



The Yarning Circle

Summer 2020 | Edition #3

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 of 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.

Publication Enquiries

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Unlimited possibilities for the mob in The Academy

The Academy at Western Sydney University is committed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander excellence. Over one-hundred high-achieving Indigenous students have joined The Academy and many others have received offers. The Academy provides students with a unique, hands-on approach to learning in an interdisciplinary environment. Learning draws on the unique experience of leading thinkers, social change agents, community leaders, and high-achieving students

both past and present, with a focus on global citizenship, ethical leadership, and critical thinking. This is underpinned by the principles of community engagement, academic excellence, and personal and professional development.

Professor Jonathon Allen, Head of The Academy, said that they are delighted to have increased the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in The Academy and are looking forward to having more students in the future.

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"I have been so impressed with the students I've had the great fortune of meeting and have been profoundly impressed with their qualities of leadership, thoughtfulness and respect, and care for our communities," said Professor Allen.

"I have seen just how good our Indigenous students are – but they don't necessarily know it themselves. Through The Academy's programs and community, we're trying to provide the opportunity for our students to believe in themselves, to know that they are worthy and aren't imposters, to grant themselves 'permission' to embrace the breadth of education and to invest time in themselves. This is how we're helping to develop our future leaders," said Professor Allen.

On Wednesday, September 9th, The Academy held their fourth segment in the series of 'Conversations with The Academy' which featured proud Darug man, Chris Tobin, as the guest speaker. This event gave Western students, staff and community members the opportunity to engage in a candid conversation celebrating the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



CONVERSATIONS with The Academy

It was a wonderful opportunity for all students, staff and community to discover, celebrate, value and take pride in Indigenous culture. The audience bought their questions, deepened their understandings and un-learned and re-learned about cultural competence, values and world views.

Leanne Markovic, a proud Darug student at Western and 2020 Academy Ambassador, said that it was an honour to host the webinar with Chris Tobin.

"He is an amazingly interesting man who reminds us that our journeys are all unique, our connection to country and mob should be our prime focus and that there is still so much to be done in our current political climate," she said.

"I encourage any Indigenous students who are invited to join the Academy to take up this great opportunity. It has connected me to so many experiences I never thought I'd have. My contributions have been valued and the interest the Academy has shown me in wanting to know more about how to work with Indigenous students has been excellent. I feel the Academy is setting an amazing benchmark for all programs at the university to aspire to," she said.

The Conversation with Chris Tobin was recorded, please follow the link: https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/the_academy/inside_the_academy/events/conversations_with_the_academy

To learn more about The Academy please visit: westernsydney.edu.au/myacademy



Pro Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michelle Trudgett.
Photography: Sally Tsoutas

MESSAGE FROM THE PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR

It is with great pleasure that I present you with the Summer 2020 edition of *The Yarning Circle*. This is the third edition of Western Sydney University's newsletter that highlights some of the incredible accomplishments of our Indigenous students, staff and alumni. This edition also features key events in the Western calendar such as the annual Yarramundi Lecture and the Indigenous Research Forum – Sharing Indigenous Knowledge – Always Was, Always Will Be.

2020 has certainly been an interesting year for us all, presenting many unforeseen challenges due to COVID-19. Staff and students have had to adjust the ways we operate, learn and communicate.

Along the way we have learnt many lessons and formed new practices that will be incorporated into our standard business in the future. I would like to take this moment to thank everyone for their incredible work throughout the year. The manner in which our staff and students have come together to support one another has been outstanding. I wish you and your families a safe and happy festive season and look forward to welcoming everyone back in 2021.

Professor Michelle Trudgett (BA, MPS, EdD)

Pro Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation



Emeritus Professor MaryAnn Bin-Sallik

Celebrating Emeritus Professor MaryAnn Bin-Sallik's continued commitment to Western's Board of Trustees

Western Sydney University is honoured to have Emeritus Professor MaryAnn Bin-Sallik as an appointed member to its Board of Trustees. Matrilineally she is member of the Djaru people from the Kimberley region of Western Australia and was born in the pearling town of Broome. Her father, a Malay pearl diver, was a Muslim, consequently the family observed both Christian and Muslim special events. She has a deep respect and affinity for her Muslim heritage and fond memories of the wonderful Eide celebrations at the end of Ramadan. The children of Aboriginal Malay families referred to Eide as Malay Christmas and were the envy of the other children as this meant they had two Christmases and two sets of presents.

Professor Bin-Sallik relinquished a successful nursing career to work in the first Indigenous higher education program in this country located in South Australia. She was the first Indigenous person to graduate as a trained nurse in Darwin in 1962, the first Indigenous person to be employed full-time in the higher education sector in Australia in 1975; and the first to receive a Doctorate from Harvard University in 1989. Professor Bin-Sallik was at the forefront of Indigenous Higher Education in this country and structured her career around overcoming the effects of social and political disadvantage of Indigenous Australians. She was pivotal in increasing the number of Indigenous enrolments in universities nationally and also contributed to the development of Aboriginal Studies as a multidisciplinary study including the development and incorporation of Indigenous knowledges and ways of knowing and doing. Now, every university in Australia has an Indigenous centre and Indigenous Australians hold positions as lecturers, Professors, Associate Professors, Deans, Associate Deans, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Chancellors.

Professor Bin-Sallik's involvement in government, university, community advisory and review groups has greatly influenced education and equity policies for Indigenous Australians across the nation. She has received many accolades for her mentorship and work in communities. In 2008 she was made an Emeritus Professor of Charles Darwin University and in 2015 the Darwin Indigenous Community awarded her the NAIDOC Lifetime Achievement Award. She was named National Female Elder of the Year during NAIDOC 2016. She was also awarded a Centenary of Federation Medal for contributions to Indigenous

higher education and in the same year was awarded a Special Recognition Medal from the National Museum of Australia for her contributions to the museum in the 1980's. In 2017 she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from her alma mater the University of South Australia and was made an Officer (AO) of the Order of Australia for her distinguished service to tertiary education as an academic, author and administrator, particularly in the area of Indigenous studies and culture, and as a role model and mentor.

