Cover images
These images capture a glimpse of the people who have walked before us over the past 30 years – the people who contributed towards shaping Wollotuka into what it is today – a National Leader in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education.
The Wollotuka Institute (Wollotuka) acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal owners of the lands within our footprint areas:

- Awabakal Nation
- Darkinung Nation
- Biripai Nation
- Worimi Nation
- Wonnarua Nation

We also pay respect to our Ngurakí past and present.

1In the language of the Awabakal meaning “eating and meeting place”
2In the language of the Awabakal meaning “wise person, elder”
GUTHI WANGGA
- CELEBRATING OUR 30TH ANNIVERSARY

Our Dreaming, our connection to country and place, our rich heritage, our diverse cultures and our strong identity to spirit has empowered Wollotuka to not only survive through 30 years of change and restructure but to thrive.

2013 CELEBRATES OUR PROUD HISTORY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

This year marks a milestone for Wollotuka, which commenced in 1983 as a small enclave providing cultural support to a handful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to an Institute now engaging with 859 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across the three main campuses of the University - Callaghan (Awabakal Country), Ourimbah (Darkinung Country) and Port Macquarie (Biripai Country) as well as making a commitment to Indigenous education within the areas of teaching and learning; research and innovation and staff employment and development.

Our Aboriginal-led governance and leadership model has continued to advance Wollotuka as a national leader in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education with the University once again boasting the highest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments and staff numbers in Australia. This national leadership status can also be attributed to the University’s “New Directions” Strategic Plan 2013-2015 which continues to value the relationships it has with our Indigenous Communities both at a national and international level by providing educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, creating awareness of Indigenous knowledges for all Australians and attracting and retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Our Nguraki and Community also continue to play a vital role in our activities particularly with the shaping, development and launch of our Cultural Standards – an Australian first. This key achievement of 2013 is a major criterion to receiving international accreditation through the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC) with the Standards defining and guiding the next step in the accreditation process – a self-study of how we operate. This and other major achievements will be highlighted within this report.
2013 SNAPSHOT

859 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Student Enrolments

BY PROGRAM LOAD

- Undergraduate (574) 67%
- Postgraduate Coursework (62) 7%
- Research Higher Degree (25) 3%
- Enabling (196) 23%
- Non-Award (2) 7%

BY FACULTY

- Business and Law 28
- Education & Arts 196
- Engineering & Built Environment 252
- Health and Medicine 153
- Science & Information Technology 54
- English Language & Foundation Studies 100
- The Wollotuka Institute 72
- Student & Academic Services 25

73 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff

BY FACULTY DIVISION

- Academic Division 10.7
- Education & Arts 4.5
- Engineering & Built Environment 45
- Science & Information Technology 7
- Research Division 2
- Resources Division 7
- Vice-Chancellor's Division 2
- Health & Medicine 48

111 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Graduates

BY FACULTY

- Business and Law 8
- Education & Arts 22
- Engineering & Built Environment 28
- Health and Medicine 12
- Science & Information Technology 3
- English Language & Foundation Studies 18
GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Our Nguraki play a pivotal role in the governance structures and leadership within Indigenous education at the University. Their wisdom and teachings are essential to the cultural fabric of our ‘ways of doing’. Their guidance is sought by our staff, students and community. This respect for their wisdom has seen two additional Elders appointed on a part time basis in 2013 to complement the two Elders in Residence appointments on the Callaghan and Ourimbah campuses.

Wollotuka stands alone from other Australian higher education Indigenous units as an all-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffed unit. A Board of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Training (BATSIE) whose membership includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives with high level skills and expertise in Indigenous educational and community matters, provides high level advice to the Vice-Chancellor. Consultation with Indigenous communities is integral to the University’s approach to supporting Indigenous education.

Wollotuka’s unique triad director management structure based on a traditional collaborative leadership perspective continues to form a dynamic decision making process that is achieving outstanding results in Indigenous education locally, nationally and internationally. Directors actively participate in numerous committees both within and outside the University to achieve these results.

This alternative successful approach has been endorsed and supported by the University’s senior management team who continually work in collaboration with the directors to strengthen the University’s leadership in Indigenous education. Wollotuka reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Division) and is positioned within the University as a foundation for providing leadership and direction in relation to Indigenous education.

Leanne Holt, Director of Indigenous Student Engagement, Employment and Collaboration

- University Student Engagement Committee
- an elected professional staff member of University Council
- Co-chair – Innovative Research Universities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Network
- Treasurer of National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Consortium
- Leading the international accreditation process with WINHEC

Professor John Lester, Director of Academic and Research

- University Academic Senate
- Returning Officer, NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
- Advisory Board, Australian Council for Educational Research
- American Educational Research Association

Associate Professor Peter O’Mara, Director of Indigenous Health

- University’s Joint Medical Program Committee
- Australian Indigenous Doctors Association

Academic staff are represented on the University’s Program and Course Approval Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee and Human Research Ethics Committee. Professional staff are also involved in a number of University committees such as Callaghan Campus Landscape Management Committee, University Sustainability Committee, Healthy UoN Steering Committee, Psychological Health Working Party, Newcastle University Post Graduate Student Association.
The Wollotuka Institute – Organisational Chart 2013
The University is the preferred study destination for Indigenous students in NSW and ACT topping the state in Indigenous student preferences from UAC. In 2013, the University received 321 first preferences from Indigenous students more than double the number of preferences of the next ranked University of 129. At 1,382 total preferences the University received 102% more preferences from Indigenous students than the next ranked institution (683). Source: Universities Admission Centre

Cultural Standards

The cultural essence to which the goals of Wollotuka are directed and under which it operates are now reflected by the development in 2013 of a set of locally defined Cultural Standards. Elders, Cultural mentors and knowledge holders from Aboriginal organisations within the University’s footprint area formed the committee to develop these standards which provide a guiding principle against which the cultural integrity of Wollotuka and Indigenous programs within the University can be reviewed and assessed. Aboriginal Dreaming stories provide the philosophical basis of the standards and are presented to give meaning to each of the five domains – Ngarralin Marrung* (Respect and Honouring); Guthi Wangga (Cultural Celebration); Ngiyang Nganggalidhi* (Community Responsiveness); Djuwal Ngarraigu* (Academic and Research); Bulu Wiyawiyelli* (Inter-Institutional Relationships). The formation of these standards plays a key role in Wollotuka applying for International accreditation with the renowned World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium (WINHEC).

