



# The Yarning Circle

Summer 2022 | Edition #11

Artwork by Chris Edward (2010)  
*Swimmy Creek* [Mixed media on Latvian  
linen 100cm x 145cm Western Sydney  
University Art Collection Image in  
Western Red].

## Acknowledgement

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, Western Sydney University acknowledges the Darug, Eora, Dharawal (also referred to as Tharawal) and Wiradjuri peoples and thanks them for their support for its work in their lands in Greater Western Sydney and beyond.

## Disclaimers

The opinions expressed in these articles are those of the authors and contributors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the University or the organization to which the authors are affiliated. Statements of fact are believed to be true as at the date of publication, and the University accepts no liability for the truth or accuracy of such statements.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that the following magazine may contain images or names of deceased persons.

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Photography: Sally Tsoutas.

## Building the Next Generation of Indigenous Leaders at Western's Indigenous Staff Conference

On Friday 28<sup>th</sup> of October, Western Sydney University's Indigenous staff members came together to celebrate, reflect and learn at the annual Indigenous Staff Conference. The 2022 conference theme was '*Building the Next Generation of Indigenous Leaders*', providing full-time and part-time Indigenous staff the opportunity to learn about ongoing developments in the Indigenous portfolio at Western, whilst having fun and networking with other Indigenous staff.

Professor Barney Glover AO, Vice-Chancellor and President addressed the conference and congratulated Western's staff on their collegiality, teamwork and commitment through the year. The Vice-Chancellor noted the contribution of the Indigenous portfolio as Western aims to serve and empower our community and to be recognised as a national leader in Indigenous education, employment and research.

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Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership, Professor Michelle Trudgett also provided an update and yarned about how Western aims to continue to work together to achieve the ambitious goals set in the 2020-2025 Western Sydney University Indigenous Strategy. Professor Susan Page provided an Indigenous Learning and Teaching update. Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews provided an Indigenous Research update. Fiona Towney discussed the support and events offered by the Badanami Centre of Indigenous Education. Stacey Kim Coates provided an Indigenous employment update yarning about key initiatives including the development of the Indigenous Alumni Network, and goals for Indigenous student and staff employment at Western. Attendees also engaged in group discussions focused on key strategic priorities and approaches to be taken together across Western to support Indigenous success in the coming year.

After lunch the Indigenous staff network tested their communication, teamwork and construction skills when undertaking a powerful activity called Helping Hands. The teams built prosthetic hands which will be sent to amputee children overseas who are victims of landmines. It was a powerful activity, reminding all staff of their sense of purpose and the value of teamwork.

Professor Michelle Trudgett said the Indigenous Staff Conference has become an important annual event in the Western Sydney University calendar.

"This year's Indigenous Staff Conference was a huge success with Aunty Jean and over 40 professional and academic staff coming together on Parramatta South Campus. I would like to thank all involved in organising and facilitating the event, particularly the Indigenous employment team and the great team from Human Resources who assisted with the Helping Hands activity. I would also like to extend my thanks to all attendees for their commitment and contributions. The Indigenous Staff Conference provided an opportunity to celebrate how much we have achieved at Western, whilst acknowledging that there is still much to do in this space," said Professor Trudgett.

Stacey Kim Coates, Manager of Indigenous Employment in the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership at Western Sydney University, said that the clear message from the conference is that we need to support and nurture one another to serve our communities with excellence and integrity.

"The conference demonstrated that when people work together in a strong

## Upcoming events

Western Sydney University has planned a number of face-to-face and digital events in the coming months to showcase Indigenous knowledges, success and stories and empower networking and learning opportunities across all teams and Schools. All events may be subject to change. Please follow the link for updates on Western's calendar and upcoming events:

<http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander/events>

community, with a shared goal and common purpose, they can make the impossible possible. The speakers and activities at the conference demonstrated Western's commitment to building the next generation of Indigenous leaders," said Stacey Coates.

To find out more about Western's commitment to Indigenous staff, students and community please read the 2020-2025 Indigenous Strategy by following the link,

[www.westernsydney.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1672462/2020-2025\\_Indigenous\\_Strategy\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1672462/2020-2025_Indigenous_Strategy_FINAL.pdf)

## MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR, INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

Welcome to the final edition of The Yarning Circle for 2022. This provides an opportune moment to reflect on the year as it comes to an end. The Indigenous community within Western Sydney University is strong and dynamic, continuing to grow, not only in size but also in reputation, amongst our communities. At Western we now have 846 Indigenous students, 106 Indigenous staff and over 1500 Indigenous Alumni. This incredible community is supported by our Elders who generously share their knowledge and wisdom with the university, enabling us to be the best advocates for our families and communities. It is important that, as I reflect on the year, I take a moment to thank every person who has contributed to our journey of success.

This edition of The Yarning Circle is packed with stories of incredible achievements by Indigenous students, staff, researchers, alumni and Elders at Western. Notably, there are several stories that highlight important events that have taken place over the last three months. A personal highlight for me was the 2022 Indigenous Staff Conference which was held at the end of October. The collegiality, professionalism and commitment displayed by all staff on the day was outstanding.

In 2023 we will focus on the Uluru Statement and the Voice to Parliament, exploring what this means for our community. In saying that, I recognise many of our younger people have not yet had the opportunity to vote in a referendum. As a University we will provide information to assist our community members to make informed decisions on this matter of national significance.

I would like to wish you all a safe holiday break with your friends and family. I look forward to welcoming you back in 2023



Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership. Photography: Sally Tsoutas.

as we commence what will be another year where we celebrate Indigenous excellence.

**Professor Michelle Trudgett (BA, MPS, EdD)**

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership



# BOLD

## conversations

### Dr Sarah Kennedy

The Bold Conservation segment encourages Indigenous staff and students to share their honest perspectives and opinions about key topics and current issues in order to promote discussions in a culturally safe environment.

Dr Sarah Kennedy



Dr Sarah Kennedy is a proud Wiradjuri woman and lecturer in Sport, Health & Physical Education in the School of Health Sciences at Western Sydney University. She has an undergraduate degree in Exercise and Sports Science, and a master degree in Teaching and Exercise Science (strength and conditioning). Dr Kennedy's PhD focused on the evaluation of the Resistance Training for Teens program from effectiveness to state-wide dissemination. This was the first school-based strength training program to be delivered at such a scale, in partnership with the New South Wales Department of Education. Sarah's current research is focused on the design, delivery, scale-up and evaluation of school-based physical activity interventions, spanning from primary to senior high school students, with particular interest in youth resistance training, physical activity promotion and implementation at-scale.

In the following segment Dr Kennedy offers insights and research findings related to youth inactivity, the importance of school-based health promotion and the need for widespread implementation of prevention interventions.

Physical activity is an important preventative health measure – benefiting both our physical and psychological health. Evidence highlights the link between meeting physical activity guidelines and a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, anxiety and depression. Despite the benefits of physical activity, only around 25% of Australians do enough activity. However, for our mob that number is lower, with only around 12% doing enough physical activity. This is a serious concern, given that physical inactivity is a major modifiable risk factor contributing to many of the major chronic conditions

negatively impacting Indigenous peoples' health and wellbeing.

