



NSW Department of Education

17th Annual Nanga Mai Awards 2022

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 17th Annual NSW Department of Education Nanga Mai Awards.

Sponsorship

Thank you to all our award sponsors



Aboriginal
Education
Council (NSW) Inc



Welcome to the 17th Annual Nanga Mai Awards

The NSW Department of Education is proud to present the 17th Annual Nanga Mai Awards 2022 celebrating the outstanding achievements of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander 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 Harrison

Secretary, NSW Department of Education

Special Guests

The Hon. Sarah Mitchell, MLC

Minister for Education and Early Learning

Catherine Trindall

President, NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

Dr Jack Evans

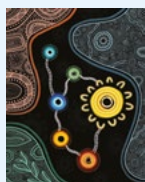
Former student, Mount St Thomas Public School and Figtree High School

Michele Hall

Executive Director, Connected Communities

Karen Jones

Executive Director, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships



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 | Master of Ceremonies



Alira Morgan **Year 12, Kiama High School**

Alira is a proud Yuin and Gamilaroi woman whose family comes from the South Coast of NSW and Walgett.

Alira has just completed her HSC at Kiama High School and has just been accepted into NAISDA Dance Company. She has been a member of the Student Representative Council for the past 5 out of 6 years. She was nominated the First Nations Representative this year and has led the school and the First Nations students at Kiama High school and other local schools.

Alira is a positive role model and leader to her peers, staff, and wider community. She was awarded Young Female Achiever of the Year at the 2022 Regional NAIDOC Awards for her commitment to culture, arts, language and leadership in her community.



Christine Kelly-Winters **Year 12, Elizabeth Macarthur High School**

Christine is a proud Kamilaroi woman who lives in Spring Farm, currently in Year 12 at Elizabeth Macarthur High School. Christine is a strong role model for First Nation students, consistently upholding the school's values and engages in every cultural opportunity. This includes being an active mentor within the school's Kirra program for female First Nation students. Christine is a strong advocate for the program, supporting students to engage and embrace their cultural identity. This is continued across programs for all First Nations students where she utilises her exceptional creative arts ability to teach peers about varying art styles and Dharawal symbols.



Lincoln Simpson
Year 12, Sydney Secondary College,
Blackwattle Bay Campus

Lincoln Simpson is a proud Wiradjuri man who has just completed Year 12 at Sydney Secondary College, Blackwattle Bay Campus. He is a talented percussionist and has been part of the NSW public schools Arts Unit since Year 7.

He aspires to work in the medical field. He aims to connect further with his Aboriginal culture throughout his university and working life as his Aboriginality brings him a sense of great pride.

Presenters | Acknowledgement



Aaliyah Haumono
Year 12 School Captain, Alexandria Park
Community School

Aaliyah Haumono is a proud Tongan, Wiradjuri & Kamilaroi woman descended from Coonabarabran and Wellington NSW.

Aaliyah is School Captain at Alexandria Park Community School and is a graduate of the class of 2022. Her passion for her people and community is highlighted through the time and effort spent working and volunteering for Redfern Youth Connect and the broader Redfern Community. She is always extremely proud of representing her cultures.

Her passions and interests include faith and everything sport related. As well as playing Open Womens footy with Redfern All Blacks during the 2022 season, she also played Premier League Representative Basketball this season with U18s D1 Norths Bears and is a current member of the Canterbury Bulldogs Rugby League U19s Tarsha Gale squad for 22/23.

Presenters | Acknowledgement



Kyeemah Roberts **Year 6, Glebe Public School**

Kyeemah is a proud Bundjalung girl whose family comes from Lismore. She has grown up on Gadigal Country and is a current Year 6 student at Glebe Public School, where she has attended since Kindergarten.

Kyeemah likes sports, writing and attending school to socialise with her cousins. She participates in the SistaSpeak and Jarjum programs. She is a role model to others and is the student voice for the Aboriginal Education Committee.

She likes to play Oztag and enjoys going back on Country to Lismore to visit the mob. Kyeemah is very proud of her culture and is looking forward to high school next year.

Performers



NSW Public Schools Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dance Company

The NSW Public Schools Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dance Company nurtures and celebrates the talents of 25 students from 21 metropolitan, rural and remote public schools through contemporary Indigenous dance. Students are mentored by Bangarra Dance Theatre's Youth Program in collaboration with The Arts Unit, NSW Department of Education.

Their piece, Spinifex, is adapted from Bangarra's repertoire where choreographer, Frances Rings, imagined the contorted spinifex trees as women from thousands of years ago, waiting for the waters to come and the transformation of the landscape to happen near Lake Eyre.



Luca Saunders

Year 12, Taree High School

Luca is a proud Biripi woman from the Taree area. Luca loves singing, dancing and surfing. She has recently signed with IMG Model agency and will move to Sydney in 2023 to pursue a career in modelling. Luca is passionate about her culture, music and language and her family means the world to her. A proud recipient of a Nanga Mai award in 2019 she is honoured to be invited to perform at this year's ceremony.

Songs performed:

Seal - Crazy (Tori Kelly Version)

Amazing Grace in a combination of Gathang language & English

Guest Speaker



Dr Jack Evans

Jack Evans is a Wiradjuri/Ngunnawal man who grew up on Wodi Wodi country in Wollongong. He studied a Bachelor of Medical and Health Sciences at the University of Wollongong and subsequently a Doctor of Medicine at the University of Sydney. Jack is currently working as a junior doctor at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney and is an associate conjoint lecturer at the University of New South Wales.

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

Masters of Ceremonies

Alira Morgan, Kiama High School

Christine Kelly-Winters, Year 12, Elizabeth Macarthur High School

Lincoln Simpson, Sydney Secondary College, Blackwattle Bay Campus

Acknowledgement of Country

Aaliyah Haumono, Alexandria Park Community School

Kyeemah Roberts, Glebe Public School

Opening Performance

NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company

Opening Address

Georgina Harrison, Secretary, NSW Department of Education

NSW AECG Address

Catherine Trindall, President, NSW AECG

Welcome Address

Karen Jones, Executive Director, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships

Student Awards

- The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate Outstanding All Round Student Awards
- Outstanding Student Leadership Awards
- The NSW Department of Education Outstanding School-Based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year Award

Event Program

Opening Student Performance

Luca Saunders

- The NSW Department of Education Outstanding VET in Schools Student of the Year Award.
- Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Awards
- Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards
- Highest Achieving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Student in the 2021 HSC Award
- Outstanding Academic Excellence Awards
- Outstanding Achievement in Performing, Creative and Visual Arts Awards

Recognition Award

- Kimberwalli Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

Guest Speaker

Dr Jack Evans, former student

Staff Awards

- Award for Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education
- 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 Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-School based Staff Member
- Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a non-School Based Staff Member

School and Community Awards

- Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member Award
- Outstanding School and Community Partnership Award

Connected Communities' Address

Michele Hall, Executive Director, Connected Communities

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

Recognition Awards

- Connected Communities Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

40th Anniversary of the Aboriginal Education Policy Presentation

- Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

Closing

Executive Director Closing Address

Karen Jones, Executive Director, Aboriginal Outcome Partnerships

Student Performance

Luca Saunders



Student Awards

The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate Outstanding All Round Student Awards

Presented to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students who have 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.

The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate Outstanding All Round Student Awards



Emma Hoskins

Year 6, Quakers Hill Public School

Emma is a proud Wiradjuri, Gamilaraay girl with Aboriginal, Scottish, and Irish bloodlines; born, living, and learning on Dharug land. She loves learning about her culture and sharing it with others, teaching girls at school dance and leading ceremonies. She does the Welcome and Acknowledgement at school assemblies, performances, and special occasions. Emma played part in the implementation of the Gulyangarri Ngura (children's garden), used by the whole school. She has been a guest speaker at Blacktown City Council (BCC) & Baabayn NAIDOC Day celebrations, where she also danced. Emma was awarded BCC's NAIDOC Day Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young Achiever/Citizen Award and was chosen to participate in the Youth Advisory Committee.

Emma has represented school sports (athletics, oztag, cross country, and touch football), as well as athletics and cross country outside of school; representing her club at zone/regional/state/national levels. Also representing NSW with race walking. She competed in the NSW Junior Athletics Championships and qualified for Nationals to represent NSW in the Athletics Australia Championships.

Emma maintains high academic levels at school and her attendance is over 90%. She enjoys going into school early twice a week to assist her peers with reading. Emma is a school prefect, performing all tasks asked of her in a respectful manner. She has represented the school at Westpoint, Blacktown Festival of Performing Arts in the school band and the Multicultural Public Speaking competition.

Emma plays the piano and will sit Piano Forte AMEB exams, previously she has obtained outstanding results, awarded high distinction and honours. Emma also plays the clarinet in the school band.

The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate Outstanding All Round Student Awards



Sienna Gordon Year 6, Dungog Public School

Sienna is a proud Wiradjuri girl at Dungog Public School. Throughout her seven years at the school, Sienna has maintained a high level of attendance and is the current School Captain and Junior AECG President. She attends meetings, always proudly representing her culture, and has been an active member in planning and organising NAIDOC celebrations and promoting her culture, especially through cultural dance. She supports younger Aboriginal dancers and is involved in developing her cultural skills to learn new choreographed dances that are both contemporary and traditional.

Academically, Sienna applies 100% effort to all aspects of learning. She has continued to show growth in her studies across her schooling and in 2022 was awarded the Galawa scholarship for academic achievement. She actively participates in the school debating team, spelling bee and public speaking competitions.