Leanne Holt’s email reflections to staff after presenting the Cultural Standards to the WINHEC Accreditation Board at Navajo Technical College, New Mexico, in August 2013:

“We presented our Cultural Standards to the World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium today and received overwhelming support from the whole committee. There were tears, cheers and many congratulations on an outstanding result. We will need to have a small celebration when I return. They have been live streaming the meeting so I’m hoping that our presentation is put up so staff can see the response and hear the statements made on how significant this work is on an International Indigenous platform particularly being an Australian first. It is already opening up very valuable relationships. I am going to talk to Peter (Bucksbin) tomorrow as Chair of our National committee about possibly doing a joint media release. We now need to complete our self-study which is a major piece of work however we should be inspired by the journey we have already taken. Congratulations Cheryl (Newton) on all the work you put into this. I also acknowledge our relationship with you Andrew (Parfitt) and the rest of the senior executive team, being able to emphasise the autonomy we are given to create an empowering cultural space and the positive relationship of working together to achieve excellent outcomes, was an important part of our presentation and not something that seems to be valued at many of our other universities in Australia.”

Similar accolades were received when the Standards were launched at the International Research Symposium we hosted as part of our 30th anniversary celebrations in November 2013.

---

*In the language of the Awabakal meaning “listening/learning well”  
*In the language of the Darkinung meaning “we are talking”  
*In the Gathang language of the Worimi, Gwingai and Biripai meaning “search for knowledge”  
*In the language of the Awabakal meaning “you two converse”
Partnership Agreements

• A new partnership agreement committing to giving Indigenous people a voice in their educational future was signed on 16 April at the University’s Ourimbah campus. Vice-Chancellor, Professor Caroline McMillen, signed the Partnership Agreement, which is a statement of intent of how the Central Coast Regional Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and Wollotuka are planning to work together.

It is the first formal agreement between a regional AECG and a university.

• Two Memorandums of Understanding were signed during the Indigenous Research Knowledge and Leadership Symposium in November with:
  – Leading Maori University, Te Whare Wananga O Awanuiarangi. The underpinning aim of the agreement is ‘whaihua’: Maori and other Indigenous students supported to achieve their educational aspirations. This MOU will further strengthen relationships within the Pacific Rim.
  – First Nations House of Learning which operates under the auspices of the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada.

ARC Funding Grant

University of Newcastle research fellow Dr Mark Lock and Associate Professor Peter O’Mara attracted the largest Discovery Indigenous grant awarded by the ARC for research into Indigenous health. They will spend three years and three-quarters of a million dollars investigating the integration of Aboriginal voices in the governance of public health services.

“It is a common assumption that improving Aboriginal access to health services will improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people, but there is no rigorous scientific evidence that the current integration reforms are effective. My research will use innovative mathematical, visual and vocal methods to model the most effective ways to integrate Aboriginal voices” said Dr Lock.

Book Launches

• Our Voices – Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Social Work, edited by Dr Stephanie Gilbert, Bindi Bennett, Sue Green and Dawn Bessarab, was launched on 5 February by respected former Social Justice Minister, Dr Tom Calma. The book is a ground-breaking collection of writings from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous social work educators and students who, through a process of hypothesising, reflecting and evaluating, have built and acquired a tool kit of appropriate behaviours, interactions, networks and intervention. Sharing this tool kit means sharing the outcome of a methodical, informative and evaluative process that has been shown to work. Karen Menzies also contributed towards a chapter.

• Professor John Maynard released an updated edition of his book ‘Aborigines and the ‘Sport of Kings’ during the spring carnival at Flemington racecourse. The book details the exploits of some of racing’s lesser known heroes. Former champion Aboriginal jockey, Darby McCarthy was on hand for the launch.

Staff Achievements

• Stephanie Gilbert was awarded her Doctor of Philosophy (History) and was also successful in achieving a promotion to Senior Lecturer Level C.

• Catherine Phoenix received a 2013 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Advisory Council Indigenous Staff Scholarship to assist with her research higher degree studies.

• Associate Professor Peter O’Mara was awarded the LIMElight Leadership award at the Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) Connection V Awards Dinner on 27 August.

• Vicki Holliday received the School of Medicine and Public Health Indigenous Collaborations Staff Excellence Award.

• Cheryl Newton, Amanda Kelly, Leanne Holt, Professor John Maynard, Michael Donovan and Joe Perry received Service Recognition Awards from the Vice-Chancellor in recognition of extended contribution to the University.
Living Cultures…The Corroboree

A Corroboree celebrating the significance of the living cultures within our local Aboriginal Community was a great way to finish Wollotuka’s 30th Anniversary year. Tuesday 26 November commenced early for a group of Wollotuka staff who gathered with our Maori brothers and sisters to prepare the hungi for the evening celebrations with a blessing of the food ceremony being performed by Elders. The National Aboriginal Elders Alliance meeting was also held at the University on this day with the group in attendance for these special ceremonies.

Throughout the day Aboriginal men and women gathered separately with discussions on the business of the day being guided by our Elders. A growing number of community gathered on the grounds outside the Birabah Building at dusk in anticipation of this significant event with the commencing Welcome to Awabakal Country being witnessed by 300 people. A Male and Female Clearing Dance started the corroboree following by a number of significant dances, didgeridoo and song performances as well as opportunities being provided for crowd participation. Aboriginal culture is still alive and strong within our community and the wider community and this was showcased on the night.

“I had the opportunity to be there at the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders Alliance meeting 26 November and also attended the celebrations that evening. When I first arrived I felt as if I was back home, staff were very friendly and the students who looked after us were great, Amber and the young man. The celebrations were wonderful, music, dance, food and community were great. I would like to thank the men who looked after us at lunch time. The Elders who came with me said it was the best they have seen—didgeridoo playing unreal—the young ones—so professional at such a young age. All dancers were great. From us here at CSU in Wiradjuri Country we thank you all.” John Nolan, Community Relations Officer, Centre for Indigenous Studies, Charles Sturt University


This symposium hosted by Umulliko® Indigenous Higher Education Research Centre tackled issues and challenges in Indigenous Higher Education in the 21st Century. The symposium introduced keynote Indigenous academics from Aotearoa (New Zealand), Canada and Hawaii as well as eminent Australian scholars speaking on topics such as Privileging Indigenous Knowledge in the Academy; Decolonising Indigenous Research Methods and Processes; Connecting the Academy with Community; and Indigenous Higher Education, Leadership and Scholarship. The Symposium was structured to promote and privilege Indigenous knowledge sharing and creation methods, especially those that are referred to as Dadirri – deep reflective and respectful listening.