Most people are familiar with aerobic activity, including things like walking, swimming, or riding your bike. The type of activity people are not as familiar with is muscle strengthening activity, such as resistance training. This is where we use our own body weight or an external force (such as free weights) to improve muscular fitness. In addition to the benefits mentioned above, resistance training has the added advantage of improving bone health (very important as we age) and our ability to perform activities of daily living. The participation rates for muscle strengthening activities are even lower than for aerobic activity. Only about 1 in 10 adults and 1 in 8 young people do enough muscle strengthening activity.

Barriers to participation in physical activity exist, across both the aerobic and muscle strengthening categories. These include a perceived lack of time, lack of knowledge, skills and confidence, and perceptions related to equipment requirements. For muscle strengthening activity, there are also myths related to safety and risk of injury – and the appropriateness of resistance training as an activity for youth. It is important that we look to provide individuals with the knowledge, skills and confidence to develop positive physical activity behaviours in youth, as these are the behaviours that are often carried on into adulthood.

Schools present themselves as great places to deliver public health programs to young people, to help develop these physical activity behaviours. Many school-based programs have been delivered over the years and found to be effective. However, the majority

have been small in their scale, limiting the number of youth impacted. This is of particular concern to mob kids, as programs are often delivered in metropolitan areas – away from many of the communities, and people, most in need. Scale-up of effective interventions is necessary, meaning that programs are delivered to more young people in more schools – enhancing the public health impact, and ensuring many young people can access programs to benefit their health. This will assist them in developing the health habits needed to take into adulthood. Not only have limited interventions been scaled-up, but few have focused on resistance training.

Resistance Training for Teens (RT for Teens) was the first program focused on resistance training to be delivered at-scale. Developed in partnership with the NSW Department of Education, RT for Teens was a 10-week program which aimed to improve the knowledge, skills and confidence of young people to participate in resistance training. To maximise the reach into the student population, teachers delivered the program to students within their schools. The teachers were trained to deliver the program during a professional learning workshop, through practical and theory-based learning opportunities designed to improve their knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver resistance training in their schools. They were also provided with resources to aid in program delivery.

This workshop was an important aspect of the program, as teachers play an important role as health promotion champions within schools. As such, engaging with teachers, and providing them with the tools to positively influence the health of young people through quality program delivery is vital.

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Since 2016, 468 teachers from 249 schools across NSW have been trained to deliver RT for Teens. That's almost half of all secondary schools in NSW with a trained teacher and accompanying resources. Teachers who delivered the program reported improvements in their own confidence, as well as enhanced perceptions of their own fitness. RT for Teens has reached approximately 10,000 students across NSW. Importantly, of all the students participating in the RT for Teens program – 10% of students were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. NSW school data indicates that 6% of students are Indigenous, so we were able to reach a higher proportion of mob kids than expected.

Students involved in the program improved their muscular fitness and, given the compelling physical and psychological health benefits associated with adequate levels of muscular fitness, including reduced cardiovascular disease risk, stronger bones, improved self-esteem, and well-being, the health impact of RT for Teens is undeniable. Not only that, participating student's techniques improved, and they had more belief in their own resistance training ability. These are important factors in promoting lasting behaviour changes. RT for Teens gave these young people the strength, knowledge, skills and confidence to overcome barriers relating to physical activity participation and the associated health consequences of inactivity.

This research shows the good that can be done in community, influencing the health of kids, when effective school-based programs are delivered at-scale. However, there is a long way to go. We must continue to work together as a community to fight the good fight and give all young people the knowledges, skills and confidence to live a healthy life. As we move forward, we are now updating RT for Teens for its next phase of implementation in schools. Partnering with the NSW Department of Education and NSW Health to continue to encourage and educate an even wider proportion of the population on the importance of resistance training (and overall physical activity) for all.

## School of Medicine Indigenous researchers and team are awarded a New South Wales Health's Translational Research Grant worth over \$495,000

Western Sydney University would like to congratulate Indigenous colleagues from the School of Medicine and their team on recently receiving a Translational Research Grant worth over \$495,000 from New South Wales Health. The project is entitled *Tharawal Holistic Indigenist Metabolic Clinic: A replicability and adaptability study to improve metabolic health in Aboriginal clients of an Aboriginal Medical Service* and commenced in July 2022.

The research will use the RE-AIM framework, an effective mainstream metabolic service, as a satellite metabolic rehabilitation program at Tharawal Aboriginal Medical Service. The program will be adapted to be culturally appropriate for Aboriginal participants. The trial of the RE-AIM framework will examine the impact of health and social outcomes among participants; the enablers and barriers for the successful adaptation of the intervention; the perceived cultural acceptability of the intervention; and the average costs of the intervention.

The project is significant as it addresses critical health concerns, such as obesity which affects 4 in 5 Aboriginal people in New South Wales compared to 2 in 3 non-Aboriginal people, affecting Indigenous peoples in Greater Sydney and beyond. Adults who are living with clinically severe obesity, have a higher rate of death and associate health problems morbidity and mortality than the non-Aboriginal community, posing considerable long term health challenges. Having a significant number of adults with clinically severe obesity also leads to an increased health burden for families and the community, which is why a culturally safe, strength-based program is required. The difficulties experienced by many Aboriginal Australians in accessing specialist services due to cultural, social, communication and structural barriers when not integrated within an Aboriginal Medical Service setting can be ameliorated by placing these services

in community-controlled organisations designed to improve social and health outcomes.

Dr Paul Saunders, an Indigenous Western Research Fellow and PhD candidate, said that he is excited to be working on the research project.

"Approximately 80% of Aboriginal people in NSW are overweight or obese, with the South-Western Sydney local area being no different. Through this research, we strive to address inequitable access to metabolic services, including diabetes services, for Aboriginal people in South-West Sydney."

"The research team are a mix of local clinicians, researchers, and Aboriginal community leaders and advocates, well known to each other through previous clinical service and research project partnerships. The team brings a breadth and depth of experience in metabolic medicine, qualitative and quantitative research methods, Indigenist methodologies and local community knowledges that will ensure research outcomes meet the needs of Aboriginal communities in South-Western Sydney. It is theorised that the results of this project will be used to inform models of care that are culturally proficient and safe, increasing the concordance of clients and their care regimes," said Dr Saunders.