The sporting field is also an area where Sienna has excelled. She has been a member of the school, zone and regional teams for various sports including rugby union, netball, basketball, softball, touch football, rugby league, AFL, and rugby 7s. She was selected in the teams to participate at the Schools State PSSA competition for basketball, rugby 7s and softball and the All Schools National tournament for AFL. Sienna has successfully been awarded the Sports Person of the Year Award at Dungog Public School for her high sporting achievement across 2020 and 2021 and her sporting achievements continue to extend outside school where she is involved in representative teams for netball, basketball and oztag.

The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate Outstanding All Round Student Awards



Stewart Jerrard-Kapeen Year 11, Ballina Coast High School

Stewart is a young man from the Bundjalung Nation in the Northern Rivers of NSW, currently living in the flood-affected area of Bagotville. Stewart's dedication to excellence and his motivation to ensuring his own bright future is second to none.

At school, Stewart leads the Aboriginal dance group, participates in all school cultural ceremonies and mentors during the Aboriginal Boys Group meetings. He was also the leader of the school 'Green Team', leading several projects including the construction of playground equipment donated to the local day-care centre and bush tucker garden area outside the school's Aboriginal Learning Centre. He also helped design and create a sensory garden for fellow students which provides a safe and quiet space for students who are feeling overwhelmed.

Stewart has also achieved in sports, receiving a scholarship through the Gilchrist Foundation for his leadership qualities and ambition to further his sporting and educational aspirations. This scholarship means he will be supported to attend Southern Cross University. Stewart's current special achievement is representing Ballina Coast High in the State Athletics Championship in javelin and high jump.

He is also highly regarded and recognised in Ballina Coast High School's CAPA department. Participating and playing main characters in the school's MADD (music, art, dance, drama) production for the past 2 years. He has also volunteered behind the scenes as part of the backstage crew to support the production.

The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate Outstanding All Round Student Awards



Kye Jones

Year 12, Elizabeth Macarthur High School

Kye has consistently demonstrated exceptional commitment to his studies and cultural engagement. Throughout his senior years, Kye has maintained a high attendance rate of 95% across both Year 11 and 12. He has also demonstrated consistent achievement, maintaining a B average across his subjects. During NAIDOC week, he was awarded the Academic Achievement Award to recognise his consistent achievement and growth across subjects. This was nominated by staff in acknowledgement of his continual seeking of feedback to improve.

Kye is a positive role model for First Nations students, actively encouraging younger students to engage with their cultural identity. He has held a leadership role within the school's Clontarf Academy over the past two years. In this role, he collaborates with students and staff for major events in their planning and facilitation. Kye balances his school commitments alongside a number of representative and community sports teams. These include being part of the local Group 6 Reserve team, playing as part of the Andrew Johns Cup representative team and has been selected for the Australian Indigenous Oztag team for 2022. Kye is an exceptional all round student who proudly engages in his culture and encourages other young First Nations students to also do so.





Student Awards

Outstanding Student Leadership Awards

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

Outstanding Student Leadership Awards



Kyeton Farrell Year 6, Bomaderry Public School

Kyeton is an outstanding role model and has demonstrated excellence in leadership. He leads by example, which is evident by his behaviour, impeccable attendance record, wearing his school uniform and demonstrating our school values by being a Safe Respectful Learner.

Kyeton recently showcased his leadership skills by leading class lessons across our school with the 'Living Ripples' wellbeing team. As school leader, Kyeton acknowledges Country at school events, is a leader in our Koori dance troupe, represents our school in sporting events and is passionate about sharing his culture. Kyeton also cares for younger students at school. He supports school events and leads peer activities.

Kyeton was instrumental in the development of his class's Acknowledgement of Country and brings an Aboriginal perspective to all activities within his classroom, through the local Dharawal language and connecting lessons to Dreaming stories.

Kyeton's outstanding leadership extends beyond the school as demonstrated by his involvement in the Gadhungal Murring Cultural group where he shows outstanding potential in all cultural areas. His dedication and love for his culture is evident in his enthusiasm to learn and share his knowledge. Kyeton has danced with Gadhungal Murring at several community events including the commencement of construction for a local preschool, NBL basketball Indigenous round, Bundanon Art Centre, community of schools' staff development day and the Gundagai Commemoration Corroboree. As well as dance, Kyeton is extremely engaged in learning language, songs and making artefacts.

Kyeton now has an aspirational goal of one day joining a cultural organisation such as Bangarra Dance Company. He exemplifies this year's NAIDOC theme, standing up for his people and culture, and is extremely deserving of this award.

Outstanding Student Leadership Awards



Ella Lee

Year 6, Broken Hill Public School

Ella is an outstanding student leader at Broken Hill Public School. She is an excellent School Captain who leads by example. In her captain role, she leads student representative meetings, reads the newsletter for the community by video and leads school assemblies with ease. She was proud to lead the school in the Reconciliation march at Broken Hill.

Ella is a diligent student who participates in all school activities with enthusiasm and a strong commitment to do well. She has coordinated and participated in leadership video conferences that link students all over NSW. She represents at the highest levels in all her sporting pursuits. Ella is well respected by the staff and her peers. Younger students look up to her as she is a valuable role model in her school.

Outstanding Student Leadership Awards



Phoebe Little Year 11, Oxley High School

Phoebe is a proud Gomeroi woman who always participates in all aspects of school and community life. She has been a member of numerous leadership groups including the School Representative Council (SRC), House Captain and a founding member of Oxley High School Role Model and Leaders Australia program (Girls Academy).

Phoebe has been a driving force for creating change and inclusivity within the school community. She has designed an Aboriginal inspired artwork that will feature on the Oxley High School 2023 School Year 12 jersey.

As an active member of the SRC for three years, Phoebe advocates for Aboriginal students by representing her culture through a student voice and providing an Indigenous perspective to the decision making process. Throughout this role Phoebe has represented her culture and school through the following roles and events:

- Delivering the Acknowledgement of Country in Gomeroi language to the school and at local community events for ANZAC Day and NAIDOC Week.
- Acknowledgement of Country at Woolworth's renewal relaunch ceremony.
- Acknowledgement of Country at 2022 opening Tamworth Netball Association.
- Supported community initiatives including fundraising for the Cancer Council, Legacy, Relay for Life, and the Red Shield Appeal.
- Attended the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN).
- Volunteered as a peer leader for Lake Keepit Sport and Recreation Centre.
- Coaching junior soccer teams for the North Companions Football Club.

Outstanding Student Leadership Awards



Azaria Dennis

Year 12, Walgett Community College High School

Azaria brings strong talents to her role as School Captain at Walgett Community College High School. She has demonstrated outstanding qualities by embodying the role of school captain through her values and behaviour. She is always encouraging and supporting those around her to develop their best practice. Azaria brings high energy and personality to everything she does. She has ambitious goals and is extremely determined and focused.

Everything Azaria does is underpinned by compassionate care for those around her, particularly the other students who look up to her. She is reliable and has always risen to the occasion no matter what we have asked of her. Azaria has helped make our school a better place by valuing her culture and encouraging other students to do the same. Our school is better for having Azaria as our school captain and she has paved the way for future leaders to follow in her footsteps.

She is a born leader who leads by example. Her natural intelligence allows her to assess situations in which her fellow students may benefit from a different way of teaching, and she is quick to implement this in a proactive and caring way.

Outstanding Student Leadership Awards



Sarah Dennis

Year 12, Bingara Central School

Sarah has provided a voice for Aboriginal students at Bingara Central School. She established a Junior AECG at Bingara Central School and has been elected the inaugural President of the group. This involved ensuring the support of the Aboriginal students in our school community, the backing of the school executive and organising a visit from Brooke Kennedy, Vice President of the North West AECG, to visit the school to establish the program.

Sarah contributed to Bingara Central School's Cultural Days by assisting the Principal with scripts and being responsible for running ceremonies on these days. She also took part in many Myall Creek memorial days as part of Bingara Central School. This takes the voice to the broader community.

Sarah is the elected Vice Captain of the Bingara Central School SRC. This has allowed her to provide support and leadership to all students but has also enabled her to aid Aboriginal students when they encounter cultural issues or problems. She is also passionate about promoting the use of language – performing Acknowledgement of Country in Gomeroi and teaching this Acknowledgement to younger students

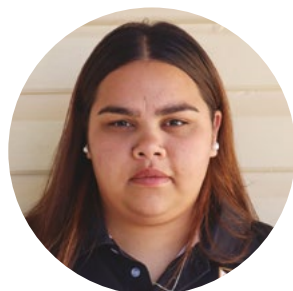


Student Awards

The NSW Department of Education Outstanding School based Apprentice/ Trainee of the Year Award

This award is presented to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander student who has maintained outstanding commitment, effort and application in completing their School-based Apprentice/Traineeship, which includes high application to workplace training and VET course, alongside their HSC.

The NSW Department of Education Outstanding School based Apprentice/ Trainee of the Year Award



Tylera Cochrane Year 12, Goodooga Central School

Tylera, a Year 12 student at Goodooga Central School is a young Yuwaalaraay woman who is a strong role model for younger students. Tylera completed 100 days of workplace learning and competencies required for her Certificate II in Business Services well before the due date. Consequently, Tylera was granted permission to complete a second School Based Traineeship - the first time this opportunity has been offered to a NSW DoE student.