“I had such a wonderful visit to your tertiary establishment 27-30 Nov 2013. What a magnificent Institute you have there. How talented and supportive your team is there. I was so impressed by the manaakitanga (nurture and care) of you all as you hosted us to generous and delicious morning teas, lunches and dinners each day. Above all the program was stimulating, thought-provoking and challenging. I was very pleased that Professor Jo-Ann Archibald had come from the University of British Columbia and that we had escorted Distinguished Professor Graham Smith to be at your University – to sign an MoU. How appropriate that we should align ourselves with Aboriginal endeavour to model the provision of indigenous education around the world. Maori Scholar, Professor Kuni Jenkins

“In the language of the Awabakal meaning “to create, to make, to do”
Birabahn Cultural Trail Opening – Acknowledging Aboriginal presence on Callaghan Campus site

University staff, students and community celebrated the opening of the Birabahn Cultural Trail on 7 November. 60 attendees were heartened by the speeches given by local Awabakal Elders, Aunty June Rose and Aunty Sandra Griffin who noted the significance in acknowledging Awabakal presence on the University grounds and who both officially opened the trail. The establishment of the trail was a recommendation from a research study conducted by Professor John Maynard in 1999 titled “Callaghan, The University of Newcastle: Whose Traditional Land?” Professor Maynard provided a brief discussion on the interpretive signage along the trail which provides historical and cultural knowledge of the long association that Aboriginal people have with the University’s Callaghan campus site. The afternoon concluded with bush tucker refreshments and opportunity for guests to plant small trees along the trail.

Newcastle Community applauds Indigenous Short Films

Wollotuka hosted an Indigenous Short Film Festival at Event Cinemas, King Street Newcastle on 31 October with two of the films featuring local Aboriginal talent.

There was a great interest shown in the Festival with an audience of 150 applauding the presentation of six Indigenous short films with PhD student Raymond Kelly, featuring in Dr Romaine Moreton’s film The Oysterman. Romaine is also connected to the University as a research fellow. Another local Aboriginal actor, Rodney Smith starred in Tracey Rigney’s film Abalone which was named best short film at the imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival in Toronto, Canada. Dr Romaine Moreton’s film The Oysterman was also shown at the Media Arts Festival in Toronto.

Other films shown on the night which were showcased at the Toronto festival were Margaret Harvey’s The Hunter and Jon Bell’s The Chuck In. Kimberley West’s In the Air and Tiffany Parker’s Scar were also shown at the Wollotuka event.

Acknowledging our Elders

On 19 October a dinner was held at Wollotuka in honour of our Elders both past and present thanking them for their valuable contributions.

Engaging students with our Elders plays a pivotal role in their University journey with student MC’s, Jordyn Pol and Jake McDonald, acknowledging this role Elders played in their own lives both within and outside of the University. The 80 Elders and their guests enjoyed a fine evening with dinner and refreshments and acknowledged how great it was to ‘catch-up’ with others they haven’t seen for so long. The guests were also entertained by our very own education student, singer/guitarist, Jesse Hodgetts.
UoN staff paving the way in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competency

Seven University Divisions presented their action plans to create a culturally safe and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people involved with the University at the inaugural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competency Showcase Day on 2 October.

Auchmuty, Ourimbah and Huxley Libraries, faculty Business and Law, Equity and Diversity Unit, Student and Academic Services and faculty Engineering and Built Environment presented some inspiring action plans to an audience of 60 University staff and community. These actions plans are the final component of the University’s Cultural Competency workshops which are offered to staff to enable the development of a greater knowledge and stronger understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

These workshops have attracted 390 participants since their inception in 2011. The workshops aim to enable positive changes in professional practice and capacity building for students and staff in working effectively within inter-cultural contexts.

Reconciliation Scholarship Ball 2013: A glowing testament to Community supporting Reconciliation

Wollotuka’s Reconciliation Week celebrations culminated with the annual Reconciliation Scholarship Ball held on 1 June at Newcastle Panthers. It aimed to foster and build relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians and businesses with a passion for Aboriginal education, and to establishing a self-sustaining Scholarship fund that will support students through full-time study, in particular those who are not eligible for Commonwealth assistance.

Affectionately named The Black & White Ball when it was first held in 1999, one hundred guests from Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities from the University and Hunter Region came together in a show of solidarity. This year the Black & White Ball brought 340 guests together which is a glowing testament to the community and corporate support for the work Wollotuka is doing in the higher education sector.

The target of $1 million for the University’s Aboriginal Scholarship fund saw the 2013 Black & White Ball raise $15,000 on the night in sponsorship, silent auction and balloon sales with a private donation of more than $200,000!

Guests enjoyed champagne and canapés on arrival, a three course premium menu dinner and were entertained by renowned Aboriginal hip hop trio The Last Kinection featuring medical student, Joel Wenitong, Naomi Wenitong with DJ Jaytee and supported by The Soul Machine, featuring Newcastle’s upcoming vocalist Cassia Shirlie with Willy Graham on keys.

High Tea bringing together cultures to recognise International Women’s Day

Wollotuka’s first event to celebrate its 30th anniversary was a high tea to commemorate International Women’s Day on 7 March. Both Indigenous and non-Indigenous women from the University gathered in discussion to recognise this important day with a number of invited guests providing keynote addresses on the year’s theme of “Ending Violence against Women”, the Wollotuka event.
TEACHING AND LEARNING

Meaningful and respectful relationships with community are imperative to the design and application of academic protocols. The utilisation of cultural values and principles which reflect unique Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges will contribute to the creation of a culturally safe and healthy learning environment.

Teaching Quality and Development

Both semesters in 2013 saw development activities take place on teaching quality and development more closely embedding and voicing the Cultural Standards document.

Dr Stephanie Gilbert was confirmed into the role of Coordinator of Teaching Quality and Development for a period of two years and also was successful in achieving her promotion to Level C.

Joe Perry and Michael Donovan have completed their Special Studies Programs focused on furthering their PhD studies and this has led to the submission of Joe Perry's thesis for examination.

Staff undertook a range of activities with the Centre for Teaching and Learning including improving their teaching and course development skills. For some staff this was to fulfil probation requirements as well as a desire to enhance their skills. Staff were also invited to be part of Teaching and Learning special projects like the “Brilliant Blackboard Sites: UoNine Showcase” where Gail Tillman was invited to show her work. Congratulations to Gail for this recognition of her excellent work.

Lecturers have also been busy providing lectures for other parts of the University and other bodies such as Karen Menzies' work with the students enrolled in the Social Work degree.

Stephanie Gilbert was awarded her Doctor of Philosophy (History) in 2013. It is worth noting as it is a reasonably rare event that Stephanie was not required to make changes to her thesis submission. Higher degree studies remain ongoing for Karen Menzies, Professor John Lester, Michael Donovan, Gabrielle Fletcher, James Charles, Leanne Holt, Catherine Phoenix and Joe Perry (in the last stages of examination).