To learn more about the Translational Research Grants Scheme and their funding of research projects that aims to translate into better patient outcomes, health service delivery, and population health and wellbeing, please follow [www.medicalresearch.nsw.gov.au/translational-research-grants-scheme/](http://www.medicalresearch.nsw.gov.au/translational-research-grants-scheme/)



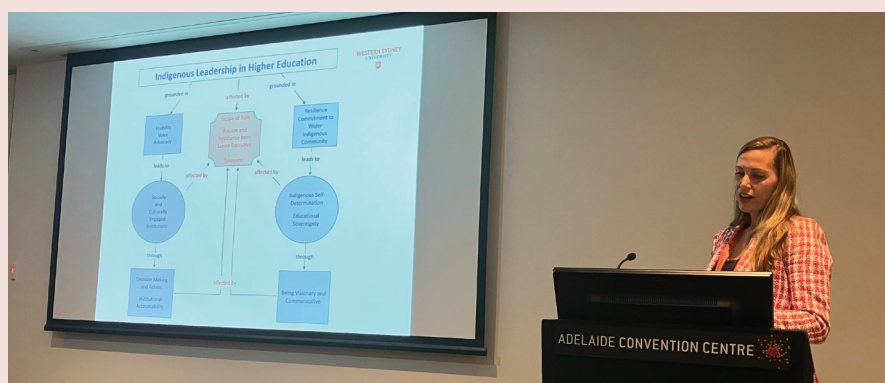


# Nine Indigenous staff represented Western at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference in Education

In late September, a group of nine Indigenous Western Sydney University academics, professionals and higher education students attended the 12th World Indigenous Peoples Conference in Education (WIPCE) on Kaurna Country in Adelaide. The conference has grown to become the largest and most diverse Indigenous education forum in the world.

More than 2500 delegates attended this year, including Indigenous education experts, practitioners, scholars, students, community members and Elders. WIPCE draws Indigenous representatives from across the globe to share successes and strategies for culturally grounded education, with the theme of this year's conference being *Indigenous Education Sovereignty: Our Voices... Our Futures*.

Minister Linda Burney gave a powerful speech, and many Indigenous scholars presented keynotes and facilitated networking, interactive workshops, yarning circles and master classes. Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews' presentation is entitled *Resisting Genocide: The Appin Massacre and the Story of How Wirritjiribin Came To Be*. Professor Bodkin-Andrews sought to report the wisdom and voices of a Circle of D'harawal Elders and Knowledge Holders, and the many valuable lessons embedded within the D'harawal Gurrawanga (Ancestral) story of Wirritjiribin and how this Story may guide Our Peoples today. Associate Professor Corrinne Sullivan's presentation was entitled *Building a School based environment that nurtures and supports Indigenous Higher Education*. Associate Professor Sullivan discussed the many factors that contribute to Indigenous success in the School of Social Sciences at Western Sydney University and how to develop and implement a model of best practice to build strong, prosperous futures for Indigenous education in school-based university environments. Stacey Coates also shared her PhD research, developed from an Australian Research Council project, led by Professor Michelle Trudgett and Professor Susan Page, with her presentation entitled *Walan Mayiny: Indigenous Leadership in Higher Education*. She discussed the role and subsequent value of Indigenous leadership within the Higher Education sector and the responsibilities and impacts of senior



Stacey Coates presenting

Indigenous appointments. All Western Sydney University attendees found the conference enlightening, thought-provoking and an incredible experience.

Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership, expressed her excitement for being an Australian Indigenous delegate

"It was exciting to be in the presence of other Indigenous peoples from all over the world and to be able to spend time with old and new friends. The Western Sydney University team who presented their research were second to none. We also got lots of great comments about our Western Indigenous branding which was proudly on display all week. Most importantly, I was super impressed by the professionalism, collegiality, knowledge shared and kindness displayed by our team. A great week indeed," said Professor Trudgett.

Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, Western's Director of Indigenous Research, said WIPCE was an absolutely amazing conference showcasing some of the greatest critical Indigenous and First Nations educational scholars in the world.

"Wiradjuri scholars Associate Professor Corrinne Sullivan and Stacey Coates represented Western with true strength and integrity, and it was also great to see Biripai scholar Anjilkurri Rhonda Radley's poster on the revitalisation of 'hand-talk' to assist in the revival of the Gathang Language. Everyone who attended has done their Ancestors proud," said Professor Bodkin-Andrews.

To find out more about the World Indigenous Peoples Conference in Education please follow: <https://wipce.net/>



Associate Professor Corrinne Sullivan reading *The Yarning Circle* at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference in Education



Some of Western's Indigenous Academic and higher Degree Research students attending the Indigenous Writing Retreat

## Western's Indigenous academics and Higher Degree Research students engage in the Annual Indigenous Writing Workshop

From the 31<sup>st</sup> of August to the 1<sup>st</sup> of September Western Sydney University held its 2022 Annual Indigenous Writing Workshop at the Crowne Plaza Hawkesbury Valley. Indigenous academics and higher degree research students engaged in two days of writing workshops, inspiration sessions and free writing. The writing workshop was a great networking opportunity for the Indigenous Research Network and was very productive with many working on their theses, journal articles and book chapters.

Throughout the Indigenous Writing Workshop three awards were presented to some of Western's most outstanding Indigenous academics. Western would like to congratulate Dr Scott Avery for winning the Ice-Breaker Bravery Award. Robyn Newitt won the Indigenous Publication Inspiration Award with amazing coverage of the call for Aboriginal Citizen Rights in 1938 by J. Patten and W. Ferguson. Further, the Critical Writing Award was awarded to Shirley Gilbert for her writing not only on resisting 'tolerance' narratives, but also resisting and denying the colonial collectors within the academy itself.

Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, Western's Director of Indigenous Research, gifted a native *Leptospermum Obovatum* (Lemon Bun tea tree) to all academics and higher degree research students in attendance.

"It was a wonderful two days of hard work, sharing and a little bit of mischief. I was exceptionally proud of the yarns that arose out of the 'Writing Indigenous' presentation, where both staff and HDR students freely shared the Indigenous protocols (and strengths) they committed to when writing. A big congratulations to all award winners. I also hope you all remember (pun intended) that the gifting of the native *Leptospermum Obovatum* (Lemon Bun tea-tree) also includes the secret D'harawal memory recall technique," said Professor Bodkin-Andrews.

The Office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership would like to thank Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, Western's Director of Indigenous Research, for organising and facilitating the event which was a great success.

To learn more about higher degree research opportunities please follow [www.westernsydney.edu.au/future/study/courses/research](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/future/study/courses/research)



Associate Professor Sandra Phillips.  
Photography: Mick Richards.

## Associate Professor Sandra Phillips joins Western Sydney University

Western Sydney University is pleased to announce the appointment of Associate Professor Sandra Phillips. She will commence her role in January 2023. In this new role, Associate Professor Phillips will provide outstanding leadership to the Indigenous Studies discipline in the School of Humanities and Communication Arts and will work closely with colleagues in the Writing and Society Research Centre.