Since Year 10, Tylera has worked one day a week at the REDI.E office in Goodooga and travelled to Dubbo for one-week blocks to gain experience at the REDI.E head office. She is organised and committed, submitting all work on time for all other HSC subjects. Tylera is keen to continue working at the local REDI.E office and seeks opportunities to travel to Dubbo to continue building her skills and connections. As a result, she has been offered full-time work with REDI.E post HSC.

The community is very proud of Tylera's achievements. She has been congratulated by the Executive Director, Educational Leadership and was featured in a news article published by the NSW DoE on the success of the School Based Traineeship program at Goodooga Central School.



Student Awards

The NSW Department of Education Outstanding VET in Schools Student of the Year Award

This award is presented to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students who has demonstrated outstanding achievement, commitment, effort and application to completing their VET and HSC commitments.

The NSW Department of Education Outstanding VET in Schools Student of the Year Award



Taleah Dodd Year 11, Hunter Sports High School

Taleah Dodd is a proud young woman from Gundungurra Country, currently in Year 11 at Hunter Sports High School on Awabakal/Worimi Lands. She is an accelerated HSC student who started studying SIT20213 Certificate II in Hospitality in Year 10, a year earlier than her peers in the class. Taleah has achieved exceptional results academically, placing first in the course in both the Preliminary and HSC years, as well as successfully achieving the full Cert II qualification in Hospitality in Year 11.

Taleah is a committed, friendly, and respectful student whose personal traits have enabled her to stay dedicated to the course and complete all elements in competencies to very high industry standards. Her attendance in the course is outstanding and her mature approach to balancing her sporting commitments and study has allowed her to stay focused on the completion of assessment tasks in the course.

In the practical classroom, she demonstrates leadership qualities, guiding other students quietly and respectfully. She works confidently alongside her teacher/assessor serving customers in the school café, completing online coffee orders in the role of the barista, as well as serving customers as they place orders at the café's window. Taleah's dedication to her study for Hospitality is to be commended.



Student Awards

Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Awards

This award is presented to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander 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 Awards



Penelope Towney Year 3, Waniora Public School

Penelope has represented her school and people in speaking roles on many occasions. In her first short film, 'The Land We're on with Penelope Towney' she performs an Acknowledgment of Country for the Dharawal & Yuin Nations, then speaks about Welcomes to Country, Acknowledgements of Country and why she believes they are such an important tradition to carry on. She appeared on Channel 10 Live with Narelda Jacobs & Tristan McManus, speaking about her film and sharing language and culture.

Penelope opened the 16th Annual Nanga Mai Awards, performing an Acknowledgement of Country. She co-hosted the Northern Illawarra AECG Deadly Encouragement Awards and Deadly Achievement 2021 Graduation Awards. She also opened the 'High Potential & Gifted Education community of practise' meeting in front of over 80 principals and leaders from around the Illawarra.

Deadly Science founder OAM, Corey Tutt & OAM, Kirli Saunders have both been interviewed by Penelope. She also recorded her own podcast on ABC Radio National, 'Awaye' and appeared on ABC's, 'Playschool.'

This year, Penelope was interviewed by the National NAIDOC committee speaking about what this year's theme, 'Get Up, Stand Up, Show Up' means to her. She will be a guest speaker at UOW, celebrating 'Indigenous Literacy Day' and speaking for the NSW Department of Education in regards to their Anti-Racism Policy.

Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Awards



Izabelle Trotter Year 6, Glenbrook Public School

Izabelle is a 12 year old Aboriginal girl from Wiradjuri Country. She is attending Glenbrook Public School and is currently in Year 6 on Darug and Gundungarra lands. Izabelle is a member of our school's Student Representative Council (SRC) and is a leader within our school, which means she represents the Aboriginal students within our school. Izabelle performs various roles as a leader, which includes presenting at assemblies, attending community events such as ANZAC Day and public speaking at community events.

This year Izabelle led the school in developing a whole school student created Acknowledgement of Country. She worked collaboratively with students from Year 1 to Year 6 to create an Acknowledgment of Country that Glenbrook are very proud of. Students feel they had a voice in creating and it now holds so much significance to our whole school community.

Izabelle has taken it upon herself to learn the Darug language and performs the Acknowledgement of Country in language at large events in the community. Recently opening the Penrith Valley Performing Arts Showcase at the Joan Sutherland Theatre. Izabelle speaks with confidence, authority, and clarity and as soon as the Darug language is spoken you can hear a pin drop as she captivates the audience. Izabelle is not only an exemplary school leader, but she is also an excellent public speaker.

Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Awards



Zalia Terry Year 7, Trangie Central School

Zalia is currently in Year 7 at Trangie Central School and has excelled in Public Speaking this year. She successfully made it into the regional finals for the Country Women's Association Public Speaking Competition, and consistently represents herself, her school, and her community with great pride, clarity, and confidence.

Zalia uses her skills in public speaking and her cultural pride, to perform the Welcome to Country in Wiradjuri at school events and functions. Zalia has also used her public speaking skills and her want for being a proactive student voice has gained her a coveted seat in the Minister's Student Council, officially known as DOVES (Department of Student Voices in Education & Schools). This student council advocates for students, voicing their concerns and key issues, in an effort to make real change.



Student Awards

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards

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

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards



Leihani Zoric

Year 4, Lennox Head Public School

At just nine years of age, Lennox Head Public School student Leihani Zoric has already achieved great things in the sport of surfing and has always had a special connection with the ocean. Mainly competing against much older competitors, her accolades and previous awards include the following:

- Regional NSW Champion Under 12s
- BL Blast OFF World Online 10 & Under 2nd place and Over All Star Performer of Week 3
- Skullcandy Oz Grom Open 2nd place in the Under 14 Girls
- A Wildcard entry to The RipCurl National Championships in the Under 14s.
- Junior Under 18s winner at the Wandiyali Indigenous Surffest Classic, including Open Women's 2nd place.
- Naru Goori Surf Gathering Under 14s 1st Place, Junior Women's 18 and under 2nd Place, Open Women's 4th Place.
- Surfing Australia picked her for the Talent ID Selection Camp 2022.

Leihani is always striving to achieve her goals and loves sharing the culture of her Yuat People with the world. She is a fearless competitor and super dedicated to achieving her best. Her goals are to keep improving and hopefully be the first Aboriginal female surfer on the World Tour. Leihani hopes to one day represent Australia at the Olympics for surfing.

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards



Jett Pus

Year 6, Sarah Redfern Public School

Jett Pus is an outstanding sportsman. He has been selected to represent his school in many sports and on many levels, as listed below:

- Sydney Southwest in Regional swimming (2020, 2021, 2022) and athletics (2019)
- represented at Zone in cross country (2019, 2021, 2022), swimming (2019, 2020, 2021, 2022), softball (2021, 2022), athletics (2022), AFL (2022), rugby (2022) and basketball (2022)
- Represented his school in Wanderer's Cup soccer (2021)
- Selected to represent the school in Rugby 7s (2021)
- Selected for his school's Academy of Sports teams in soccer, football, and basketball.

Outside of school this year, he has participated in 14's representative softball, swimming squads, rugby league, softball, and basketball. Jett displays great sportsmanship and models this to his teammates. He teaches his peers and younger students to graciously accept defeat and to shake hands with the opposing team. He motivates and encourages other players to persevere in the face of adversity and support each other through good times and bad.

Jett was the Junior House Captain for 2020 and is the Senior House Captain for 2021 and 2022. He continually advocates for a healthy, active lifestyle.

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards



Tawhiao Selway Year 6, Trangie Central School

Tawhiao, who is currently in Year 6, has demonstrated outstanding achievement in sport.

Tawhiao is a representative player in both Western Region Tennis and Western Region Netball. He has also been selected, due to his netball skills, as part of an International Squad to tour Fiji in December 2023.

Tawhiao displays great sportsmanship in his sporting endeavours, whether this is during school sport, local sport or at representative level.

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards



Millie Sutcliffe

Year 8, Dubbo College South Campus

Millie Sutcliffe is a proud young Wiradjuri girl who attends Dubbo College South Campus. Millie is a proud member of the school community and is involved in several community and school working groups where she is a role model and mentor to many. Millie was selected to be part of the Dubbo College Talented Athletes Program and represents the college in athletics, touch football and basketball. Millie was also selected in the Western Region Basketball Team that competed in the NSW CHS Basketball Tournament. Millie is also a member and captain of the Macquarie Under 14 League Tag team in which she is a mentor and valued team member.

Millie's basketball achievements throughout 2022 include being selected in the Dubbo Rams Under 16 Girls side that won the Western Junior League Title and the Country Championships where they finished 2nd. Millie was Selected in the Western Region Academy of Sport Basketball Squad that trained and played at an elite level throughout the year, culminating in them winning the Academy Games in Wagga Wagga. Millie was also selected in the Basketball NSW State Performance Program Under 16 Squad which involves high performance training, coaching and playing throughout 2021-2022.

Millie's proudest achievement was being selected in the NSW side as captain for the first ever National Indigenous Basketball Tournament on the Gold Coast in April this year, which led to her being selected in the All Star 5 which was the Top 5 Players at the tournament. Millie was also selected to participate in the Junior NBA Camp at the Gold Coast where they were mentored by Patty Mills and other NBL and NBA coaches and players which led to her being in a feature article in the Daily Telegraph about Indigenous basketball. Mille is one of 3 players in Australia selected to attend the opening ceremony of the FIBA Women's World Cup.