Embedding The Cultural Standards

The Australian Quality Framework (AQF) standards processes have meant all ABOC courses have been mapped against discipline and teaching and learning standards including graduate attributes for their respective degrees. The AQF changed the standards for higher degree programs. This has meant an extensive level of preparation to show our courses and degrees meet those new descriptions. Working with the Centre for Teaching and Learning Dr Stephanie Gilbert and Executive Officer Luke Halvorsen have finalised these documents ready for presentation at Faculty level. After progressing from there they were presented at the University’s Teaching and Learning Committee and the Program and Course Review Committee as well. These processes will be completed in 2014.

We continued also our cycle of review for all of courses making sure their entry into our Curriculum Tracking System is up to date and fully compliant with current expectations. We have also been endeavouring through training and meeting with academic staff to update courses to reflect the Cultural Standards framework. In many instances this is asking staff to actively write about what they are already doing in words that meet University and Wollotuka’s standards.

Inclusive Curriculum

Continuing the directions established within the University for Indigenisation of curriculum, an Aboriginal staff member or community member with relevant experience is represented on all Program Review committees.

Yapug® Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enabling Program

This program continues to be one of the key pathway programs enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students access to undergraduate studies.

| Table 1 |
|---------|---------|---------|
|         | 2011    | 2012    | 2013    |
| Student enrolments | 47      | 65      | 78      |
| Student completions | 7(14.8%) | 9(13.8%) | 16(20.5%) |

Although enrolment and completion numbers for this program show marked increases each year, success rates are quite low. It should although be noted that at least 80-85% of completions enrol in undergraduate study the following year. (Source: University MIS February 2014)

A number of strategies are implemented to improve these statistics such as ensuring all students are assessed and divided according to needs basis; ensuring all students are supported through an early intervention and ensuring students’ holistic health requirements are being met. The development of new strategies will be implemented in 2014 which include:

• a week zero  
• a strategy around the use of ITAS will also be implemented in 2014  
• recruitment of an Indigenous Student Engagement Officer for Enabling Programs

*In the language of the Awabakal meaning “a path, a broad way”
Identity key to better results

ABORIGINAL CULTURE MUST BE ‘EMBEDDED’ IN SCHOOLING

Mr Donovan has interviewed and recorded the perceptions on education of groups of Aboriginal secondary students from diverse geographic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

“Aboriginal students are failing within Australian educational systems, with 66 per cent of Aboriginal students falling below the national average literacy and numeracy benchmark,” he said.

“This underachievement must be addressed for these students to achieve their potential.”

“The views of these students have reinforced the importance of acceptance of a cultural identity to an Aboriginal student’s success at school, and supports the embedding of cultural practices is to best engage the indigenous student. Their views will enhance our understanding of the unique needs of Aboriginal students.”
It came as no surprise to Shay McMahon’s parents when their daughter decided to study to be an architect. Even as a child, a young Shay would hone in on drawings of house layouts in newspaper advertisements for project homes and take to them with her pencils, redesigning them into her own dream abode.

Now in her second year of the undergraduate Bachelor of Design, Shay hopes to become a professional practitioner in a creative field in which Indigenous people, particularly women, are significantly under-represented.

“There are only a few female Indigenous architects working in Australia so there is a real opportunity to make a mark,” she says. “I want to help break down that barrier and let others know that it is possible for them to pursue this career.”

Shay did not secure a high enough ATAR for automatic entry into the architecture degree, so to achieve her long-held dream she committed to another year of study and qualified through the Yapug tertiary preparation program.

“Yapug provided a good grounding for university study,” she says. “As well as being able to focus on the arts-related subjects that would help me gain a place in the architecture program, I learned many useful skills, like how to structure essays and reference resource materials. In hindsight, I think I would have struggled if I had started the degree straight from school.”

To qualify as an architect Shay must complete a Master of Architecture after achieving her Bachelor of Design, then work for two years and pass a professional examination. However, she is not deterred by the challenge ahead.
2nd International Indigenous Voices in Social Work Conference, Manitoba, Canada, July 2013 – Dr Stephanie Gilbert presented two papers:

Paper 1 “Working with Australian Aboriginal Communities and International Links: Building and Learning from Our Voices”. This workshop works through the core tenets of the chapter ‘Engaging Communities’ within the book “Our Voices: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Work” and shows how cultural and clinical competence can be built together.

Paper 2 “Identity Formations and the Impact of Removal In Australian Stolen Generations” which examines that the removal of Aboriginal children in the Australian context was squarely set within a philosophy of assimilation with the goal to make Aboriginal people disappear.

Engagement Australia- Next Steps Conference, Melbourne, 15-17 July 2013 - Joe Griffin, Community Engagement Officer, presented a workshop which focused on engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the strategies and techniques which Wollotuka uses to undertake and maintain this engagement in regard to retention and completion rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the support which is offered.

Hidden Gems; The Role of Libraries and Archives in Cultural Revitalisation Symposium, NSW State Library, 26-27 August 2013 – Amanda Kelly, Coordinator of the Yuranna Research Study Centre, found this symposium pertinent to her position particularly in the retrieval of archival material for Indigenous researchers at the University. In attendance were language workers, academics, librarians and staff working within information sectors and keeping places from Canada, New Zealand and Australia. The theme of the symposium was ‘Hidden Gems - information and material you may be lucky enough to find within libraries and archives’.

WINHEC Annual General Meeting, Navajo Technical College, New Mexico, 4-6 August 2013 – Leanne Holt, Dr Robert Morgan - Chair of BATSiET, Aunty Colleen Perry - Elder and Regan Lilley - Student representative provided a successful presentation of The Wollotuka Institute Cultural Standards to the Accreditation Board which has been highlighted under “Highlights and Achievements” in this report.

American Indian Higher Education Consortium 40th Anniversary Conference, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 7-11 August 2013 – The abovementioned travelled to this conference after the WINHEC AGM to establish further international partnerships.

Professor John Maynard was invited by The University of Exeter, United Kingdom on 25 September 2013 to speak at the launch of the new book published by Routledge The Aboriginal Tent Embassy – Sovereignty, Black Power, Land Rights and the State. The book was edited by Gary Foley, Andrew Schaap and Edwina Howell. The special event was hosted at Senate House the University of London.

National Indian Education Association 44th Annual Convention, Rapid City, South Dakota, USA, 29 October – 2 November 2013. As an Aboriginal educator teaching and researching in Indigenous education, Michael Donovan was accepted to present a paper at this forum titled “Asking Aboriginal students what is best, using narratives to find the students’ voice in educational reform”. In this competitive program his presentation was one of only ten research presentation allocations within their research forums and the only international presenter.

Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia Conference, University of Western Australia, November 2013. Dawn Townsend, Indigenous Employment Coordinator, found the following themes of interest to her position whilst attending: What do Aboriginal, Maori and Pacific Islander students need in order to achieve their full potential within their respective (Western) education systems? How do we recognise and support identity, community, and traditional knowledge within the widening participation agenda? How can our academic and professional staff best support students to reach their full potential?
Research Training

Indigenous Research Higher Degree student enrolments remain steady with a total of 25 enrolled across the University, 14 of these students enrolled with Umulliko Indigenous Higher Education Research Centre, the research arm of Wollotuka. One student graduating - Stephanie Gilbert, Doctor of Philosophy (History).

Providing culturally appropriate supervision for these students and future enrolments is a major focus for Wollotuka. Current staff with appropriate qualifications to supervise are at their supervision capacity. There are, however, a number of staff in the final stages of their doctoral studies thus increasing staff qualifications for supervision. Other academic staff are strongly supported and encouraged through their research higher degrees.

PURAI\(^\text{1}\) – Global Indigenous and Diaspora Research Studies Centre

Professor John Maynard is the Director of this Centre which is an exciting research initiative to integrate global and transnational analytical perspectives and frameworks with research on Indigenous and diaspora studies, and other related topics of race and society.

Grants/Research Projects/Consultancy Agreement

Consultancy Agreement with General Practice Training – Valley to Coast - $6,000
Karen Menzies to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Training for their staff

Consultancy Agreement with Acil Allen Consultancy - $4,500
Professor John Lester to review the Commonwealth DIICCSRTE’s Industry and Indigenous Skill Centre Program

The More Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Indigenous Teachers Initiative (MATSITI) ‘Aspire to Inspire’ Tier 2 initiative - $48,019.00
Leanne Holt will provide the opportunity for students to realise their potential and become culturally resilient, with confidence and connectivity through cultural affirmation, community connection, past journeys and academic forums. The initiative will include two forums, a mentoring program, online discussion forums and a project evaluation.

\(^{1}\)In the language of the Awabakal people meaning “the world, earth”
Public Seminar on the findings of the National Summative Evaluation of the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities Project

As a commitment and reciprocal responsibility to the many participants who gave freely of their time over the past three years, to be involved in the Stronger Smarter Learning Communities project and the major national evaluation research undertaken of the project, a discussion of the findings was provided by Professor Allan Luke from Queensland University of Technology supported by two of the core research team, Associate Professor James Ladwig and Professor John Lester. The seminar was attended by 40 people including school principals and local Aboriginal community members. The evaluation is available at http://eprints.qut.edu.au/view/person/Luke,_Allan.html

Publications


Blyton G. (2013) Chapter 11 Sixteen-pound hammers, fettlers, shanties and railway tents: Demographic movement of Aboriginal people from rural to urban areas of central-eastern New South Wales in the assimilation era, 1940–69, p171 Christine Hansen and Kathleen Butler (Editors) Exploring Urban Identities and Histories AIATSIS Research Publications 2013 @ Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra


STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND EXPERIENCE

Our cultural standards will ensure that our students are strong in their own cultural knowledge, heritage and identity in order to be positive contributing members of the community.

Motivation to do more

For Jakambal man Jake MacDonald the recognition received through being awarded the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship has made him more determined to change education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

“I want to change the way that education is seen in Australia for Indigenous kids,” says Jake, who is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary)/ B Health & Physical Education at the University of Newcastle. Jake believes through increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children involvement in sport at school is a great starting point in creating a positive schooling environment.

Jake has immersed himself in his local Aboriginal community, where he is employed at Wadalba Community School as a Norta Norta tutor, teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children maths and English. One of the other roles within the school is teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children how to play the didgeridoo as a way in helping them to feel more culturally supported.

“To be acknowledged and recognised by Wollotuka and the donors has really pushed me to do more, I feel as though they have invested in me,” says Jake.

Jake’s ultimate goal is to become a PDPHPE teacher in a school with a high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and this goal is becoming closer to a reality.

Due to the collaborative efforts of Wollotuka and the University, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student enrolments continue to rise with a total of 859. This 2.8% proportion of total University students is significantly higher than the national average of 1.4% (Source: 2013 Institutional Performance Portfolio Report)

Four new Indigenous Engagement Officer Positions (one for each Faculty - Business & Law; Education & Arts; Engineering & Built Environment; Science & Information Technology) have been introduced to the Student Engagement and Experience Portfolio to improve retention, success and completion rates of the ever increasing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The aim is to provide one on one contact with students encouraging involvement with Wollotuka’s academic and cultural activities as well as providing information regarding tutoring, scholarship and cadetship opportunities.

A number of new initiatives have been undertaken by the team this year to ensure that our students’ success and retention rates are increased. These rates are currently higher than the national average (Source: Planning Quality & Reporting Feb 2014):

• Manage ‘at risk’ and ‘show cause’ students by setting up individual care plans as well as attending the relevant Faculty meetings for these students
• Encourage students to attend special lectures relevant to their discipline areas
• Over 30 health students across various programs provided with access to specialised tutorial groups throughout semester 1 and 2 for HUBS 1406 and HUBS 1416 respectively. Workshops provided students with increased opportunity to be supported thereby enabling success in course outcomes.

• Indigenous Allied Health Australia and Medicare Locals teams conducted information sessions across all three campuses to inform students of the services they provide to students and the wider community such as scholarships, mentoring and professional membership.

• Granted funding from Faculty of Health Marketing Professional staff and to create 2015 faculty of health marketing material targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prospective students interested in studying health programs.

• Faculty of Health High Achiever Scholarship assessed and awarded to commencing Faculty of Health student with highest ATAR, Sally Healy, Bachelor of Medicine.

• Collaborated with School of Nursing for funding to award book voucher to a hardworking and high achieving student as incentive and support in their studies. Awarded at official awards ceremony for School of Nursing.

• An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Men’s Group “Yaama Binghi” meaning “welcome brothers” has been formed incorporating both students and staff. The vision is to develop a culturally appropriate mentoring profile supporting students’ studies, any issues they may encounter and their identified areas of expertise within a culturally safe environment.

Our staff are always pleased to hear positive feedback from our students:-

October 2013

To the Wonderful Team at Wollotuka, Thanks!