Associate Professor Sandra Phillips is an Aboriginal woman from the North Burnett region of Queensland. Raised on-Country, Associate Professor Phillips takes her First Nation status from her mother's lineages of Waka Waka and Gooreng Gooreng. Associate Professor Phillips' late father was from the Aboriginal community of Cherbourg. An Arts graduate from 1980s UQ, Associate Professor Phillips became a leader in Australian book editing and publishing through work with Magabala Books, the University of Queensland Press and Aboriginal Studies Press. Completing a PhD in 2012 led her to full-time work in Australian higher education, holding lectureships at the University of the Sunshine Coast then QUT Creative

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Industries before a leadership role at UTS Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research and most recently as Associate Dean (Indigenous Engagement) with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at The University of Queensland. Associate Professor Phillips is also affiliated with the UQ School of Communication and Arts. Broadly speaking, her research focuses on Indigenous creativity.

Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership, is delighted to welcome Associate Professor Phillips to Western.

"On behalf of the University, I warmly congratulate Associate Professor Phillips on her appointment. I have had the pleasure of working with her previously at the University of Technology Sydney and I am excited by the energy, enthusiasm and knowledge that she will bring to Western. We will also have the honour of including Associate Professor Phillips as a valued member of the Indigenous Professoriate group. She is a highly respected higher education researcher and is passionate about expanding our knowledge and understanding of Indigenous matters," said Professor Trudgett.

Associate Professor Sandra Phillips said she is excited to join Western Sydney University for its Indigenous education leadership and its strong connections to the community.

"Joining Western boosts my opportunity to work alongside strong researchers in fields of writing and society. Teaching Indigenous Australian Studies from the School of Humanities and Communication Arts also allows wonderful possibilities in advancing knowledge with the Western Sydney University student community. I look forward to being part of the on-campus community and to working with colleagues in the School of Humanities and Communication Arts and across the University," said Associate Professor Phillips.



Some of Western's Indigenous Academic and higher Degree Research students attending the Indigenous Writing Retreat

## The Second Annual Indigenous Professoriate Lecture featuring Professor Susan Page

Earlier in September Western Sydney University's Indigenous Professoriate held its second biannual lecture in the new series. Western's Indigenous Professoriate is growing, and passionate about contributing to national and international conversations regarding Indigenous recognition and the respectful dissemination of Indigenous knowledge. Following a successful and engaging lecture by Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews last semester, Professor Susan Page gave the second lecture. Professor Page's lecture was entitled *Recognising the Colonial Past in Order to Reconcile Educational Futures*.

Professor Susan Page, Director of Indigenous Learning and Teaching, was thrilled to give the second lecture.

"My lecture explores the colonial past of our Australian universities to illustrate some of the obscure spots which can impede educational reconciliation. The colonisation of the Australian continent was well underway when the first universities were established in Sydney and Melbourne in the early 1850s. Indigenous peoples, particularly on the Eastern seaboard were already experiencing the negative effects of land theft, frontier violence and cultural disruption.

Universities were built on the unceded lands of Aboriginal peoples as the colonisers moved outwards, upwards and across from the original Sydney Cove site where the First Fleet, passengers and crew disembarked. Today, we acknowledge the Country on which our university stands, but I suspect that we think less often of what that means for the very fabric of our institutions – the people, our practices, our students," Susan Page

Professor Michelle Trudgett, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership, thanks Professor Page for her dynamic, engaging lecture.

"Professor Susan Page has been my research partner for over a decade. Her generosity of spirit and knowledge of methodology and theory is second to none. Susan's lecture demonstrates Western's deep commitment to Indigenous leadership and developing staff and student knowledge about Indigenous peoples, cultures, and Country. I look forward to the next lecture of Western's Indigenous Professoriate Lecture Series. More details and information regarding this upcoming event will be shared soon," said Professor Trudgett.

If you are yet to watch Professor Page's lecture, please follow the link: <https://vimeo.com/751120902/52431f2342>



Indigenous Researchers who presented at the Indigenous Research Week Event. Photography: Sally Tsoutas.

## Unlocking Indigenous Research Excellence

On Wednesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership proudly hosted the *Unlocking Indigenous Research Excellence* symposium on Parramatta South Campus. Western Sydney University would like to thank Dr Michelle Locke for welcoming us to beautiful Darug Country, Professor Sweeney for her wonderful address and Professor Bodkin-Andrews for facilitating the day.

The event featured a keynote presentation by Noonuccal and Bidjara scholar Dr Karen Martin, a renowned Indigenous Research Methodologist and Ethicist who has had immense impact on expanding Indigenous Studies Research as a discipline. Her seminal works include *Please knock before you enter: Aboriginal regulation of Outsiders and the implications for research and researchers* (Martin, 2008) and *Voices and visions: Aboriginal early childhood education in Australia* (Martin, 2017). Dr Martin presented on the past, present and future directions of Indigenous Research Excellence.

In addition, Excellence in Indigenous Research was highlighted in a series of outstanding flashpoint presentations

by 13 Indigenous Higher Degree Researchers and Indigenous academics within Western Sydney University. These presentations encompassed a wide range of disciplines, methodologies and methods, all of which have unlocked the many possibilities for achieving Indigenous Research Excellence. The five-minute, five slide, flashpoint presentations focused on a diversity of key Indigenous topics. This included but was not limited to cultural safety, Indigenous languages, Indigenous disability and inclusion, Indigenous mentoring, community development and Indigenous leadership.

Three awards were presented during the afternoon. Dr Karen Martin awarded Dr Sarah Kennedy as her standout presentation. Professor Michelle Trudgett awarded undergraduate student, Kobi Newell the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership Award. Doctoral candidate Matilda Harry was awarded the People's Choice Award.

Professor Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews, Western's Director of Indigenous Research, said an intellectual Indigenous firestorm was lit within the *Unlocking Indigenous Research Excellence* symposium.

"The warming flames were first gifted by Michelle Locke in her Welcome to Country and further kindled by respected Noonacul and Bidjara scholar, Dr Karen Martin. Dr Martin inspired us with her powerful keynote address on the importance of taking the time and effort to understand the true depths of diverse Indigenous Knowledges. I would like to thank all Indigenous scholars who presented, the intellectual flames of Indigenous critical thinking nearly burned the place down (metaphorically speaking of course)! As the intellectual fires settled towards the end of the symposium, I honestly felt that the lands of Indigenous Studies Research within Western were replenished, and the seeds of Indigenous Knowledges were free to grow even stronger. Dadjariguru'o'wa – I offer a huge thank you to all the Indigenous presenters, and to the Indigenous and non-Indigenous members of the audience, your presence and respect was greatly appreciated," said Professor Bodkin-Andrews.

To find out more about research opportunities offer at Western, please follow: [www.westernsydney.edu.au/research](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/research)



# Students

## WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY'S INDIGENOUS STUDENTS ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS

### Seven deadly questions: Introducing Kobi Newell

Kobi is undergraduate student studying a Bachelor of Business, majoring in Human Resource Management and Australian Indigenous Studies

#### Who are you?

Wiyabu! (Hi!) I am Kobi Newell, a proud Warrimay man. I am an undergraduate student studying a Bachelor of Business, majoring in Human Resource Management and Australian Indigenous Studies. Caring for and being connected to Country is a core part of who I am. I have grown up on beautiful Dharug and Gundangurra Country in the Blue Mountains.