Professor Bin-Sallik's relationship with Western Sydney University began when she came out of semi-retirement to take up the position of Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Leadership at Western from 1 July to 31st December 2015. In 2016 she was appointed to the University's Board of Trustees which is the governing authority of the University which manages development of broad policies and strategic plans, and is informed by a number of standing committees.

"I've been indelibly influenced and inspired by Western's robust commitment to diversity and equity in education; it upholds an ethos second to none," said Emeritus Professor Bin Sallik.

Chancellor Professor Peter Shergold AC said it has been a pleasure to work alongside Emeritus Professor Aunty MaryAnn Bin-Sallik on the Board of Trustees.

"On behalf of the University community, I thank Professor Bin-Sallik for her commitment to Western Sydney University's Board of Trustees. Her leadership and academic service has been vital to the advancement of Indigenous education, cultures and heritage at our University and in the Western Sydney region," said Professor Shergold.

"Professor Bin-Sallik is an outstanding university leader who is passionate about the transformative role that universities play within Australia's regions. Throughout her career she has worked to open up access to higher education, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities – experience that is invaluable to Western Sydney University."

To learn more about the Board of Trustees and Professor Bin-Sallik's contributions please follow the [link](#).

New strategy to empower Indigenous success in the School of Social Sciences

The School of Social Sciences is committed to fostering Indigenous Australian success across research, learning and teaching portfolios, staff and student bodies, as well as nurturing community engagement and international collaboration. On the 27th July 2020, the School of Social Sciences launched their [Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025](#). They are the first School at Western to develop and launch an Indigenous Strategy that responds directly to the University's [Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025](#).

The development of the strategy was led by Associate Dean of Indigenous

Education at the School of Social Sciences, Dr Corrinne Sullivan, and has been endorsed by the School's Indigenous Advisory Committee, the Pro Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation, Professor Michelle Trudgett, and the School's Senior Executive Committee.

The Indigenous Strategy follows the University's plan which focuses on strategic objectives in seven areas: students; employment; research; learning and teaching; community engagement; leadership; and cultural viability and knowledge. The objectives set out in the School of Social Sciences Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025 are vital to achieving a whole-of-School approach to building a collegial environment for all staff and students in an active pursuit of Indigenous excellence.

Professor Brian Stout, Dean School of Social Sciences, said that the School is deeply committed to the objectives set out within this strategic document and will ensure that achieving those objectives is the responsibility of all in the School.

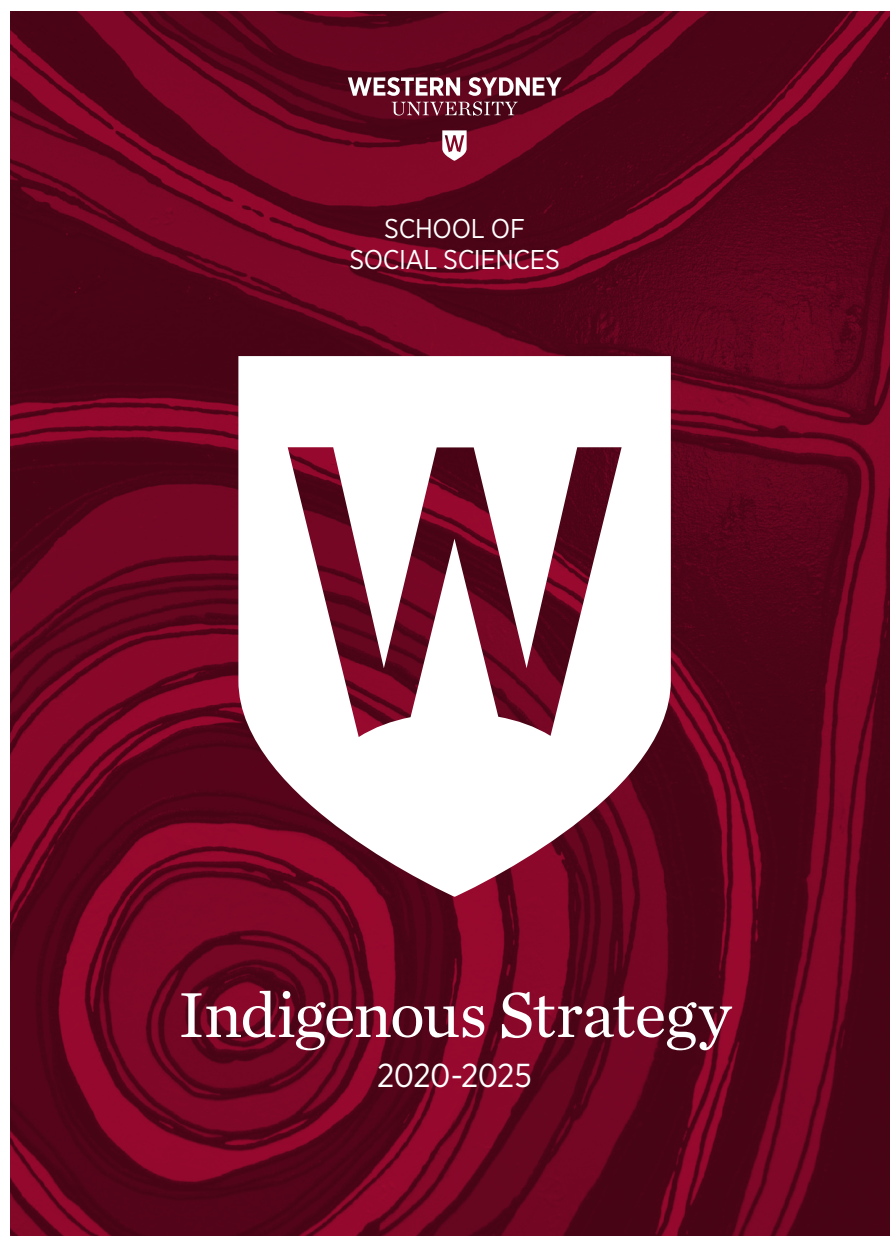
"The School of Social Science's Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025 demonstrates the School's commitment to Indigenous Education and Research and our support for students and staff. It builds on the foundation of our existing achievements and sets ambitious objectives for the next five years. I commend Associate Dean Dr Corrinne Sullivan for her leadership in developing the strategy, and the School Executive and wider School for providing their full and enthusiastic support," said Professor Brian Stout.