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards



Taimana Elers Year 11, Hunter Sports High School

Taimana is a proud Aboriginal man from the Worimi tribe born and raised on Awabakal/Worimi lands. He is an exceptionally talented and gifted athlete across multiple sports and is often selected as team captain. Taimana attends Hunter Sports High School for the Rugby League talented sports program. As a year 11 student, he is currently the senior squad captain. He has represented the school, region, and state for 5 years in athletics, cross country, league, union & touch.

His selections include:

Touch Football

- Hunter CHS 15s -3 years
- Opens CHS - 3 years
- 2022 NSW CHS team
- Hornets Regional team - 4 years
- 2021 Hornets Captain, runners up, NSW merit team
- 2022 Hornets u/18s Champions and NSW merit team
- 2022 Hornets u/20's Runners Up
- 16 years of age - representative touch for 10 years
- Named in the National u/18's Australian Youth Squad for 2022/2023

Rugby League

- Taimana represented Newcastle Representative Team - 2 years
- 2021 Newcastle Knights U/16s and Elite Pathways Program
- 2022 Newcastle Knights U/17s Harold Matthew's Team

Rugby Union

- Hunter Combined High School (CHS) teams in Rugby Union - 2 years
- 2021 selection for NSW 16s CHS Rugby Union Team

Outstanding Achievement in Sport Awards



Ethan Ferguson Year 12, Lambton High School

Ethan is a proud Aboriginal man and an outstanding sportsman who has excelled in rugby league (RL). Ethan began representing the Hunter Region as an U15 player in both touch football and rugby league in 2018, progressing to the Northern NSW Combined High Schools (CHS) U15s and then the U15 Touch Football Merit Team that same year. Ethan was selected in the NSW U16 Indigenous RL Team in 2019 and the U17s Harold Matthews Cup for 2019 and 2020. Ethan was selected in the U19 SG Ball, the Hunter SSSA Open RL Team and the Northern NSWCHS RL Team in 2021-2022 where he played with distinction.

These incredible achievements were surpassed this year when Ethan was selected in the NSWCHS Open Boys Rugby League Team which became national finalists, with Ethan being awarded NSWCHS Player of the ASSRL Final. Ethan progressed to the Australian Schoolboys Rugby League Team – Fiji Four Nations Tour this year, as well as the U21 Jersey Flegg Squad and is training with the Newcastle Knights NRL Training Squad throughout 2022. Whilst maintaining a focus on his academic achievements, where he has placed first in the Sport, Lifestyle and Recreation Studies at Lambton High School in Year 12.





Student Awards

Highest Achieving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Student in the 2021 HSC Award

The Outstanding HSC Achievement Award recognises the highest ATAR result in 2021 by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander student.

Highest Achieving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Student in the 2021 HSC Award



Laura Fernando Merewether High School

Laura is a proud Aboriginal woman of the Muruwari, Ngemba (maternal) and Kamilaroi, Weilwan (paternal) peoples. Laura and her families have strong ongoing connections to culture and Country, and she has been actively involved in arts, community and social action platforms from her earliest age.

Laura attended Merewether High School (Academic Selective) throughout her secondary studies and achieved an ATAR of 95.75 undertaking: English (Advanced & Extension 1), Ancient History, History (Extension), Geography, Studies of Religion and Biology achieving Course Distinctions and Academic Performance Awards.

Laura was conferred the Premier's Award for All-round Excellence in the NSW Higher School Certificate, February 2022. She has taken a gap year in 2022 and is currently travelling throughout Europe and will begin full time study (Bachelor of Arts) at the University of Melbourne in 2023.

Laura acknowledges the support both personally and academically given to her from her teachers throughout her senior studies and especially during the pandemic. 'I will look back on my time at Merewether High School with happiness and pride'.



Student Awards

Outstanding Academic Excellence Award

This award is presented to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students who have demonstrated outstanding academic excellence in any curriculum area in 2022 and who have displayed a positive attitude to school and a commitment to their future.

Outstanding Academic Excellence Awards



Flynn Gordon Year 5, Dungog Public School

Flynn has demonstrated academic excellence across the curriculum and was identified as an eligible candidate for the high-potential gifted and talented Aurora College program for Aboriginal students. He is an enthusiastic learner, always engaging in whole-class discussions to ask questions and share his ideas and opinions with his peers.

Flynn is a fantastic leader and is the Vice President of the Junior AECG committee. He is a kind friend to his peers and has a very strong connection to his identity and culture. He is a positive student who brings joy to the classroom and this has been displayed in his academic results. Flynn was the winner of the Stage 2 Public Speaking Award in 2021 for his achievement in the Multicultural Public Speaking Award and he was the winner of the Stage 3 Spelling Bee in 2022 and progressed in both areas to the Regional Spelling Bee finals.

Flynn has successfully produced results that have placed him in the top bands in English and Mathematics through Departmental check-in data and his recent NAPLAN results have placed him in the top bands in NSW. He has been awarded the Academic Excellence Award in 2020 and 2021 for his allocated stage due to his continued achievement in his studies. This award recognised Flynn's high performance in academic studies and his capacity to inspire others in various school pursuits such as academically, sporting, and cultural.

Outstanding Academic Excellence Awards



Claire McLennan Year 5, Primbee Public School

Claire is a dedicated student whose hard work is reflected in her excellent academic results. This year she was successful in gaining a position in an Opportunity Class which she attends one day per week. The class includes students from across the region who are high performers in literacy and numeracy. Claire has blossomed with this experience and transfers her critical and creative thinking skills into her everyday work.

Claire has achieved in the top 2 bands of NAPLAN 2022 across all areas. Her outstanding results are consistent with her Check in Assessment results whereby she has achieved significantly above the state average in all areas in the 2020 and 2021 assessments.

Claire consistently seeks opportunities to extend her academic knowledge and understanding. This is evident in her participation in the University of Melbourne mathematics and statistics competition in 2022. She also looks to strong Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander female role models as a source of inspiration. For her classroom biography writing task, Night of the Notables, Claire chose Karlie Noon as her notable. Claire is drawn to Karlie through her hard work and dedication to the fields of mathematics and science, much like herself, and merging these talents with her Aboriginal background. Claire has been given the opportunity to reflect on her Aboriginal heritage and this year wrote a personal Acknowledgement of Country that symbolises her connection to Country.

Outstanding Academic Excellence Awards



Sophie Christian Year 11, Crestwood High School

Sophie Christian has demonstrated outstanding academic excellence in the pre-University Course in 2021 and has displayed a positive attitude to school and a commitment to her future studies. Sophie pursued the opportunity to complete an Undergraduate First Year “Critical Thinking” Macquarie University course through their Indigenous Pathway on top of her Year 11 studies. She completed the unit across a 5 month period during semester one. Sophie designated Wednesday afternoons to complete the weekly university work and assessment tasks. Sophie displayed incredible commitment and dedication, resulting in her achieving a Distinction. This is an amazing result for a Year 11 student, completing University distinction level work. This achievement has resulted in an offer from Macquarie University to study Law in 2024 and this course will be counted in her degree. Sophie found the course enlightening; she developed her time management skills and her ability to take on challenges. Sophie is keen to encourage any future Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students in Year 11 to complete the course.

In addition to this, Sophie continues to excel in her Year 11 studies, achieving a Top 20 award for semester one and has been elected to the Year 12 leadership team for 2023. Sophie is an excellent role model at our school for Indigenous students and plays a leading role in our program at Crestwood to celebrate Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander culture. She is a gifted artist who has painted about her Wiradjuri heritage for our Indigenous garden.

Outstanding Academic Excellence Awards



Lachlan Masters Year 11, Erina High School

Lachlan is an outstanding student who consistently strives to achieve academic excellence. His Preliminary HSC Academic Report Semester 1 - 2022 is extremely impressive and is evidence of his excellent effort and application to his senior studies. These include, 1st in the year for PDHPE, Music, Chemistry Stage 6, and Mathematics Advanced Stage 6, as well as 4th in Mathematics Extension 1 Stage 6.

Lachlan's teachers describe him as mature, diligent, productive, disciplined, organised and enthusiastic. Lachlan consistently strives to build upon his results in order to achieve his personal best outcomes. This is evidenced in his consistent participation in the after-school maths homework club.

Lachlan is a proactive member of our school community who volunteers his time during break on Fridays to tutor Stage 4 students. He is also a member of our Aboriginal Leadership Team and a participant in the Duke of Edinburgh program. He has received 55 positive mentions this year for positive attitudes toward learning as well as Bronze and Silver Awards. Lachlan is an extremely capable and dedicated young man and an outstanding role model for Aboriginal students.

Outstanding Academic Excellence Awards



Ausha Paulson Year 12, Taree High School

Ausha is a proud Aboriginal woman with strong connections to both the Biripi and Worimi communities. Ausha is a hard-working and diligent student who has achieved consistently high results across all subject areas. Throughout Ausha's time at Taree High School, she has proven to be a self-motivated, respectful, high-achieving student with a strong work ethic. This is evident in her semester reports, achieving 1st place in 3 subject areas, 2nd in one and 3rd in two.

Ausha regularly demonstrates her ability to achieve education goals while participating in co-curricular activities such as performing throughout Biripi Country with the Taree High School Aboriginal dance group, working part-time and representing NSW and Australia in a variety of sports. During Ausha's educational journey, she has received a substantial number of awards that include categories such as academic achievement, too deadly, certificate of appreciation, leadership, diligence, and school spirit.

Ausha is currently applying for early entry into medicine at University of New South Wales. Her conscientious approach to her learning should ensure she will achieve her goal of becoming a doctor and fulfilling her dream of providing care for others.