#### Who is your mob?

Warrimay is my mob and my home Country. Located on the Mid-North Coast of NSW, our lands extend from the areas of Port Stephens in the South, to Forster in the North. We speak the language of Gathang, shared with our neighbours, the Birrbay and Guringay People. We are the people of the Gupurr, the Dolphin.

#### What community or cultural events have you been involved in lately?

Recently, I have been involved in a very exciting and personally significant research project as a part of the Winter Research Scholarship Program with supervising co-researchers, Mark Richards, Gulwanyang Moran and Caroline Jones. Alongside a knowledgeable and engaged community working group, I contributed to the creation of a language learning resource that supports the revitalisation of the Gathang language, belonging to the Birrbay, Guringay and Warrimay People.



Kobi Newell.

#### Why did you choose to study at Western Sydney University?

I chose to study at Western Sydney University because it's locality and familiarity, as I grew up participating in events on campuses and various programs. Western was the natural choice. Another factor in deciding that Western Sydney University was for me, was the convenience of a 40-minute train trip to the Parramatta City campus for business tutorials. There were so many more benefits of choosing Western that I did not realise before coming here. The community and opportunities from the Badanami centre have truly enriched my experience as an Indigenous student at Western. I have also had the privilege of being employed as a Student Curriculum Partner where I have been able to develop partnerships with academic staff to build new transdisciplinary minors and contribute to the wider conversation of Student-Staff Partnership in tertiary education.

#### Have you faced any challenges as an Indigenous student? If so, how did you overcome them?

Everyone experiences challenges! Some of the challenges I have faced include feelings of isolation and lack of connection within the university environment. When tutorials were online, my ability to connect and socialise with others was significantly impacted. I found engaging with the Badanami Centre in the weekly online Yarns really refreshing and great way to connect with people.

In the study of my business subjects, there has been no inclusion of First Nations knowledges or perspectives, so this prompted me to look into the school's Indigenous strategy where I found promising plans to grow the presence of Aboriginal culture.

#### When you graduate from Western Sydney University what do you hope to achieve?

I hope to be an inspiration to other young Indigenous Australians in the pursuit of tertiary education and opportunity. I believe there is a great potential for Australian organisations to better engage with and learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. I envision myself working between the fields of people and culture, and First Nations matters. I am passionate about helping organisations create culturally safe workplaces and facilitating collaboration with local Indigenous Communities which aids reconciliation and the promotion of self-determination.

#### You are clearly a busy person with lots of commitments, what are your top tips towards success for other Indigenous Western Sydney University students?

1. Do things that will get you where you want to be. Assess the suitability of opportunities in their contribution in getting you where you want to be, both in professional and personal contexts. Pursuing many opportunities with various directions will often compromise your effectiveness in achieving what you want to.
2. Take time to be on Country. Country restores and rejuvenates. It is where we come from and where we will return to. Whether it be a walk, run or just sitting, I have found that getting out on Country is so beneficial for mental health, physical health and all aspects of our wellbeing.
3. Get yourself plugged into a community. I have found so much value in getting involved with various communities as a young Indigenous person including the Badanami Centre and CareerTrackers Internship Program. Meet new people, listen to their stories, and grow in relationship. Some of the most valuable guidance and advice has come from people I've met through these communities.

# Students



Sharidan Kearney.

## Pathways To Dreaming Scholarship supports first-year Ngiyampaa, Wiradjuri and Yorta Yorta student to achieve her academic aspirations

Sharidan Kearney is a proud Ngiyampaa, Wiradjuri and Yorta Yorta woman. She was born in Blacktown and grew up in Western Sydney on Darug land. Sharidan is a first year Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Social Science student at Western Sydney University and was lucky enough to be the 2022 Pathways To Dreaming scholarship recipient. The scholarship is valued at \$5,000 per year for up to four years and requires applicants to be active participants in the Pathways to Dreaming

program throughout high school and to have received an offer or have applied to study at Western Sydney University.

Sharidan aspires to have a successful career that focuses on academic research, social advocacy, activism and social policy analysis. She is incredibly determined to use her academic ability to gain as much knowledge as possible while undertaking her double degree, so that one day she can work within an organisation that supports the wellbeing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, families and children.

Christopher Miller, Indigenous Engagement Project Officer in Indigenous Engagement, said Western are very proud to have Sharidan as the Pathways To Dreaming scholarship recipient and looks forward to seeing what the future brings for her at Western.

“The Pathways to Dreaming scholarship is a fantastic opportunity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students who have participated in the Pathways to Dreaming program in high school and are now beginning their studies at Western. The scholarship can be used to assist students financially with their studies at Western. This could mean helping with a new laptop, textbooks or even help pay for university parking for the year.”

“One of the biggest challenges we have is that we do not have enough students applying for this scholarship. If you have achieved an ATAR of 65 or above, a minimum of 65% in each of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pathway Program assessments or have received a True Reward Early offer to a course with

a 65 ATAR entry requirement you may be eligible! It only takes 20 minutes to apply,” said Christopher Miller.

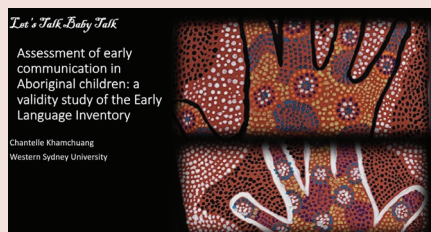
Sharidan Kearney said the Pathways to Dreaming scholarship has strongly supported her learning journey through university.

“As a first-year student, it has greatly increased my motivation and confidence in my academic ability. With the support received from the Pathways to Dreaming scholarship, I can strive to achieve all my educational goals and expand my knowledge to become an Indigenous role model in my future career. The Pathways to Dreaming scholarship will not only allow me to learn further at university but will give me an opportunity to give back to the Indigenous communities with the knowledgeable information I will gain from studying my degrees Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Social Science. This will allow me to become an Indigenous representative and make a positive difference for the future. I want to become a role model that strengthens and empowers Indigenous people to excel in our education and represent our communities. I will be forever grateful for receiving the Pathways to Dreaming scholarship,” said Sharidan Kearney.

Western Sydney University would once again like to congratulate Sharidan Kearney and encourage any applicants for the 2023 Pathways to Dreaming scholarship to follow the link and apply before February 2023: [www.westernsydney.edu.au/opportunities/scholarships/all\\_uws\\_scholarships/PATHWAYS](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/opportunities/scholarships/all_uws_scholarships/PATHWAYS)

## 3-minute thesis winner in The MARCS Institute- Chantelle Khamchuang

Western Sydney University would like to congratulate Chantelle Khamchuang who recently won the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development's Three-Minute Thesis competition. The Three-Minute Thesis is an international competition for higher degree research candidates to showcase their research. Candidates present to an audience on what their research is and why it is important in plain language for three minutes, with only a single PowerPoint slide.