Dr Corrinne Sullivan, Associate Dean of Indigenous Education at the School of Social Sciences, said she is excited by the School's commitment to Indigenous excellence.

"We have outlined our key priorities and are dedicated to ensuring that we achieve our goals. Many of the objectives set out are ambitious but they are deliberately so, as the School aspires to be a leader in Indigenous Education to the benefit of our colleagues, students and the community. I look forward to reporting on our successes as we work towards our collective School objectives," said Ms Sullivan.

The School has already made significant progress towards many of the objectives set out in the strategy, in particular in leadership, in employment and student numbers. To learn more about the School of Social Science access their webpage [here](#) and download the School of Social Science's Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025 [here](#).

The School of Social Science's Indigenous Strategy 2020-2025 demonstrates the School's commitment to fostering Indigenous Australian success across research, learning and teaching portfolios, staff and student bodies, as well as nurturing community engagement and international collaboration.





Western welcomes Indigenous students through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pathway Program

Western Sydney University is committed to providing higher education pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. If you do not have a HSC or other qualification, or you have an ATAR lower than required for your chosen course, you can apply to study at Western Sydney University through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pathway Program.

The Pathway Program has had a successful year. Students were accepted in June, July and November 2020, these assessments saw 106 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participate. Many applicants were successful in gaining mid-year entry offers and early conditional offers to study at Western in 2021.

Western currently has over 316 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants for undergraduate courses commencing in 2021 and this number is continuing to grow.

Jo Galea, Manager of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Marketing team, expressed how The Pathway Program is a fantastic way to apply to study at Western.

“Over the years we have had the pleasure of offering hundreds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples a chance to study at university. In particular, it was rewarding to provide the opportunity to study to those who do not have formal education qualifications, which in the past was quite a barrier to entering higher education. The program proves that anyone can study at university,” said Ms Galea.

The program includes assessment of literacy and numeracy (not all courses require numeracy) and an informal interview with an academic from your chosen area of study providing an opportunity to ask question and find out more about the course you want to study.

To apply to study at Western via the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pathway Program please visit: www.westernsydney.edu.au/pathwayprogram



Jo Galea

WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY

Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Barney Glover AO
invites you to attend Western Sydney University's annual

YARRAMUNDI LECTURE 2020

The Yarramundi Lecture provides a forum for the discussion of issues of local and national importance. It has become central to the University's longstanding commitment to its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Aunty Fran Bodkin, Dharawal Elder and WSU Elder on Campus

Dr Kerry Arabena, Managing Director of Karabena Consulting Trust and First 1000 Days Australia, Director of Kinaway Chamber of Commerce and President of EcoHealth International

Luke Hodge, WSU Indigenous Student Representative on Student Council

Jessie Robinson, WSU Indigenous Student Representative on Academic Senate

8 December 2020

6.30pm to 8.00pm

To register for this virtual event, please visit westernsydney.edu.au/yarramundi

If you have any queries, please contact Western Sydney University's Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation on (02) 9685 9733 or at PVCEvents@westernsydney.edu.au

westernsydney.edu.au

Always Was, Always Will Be.

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

Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Barney Glover AO invites you to attend Western Sydney University's annual Yarramundi Lecture 2020

You are invited to attend the 24th annual Yarramundi Lecture to be held virtually from 6.30-8pm on the 8th of December 2020.

The Yarramundi Lecture aims to commemorate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within Australia. It provides an opportunity for the University community to embrace a spirit of co-operation and sharing, guided by genuine understanding and mutual respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. It provides a forum for the discussion of issues of local and national importance.

It was established in 1997 out of respect and recognition for First Nations People and has become central to Western's longstanding commitment to its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and reconciliation.

Aunty Pearl Wymarra, founding member of the Yarramundi Lecture and community Elder, said that over time it has developed into a much-anticipated annual event.

"The Yarramundi Lecture achieves and models the importance of recognising and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia. It helps people genuinely listen with their hearts to stories of our people and the places they have known, lived in and preserved since time immemorial," said Aunty Pearl.

The guest speakers for the 2020 event include:

- Aunty Fran Bodkin, Dharawal Elder and Western Sydney University Elder on Campus
- Dr Kerry Arabena, Managing Director of Karabena Consulting Trust and First 1000 Days Australia, Director of Kinaway Chamber of Commerce and President of EcoHealth International

- Luke Hodge, Dunghutti student and Western Sydney University Indigenous Student Representative on Student Council
- Jessie Robinson, Western Sydney University Indigenous Student Representative on Academic Senate

Professor Michelle Trudgett, Pro Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation, said the Yarramundi Lecture is a highlight in Western Sydney University's annual calendar.

"For more than two decades it has provided a valuable platform to hear from a range of prominent Indigenous Australians. This year we are pleased to present an exceptional line up of strong Indigenous leaders who will each discuss the theme *Always was, Always be*. The Yarramundi Lecture brings people together and centres Indigenous Knowledge in the discussion," said Professor Trudgett.

To register for this virtual event, please visit westernsydney.edu.au/Yarramundi

If you have any queries, please contact Western Sydney University's Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation on (02) 9685 9733 or at PVCEvents@westernsydney.edu.au

Students

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY'S INDIGENOUS STUDENTS ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS

Seven deadly questions: Introducing Stacey Kim Coates

Who are you?

My name is Stacey Kim Coates. I'm a PhD candidate at Western Sydney University. I'm a proud Wiradjuri woman and a mother of two amazing children.

I completed my Bachelor of Social Science, majoring in Psychology in 2008. I worked in the field of child welfare, before going on to further my studies. In 2014 I was awarded my Master of Teaching (Primary), thus commencing my career as a primary school teacher. I took leave from my teaching position in 2018 to complete my PhD.

As a PhD candidate at Western Sydney University, I'm examining synergies between the governance structures within Australian universities and outcomes in relation to Indigenous Leadership in Higher Education.

In addition to completing my PhD, I am currently campaigning for the introduction of mandatory biennial 'Indigenous Histories' training for Public School Teachers. I've termed the concept 'Educate the Educators'. Ultimately, I'm aiming to facilitate the capacity to build and promote strong foundations for lasting positive change.