...I was so excited to have a pathway opened! (alternative entry) It meant that I could go straight from High School into my Degree... As a self-sufficient student with extremely limited resources actually surviving University became my next challenge, and it was one I could not have managed if it wasn’t for the staff, the resources and the sense of community which were always available in Wollotuka. In time I graduated from my Undergraduate degree and it was sad to leave UoN. I was just reflecting on the fact that if it wasn’t for Wolli and the work which was started back in the 1980s I would probably have been faced with a very different life. Or at least an even harder journey. So thank you to all of you who make Wollotuka run, who add to the community spirit, who welcome the students who are without families of their own, and for the wonderful lessons you offer both inside and outside of the classrooms.

In the language of the Awabakal meaning “happy/friendly face”
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Entry Program

This program continues to provide alternative entry for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Callaghan, Ourimbah and Port Macquarie campuses, through interview to determine potential to undertake undergraduate studies and to establish the applicant’s Aboriginality.

Numbers were down on the 2012 intake with 85 (143 in 2012) applicants being interviewed in semester 1 with 46 (99 in 2012) offers made, excluding Medicine. Notwithstanding, commencing enrolments continue to rise (see Table 2).

Orientation Cultural Camp

This year’s camp was held on the traditional lands of the Worimi people at the Murrook Cultural Centre, Williamtown. 40 students and 5 staff camped on the beautiful grounds of the Murrook Centre at Williamtown where they were taken on field trips to traditional grounds of the Worimi people learning about their culture and belief systems. Students and staff enjoyed great meals including local bush tucker and superb hospitality from the members of the Worimi Land Council over the three days.

“Wollotuka cultural camp was the best cultural experience in my life … meeting community and sharing in cultural experiences was very powerful”
Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme

ITAS continues to be one of the key programs to enhance learning outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the University. In 2013 261 students received tutoring for various degrees across Callaghan, Ourimbah and Port Macquarie with approximately

- 80% success rates
- 109 tutors were employed to assist with these tutoring needs.

Scholarships

The University has a number of targeted scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students across a number of discipline areas to assist with access and progression in higher education as well the Indigenous Commonwealth Scholarships are widely promoted by our Scholarships Officer. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Scholarship (developed through donations from the annual Reconciliation Scholarship Dinner as well as internal and external donations) was offered again this year with the successful applicant, Jake MacDonald, Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary)/ B Health & Physical Education student, accepting his scholarship during the Reconciliation Dinner this year. See Jake’s story on page 17.

2013 Roberta Sykes Indigenous Scholar

Kathleen Jackson is a Wiradjuri woman from Gulgong in NSW, who was recently accepted to undertake a PhD in African and African American Studies at Harvard University. The course is fully funded by Harvard for six years. Kathleen has also been awarded the Roberta Sykes and Harvard Club Scholarship, a scholarship jointly funded by the RSIEF and the Harvard Club of Australia. This scholarship will provide funds for travel expenses to the USA, fees, and textbooks for a Harvard Summer School course, as well as relocation costs.

Kathleen attributes the influence of a Darkinung Elder, as being a driving force in her academic career. The Elder told her of the trouble he was having with lawyers who were using their education to bamboozle him and how, consequently, he had to be vigilant at all times. He conveyed the importance to her of young Indigenous people going to university in order to help the broader Indigenous community.

She began her university studies through the Yapug Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enabling Program in 2008 and went on to enrol in a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Law degree.

Kathleen’s PhD topic will examine the phenomenon of ‘passing’ in the United States and Australia. The term ‘passing’ refers to ‘passing as white’ by African Americans or Aboriginal Australians with lighter skin complexion ‘to overcome social and political hardships’. She wants to use the strong foundations and methods used in African American Studies to gain a deeper understanding of ‘passing’ in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

Kathleen says, “It is crucial that we understand our history to ensure the prosperity of our future.”
Future Leader in Indigenous Allied Health Award – sponsored by the Healing Foundation

Matthew West, final year Bachelor of Podiatry student, was the successful recipient of this award which celebrates the achievement of an IAHA Full Student Member who is currently enrolled in 2nd, 3rd or 4th year of an undergraduate allied health degree who has demonstrated significant contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and/or health and is an inspirational role model for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Matthew is the first podiatry student to successfully apply for a NSW Aboriginal Allied Health Cadetship.

Matthew is proud Wiradjuri man who is very active in his local community and is described by the Chairperson of his local Aboriginal Medical Service as “a young leader and role model for Aboriginal children and young people on the Central Coast of NSW, displaying many of the skills one would expect to see in a Future Leader; his years of study speak of his determination, devotion and ability to execute his plans in an effort to achieve any goal.” She goes on to say he is “a man of empathy, determined to do well not for himself but for the benefit of his community”. In 2012 Matthew was chosen to participate in the Wollotuka Indigenous Students Leadership Program, travelling to both Canada and USA to experience other Indigenous cultures and build upon his existing leadership qualities.

Success and Leadership Program

- **LIME Connection V Conference, Darwin, 26-28 August, 2013** The theme being Re-imagining Indigenous Health Education: Harnessing energy, implementing evidence, creating change. This biennial conference brings together Indigenous and non-Indigenous medical educators, Indigenous health specialists, policy makers, and community members from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America to discuss innovative approaches in Indigenous medical education and the experiences of practitioners. Four of the six medical students who attended this conference provided a presentation on last year’s International Leadership Program trip to USA and Canada.

- **Youth Mental Health Forum, Westmead Children’s Hospital in Sydney, 11 September 2013** Four Aboriginal health students were selected to attend this forum which focussed on the topic of “Building and supporting the mental fitness of young people”.

- **National Indigenous Tertiary Education Games, University of Western Sydney, 22-27 September 2013** These annual games continue to promote and celebrate culture, unity, health, fitness and well-being for our students. We supported two teams of seven students to attending and compete in the games.

- **Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA) Symposium, Canberra on 2-6 October 2013. AIDA sponsored three of our medical students to attend with Wollotuka sponsoring two students. The theme of this conference being “Beyond Cultural Awareness” - demonstrating the importance of cultural awareness in the pursuit of improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Students had the opportunity to engage with Indigenous doctors and medical practitioners regarding this important topic.**

- **Congress for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses (CATSIN) Conference “All the same but totally different” in Canberra on 6 – 8 October 2013. There was extensive marketing and promotion of the conference to provide opportunity to access for all students resulting in three students, Elise McCarthy and Kayla Potter, Bachelor of Nursing and Krystal Ronning, Bachelor of Midwifery, supported to attend. All students presented at the conference to encouraging professional development and public speaking opportunities. CATSIN provided formal feedback and recognition that our students were great ambassadors for the university.**