Chantelle is a proud Booreborongal PhD candidate in the MARCS Institute and recently presented her research in the competition. Chantelle and other higher degree research candidates participated in the MARCS Institute Qualifying Round. As the winner of the Qualifying round, Chantelle went on to represent MARCS at the Western Sydney University Three

Minute Thesis Competition. Chantelle Khamchuang was thrilled to have the opportunity to share her research.

“Winning was not a big thing for me. I just want my research to get out there, because I am always looking for opportunities to share ideas and experiences with others who are researching similar topics. The more people know, the more opportunity comes. I would like to thank the MARCS Institute for holding this event,” said Chantelle Khamchuang.

To learn more about the MARCS Institute for Brain, Behaviour and Development please follow: [www.westernsydney.edu.au/marcs](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/marcs)





Jasmine Seymour.

## Jasmine Seymour received a significant Federal Government research grant

Western Sydney University would like to congratulate Jasmine Seymour, a proud Dharug Masters of Research student and her team on recently receiving a Federal Government research grant entitled 'Bayala: Let's Talk Together'. The grant is valued at \$161,460 with the research to be undertaken between 2022 and 2024. This research grant will support Jasmine's team to research and develop teaching resources and training in how to teach Aboriginal languages of Sydney area, with an early focus on Dharug.

The research team includes Western Indigenous colleagues Corina Norman, Chantelle Khamchuang, Chris Miller, Auntie Anjilkurri Rhonda Radley and other Indigenous collaborators Stacy Parry, Leanne Watson, Uncle Lex Dadd, together with Western colleagues Mark Richards from the School of Education and MARCS institute, Hiromi Muranaka from the School of Humanities & Communication Arts and Professor Caroline Jones from the MARCS institute.

Jasmine Seymour said the Bayala grant is a wonderful initiative and that the research team looks forward to being able to share and teach the Dharug language.

"The lack of Australian Aboriginal language education in Australia is an act of violence against Aboriginal people. Learning the language of place is an act of love for Country and community. It is so important that we all support language workers and language classes. Learning about Australian languages advocates place and its people," said Jasmine Seymour.

The Office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership would like to once again congratulate you on such a wonderful achievement and wish you the best of luck with your research. To learn more about the grant and other recipients please follow:

[www.arts.gov.au/documents/2022-23-indigenous-languages-and-arts-program-grant-recipients](http://www.arts.gov.au/documents/2022-23-indigenous-languages-and-arts-program-grant-recipients)

# Research

## CELEBRATING INDIGENOUS RESEARCH AT WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

Western Sydney University is very proud of our Indigenous academics and higher degree research students. Please read about some of their outstanding research published this year.

Andrew Gorman-Murray, **Corrinne Sullivan** & Emilie Baganz. (2022). Ageing, sexualities and place: Aligning the geographies of gerontology and sexualities. *Geography Compass*, 16(8), e12655. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gec3.12655>

**Corrinne Sullivan**, Kim Spurway, Linda Briskman, John Leha, William Trewlynn & Karen Soldatić. (2022). "She's Always Been a Fighter for Me": Indigenous Mothers as Advocates and Defenders of Their LGBTIQSB+ Children. *LGBTQ+ Family: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/27703371.2022.2124212>

**Corrinne Sullivan**. (2022). When the City Calls: Mapping Indigenous Australian Queer Placemaking in Sydney. In *Mapping LGBTQ Spaces and Places* (pp. 293-303). Springer, Cham. [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-03792-4\\_18](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-03792-4_18)

**Michelle Locke, Michelle Trudgett & Susan Page**. (2022). Australian Indigenous early career researchers: unicorns, cash cows and performing monkeys. *Race Ethnicity and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2022.2114445>

**Renae Coleman & Alison Barnes**. (2022). Cultural Safety in Midwifery 1. Cultural Safety in Midwifery for First Nations Women, People and Families. All 4 Maternity. <https://www.all4maternity.com/cultural-safety-in-midwifery-1-cultural-safety-in-midwifery-for-first-nations-women-people-and-families/>

**Robyn Newitt & Corrinne Sullivan**. (2022). COVID-19, "Black Lives Matter" and Indigenous Australians: A Tale of Two Intersecting Pandemics. In *COVID-19 and a World of Ad Hoc Geographies* (pp. 1375-1392). Springer, Cham. [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-94350-9\\_75](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-94350-9_75)

Toby Raeburn, Joel Zugai, Carol Liston, **Paul Saunders & Kerrie Doyle**. (2022). How to Use Microhistory Methodology in Mental Health Research. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01612840.2022.2129532>

# Staff

## WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY'S PASSIONATE INDIGENOUS STAFF

### Seven deadly questions: Introducing Kristy Bell

#### Who are you?

My name is Kristy Bell. I am a proud Wiradjuri woman. I was born in Dubbo but moved to Sydney when I was 7. I have grown up and lived in the Macarthur area ever since.

#### Who is your mob?

I have always found this question hard as I have not met my Aboriginal family. I know my father's family are from Dubbo and still live there. I have grown up in the Dhawaral community where I feel connected and accepted as an Aboriginal woman.

#### What community/cultural events have you been involved in lately?

I recently organised a weaving workshop for students and community for this year's NAIDOC week event at Campbelltown's Badanami centre. We had a great turn out and Shannon Foster, who ran the workshop, was amazing. I also try to attend any cultural events my children have at school.

#### What is your current position at Western Sydney University and how long have you worked at the University?

I am currently the Badanami Student Success Officer at the Badanami Centre on Campbelltown campus and have been in this role since 2019. I first started working at Western in 2011 and was part of the Engagement team, working in the Pathways to Dreaming program as one of the Project Officers. So, I have been with Western for a long time and I love it.

#### Have you always aspired to work in tertiary education?

I did not realise my passion for helping and supporting people on achieving their goals was such a passion of mine until I started working in the positions and programs, over the past 20 years



Kristy Bell.

of my employment. Being a part of, and supporting one's journey, gives me my own sense of achievement, feeling that I have made a difference in a person's life.

#### What is your favourite thing about working at Western Sydney University?

I have enjoyed working at Western as it has given me the opportunity to feel connected with my community and build relationships with my mob that I have never been able to in my personal life. I have enjoyed working with the younger generations and showing our mob that tertiary education is a place where our community can succeed. Throughout my time at Western, I have built great relationships with staff and students that will last a lifetime. Watching students start their university journey and grow through their degrees and seeing them graduate makes coming to work a dream.

#### Do you have any advice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people wanting to work at Western Sydney University?

Go for it, I have been very lucky within my time at Western to have great support staff supporting me through my positions. I have been able to extend my family and come back to my employment like I never left. Western have amazing Indigenous leaders and we are a great Indigenous family that support each other. I feel very fortunate to work at Western and be part of such a great team.



Gabrielle Talbot-Mundine.  
Photography: Sally Tsoutas.