Who is your mob?

My Mob are Wiradjuri, from central NSW.



Stacey Kim Coates

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

As an active member of my local Aboriginal community I provide support with tutoring and mentoring our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, on a volunteer basis.

I'm also the regional Aboriginal Education Consultative Group representative for my local AECG, which provides me with the opportunity to organise and promote cultural events etc. for schools in the area.

Why did you choose to study at Western Sydney University?

Initially I chose Western Sydney University because it had a great reputation. Having completed both my Bachelor and Master degrees, at Western and now my PhD, I can honestly say it provides phenomenal support to students and is by far the best university in the wider metropolitan area. I also hold our Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous, Professor Michelle Trudgett, in such high regard, so it made sense to continue my PhD studies at Western.

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

Yes, I have definitely faced challenges as an Indigenous student! My early school days were quite difficult, for various reasons. It took hard work and dedication to overcome them.

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

As a passionate Indigenous educator, I have a natural love of learning. I am highly motivated to further my studies in the area of educational research, focusing on increasing educational opportunities and long-term advancement of Indigenous people.

You are clearly a busy person with lots of commitments! What are your top 5 tips towards success for other Indigenous Western Sydney University students?

I may not always practise what I preach, but here goes (in no particular order):

1. Do not procrastinate!
2. Schedule and prioritise your workload, allocating time/day for specific tasks (I use a 'month-per-view' A4 diary and each Monday I write the tasks I want to complete each day, for the week).
3. Make a note of where you are up to when you 'log off' for the day, so you can pick it straight back up the following day - this will save time trying to remember where you were up to.
4. Learn to use EndNote (or the equivalent) as soon as you commence your studies.
5. Seek support and advice if you need it - Western has an amazing support network for students!

Wiradjuri postgraduate student wins the David Unaipon Award with a stellar book of poetry

Western Sydney University would like to congratulate Wiradjuri poet Jazz Money, whose book of poetry *The Space Between the Paperbark* was recently awarded the David Unaipon Award at the 2020 Queensland Literary Awards. The David Unaipon Award is a major Australian literary prize that honours and supports the work of an emerging Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander writer.

Jazz Money is a Western Sydney University postgraduate student in the Master of Literature and Creative Writing within the Writing and Society Research Centre.

She said she is enjoying her time at Western Sydney University in her first semester of a Masters of Creative Writing.

“Winning the Unaipon is an incredible honour, and one I hope I can be worthy of. I am ever indebted to the legacy of First Nations writers and poets from across this continent, who have kicked down the door, and continue to hold



Jazz Money. Photography: Anna Kucera

open the door, for the subsequent generations of writers, thinkers, artists and activists. Everything I write comes from, and is for, my beautiful families, my beautiful communities, and my beautiful Wiradjuri home,” said Ms Money.

Her creative brilliance has been recognised nationally. The judges of the 2020 Queensland Literary Awards described her book as: “A luminous and beautifully sculpted, seamless collection of poems that reflects on place and passion. It makes use of

Wiradjuri language in the part titles that offer the structural framework for the volume: beginnings, longings, distances and endings. *The Space Between the Paperbark* builds on the growing canon of work by contemporary Indigenous women poets, yet offers a new, fresh perspective on remembering and forgetting.”

Associate Professor Matt McGuire, Deputy Dean of the School of Humanities and Communication Arts, noted this is an outstanding achievement.

“The David Unaipon Award is Australia’s preeminent award for new literature by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers. In winning the award, Wiradjuri poet Jazz Money joins an important group of Indigenous authors who are leading cultural advocates, both here and overseas. Congratulations Jazz – we are honoured to have you as a writing student within our Masters of Literature and Creative Writing, and look forward to our continuing work with you,” said Associate Professor McGuire.

Jazz Money’s manuscript for *The Space Between the Paperbark* will be published with University of Queensland Press in 2021 which will be accessible through www.uqp.com.au or www.jazz.money. To find out more about the opportunities offered in The School of Humanities and Communication Arts please follow the [link](#).

Darug student volunteers to support community during Covid-19



Dana Williams

Dana Williams, a proud Darug woman, has been working hard to assist New South Wales Health cope with the record numbers of COVID-19 testing in south-west Sydney. She is in her 3rd year studying a Bachelor of Nursing at Western Sydney University with the hopes to become a registered nurse. She has been with St John Ambulance since November 2019 and her role at the clinic is to help register and record patient information, inform people on what the next steps are after they were tested and give them information on how to register to receive their results.

Dana Williams said 2020 has been so challenging in every aspect, but when asked to conduct COVID testing as a volunteer she was more than happy to assist.

“Volunteering has opened up so many opportunities for me in both my education, career and also provided me with amazing leadership skills. Part of my educational and spiritual journey has always centred around giving back to

mob and community and being with St John has definitely helped me achieve this,” said Ms Williams.

Sarah Lance, St John Ambulance NSW CEO, said “Our volunteers step forward when they’re needed most. We know that the health system is under pressure during these times and we are proud to provide support in any way we can.”

Professor Deborah Hatcher, Dean of Nursing and Midwifery, said that she is so proud of the students like Dana who have taken the opportunity to volunteer in the community COVID-19 clinics.

“This hands-on experience gives students the opportunity to engage with members of the public from diverse backgrounds, providing critical information and reassurance in a time of fear and uncertainty. Nursing is an incredibly rewarding profession and I am so pleased Dana will soon be graduating, joining the nursing workforce, and willing to give back to her community,” said Professor Hatcher.



Art Project by Talyssa Baker



Talyssa Baker

Second generation teacher-to-be inspires others

The following story was first published by the Koori Mail.

Talyssa Baker, a proud Yorta Yorta and Dharawal woman, is following in her grandmother's footsteps to become a primary school teacher and will graduate with the same degree she completed back in the nineties.

Just as her grandmother inspired and encouraged her, Talyssa, who is in her third year of the Bachelor of Education (Primary) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education program at Western Sydney University, is helping other students navigate further studies.

The 21-year-old Campbelltown resident opted to enrol in block mode learning at university so she could stay connected to her community and study. She works as an Indigenous Student Liaison Officer at Leumeah High School, a Student Ambassador for the University, and is a cultural vocalist with the KARI Singers.