Student Awards

Outstanding Achievement in Performing, Creative and Visual Arts Awards

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

Outstanding Achievement in Performing, Creative and Visual Arts Awards



Summer Kirby Year 6, Tuggerah Public School

Born on Guringai Country, Summer is an intensely proud young Bundjalung woman from Tuggerah Public School. A gifted and talented performer, Summer excels in highlighting the unique and spiritual experience of Aboriginal dance for her culture and people.

Summer is captivating and versatile and helps promote Aboriginal identity through dance. She thrives, sharing the traditions of her people and keeping Aboriginal culture alive for future generations. She is creative and blends her passions of dance, art, and song to continue the storytelling traditions of her ancestors.

Summer's commitment to dance and culture is outstanding, leading to her becoming a beacon of admiration for Aboriginal students in our school. She uses her skills and knowledge of dance to mentor younger Aboriginal students in their cultural pursuits and has facilitated Aboriginal dance workshops for local schools. Her ability and effortless leadership have seen her represent the Tuggerah Public School's Aboriginal Dance Group as lead dancer since its inception. Under her lead the dance group opened the Central Coast Dance Festival and Central Coast Showcase.

Summer uses dance as a portal to guide and motivate her peers and younger students to be culturally strong and aspire to do their best.

Outstanding Achievement in Performing, Creative and Visual Arts Awards



Levi Roberts Year 6, Ballina Public School

In addition to his good level of school attendance, Levi demonstrates a commitment to designing and creating art for personal, school and community projects.

Levi has taken it upon himself to enter the prestigious ‘Young Archie’s Portrait Competition’ for which he received an acknowledgment. He designed a mural for the eastern campus of the Ballina Public School and completed a page for a book titled “Pindan Dream Princess.” He is currently planning on entering the ‘Little Darlings Youth Portrait Prize’.

Levi is a proud Aboriginal boy, who loves sketching. He is inspired by his grandmother who originally helped encourage him. Levi is a good friend who has been known to draw portraits, animations and other pictures for his friends and he regularly carries his portfolio to display and encourage others to draw.

Levi willingly participates in all drawing activities wherever possible. He is currently engaged in the PBL drawing skills activities as a reward for his good behaviour at school. Levi always pitches in when it comes to Art. He confidently demonstrates leadership in the creative area, which positively impacts himself, his peers, and his school.

Outstanding Achievement in Performing, Creative and Visual Arts Awards



Trinity Dawson

Year 9, Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College Tumby Umbi Campus

Trinity is a proud Worimi and Yuin woman who has embraced her culture through her creativity in fashion and design. At the age of 14 she designed her own Indigenous sleepwear range, Dream Time and in February 2022 was invited to the New York fashion show to both model and present her unique Aboriginal fashion line. Trinity has since been invited to Miami, New York, and Paris to present her sleepwear and new activewear range, Deadly Active.

Her designs have been worn by Acorda, displayed on billboards in New York and feature in Getty Images. Trinity has also been invited to the Sydney Multicultural Fashion show to receive an award for her work as an Aboriginal designer. Both her sleepwear and activewear designs express her unique creativity combined with her passion for her culture and raising awareness of First Nations Peoples at local, national, and international levels.

Trinity is an outstanding role model to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students at Tumby Umbi Campus. Her quiet, modest but confident and positive manner has earned her the respect of teachers, peers, the community and international fashion designers and photographers.

Outstanding Achievement in Performing, Creative and Visual Arts Awards



Olivia Scott Year 12, Holsworthy High School

Olivia Scott is a Year 12 student who has demonstrated outstanding talent and application in dance. Olivia has a keen passion for dance and over the last 4 years Olivia has participated in over 15 regional competitions placing either first, second or third in many of these. She has completed her RAD Intermediate Ballet exams with merit and is now working on her advanced.

Olivia is a featured dancer with Southern Stars (SSPC), a regional champion in the Spotlight Championship and regional runner up in Theatre Arts title championship. Olivia is also the Regional champion in the Dynamic Song and dance festival and placed First in the National Dance duo Competition in duo lyrical. She was also part of the Aboriginal Dance ensemble for the Schools Spectacular.

Olivia's ambition is to pursue her dance interest as 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. Her dream has come to fruition this year with a dance scholarship from a leading dance school in 2023.

Olivia's accomplishments in dance, her talent, pursuing her dream and her knowledge and willingness to embrace and pass on her Aboriginal culture to others through her passion for dance make her an extremely worthy candidate for the Performing Arts Award.





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 and/or Torres Strait Islander students.

Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education Award



Joanne Graham Kurnell Public School

Joanne has led her school towards deep engagement with Aboriginal students, their families and community. Kurnell Public School is a culturally safe school for Aboriginal students and their families as well as a place where all families can gain a richer understanding of Aboriginal histories and culture at a local grassroots level.

Jo is the Chair of the Sutherland Primary Principals' Association's Aboriginal Reference Group; member of the NSW DoE's Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorates' Working Party; and lead principal of the Port Hacking Network's Aboriginal Education priority. Jo regularly promotes initiatives and resources to the 63 schools within the Sutherland Tri-Network.

The presence of culture across the whole school demonstrates her ongoing commitment to ensuring that everyone knows "Aboriginal Education Matters" these include:

- Traditional art designs across the school including a Yarning Circle installed in consultation with Rick O'Brien and the Stronga Sista program and Uncle Bruce Howell, and wall murals.
- Acknowledgement of Country workshops delivered with Stage 3 students and publicly displayed.
- Employing an AEO at the beginning of 2021 for 1 day a week which has led to authentic cultural perspective lessons across the whole school, lunchtime cultural activities, and outdoor classrooms. Fostering stronger relationships with Aboriginal families through regular "Koori Cuppa" afternoons and PLP reviews are done in a culturally sensitive environment with parents, students and AEO present.
- Engaging Sydney based Wiradjuri artist to create artwork of "Kurnell Community story" with Aboriginal families involved, new staff shirts, hats, sports jackets are being designed from this.
- Being a highly respected and trusted Principal in the Sutherland Shire and was invited to join a partnership working party group in 2021.
- Installing graphic artwork with Gurruwul on display at main gate school entrance, endorsed by local AECG executive.
- Coordinating, collaborated, and consulted on a successful One Mob Day at Endeavour High with over 1000 students.
- Taking an active role in our network to connect community members and encourages other Principals to connect with their community and seek their advice for their schools.
- NAIDOC being celebrated and acknowledged over the whole of Term 3.



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 and/or Torres Strait Islander students through the implementation of a school Aboriginal languages program.

Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Languages Award

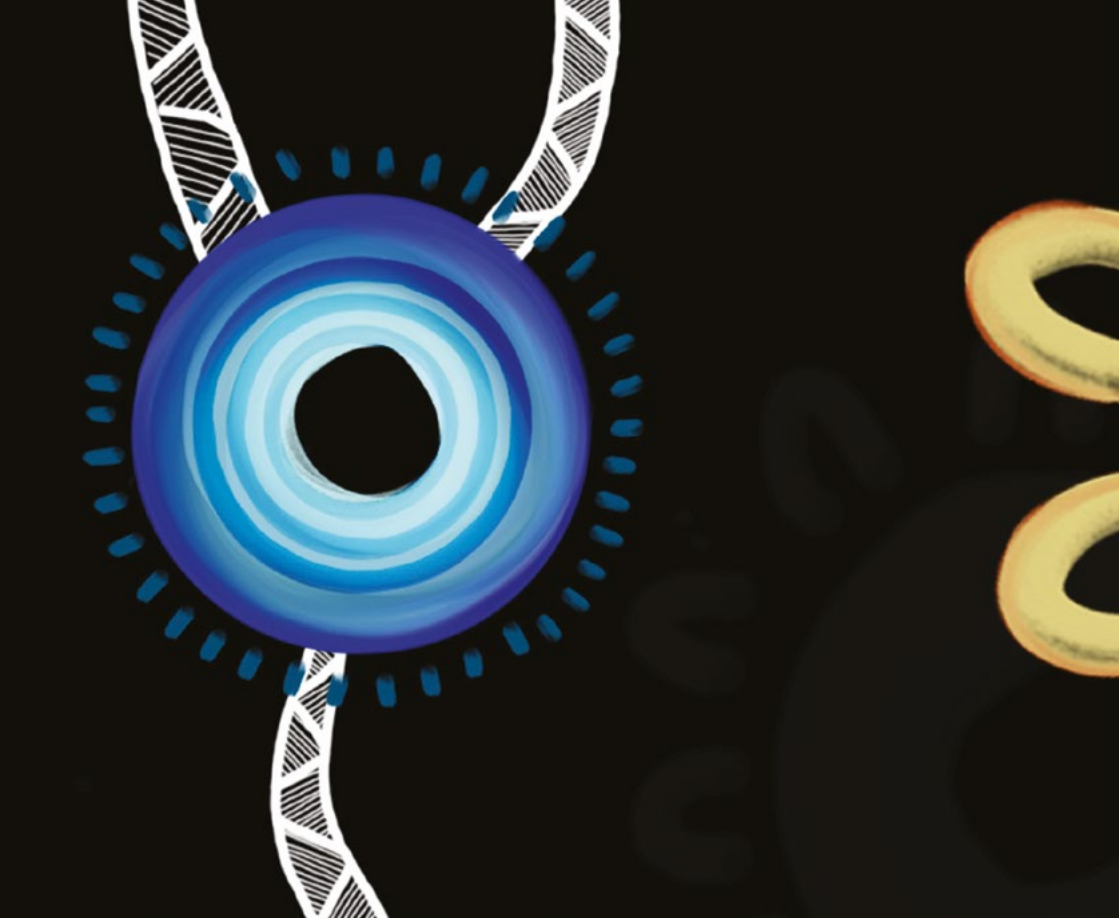


Noel Caldwell (Uncle Charlie) Casino West Public School

Uncle Charlie is a very passionate man about his culture and holds it very close to his heart. Aboriginal language and culture is something that Uncle Charlie practices every day. His knowledge is continually broadening people's awareness and attitudes towards Aboriginal languages, culture and education.

