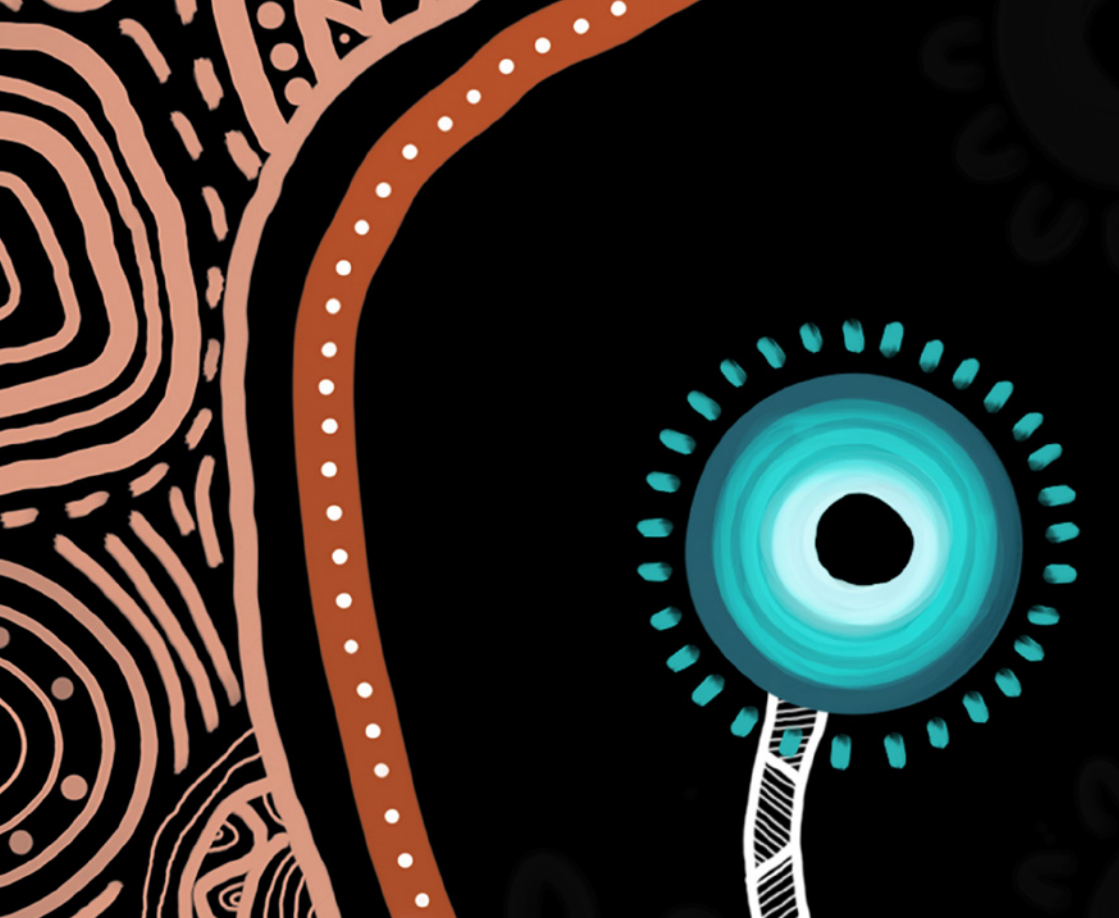
Anne Dennis has been an outstanding advocate with supporting the implementation of the Connected Communities Strategy since its inception.

Anne's unwavering leadership demonstrated through her relentless support given since the implementation of the Connected Communities Strategy in 2013, has not only provided stability to the students, parents and Community of Walgett Community College, but the wider Aboriginal Community. Her commitment to Community is evidenced through her many leadership roles as Regional AECG President; long standing AECG Management Committee member, Life member of the NSW AECG and Chair of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council. This depth of leadership knowledge and experience has ensured that the local AECG, through the work of the Local School Reference Group, and local Community in general, has been empowered to have a voice in co-decision making regards key initiatives and programs that have benefited Aboriginal students and all students in their respective locations.

The responsiveness of Anne to work differently and creatively to ensure purposeful and innovative ways in the domain of teaching and learning is also acknowledged. Her contribution to the range of ideas to complement relevant learning, and her influence to Aboriginal education across a broad area of school learning communities, has proven to be both culturally sensitive and responsive which adds a differential layer that stimulates confidence levels to maximise engagement.

Her generosity of time and assistance positions governance structures such as the Walgett Community College Local School Reference Group and the broader Aboriginal Community voice, to have a real say in their local school and feel empowered to do so with support and guidance.

The Connected Communities strategy has benefited greatly from the leadership and good will provided by Ann and we sincerely thank her and recognise her tireless commitment to the students and families of Walgett Community College and the Connected Communities Strategy in general.



Recognition Awards

Kimberwalli Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

This award has been nominated by the Director, Kimberwalli and presented to either a NSW Department of Education employee or a community member who has displayed a strong commitment to Kimberwalli and its community.

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member

Western Sydney Asset Management Unit School Infrastructure NSW

The Western Sydney Asset Management Unit, Schools Infrastructure NSW, provided Kimberwalli with outstanding support to urgently transform two buildings into a COVID-19 Vaccination Hub for Aboriginal people in Western Sydney.