"My course is studied in block mode meaning I have one to two weeks on campus four times a year. We do intensive study and the rest is done online," said Talyssa.

The flexible study and emphasis on practical placements at schools is what attracted Talyssa to Western Sydney University. And it was a university based project on community and cultural involvement that helped her reconnect with her high school where she now works.

"I reached out to my old contacts at Leumeah High School and they were on board with me running an art project with the students. We painted Indigenous artworks in the playground and the principal invited me back to continue working with the students."

"Even though I'm studying primary school teaching it's been great to work with the older kids and help them think about their career options."

"Having the placements every year as part of my degree is something that I really enjoy about our program. They have opened so many doors for me."

Talyssa's own experience at school was shaped by her participation in the Fast Forward and Pathways to Dreaming programs – both Western Sydney University initiatives that get students thinking about their career paths from an early age.

"I think education is so important. I love my culture, teaching and sharing – I just want to be part of it."

While studying in block mode, Talyssa has made a network of friends from across the state, including peers from rural and remote areas, mature aged students with kids, and students like her who want to work and study at the same time.

"While we are on block the University's Badanami Centre offers accommodation for students that live further away from our campus."

"The centre also provides us with resources, including learning supplies, access to computers and food. The staff there also give us a lot of support."

"We all stay connected when we return to online learning – we are a really close-knit group of students who look out for each other."

As part of her final year of studies, Talyssa is looking forward to completing a country placement to connect with rural kids and engage with her culture.

For more information about the Bachelor of Education (Primary) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander degree, visit westernsydney.edu.au/atsiedcourse

Staff

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY'S PASSIONATE INDIGENOUS STAFF

Seven deadly questions: Introducing Jeff Dunn

Who are you?

My name is Jeff Dunn I am an Aboriginal Community Outreach and Student Support Officer at Western Sydney University. I completed my Bachelor of Music at Western and my Masters of Screen Composition at the Australian Film, Television, and Radio School.

Who is your mob?

I am of the Budawang clan group in Yuin Country and Dhurga language group.

What community/cultural events have you been to lately?

I am always down the coast on Country but not many events happening at the moment due to Covid-19 restrictions. I am looking forward to catching up with the mob and engaging more in community once the restrictions are removed.

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

I am an Aboriginal Community Outreach and Student Support Officer at the Ngaramada Indigenous Student Centre in The College at Western Sydney University. I have worked at the University for over 11 years and was a student from 1993 to 1998.

Have you always aspired to work in tertiary education?

No, I fell into it through part-time work at The Koori Centre as an Honours Music student at Sydney University.

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

My favourite thing about working at Western is student contact and watching the mob develop and then seeing them



Jeff Dunn

working in their field after completing their degree.

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

Remember and respect whose country you are on and always consult with local traditional Elders.

Meet Kayla Sale, one of Western Sydney University's Super Tutors

Who are you?



Kayla Sale

My name is Kayla Sale and I am a Wiradjuri and Tongan woman brought up on Darug land with a passion for improving the health and wellbeing of my people.

Who are you tutoring and what are they studying?

I am currently tutoring a first year Bachelor of Health Sciences student and am studying a Bachelor of Podiatric Medicine with two months to go. I have previously completed a Bachelor of Health Sciences with a major in marketing at the University of Sydney.

Why did you decide to become part of the Badanami Tutoring for Success Program?

I decided to become part of the Tutoring For Success program as I know what it's like to be an Aboriginal first-in-family university student and how difficult it was to find a sense of belonging. I knew that becoming a tutor for people in the beginning of their degree would allow me to provide them with an example of an Aboriginal person who had already completed a degree, was in the process of attaining a second one and simultaneously engaging in employment that I loved.

Why is tutoring important?

I believe tutoring is important because, similarly to all aspects of life, no one is very good at something they are doing for the first time. Tutoring provides people with a more personal level of discussion around a topic and TFS allows students to ask questions and explore concepts without shame or judgement. Tutoring is important as it allows you to get a different perspective to an assessment you may not have otherwise had.

What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about becoming a tutor?

Do it! Tutoring is incredibly rewarding and helping young mob reach their goals is an amazing feeling. Ensure that you're qualified for what you're attempting to take on and know that there may be days your students simply want to vent or complain about university, like we all have wanted to, but now they'll have someone who will listen! Be proactive with your student and be who you wish you had during the hard parts of your degree.



Josh Mason

Welcoming Josh Mason into his new role as Academic Literacy and Learning Advisor within the Badanami Centre of Indigenous Education

Josh Mason is a proud Wiradjuri man who was born, raised and currently resides on the lands of the Darug people. He has worked in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education for 16 years and in that time has developed a huge passion for promoting the importance of education and playing a role in our people's success within the education sector.

He has worked at Western since 2010 and has just celebrated 10 years of service at the University.

"I believe this university is one of the most important assets our community has access to, and I can't imagine working anywhere else. In my opinion, working at Western gives me a great opportunity to do my part in not only promoting the importance of education but to position Western as an institution of choice for my community within the tertiary education sector," said Mr Mason.

When he first started working here at Western, he held the position of Project Officer within the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Engagement (OATSIEE). It was in this role that he worked within the employment space here at Western, including overseeing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traineeships and cadetships. He would regularly support Indigenous trainees and cadets during their work and placements both internally and externally with industry partners. His next role was Project Officer in the Office of Engagement Marketing where he worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with the aim of raising their awareness and aspirations of tertiary education. His role was to implement engagement programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary school and high school students allowing them to become familiar with the many aspects of Western and to give them the best opportunity to make informed decisions on their post Year 12 pathway.

"I'm really excited about my current role here at Western, which is the Academic Literacy and Learning Advisor within the Badanami Centre of Indigenous Education. I've been welcomed warmly by the team, who are not only fantastic at their jobs but are extremely passionate and dedicated to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students," said Mr Mason.

"Over the last few years, I have developed a real passion to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in completing their tertiary journey. I want to play my role to increase our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student retention and completion rates here at Western. For many years I've helped young people realise their tertiary aspirations and I'm extremely fortunate to be in a position now, where I can help them complete their journey," said Mr Mason.