He leads our traditional dance group which is made up of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal kids. Uncle Charlie is dedicated to promoting and implementing Aboriginal languages, culture, and education within our school. He has done so much and continues to do so much for our whole school including painting three murals within our school. Uncle Charlie is committed to enhancing the learning of our Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal staff members and jarjums regarding to Aboriginal languages, culture, and education.

Uncle Charlie's commitment to achieving results in Aboriginal languages whether it be in the classroom, amongst staff members or by increasing their cultural competency or supporting community within the school by encouraging their involvement in everyday school life.



Staff Awards

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award

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

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award



Karen Lane **Goodooga Central School**

Aunty Karen is a Yuwaalaraay woman who was the School Captain at Goodooga Central School. For 17 years, Aunty Karen has provided leadership, cultural knowledge and high expectations to students, teachers, and the executive as an SLSO at Goodooga Central School as well as being President of the local AECG. Aunty Karen is a highly valued and respected member of a team supporting secondary students to complete Year 12 with a pathway to further education or employment.

Aunty Karen is a strong matriarch; caring and supportive, whilst firm and fair. She is a fierce advocate for our students, school and community. For six years, Aunty Karen has travelled to Dubbo with female students to complete their block work placements. Our remote female students would not be able to undertake school-based traineeships without her and this year, two Year 12 students will complete traineeships in Business Services and Education Support. During block placements, Aunty Karen is a 'mum away from home' who shops for groceries and work clothing. She teaches responsibility and life skills, ensuring students complete their work journals each evening. Most importantly, Aunty Karen shares her skills, attributes, and life experience to provide strong emotional and cultural support, so students achieve their goals.



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 and/or Torres Strait Islander students and a commitment to working with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, their families and communities.

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



Sharlene Deamer Toomelah Public School

Sharlene is a committed teacher who has dedicated her career to teaching First Nation students at Toomelah Public School. Sharlene has been a constant in the school for students and the community. She is highly respected by Elders, students, staff, parents, and community.

Sharlene has learnt the Gomeroi language, enabling her to support the teaching of language and through her teaching has helped foster a greater understanding of language and culture in the community. She has worked with local language speakers to write and deliver language programs. She has planned many important events including meticulously prepared NAIDOC days at school, excursions to Boobera Lagoon and local fishing trips. She has planned, prepared, and presented the Toomelah Public School fete exemplifying her ability to deliver a large-scale project.

Her classrooms are always student focussed with a link to culture and hands on student-centred learning with outstanding units. These included the Bush Tucka Café, culminating in a Café on a verandah, serving the local community.

Sharlene ensures that she is up to date with new learning and policy changes through reading and engaging in professional learning. She has undertaken the role of Assistant Principal for the last four years, supporting the work of the executive team. Sharlene involves herself in all relevant areas of the school.

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



Bryce Walker **Glebe Public School**

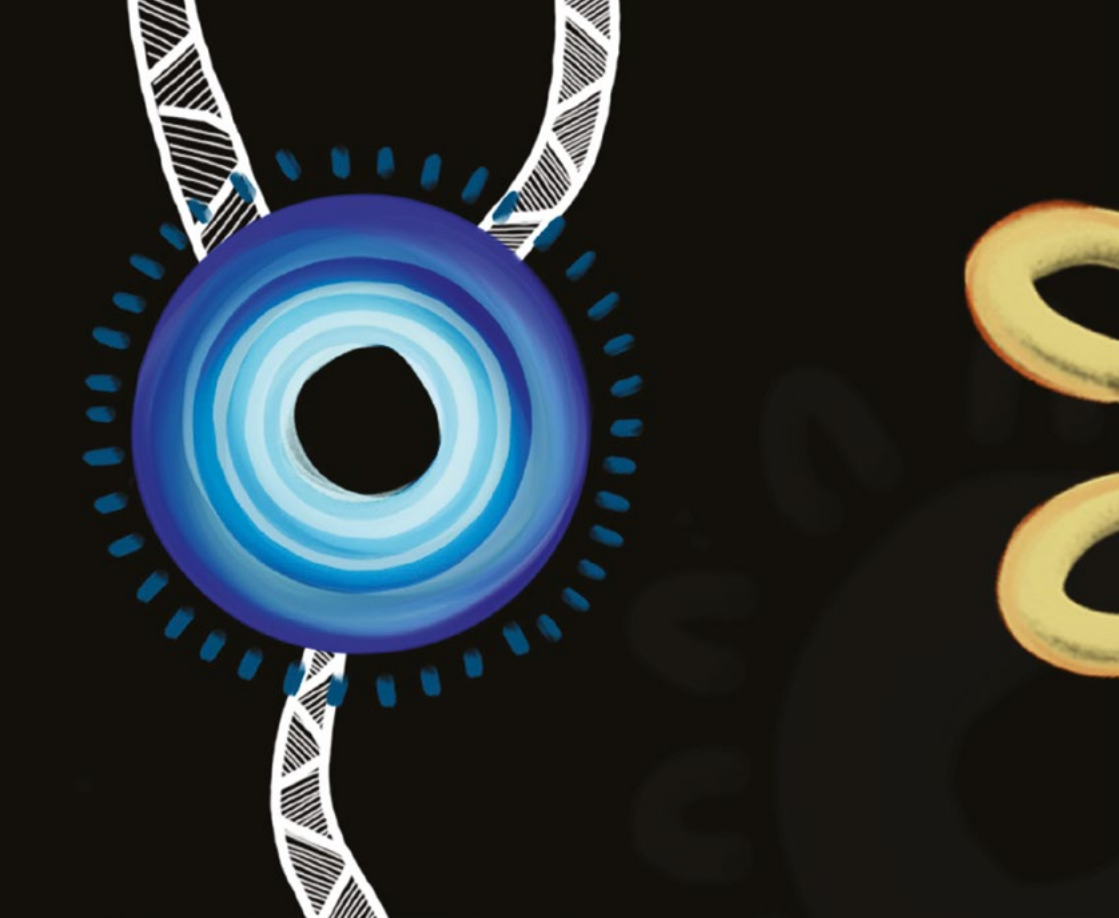
Bryce has been teaching at Glebe Public School for 18 years. During this time, he prioritises making and nurturing relationships with Aboriginal students and their families. His long connection to the Glebe community means that some of these relationships have been fostered over fifteen years. This gives him exceptional connections with Aboriginal families using his strong knowledge of Aboriginal histories and cultures. Bryce has authentic partnerships with the local AECG and always seeks advice when needed.

Bryce advocates fiercely for the school and for the Aboriginal students and families at the school when meeting with representatives and system leaders from the NSW Department of Education. He uses his positional power as Principal to advocate for students who otherwise may not be as well represented in system-level conversations. He fights for more support and resources to better support the students who need it most. Recently he advocated for the Deputy Principal Instructional Leader position at Glebe Public School as he saw the importance of closing the gap with the Aboriginal students and families.

Bryce supports, values and advocates for programs and initiatives that celebrate Aboriginal cultures and identities (Jarjums, NAIDOC Day celebrations) and support the wellbeing and success of Aboriginal students (Breakfast Club) and the workforce development of his families through supporting the Winanggaay Program.

Bryce genuinely wants to put the Aboriginal Education Policy into action and by this, he seeks advice from Aboriginal colleagues when responding to situations that require sensitivity and insight to ensure students and their families are supported in culturally safe and respectful ways. He understands and focuses on building collective staff understanding of Aboriginal perspectives and cross curricular priorities and has high expectations for the way Aboriginal students are supported at school and what they will achieve. Bryce has previously been recognised for his commitment to Aboriginal Education by receiving a Deadly Kids Award.





Staff Awards

Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a non-School Based Staff Member

Presented to a non-school based employee of the NSW Department of Education who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to the well-being and educational achievements of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students.