The Western Sydney Asset Management Unit allocated Kimberwalli a dedicated team to support delivery of this work – Michael Beckwith, Jude Keith, and Kevin Boland. The Team were committed to creating a culturally and clinically safe facility for the Western Sydney Aboriginal community and considered important diversity and inclusion issues such as disability accessibility requirements for our Elders, young people and community members with complex health issues.

The expertise and responsiveness of this team, combined with their understanding of Aboriginal people's experiences, resulted in the Western Sydney Aboriginal community having access to COVID-19 vaccination in a culturally safe place, which ultimately supported our young Aboriginal people to safely return to school. The Team also ensured that all Kimberwalli staff felt supported and part of a team working together for the benefit of our local Aboriginal community.

This partnership demonstrates how to put the Departments vision for reconciliation into action – an inclusive workplace built on mutual respect, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and cultures are recognised, valued and celebrated.



Recognition Awards

Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

This award is presented to either NSW Department of Education employees or a community member who has displayed a strong commitment in collaborating with the Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate.

Connected Communities Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

Charline Emzin Boyd

Charline Emzin Boyd is a proud Bundjalung woman who has worked in NSW public education for over 30 years. As a primary school teacher and the Aboriginal Education Coordinator for the NSW Teachers Federation (NSWTF), she has continually advocated and fought for Aboriginal education at state, federal and international levels. Charline is a founding member and chair of Yalukit Yulendj – the Australian Education Union's Aboriginal committee.

Charline has been involved in contributing to and coordinating policy changes in both the Department of Education and NSWTF that have had a positive impact on teachers, students and communities. As the Aboriginal Education Coordinator of the NSWTF, she has supported teachers to feel confident in teaching Aboriginal histories and content, and to engage with their local communities - all while being a productive partner with the Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate.

Charline's engagement with corporate staff, teachers and students has greatly assisted with increasing the numbers of active Aboriginal teachers, through the establishment of a platform of networks that give Aboriginal teachers places to feel safe and supported. Charline has empowered Aboriginal teachers to improve outcomes for themselves and their communities. She collaborated with the media group responsible for the production of the documentary 'naa muru gurung – to see a path for children', which enabled teachers to highlight Aboriginal histories in public education. The documentary was endorsed by NSW Parliament and was nominated for several film awards.

Charline's unwavering commitment and long-time dedication to Aboriginal education was also evident in her instrumental leadership in the creation of a Welcome/Acknowledgement to Country document. This was a first of its kind and is now utilised by educators not only in NSW but also other sectors across the nation. A visionary and a staunch advocate for Aboriginal education matters, Charline Emzin Boyd is the deserved recipient of the Aboriginal Outcome and Partnerships Directorate Award.

Charline Emzin Boyd

Notable Achievements

As a proud Bundjalung woman and young mother Charline established a playgroup in the Yakapari area. Charline commenced study at Lismore's Southern Cross University as a mature age student with four children and, in 1987 commenced teaching at Kyogle Public School. Charline has raised cultural awareness of all teachers through involvement in Beginning Teacher Conferences and Aboriginal Members Conferences.

Charline has raised the consciousness of individuals through her participation as an active member of the NSWTF Executive; NSWTF Council and Annual Conference; AEU Executive; AECG and Chair of Yalukit Yulendi National Aboriginal Education Committee.

In 2002 Charline was successful in having the Department to include Acknowledgement of, and Welcome to Country as part of presentations and events.

In 2004 Charline was instrumental in forcing the State Government to implement the Aboriginal Education review.

In 2007 Charline coordinated the Voting is Deadly campaign – the Little Black Duck production.

In 2010 Charline coordinated the development of the NSWTF Aboriginal Education 25 Years Approach: The Way Forward.

In 2018 Charline coordinated the documentary 'naa muru gurung – to see a path for children' as a part of the NSWTF Centenary celebrations. The documentary highlighted the histories of Aboriginal people and communities within the NSW Public Education system. The documentary also highlighted the involvement of the NSWTF in fighting for the inclusion of Aboriginal people in education and the curriculum. Charline has also coordinated the production of units of work, by Aboriginal members, to support the use of 'naa muru gurung' in schools and TAFE.

In 2021 her work has resulted in NSW having the highest number of Aboriginal teachers compared to any other state in Australia.

As the NSWTF Aboriginal Education Coordinator, Charline has advocated for and encouraged Aboriginal members to represent the NSWTF at World Indigenous People's Conferences (WIPCE) in countries around the world as well as in Australia.

She has also represented the NSWTF at the Council of Pacific Education (COPE) in Fiji, which is a part of the work of Education International.

Charline has also represented NSWTF along with principals, at National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Principals Association (NATSIPA) conferences which occur between Australia and New Zealand.

Her greatest contribution is that with great warmth and love she has become a trusted bridge to Federation for Aboriginal teachers.

She was the pivotal connection for the development and implementation of policies to enhance the success of all students in Aboriginal Education and the prioritisation of Aboriginal students in schools and TAFE.

Charline is a proud mother and grandmother who has instilled in her children the principles of social justice and cultural identity which has resulted in all of her children entering the field of education, to promote and strengthen Aboriginal Education for all.

NSW Department of Education would like to thank you for attending the 16th Annual Nanga Mai Awards.