Fiona Towney, Director of Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education, said it was with great pleasure that she welcomed Josh Mason to the Badanami team.

"Josh has been working at Western Sydney University since 2010 in various positions supporting Indigenous students and communities. Josh brings with him a skill set that will ensure high level outcomes for our students and tutors, in addition to strengthening the Badanami team," said Ms Towney.

In the future Josh wants to promote the importance of education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. He wants to be a part of positive and sustainable change for First Nations people as he endeavours to advocate for Western and the opportunities this institution has on offer for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

To find out more about the support offered by the Badanami team and Tutoring for Success follow the link https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/badanami/badanami_centre_for_indigenous_education/current_students

Alumni

WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY'S INDIGENOUS ALUMNI

Seven deadly questions: Introducing Ray Kelly

Who are you?

My name is Ray Kelly and I'm a Gomerioi man from the Quirindi area. I've been working in health for almost 30 years and can't believe I get paid to do this work. I get to work with some amazing people and help mob turn their health around. I'm also a dad of 5 kids (5yrs-14yrs) and try to be as involved as I can in their schooling and sport. I left school at 16 years but started a Human Movement degree at 29 years, then onto a Master of Teaching at 40 years, a Master of Research at 46 years and now onto a PhD (50 years). My work has me travelling across a number of communities, teaching health professionals and mob how to reverse type 2 diabetes.

Across my career I've prepared athletes for the Olympics, trained 2 winners from 2 attempts on The Biggest Loser, was the sports scientist on The Contender Australia, trained 12 world champion boxers, written 2 books as well as many other things. I'm also the current Exercise Physiologist of the Year, awarded by Exercise and Sports Science Australia.

What community/cultural events have you been to lately?

With COVID happening events have not been happening too much. I have recently been helping mob online through Twitter (#BlackFullaTwitterBootCamp). I have been out to a few communities recently and am currently over in Western Australia going through quarantine before we start filming a documentary with SBS. I'll be co-host with Dr Michael Mosley from the UK and we will be spending some time up in Roebourne, which I am hoping will be around NAIDOC week.

What is your current position and why are you passionate about what you are currently doing?

I'm an Accredited Exercise Physiologist and run my own company travelling to communities to help reverse type 2 diabetes. I'm passionate because our people are often the last to have access to these treatments and this is one area where we can heal ourselves and lead the country in it. The results mob get in remote NSW are better than outcomes in mainstream clinics in Sydney. We have people getting off insulin in as little as 7 days, after having to inject themselves with insulin daily for over 16 years. We are strong people, and diabetes was never our history. It will no longer be our future either!

What degree did you study at Western Sydney University?

I studied 2 degrees at WSU. The Master of Teaching (Secondary PDHPE) and the Master of Research.

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

I had such great support from the Badanami Centre during the Master of Teaching and met some amazing mob who I am still friends with today. The Master of Research was such great preparation for a PhD. The course coordinators Jack Tsonis and Alex Norman had intensified my critical thinking skills from day 1 and that would continue across the course. I really can't recommend that course enough. It changed not only how I see research, but also how I see the world. The most impactful subject I studied was At the Cultural Interface with Brenda Dobia. It was a subject that had me looking deeper into who I was as an Aboriginal man, as well as how the history of my parents, grandparents and my own, have moulded me. Watching the non-Indigenous students learn about our history for the first time was pretty cool too and to see their passion and anger grow gave me confidence in our future. I also had great guidance from staff such as Andrew Bennie and Christina Curry.



Ray Kelly

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

To be honest, it's my stepfather. He raised me and my brother and 3 sisters from a young age. This bow-legged bull rider who couldn't read or write took us on like his own. I watched as my mum taught him to read in his 50's and he would go on to earn his school certificate at 62 years of age. He has taught me more through actions than words, and has taught me the importance of having an education. Still to this day no one in my family has finished high school, but that cycle will stop with my family. My eldest daughter is proud of the fact she will be the first!

What would be your top 5 tips towards success for Indigenous graduates from WSU?

My top 5 tips are pretty simple:

1. Back yourself. You stand on the shoulders of your ancestors and you are capable of more than you will ever know. I learnt this the hard way. I grew up thinking I wasn't smart, and this led me to make poor choices and quit when things got tough. Now I know better and my life is different.
2. Dream big. Many people will tell you to aim lower as it's more achievable, but I disagree. Aim high. If you aren't successful, then those lower goals will still be there. However, if you succeed, well life will never be the same. Once again, you are capable of much more than you know.

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3. Don't be afraid to fail. Fear of failing will limit your potential. If there is one thing I can promise you it's that no matter which route you take, you will fail. And, if you achieve success then you will have failed more than many others. Failing is an essential ingredient for success, you can't succeed without failing along the way. The reason is simple, you learn more from failing than you do from winning. You do not want to chase failure, but you need to accept it as a part of success.
4. Put in the work. Dreams and positive mantras will not make you succeed, in the end you have to put in the work. Set aside time to study, try to meet people in your area of study/work that you admire (you'll be surprised at how many will be willing to help you), and associate with positive, motivated people.
5. Work in an area that you are passionate about. No job is ever great all the time, so it's no good chasing money. You need to do something that makes you excited to get out of bed. If you have passion, then successful people will gravitate toward you and this in turn will bring you opportunities and success!

Congratulations to our graduates

Western Sydney University is committed to empowering and supporting Indigenous students' study and graduation from degrees of their choice. Currently Western Sydney University has over 1,339 Indigenous alumni who have graduated from a variety of degrees across the university's range of Schools.

This September alone twenty deadly students graduated from their Bachelor's degree, three students graduated from their Master's degree and one student graduated as a doctor, many of whom are the first in their family to attend university.

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.

Our staff are looking forward to celebrating your graduation virtually with you and your closest.

Congratulations to the following students, we are so proud of each of you and wish you the best of luck in your future endeavours.