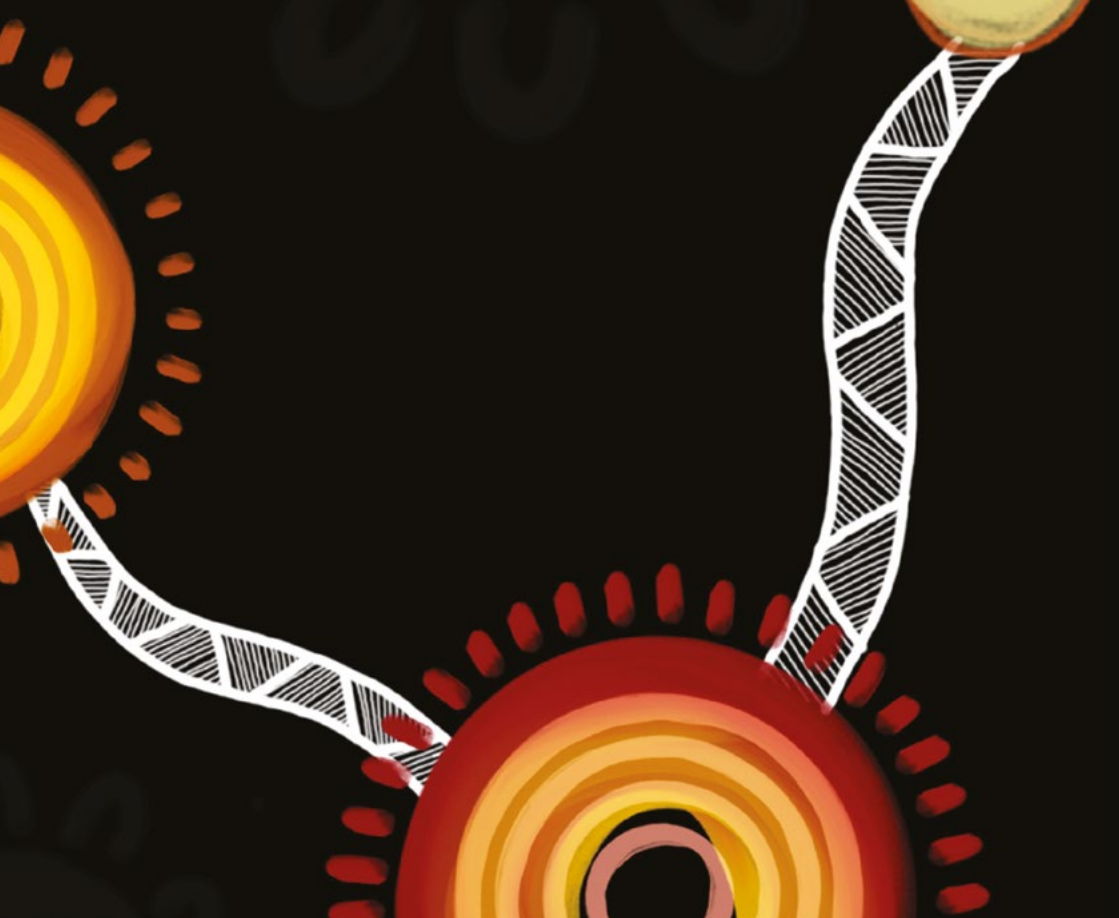
Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award for Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a non-School Based Staff Member



Uncle Michael Jarrett **Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships**

Uncle Micklo is an Aboriginal Language and Culture Officer and teacher of Gumbaynggirr Language. In the Gumbaynggirr area he is known as a 'superstar' and often appears in both local and national media. He consistently goes above and beyond delivering a Language program across many schools in his area of responsibility and works closely with the NSW AECG Inc.

For Uncle Micklo, Language teaching is not just a job but a life purpose, and this is apparent and recognised in everything he does. He created the highly successful Action Research workshop, which helps take a whole-of-school approach to Aboriginal Language teaching. After the success of the program, he assisted his colleagues who had similar programs to deliver by mentoring them through the process to achieve success.



School & Community Awards

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member Awards

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

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member Awards



Auntie Isabel Reid Wagga Wagga Network and surrounding schools

Auntie Isabel is the 2021 NSW Senior Australian of the Year winner and 2022 winner of the Wagga Wagga NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award. Auntie Isabel uses her time to raise awareness of the impacts of the Stolen Generations and advocates to close the gap in First Nations education.

When she returned to Country after spending many years in Cootamundra Girls Home, Auntie Isabel took herself to TAFE to learn how to read and write. From there Auntie Isabel acquired a job at a local primary school in Wagga, teaching First Nations children to read and write. She also worked at the Juvenile Justice Centre in Wagga Wagga (Shepherds Park) working with boys from all Nations, acting as a mum and cooking Johnny cakes and just being there to listen.

Auntie Isabel visits many schools in the region to talk to staff and students about the Stolen Generation and the impacts this had on families and why we struggle to get them past the school gate. Auntie Isabel said she had only hoped she could use her voice to help her community “When I do this work, I’m not thinking about what I can get at the end of it, I just love what I do. I just want to help my people, the work doesn’t stop,” she said. “I’ll still use my voice in the community for what matters. It’s just so great to be a part of building a better future for our young ones and to make sure the wrongs of the past are recognised and made right”.

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member Awards



Uncle BJ Cruse Eden Marine High School

Uncle BJ Cruse has dedicated his life to land rights and Education for all First Nation Peoples since the late 1960s when he was Treasurer of the Wallaga Lake Political Youth Group and attended citizen rights meetings prior to and following the 1967 Referendum. His passion for education stems from his own lack of due to policies that were in place during his life. Uncle BJ has been an integral part of our local High School and Primary School by bringing change, acceptance, belonging and uniting the school community as one.

His massive support has been through all NAIDOC celebrations, teaching local South Coast language in schools and sharing his knowledge about local history and passing that down to the next generation. In recent times he has been an integral part of our new pilot program through AOPD (Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate) with the development of this program that will include both the High School and Primary School in Eden.

His knowledge of the Education system is something beyond his years and the passion that he has for the educational outcomes for First Nation students is something remarkable. Not only does he fight for education but he has been the Chair of Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council for more than 35 years and through his position has campaigned for land rights for our local community. His dedication to educational rights for First Nation students is beyond words, he is a humble person who never asks for recognition and he is highly deserving of this award. As a small community of schools, we are blessed to have such an inspiring man to help teach us all and for him to pass on his wisdom to us all.

Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member Awards



Uncle Terry Denzil Alexandria Park Community School

Uncle Terry is a highly respected and passionate Elder who has worked relentlessly on behalf of his community to ensure culturally nourishing schooling for over 30 years. Uncle Terry Denzil is Alexandria Park Community School (APCS). When Cleveland Street High School, Redfern, Waterloo, and Alexandria Public Schools were closed, Uncle Terry was the lead spokesperson who argued with the NSW Government for the need for a school in the local area. As a result of his voice and leadership, APCS was created. After community-wide consultation, recognition and honour was given to Uncle Terry when the school gymnasium was named after him.

For decades Uncle Terry has been sharing his extensive knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal histories, culture, and experiences of Aboriginal people with local schools ensuring that school leaders, staff, students, and parents have access to high-quality cultural awareness learning opportunities.

As a Cultural mentor to APCS Uncle Terry is the linchpin in forming relationships with local Aboriginal organisations, and families ensuring that Alexandria Park has authentic programs that support an ongoing commitment to increasing knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal histories, culture, and experiences of Aboriginal people.

As a member of the APCS 'Program Reference Group' (PRG), Uncle Terry spoke to NSW Infrastructure, the architects, and builders of the redevelopment of the school of the history of the land upon which the school sits, Cadigal land, how the traditional owners lived on and cared for their Country. Uncle Terry inspired the architects to design a school that pays respect to the Cadigal people and the traditional lands.

Uncle Terry has been the driving force to introduce the Gomberee into the school. Uncle Terry sought knowledge and permission from Cadigal man Shayne Beckham to work with the school leadership team to name school buildings and significant spaces in the Gomberee language and introduced Gomberee language lessons into school programs.



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.

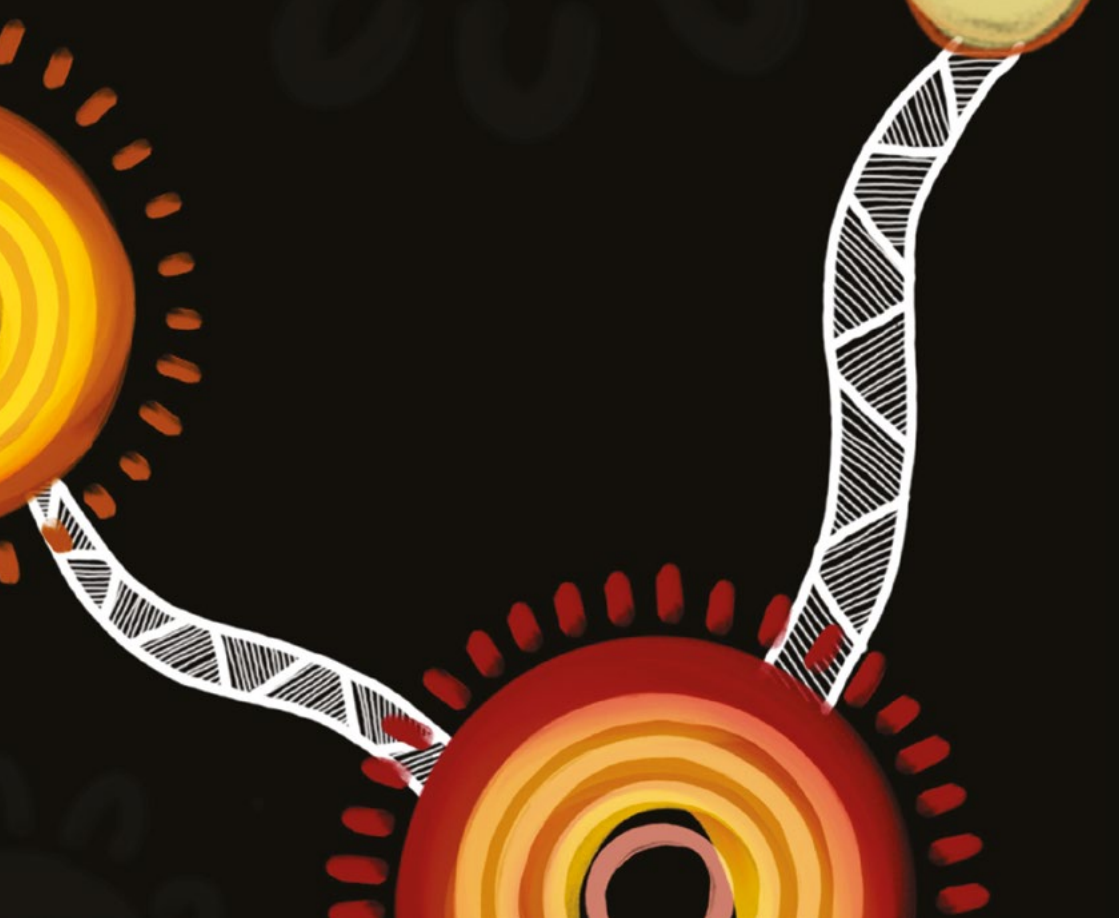
Outstanding School and Community Partnership Award