- **2013 More Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Teacher Initiative (MATSITI) National Conference, Adelaide, 14-15 October 2013. Kane Simon, B Teach (Primary)/B Arts and Rebeka McLean B Teach (Secondary) /B Arts were chosen to represent our teaching cohort at this conference. Kane and Rebekah gained a great insight into the MATSITI project and met some heavy hitters within the national teaching domain. The conference was highlighting the concept that teaching is a Deadly Career and concentrated on the strategies that could be employed to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into this most rewarding profession.**

- **Eighth Annual National Indigenous Legal Conference, Alice Springs, 24-26 October 2013. The six law students who attended this conference were exposed to the unique culture and identities of remote communities which assisted to dispel the myths and incorrect media coverage around legal issues affecting these areas. This year is of particular importance**

- **Indigenous Allied Health Association (IAHA) Healthy Footprints Conference, Adelaide, 26 – 27 November 2013. Mathew West attended and received the Achievement Award for his participation throughout the conference.**

- **Shohoku College Study Tour in Japan, December 2013. Jack MacDonald, Bachelor of Science student, was selected and participated as part of the University’s study abroad team on this tour**

- **PATT27 Conference, Christchurch NZ, 2-6 December 2013. Nerissa Jones, postgraduate early childhood teacher attended this conference.**
Graduation

Wollotuka hosted a graduation event on 4 October at the Birabahn Building acknowledging the great achievements of the 111 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who graduated in 2013 as well as celebrating the 1,180 students who have graduated since the 1960’s.

The dinner MC was Bachelor of Psychology student, Peta-Lee Moran and was attending by 120 people including graduates, their families and friends and Community. Guests enjoyed a two course dinner with entertainment by education student, Jesse Hodgetts.

Dr Stephanie Gilbert provided an inspirational student response as the only Aboriginal post-doctoral student to graduate. All students were presented with a certificate and artwork in commemoration of their achievement.

Interesting Graduation facts since the 1960’s

- Our first graduates! Bill Jonas (Arts) & Eric Wilmott (Engineering) in the 60’s
- 1st Undergraduate from Central Coast Campus was Rachel Burgess in 1999 with B Education (Primary Special Ed)
- No. of staff members who have graduated and currently work at Wollotuka is 17. There have been numerous more over the years.
- 2 of our 3 current Directors have graduated and currently work at Wollotuka is 17. There have been numerous more over the years.

Alternative way into dream degree

For Wiradjuri man, Balin Willoughby, applying to the University of Newcastle through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Entry program was a decision that has paid dividends.

With the assistance of the Wollotuka Institute in the application process, Balin was the successful applicant for the BHP Billiton Indigenous Scholarship. “Being a successful candidate for the scholarship has taken away the financial stress of living away from home and has allowed me to really focus on my study” says Balin.

The scholarship has offered endless opportunities for Balin, “I was flown over to Perth to go on a site visit to the new BHP building and discuss vacation work for the end of the year”

With the scholarship requiring a credit grade average, Balin is well on track with a distinction average for his first semester courses.

Having to work a part time job through high school, Balin’s HSC result did not reflect his actual ability. With an ATAR (university entry score) not high enough for his dream career of Civil Engineer he opted to commence the Yapug enabling program to improve his entry score.

For Balin the costs associated with studying and living away from his home in Kempsey were too expensive and had to move back during in his first semester of Yapug. His desire to pursue a civil engineering career was still present and he applied through UAC.

“I have always loved maths and science and really excelled in these subjects at school. So Civil Engineering was a perfect field for me” says Balin. Coming through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Entry process enabled Balin to demonstrate to the interview panel his passion and motivation to pursue a career in Civil Engineering and was therefore successful in gaining a position.

“The good thing about alternative entry is that you are able to give the panel a feel of what type of person you are and that you are motivated and want to do well” Balin says.
Over the course of 2013 the Community Engagement team has been busy participating in local and regional community events, programs, workshops and activities promoting university study options to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Table 2 shows a growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access rates which demonstrates the success of Wollotuka’s continued engagement with community.

Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week are always very hectic times of the year and all staff within Wollotuka came together during these two nationally recognised and celebrated events to participate and promote Aboriginal culture and the spirit of recognition of our people.

NAIDOC Week was celebrated across Australia from July 7-14. Wollotuka had a strong presence within the University footprint areas and participated in a large number of events:

- We held stalls at the Newcastle Foreshore celebrations and many staff took part in the NAIDOC Solidarity March from Civic Park to the Foreshore which was attended by over 1000 community members.
- 2013 NAIDOC Community Gathering and Health Expo at Gosford Showground.
- Eastlakes NAIDOC Day hosted by Batahbah Local Aboriginal Land Council at Blacksmiths.
- Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council NAIDOC Day.
- Westlakes Community NAIDOC Festival at Toronto.
- NAIDOC celebrations at Frank Baxter Juvenile Justice Centre.
- Major sponsors for the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council NAIDOC Week events across the Central Coast throughout the week.

S2U – School to University

2013 was a very successful year for the S2U program which saw a considerable increase in engagement with schools located within the University footprint area. Since the programs beginnings in 2007 school engagement and participation with S2U has increased from 43 schools in 2008 to 72 schools in 2013 which is a 67.4% increase over 5 years. On average the S2U program has 600 student participants throughout each calendar year and this number is expected to increase further through increased rural and remote engagement planned for 2014.

Based on current data the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school leaver entrants is demonstrated in the following chart which illustrates the steady increase in numbers of school leavers from the secondary education sector entering into university study at the University of Newcastle. This data includes entrants in to Open Foundation, Newstep, Yapug and Undergraduate study for semester one and two of each year;

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Ngiyang Nganggalidhi - Fostering strong links with community reinforces cultural values and beliefs.

**STRONG COMMUNITIES, STRONG CULTURE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Indigenous</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Access Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>12837</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>13422</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>14124</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our Port Macquarie staff participated in NAIDOC celebrations at Kempsey, Port Macquarie and Taree.

As an early NAIDOC celebration Wollotuka organised in conjunction with UoN Services a NAIDOC Solidarity Concert held at the Bar On The Hill on the 26 June where Indigenous hip hop group The Last Kinection featuring lead singer Joel Wenitong, Aboriginal medical student, and another local Indigenous hip hop/ rock act Whitehouse entertained students, staff and community.

**School Leaver Entrants**
Professor Caroline McMillen, Lesley Armstrong and Leanne Holt: Partnership Agreement with Central Coast AECG
The most successful element of the S2U Program this year has been the iBelieve program which was piloted in the second half of 2012 and rolled out for implementation from Term 2 2013. iBelieve is a school based program targeting stage four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students and aims to plant the seed of ambition for students to begin thinking of their future in a culturally safe space, through talking circles, interactive activities and Traditional Indigenous Games. iBelieve also focuses on identity and cultural confidence to enable the participants to explore further into their heritage and develop a sense of belonging and greater awareness of Aboriginality.