### Gabby Talbot-Mundine is appointed as the Coordinator of Indigenous Employment

Western Sydney University is excited to congratulate Gabby Talbot-Mundine on her recent appointment to the position of Coordinator, Indigenous Employment in the Office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Indigenous Leadership. Gabby is a proud Bundjalung woman of the Widabel tribe based in Baryulgil, Grafton. Through her new role at Western, she aims to support Indigenous mob in accessing and retaining employment opportunities whilst embedding initiatives to ensure that Western meets the strategic objectives in the Western Sydney University 2020-2025 Indigenous Strategy.

Gabby has had a long professional relationship with the university as it was in 2014 that she commenced working with Western, being appointed to roles in the Assessment and Graduation Unit, the Badanami Team and the Future Student Engagement Team. Gabby is also a current student and alumni at Western. She is studying a Master of Business part-time with her academic excellence recently celebrated when she was awarded the Indigenous Commonwealth Rewards Scholarship for outstanding achievement in 2021.

Stacey Kim Coates, Manager of Indigenous Employment in the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership at Western Sydney University said she is delighted to welcome Gabby into her new role.

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“Gabby is an asset to the team. She has already played a vital role in planning initiatives that facilitate strengthening Indigenous employment and leadership opportunities across Western. She has been working with the current cohort of Ignite Trainees on career progression to help support them in their search for ongoing employment after their traineeships next year and is a critical voice in conversations about a potential 2023 intake. She was outstanding in assisting preparation and facilitation of the Indigenous Staff Conference, supporting Western’s Indigenous staff to receive updates on the Indigenous space, network and participate in team-building activities,” said Stacey Coates.

Gabrielle Talbot-Mundine, Coordinator of Indigenous Employment in the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership at Western Sydney University said she is thrilled to uptake this position.

“The opportunity to join the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership in the Indigenous Employment Team has made me feel like I have come back to support my roots. I joined the university through an Indigenous Traineeship Program in 2014. In this new role, I am lucky enough to support the Indigenous staffing community at Western while leading and encouraging new Ignite Trainees based on my similar experience. There is something beautiful about opening doors for our community and encouraging growth,” said Gabby Talbot-Mundine.

Western is a diverse community and provides many levels of opportunity for professional development and employment pathways. To learn more about employment opportunities at Western please follow: [www.westernsydney.edu.au/employment](http://www.westernsydney.edu.au/employment)

## Staff Updates

Western Sydney University would like to congratulate Dr Michelle Locke who will commence in the position of Senior Lecturer in the School of Education in January 2023.

Western would also like to thank all Indigenous staff for continuously demonstrating excellence and leadership.

# Elders

## WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY'S ELDERS

### Seven deadly questions: Auntie Helen Riley of Western's Elders Advisory Committee

#### Please tell us about yourself.

I am a Wiradjuri Elder, mother and grandmother and am the Secretary of Mingaan Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation which aims to expand the knowledge and appreciation of Aboriginal Australia through cultural education and experiences. I also sit as a representative on the Wiradjuri Council of Elders and various committees. I have recently joined the Elder's Advisory Committee of Western Sydney University

My Grandmother reared me but denied our Aboriginal heritage to protect me from the authorities as she had already had a child taken. As a result, I did not actually find out I was Aboriginal until I was an adult, however I was already married to an Aboriginal man and actively lived within the Aboriginal community. It is an indication of why the process of Truth telling is so important for Reconciliation in this country as so many of us had to hide our heritage and lose culture because Aboriginal people were considered second class citizens.

#### Who is your mob, and where are you from?

I am a Wiradjuri women originally from Gulgong but now caring for Country in the Lithgow region.

#### What does it mean to be an Elder?

I need to live the 5 key areas of “Yindyamarra” to Respect, Be Gentle, Be polite, Honour and Do Slowly (which is different to go slowly and means more to not rush into things). I need to guide our young people and help to teach them about culture and to be proud of their Aboriginal heritage.



Auntie Helen Riley. Photography: Lithgow Library.

#### Who inspires you?

I have been inspired by other Elders such as Auntie Flo Grant and Uncle Stan Grant from the Riverina both of whom were integral in the establishment of the Wiradjuri Council of Elders and for ensuring that the Wiradjuri language is not lost through the development of the Wiradjuri dictionary. I am proud to also say that they have been my friends.

#### Why have you joined the Elder's Advisory Committee of Western Sydney University?

To ensure that Aboriginal people have an opportunity for education and to work with Elders from other communities to learn and share stories which will enable us to walk forward together.

#### What are your hopes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in years to come?

To be recognised and celebrated as the First Australians and ultimately to be included in the Constitution and finally given equality.

#### Do you have any advice for the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are striving to make change in community?

Stand up and be proud of who you are and continue to learn about your culture.

# Alumni

## WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY'S INDIGENOUS ALUMNI

### Seven deadly questions: Introducing Renee Chandler

#### Who are you?

Renee Chandler, nee Dane – I'm a Yuin woman from the South Coast of New South Wales. I live and work on Darug land. I commenced working with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) then known as Department of Community Services in 2005 as an Aboriginal Legal Cadet while completing my studies at Western Sydney University. I graduated from Western Sydney University and was admitted as solicitor in NSW in 2008.

#### What community/cultural events have you been involved in lately?

Throughout my career at DCJ I have been involved in working with some of our most vulnerable Aboriginal children and families with a goal of improving outcomes for children and young people. More recently, I have had the opportunity to be involved in championing an Aboriginal law graduate program with DCJ as part of the DCJ Aboriginal Employment Strategy. The aim of this program is to attract, recruit and support Aboriginal students and graduates with opportunities to experience the wide diversity of career opportunities in Law Reform and Legal Services.

#### What is your current position and why are you passionate about it?

I'm currently the Acting Senior Solicitor of the North and West Child Law Team. The Child Law team provides legal advice and representation to casework staff in the northern and western areas of NSW in respect of child protection and the legal needs of children in Out of Home Care. The Child Law Team also provides advice and representation of the Secretary in the Family Law jurisdiction.

As the Senior Solicitor I'm responsible for providing supervision and mentoring to a number of Child Law solicitors within the team and administrative staff within the broader team, including some that work from remote locations. A major responsibility of the Senior Solicitor is the management of obtaining legal advice on the identification of potential claims on behalf of children and young people in the Minister's care.

I am passionate about this work because I'm involved in working closely with casework staff within the legal framework relating to the care and protection of children. I am able to contribute to Aboriginal community by ensuring a greater focus on prevention and early intervention which results in better outcomes for Aboriginal children and their families. For children and young people in the Minister's care, I'm involved in ensuring their legal entitlements are applied for on their behalf, including for victims support available under the New South Wales Victims Support Scheme.

#### What degree did you study at Western Sydney University?

Bachelor of Law/Bachelor of Social Science.

#### What has your experience at Western Sydney University given you that is unique compared to graduates from other universities?

Looking back on my experience at Western Sydney University, what stood out for me was the support the Aboriginal Education Unit provided. It was through the Aboriginal Education Unit that I found out about the cadetship with DCJ, along with other opportunities, like securing a small financial scholarship to support me during my studies. I found having multiple campuses offering subjects for my degrees was also helpful as my location needs changed when I moved during that time.