Ashley Renee Greentree – Bachelor of Business

Cameron Robert James Bartlett – Graduate Diploma of Psychological Studies

Chantelle Kitchener – Bachelor of Psychology

Cheleigh Shaw – Bachelor of Construction Management

Chloe Bird – Diploma in Criminal and Community Justice/Bachelor of Criminal and Community Justice

Codi-Lee Collins – Bachelor of Nursing

Corinne Miller – Bachelor of Policing Studies – Non NSW Police Pathway

Dayle Marie Sumner – Bachelor of Social Work

Dean Norris – Doctor of Philosophy – Health Science

Donna McKenzie – Bachelor of Education (Primary) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education

Emma Rose Costello-Grealy – Bachelor of Social Science

Evan Williamson – Master of Financial Planning

Jackson Wentworth Marlow-Conway – Bachelor of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security

Kristy Ann Haley – Bachelor of Arts

Kristy Maree Rendell – Bachelor of Arts (Pathway to Teaching Primary)

Mark Terry Lee – Diploma in Design/Bachelor of Graphic Design (Pathway to Teaching Secondary)



Naomi Carr – Bachelor of Education (Primary) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education

Narelle Cazna Jordan – Master of Art Therapy

Phillip Nixon – Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws

Renee Brennan – Diploma in Social Science (Policing)/Bachelor of Policing

Tahnee Perri Ping – Bachelor of Tourism Management

Wyatt Edward Barn – Bachelor of Arts (Pathway to Teaching Secondary)

Zoe Jade Makkink – Bachelor of Health Science (Health and Physical Education) – Pathway to Teaching (Secondary)

Research

CELEBRATING RECENT 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 that was completed earlier this year.

Pheobe Bailey, Natalie Ebner, Ahmed Moustafa, Jake Phillips, **Tarren Leon**, & Gabrielle Weidemann. (2020). The weight of advice in older age. Decision. Advance online publication. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1037/dec0000138>

Stacey Kim Coates, Michelle Trudgett & Susan Page. (2020). Examining Indigenous leadership in the academy: A methodological approach. *Australian Journal of Education*. doi:10.1177/0004944120969207

Corrinne Sullivan. (2020). *Indigenous Australian experiences of sex work: Stories of Agency, Autonomy and Self-Determination*. PhD Thesis, Macquarie University, Sydney NSW.



Royal Commission
Into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
of People with Disability

Research Report

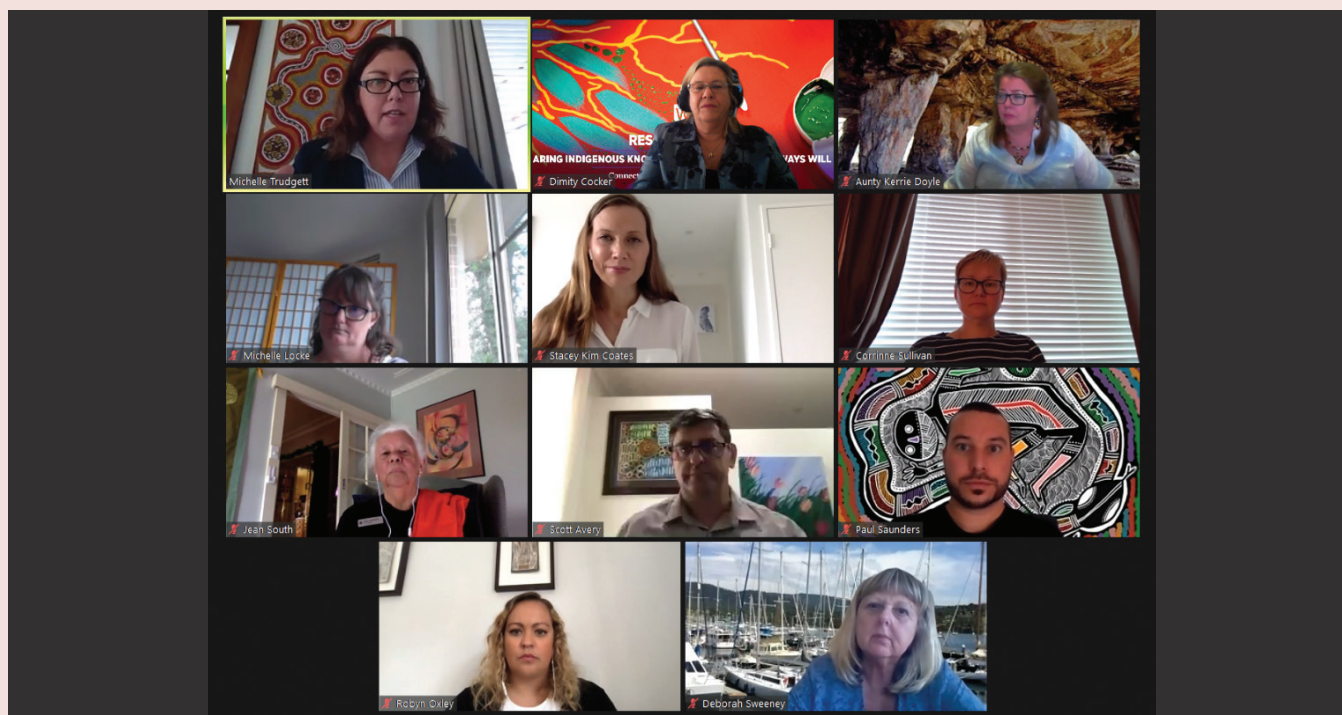
Something Stronger:

Truth-telling on hurt and
loss, strength and healing,
from First Nations people
with disability

Scott Avery

October 2020

Dr Scott Avery, Senior Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences has recently published a research report for the Disability Royal Commission titled 'Something Stronger: Truth-telling on hurt and loss, strength and healing, from First Nations people with disability'. Access the full report [here](#).



Research Week: Connecting today for resilience tomorrow

Western Sydney University values academic excellence, integrity and the pursuit of knowledge. Ranked in the top two percent of universities in the world, Western is research-led and committed to making a positive impact on the communities it engages with.

From 19th October to 23rd October 2020, an insightful Research Week program was held to showcase our University's research expertise in a range of areas. Western held 24 virtual events which explored this year's theme, 'Connect today for resilience tomorrow'. The theme was very fitting to the current global crisis and created a unique setting for conversation and analysis on what it means to be 'resilient' in a year like no other.