In 2013 the program engaged with 40 secondary schools in the Newcastle, Central Coast and Port Macquarie footprint areas and we had a total of 521 students participate in iBelieve.

Students who participate in the S2U program workshops are asked to evaluate their experience at the end of each session and provide feedback as to what they learned and what they enjoyed most about the program. Some examples of what Year 7 and Year 8 students said about their experience with iBelieve are outlined below;

“I learnt more about myself and where I fit it” (Wyong HS)

“The games at the end and more about being Aboriginal” (Lake Munmorah HS)

“I liked that I learned more about my culture and I got to know other Aboriginal kids at school. …..the family tree activity was fun” (Kariong HS)

“I loved how this program made me confident in speeches and other things that may happen in my life” (Callaghan College)

“Learning how to achieve becoming an actor and finding out what learning style I am” (Kincumber HS)

“I learnt more about my culture and self-esteem……it was fun” (Kincumber HS)

“The games, the lollies and learning about my culture…….the day was wicked” (Lisarow HS)

“I enjoyed that everyone got to speak up and gain confidence and we all now know new stuff” (BWSC Umina)

“Everything” (BWSC Umina)

### UAC Workshops

This program is designed to inform Stage 6 secondary students of their tertiary options, whether they are taking ATAR or Non-ATAR subjects. Students participate in an interactive information session and are provided detailed information about Wollotuka, Yapug, Open Foundation, Newstep Alternative Entry, Universities Admission Centre (UAC), Scholarships and the University life in general. This year across the Wollotuka’s three footprint areas staff engaged with 23 schools and a total of 220 students participated. As a result current UAC data indicates that there is a projected 164 school leaver entrant’s enrolling to study through Wollotuka in 2014 which is 74.5% of the participants who engaged in Wollotuka’s UAC workshops.

### INDIGENOUS ALUMNI AWARD 2013

The Indigenous Alumni Award recognises the contributions, outstanding talent and achievements of an Indigenous graduate in their chosen field and this year was awarded to:

**Bachelor of Arts 1988**

Craig is the General Manager of the Access and Participation Branch in the Higher Education Division of the Department of Education. He leads two major systemic reform initiatives in higher education including reframing the national approach to student equity policy and programs, and implementing the findings of the landmark Review of Access and Outcomes in Higher Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Craig is an Aboriginal man of the Dhunghutti/Biripai nations and was the first in his family to attend university. He taught secondary English and history in Gosford for seven years before joining Awabakal Newcastle Aboriginal Co-operative in 1996. There he managed the Awabakal Medical Service that provided comprehensive primary health care to Aboriginal Communities in Newcastle, Hunter and Central Coast.

Craig was the CEO of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation from 1999-2002 before taking the role of Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Policy for ACT Health.
INDIGENOUS EMPLOYMENT

Our Vision

Our positioning statement ‘Maligagu’ in the Darkinung language means ‘to shine’. To achieve this UoN provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with employment that values the culture and the aspirations of the individual, working together to build strong, dynamic and vibrant communities.

Our Plan

The University will continue to build on the strong commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in providing employment opportunities at the University, focusing on growing and retaining the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across the faculties and divisions and developing their capacity to take up leadership and professional positions across all areas of university business.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment is highlighted as a strategy within the Strategic Plan with supporting Key Performance Indicators for the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, using the population parity target identified by the Australian Government as outlined in the National Indigenous Higher Education Workforce Strategy.

The ‘Maligagu’ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy reflects our ongoing commitment in relation to the recommendations in the Behrendt Report. It is recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people bring with them unique strengths and knowledge.

Increasing the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff both academic and non-academic is critical for student outcomes, University culture and individual career aspirations.

We will continue to build into our current successes and develop new initiatives to further progress our commitment;

Current successes:

• Grow Our Own Program ‘Indigenous New Career Academics’ Program
• Attraction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people, in 2012 of 222 positions advertised we had 128 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants
• Cultural Competence Training and University Induction ‘Welcome to Wollotuka’ attracting 632 participants since 2011

New initiatives for 2014:

• Launch ‘Maligagu Cadetship Program 2014 (target of 40 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cadets 2014 and 2015 across the University)
• Launch the University’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Future Workforce Virtual Centre
• Implement a ‘Cultural Wellbeing Program’ for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to include language, lifestyle and cultural practices

Our Values - Cultural Standards:

‘The Wollotuka Institute Cultural Standards provide a cultural foundation that incorporates cultural responsiveness and accountability in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy reflecting goals and aspirations for advancement.

The Wollotuka Institute Cultural Standards provide a cultural foundation that incorporates cultural responsiveness and accountability in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy reflecting goals and aspirations for advancement.
**Indigenous Health**

**Pital Tarkin** Mentor Program

This new initiative developed by the Indigenous Health team commenced offering a great opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students to meet experienced and accomplished health professionals from this and other universities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical alumni to establish formal and informal relationships. The two events held this year on 14 May (inaugural) and 30 July assisted 21 students to build professional networks through relationship building and mentor/mentee relationships. Both events were well attended and received by students and mentors alike.

**Miroma Bunbilla** Indigenous Pre entry to Medicine Program

This one week program is designed to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medicine applicants hands on experience of the University’s Joint Medical Program.

Applicants have the opportunity to gain an invaluable understanding of the commitment required to complete the program, the methods of teaching and learning, and group-based learning. Applicants will also gain experience and learn about the kind of skills required to be successful in the Joint Medical Program.

The second pilot program was held in the first week of December 2013, with 20 applicants attending 13 being offered and accepted places (1 deferred until 2015) and 1 place offered to an applicant for special entry pathway application.

The tutors we work with on the (2) PBL tasks are JMP tutors. These tutors are very experienced in the course and give friendly and helpful feedback through the week. It is not expected that anyone attending the program has any prior experience in this style of learning to participate effectively in the tutorials.

Overall performance during the week did not contribute to admission into the program, however will benefit applicants in preparing for the program if successful in gaining entry.

We are very excited to see the positive outcomes for the applicants that attend.

---

11 In the language of the Awabakal meaning “happy/friendly face”
12 In the language of the Awabakal meaning “permit … take care of”
WE WILL CONTINUE TO CHAMPION THE NEED FOR ACADEMICALLY ENRICHING AND CULTURALLY AFFIRMING EDUCATION FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES AT A LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL.
Contact Details
The Wollotuka Institute
Birabahn Building
The University of Newcastle
Callaghan NSW 2308 Australia
T: +61 2 4921 6863
F: +61 2 4921 6985
E: Wollotuka@newcastle.edu.au
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/wollotuka/