#### Who is your role model and why do they inspire you?

It is hard to nominate only one person, so instead I'll share a group of people who inspire me – the children and young people in the Minister's care, who despite facing traumatic experiences in life, go on to do amazing things and turn their lived experiences into opportunities for themselves and their community.

#### What would be your top 5 tips towards success for Indigenous graduates from Western Sydney University?

1. If you think you cannot finish your studies, or it is too hard - you are wrong. Stick it out, ask for help and you will get through it and be glad you did.
2. Imposter syndrome is real. If you think you have it, get help. Stop using avoidance techniques or your own minds negative chatter to hold you back from opportunities you are capable of doing and doing well.
3. People come from all different backgrounds and connection to their culture. Do not let anyone's connectedness to theirs make you doubt your own.
4. Don't wait for the 'perfect' career opportunity to come to you. Go out and find it. There are a lot of opportunities that are not wrapped up with a pretty title and an attractive salary, but they could be the right role for you at that time and which later may lead you to exactly where you want to be.
5. As clichéd as this will sound – get comfortable with being uncomfortable. You do not learn or grow in life or in a professional setting without pushing yourself to do the things that may initially feel uncomfortable to you, but it is in those moments you learn the most, particularly about yourself and what you are capable of.





Dr Jonathan Armstrong who graduated from a Doctor of Creative Arts and Professor Michelle Trudgett.

## September graduates

Western Sydney University is committed to empowering and supporting Indigenous students' study and graduate from degrees of their choice. Currently, Western Sydney University has over 1,515 Indigenous alumni who have graduated from a variety of degrees across the University's range of Schools.

Graduation is an incredibly important milestone as it celebrates all the hard work and time put into achieving a degree, marking the formal end of tertiary study and the beginning of a new career.

In September 2022, 44 students graduated including 2 Diplomas, 1 Graduate Diploma, 1 Undergraduate Certificate, 1 Graduate Certificate, 32 Bachelor Degrees, 6 Master Degrees and 1 Doctorate. Congratulations to the following students who graduated from a range of Western Sydney University degree programs. We are so proud of each of you and wish you the best of luck in your future endeavours.

Alanna French graduated from a Bachelor of Design Studies

Albarr Azim graduated from a Bachelor of Construction Management

Bohzanna Srbeek graduated from a Bachelor of Nursing

Brendan Jones graduated from a Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Brooklyn Pulevaka graduated from a Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Caitlin Batten graduated from a Bachelor of Arts

Chloe Curtis graduated from a Bachelor of Social Science

Christopher Matthew Moore graduated from a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) (Civil)/Bachelor of Business (Applied Finance)

Debby Chandler graduated from a Bachelor of Music

Erin Ash graduated from a Bachelor of Arts

Erin Rae graduated from a Master of Teaching (Secondary)

Georgia Berry graduated from a Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)

Jackson Shorten graduated from a Bachelor of Business (Applied Finance)

Jamarra Newman graduated from a Bachelor of Social Science (Psychology)

Jarred Murphy graduated from a Bachelor of Communication

Jessica Amatto graduated from a Master of Teaching (Primary)

Jessica Nakhoul graduated from a Bachelor of Arts

Jessica-Lee Arnott graduated from a Bachelor of Nursing

Joe Townsend graduated from an Undergraduate Certificate in Disability Care Support

Jonathan Armstrong graduated from a Doctor of Creative Arts

Jonathon Gale graduated from a Bachelor of Health Science (Sport and Exercise Science)

Jonathon Captain-Webb graduated from a Master of Business Administration

Kimberley Jarman graduated from a Bachelor of Design (Visual Communication)

Lahrohn Moreton graduated from a Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Lauretta Josevski graduated from a Graduate Diploma in Midwifery

Lisa Conley graduated from a Bachelor of Nursing

Loughlan Bellette graduated from a Diploma in Criminal and Community Justice

Maria Dasler graduated from a Bachelor of Health Science (Public Health)

Naomi Tate graduated from a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy

Nikayla Brown graduated from a Bachelor of Social Science

Noah Conaty graduated from a Bachelor of Arts

Renee Thomson graduated from a Bachelor of Health Science (Personal Development, Health and Physical Education)

Ryan Peterson graduated from a Diploma in Health Science (Health and Physical Education)

Sara Bennett graduated from a Graduate Certificate in Child and Family Health (Karitane)

Suzanne Hegarty graduated from a Bachelor of Arts

Tarneil Duroux graduated from a Bachelor of Arts

Tayoni Webber-Travers graduated from a Bachelor of Criminology

Tiana Nicola graduated from a Bachelor of Laws

Timothy Roberts graduated from a Bachelor of Information and Communications Technology

Tyson Brown graduated from a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) (Electrical)

Wyatt Barn graduated from a Master of Teaching (Secondary)

Zachary Wheatley graduated from a Bachelor of Arts

Zana Jabir graduated from a Master of Teaching (Secondary)

Zoe Makkink graduated from a Master of Teaching (Secondary)

## Badanami

As we move into the last month of 2022, the Badanami team have continued to be very busy supporting Indigenous students and engaging with the broader Western community. Badanami staff have continued to provide our students with a high level of support through face-to-face interactions, personalised phone calls and emails as well as personalised text messages. As of early November, Indigenous students have received over 7200 individual and personalised interactions with Badanami staff, as well as other Indigenous student support staff within the School of Social Science, School of Education and The College. Badanami staff interactions with our students have significantly increased throughout 2022 and we look forward to building on them in 2023.

The team at Badanami also had the opportunity to host morning tea events to celebrate both International Day of World Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Literacy Day which were held at our Hawkesbury and Liverpool City Centres respectively. These events were well attended by the Western community and provided those who attended an opportunity to learn more about key Indigenous initiatives and how we all play a role in Indigenous success.

Badanami also attended Western's Open Day in August which provided the team the chance to engage with some of our future Indigenous students, showcasing the level of support they will have if they choose to study here at Western.



(Left to right) Lara Jash an Indigenous Bachelor of Law student with Adrian Atkins, Professor Michelle Trudgett (DVCIL) and Wayne Clark at the Open Day 2022.

Badanami also attended Western's Indigenous Staff Conference held at Parramatta South Campus. This conference was a highlight for our team and is a wonderful opportunity to catch up with all Indigenous staff and hear about the amazing work that is being done by Indigenous staff across the whole university. Other events Badanami have attended include Unlocking Indigenous Research Excellence, as part of Western's Research Week and the NSWVCC Indigenous Professional Staff Annual Conference, where the team got to meet mob from various New South Wales and Australian Capital Territory universities and share best practice knowledge in the area of Indigenous student support.

As we move through the end of the Spring semester, post exams and into the Summer semester, we encourage all Indigenous students to continue to engage with the Badanami team. Please reach out if we can help as we all move into what will hopefully be a safe and enjoyable holiday period.