On Monday 19th October, the '*Sharing Indigenous Knowledge – Always Was, Always Will Be*' event was held. The Indigenous Research Forum brought together seven Indigenous Higher Degree Research students and academics from Western Sydney University's Indigenous Research Network who each delivered presentations and answered questions on the resilience of our First Nations People. Stacey Coates, a PhD student and Michelle Locke, a Research Officer represented the Office of the Pro

Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation. Dr Corrinne Sullivan, Dr Scott Avery and Robyn Oxley represented the School of Social Sciences. Aunty Professor Kerrie Doyle and Paul Saunders represented the School of Medicine.

The event was a success with over 102 people registered. It showcased Western's deep commitment to supporting the dynamic Indigenous Research agenda which spans across a range of disciplines.

Professor Michelle Trudgett, Pro Vice-Chancellor Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Strategy and Consultation, said she was inspired and encouraged by the presentations delivered by the seven Indigenous scholars.

"Western is doing an incredible job at building the Indigenous research capacity across our University. It is certainly an exciting time for Indigenous research at Western. The event showcased the talent of Indigenous researchers who are investigating a wide and diverse range of topics that will significantly impact our communities and broader Australian society," said Professor Trudgett.

Professor Deborah Sweeney, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Research, Enterprise and International) said Research Week is one of the most exciting weeks in our University's calendar.

"It is a celebration of Western's research and a showcase event of research outcomes, opportunities, facilities and talent for industry, staff, students and the community. The Indigenous event held every year as part of research week, reflects the commitment Western has to supporting and encouraging Indigenous-led research. This year's symposium '*Sharing Indigenous Knowledge – Always Was, Always Will Be*' provided a wonderful opportunity to bring together HDR students and academics from the WSU Indigenous Research Network to broadcast their research, open discussions and demonstrate Western's ongoing commitment to the development of Indigenous knowledge," said Professor Sweeney.

Other events included the Research Impact Competition, Resilience NSW and WSU with Resilience Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, and the Laureate Address: 'The Spirit of Endurance: learning about resilience from Australian vegetation', with Australian Research Council (ARC) Laureate Fellow, Distinguished Professor Belinda Medlyn.

To learn more about Research Week and about the speakers please visit the [Research Week Webpage](#).

If you are interested in Research at Western Sydney University, please visit the [website](#) or contact our team via +612 4736 0895.

Badanami Centre supports all Indigenous students

2020 started unremarkably for Western Sydney University, Badanami and our support services. Students and staff were fortunate to gather on the 2nd of March at Parramatta South for the purpose of delivering a Welcome to Country and to acknowledge the beginning of a new academic year. This event was attended by many who enjoyed the yarning by Uncle Wes and Uncle Greg. The smoking ceremony was appreciated by all, as was Jessie playing the didge for us.

Little did we know what lay ahead.

The Badanami staff participated in O week and Western Fair activities. On Friday 13 March, we were fortunate to attend (and in some cases participate) in the inaugural Indigenous Soccer game of the century, students v staff, where a great time was had by all.

By the end of March, all Badanami staff were working from home, and our students were also required to attend university remotely. Under the leadership of Fiona Towney, Director of the Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education, the Badanami team had to adjust to a new way of supporting our students and each other. The basics commenced with daily team zoom meetings, and weekly Badanami staff and student zoom meetings on Wednesdays at noon. These meetings continue to be held.

Our practices evolved daily. Each Badanami student success officer was allocated a list of students by School. The role of the student success officer was, and continues to be, to support our mob in any way possible. The team learnt as they went along. They were aware that Indigenous students and communities were at greater risk of contracting

COVID-19 compared to other peoples. They ascertained that a number of students were struggling financially and arranged for food parcels to be delivered.

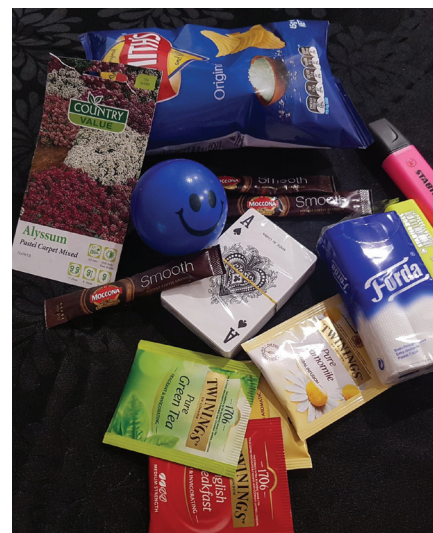
Printing documents was a basic, but important, requirement. We were able to liaise with staff from Librarian Client Services, who arranged for all our students to be able to attend campus libraries, swipe their student card, and access the printing they needed, with the charge being debited to Badanami account. Additionally, rural students were able to access printing via an Officeworks click and collect credit. Those rural students who could not access an Officeworks branch, were able to email their printing requirements to the Director of Badanami, who arranged for the printing to be completed and then posted to the student.

Weekly \$50 gift voucher raffles were introduced to offer another practical support, and perhaps give students something to look forward to.

Badanami has faced many challenges over the last seven months – certainly the most distressing was the loss of one of our beautiful female Indigenous students – communicating with her family and attending to the various ceremonies and memorials held to respect her memory. The Badanami team continued to rally and support each other, and our students. The Mental Health and Wellbeing team were unwavering in their support of us all at this most distressing of times.

We recently sent a care package to all our enrolled students to let them know we are genuine in our care for them. Many, many emails and calls have been received expressing gratitude for the support that has been provided.

We recently celebrated 80 of our students graduating. Although we were not able to watch them literally walk across the stage, perhaps there is some prestige in being



The Badanami team sent approximately 700 care packages to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

able to say they were part of the very first virtual ceremony ever held at Western.

Fiona Towney, Director of Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education, said during 2020 the Badanami team had the opportunity to develop deep relationships with the students.

“This is a very challenging time for all, but we are a resilient mob – tens of thousands of years of history tells us this. We at Badanami are confident that we will all emerge from this difficult time stronger and better than ever,” said Ms Towney.

The Badanami team will continue to support each other, and all Indigenous students, as all head towards the end of the year. The Badanami team wish all graduands, continuing students and those of you having a temporary break, and your families, a happy, safe and peaceful Christmas break and a wonderful 2021.

To find out more about the support offered by the Badanami Team please follow: https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/badanami/badanami_centre_for_indigenous_education