Morisset High School and Itji-Marru Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

In July 2022 more than 300 members of the Morisset community came together to celebrate 30 years of the Itji-Marru Aboriginal Education and Resource Centre. The combined celebration organised by the Itji-Marru AECG, Morisset High School, and the school's Junior AECG included two community events, attended by former, current and future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their families, staff past and present, leaders from partner primary schools, community and Local Members of parliament, who celebrated the success of Itji-Marru in boosting participation and educational aspiration of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Almost 700 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have been supported in their learning through Itji-Marru since it opened on July 21, 1992. Currently, 25 per cent (143 students) of the Morisset High School student population are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Former students shared their stories of the positive impact their connection to Itji-Marru has had on their lives after school, a stomping ground and Indigenous Garden created by students, traditional dance, and the talent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were showcased at the events, and a series of videos were captured to highlight the importance of Itji-Marru to the greater community.



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, community schools or community member that has 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 and/or Torres Strait Islander students.

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



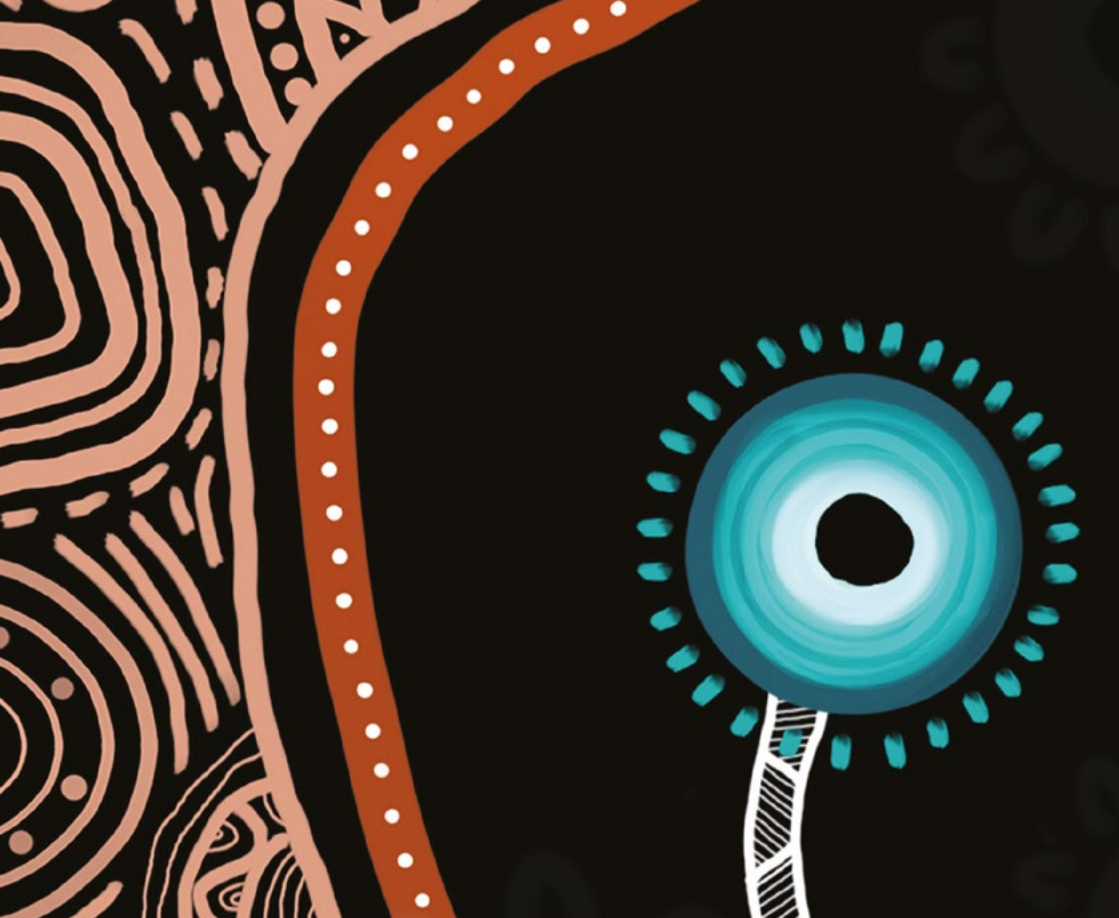
Dr John Lester Adamstown Public School

A Wonnarua man, Uncle John Lester, is well known in the NSW community as a compassionate, respected, and determined leader. Uncle John has been at the forefront of Aboriginal education since 1977 when he was appointed as the first Aboriginal teacher at Redfern Primary School and then Moree High School. He was also the first Aboriginal TAFE Principal in Australia.

Uncle John's wealth of knowledge, experience and generosity saw him rise through the ranks. He was appointed the first Aboriginal Director of Aboriginal Education for the NSW Department of Education. Uncle John's tireless work to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students is honoured with his life membership and re-election to executive roles in the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. He has recently retired from his role as the Professor of Aboriginal Studies and the Director of the Wollotuka Institute at the University of Newcastle.

Uncle John is a pillar of Adamstown Public School. He is embraced and respected by all members of the school community as a volunteer Elder in Residence. Uncle John challenges, supports, and builds teacher capacity to ensure that quality teaching and best practice is happening in all classrooms to meet the educational needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students. He also has weekly conference sessions with Aboriginal students to review their learning goals and plan future learning goals to ensure that they are meeting their personal best. Uncle John promotes a safe and inclusive learning environment by greeting students and their families at the school gate, sharing his wealth of knowledge at kindergarten transitions, hosting open Q&A forums, attending P&C meetings, PLP afternoons, NAIDOC events and is a fixture in all classrooms.

The students, community and teachers can visibly see and feel the unconditional patience, time, knowledge and joy that Uncle John brings to our school community every week. Uncle John is admired, trusted and loved by all students K-6.



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

Kimberwalli Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education



Kevin Boland Schools Infrastructure NSW

Kevin Boland is a group leader of the Western Sydney Asset Management Unit, Schools Infrastructure NSW. Uncle Kev, as he is now affectionately known at Kimberwalli, the Aboriginal Centre for Excellence, has been an invaluable source of support, expertise, and knowledge, resulting in transformational changes at Kimberwalli that will support cultural and education outcomes for Aboriginal students in Western Sydney for generations to come.

Kevin has managed and delivered multiple projects in short time frames to create a new Cultural and Community hub, whereby; Aboriginal students and their families held a graduation event for 100 participants in the Boys Didge Program, 120 students engaged in our school holiday program and youth have connected with Elders to learn painting and storytelling.

He has transformed an old science lab into a VET standard Hospitality Training Kitchen, installed new roofing to prevent leaks and upgraded a very old and unusable canteen and hall. All spaces will deliver cultural, educational and wellbeing outcomes for current and future generations of Aboriginal students and their families.



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



Leah Anderson

Director, Priority School Recruitment Support, School Workforce

Leah Anderson, Director, Priority School Recruitment Support, School Workforce has been outstanding in supporting the implementation of the Connected Communities Strategy from a human resources systems perspective.

Leah's unwavering leadership demonstrated through her relentless support given throughout the implementation of the Connected Communities Strategy, has not only provided stability to the school's staff, but more importantly provided a customised service to Executive Principals ensuring that they are listened to and supported within their unique location and circumstance.

The responsiveness of Leah to be innovative and lead her team to work differently and creatively to ensure the Connected Communities schools are well positioned to deliver teaching and learning has a cascading impact on students, parents, and the whole school Community.

Connected Communities schools and the directorate have valued the high-level leadership, expertise and collegiality provided and are grateful for the ongoing assistance from Leah and the officers within the Priority School Recruitment Support and congratulate Leah on receiving this award of exceptional recognition.



Recognition Awards

Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education

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

Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education



New South Wales
Aboriginal Education
Consultative Group Inc.

NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc.

This year's winner of the Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award for Outstanding Contribution to Aboriginal Education is the NSW AECG. The department's primary partner on all matters of Aboriginal education, the NSW AECG works with the department, schools and communities to enhance and strengthen educational and cultural outcomes for Aboriginal students.

This award is given for their invaluable support, contribution, community leadership and partnership of the Aboriginal Education Policy and its implementation into NSW public schools. As we come together today and recognise the 40th Anniversary of the Policy, it is important to celebrate the NSW AECG's ongoing commitment in driving improved outcomes for all Aboriginal students in NSW. One of the many highlights was the partnership, and contribution, of the NSW AECG toward the 2004 Report of the Review of Aboriginal Education.

The NSW AECG continues to lead the way, supporting Aboriginal students, families and communities through a range of academic and cultural initiatives and programs that uphold the commitments of the Aboriginal Education Policy.

The NSW Department of Education would
like to thank you for attending the
NSW Department of Education
17th Annual Nanga Mai Awards 2022



