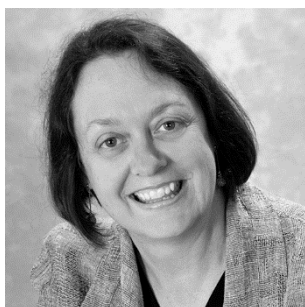


2023 Creating Futures Summit Series: Conversations that matter

Transforming Indigenous Education in practice On, From, With and In Country, flowing with the TIDE

2023 Creating Futures Summit Series Presenters' Biographies

Summit Host



Professor Donna Pendergast

Director of Engagement, Arts, Education and Law, Griffith University

[Synthesis & Communiqué](#)

Biography

Professor Donna Pendergast, the Director of Engagement in the Arts, Education and Law Group at Griffith University, is a renowned education researcher and former Dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies. With expertise in education transformation and efficacy, her research focuses on areas such as middle years education, student engagement, early years, teacher education, and school reform. Throughout her career,

Donna has made significant contributions to the education profession, holding leadership positions at both state and federal government levels, including Chair of the Queensland Council of Deans of Education and Vice-President of the Australian Council of Deans of Education. She has authored numerous publications and books, including the acclaimed *Teaching Middle Years: Rethinking curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment*. Donna's research projects, valued at over AUD\$5 million, have been instrumental in implementing educational reforms, including the successful transition of Year 7 to secondary schooling in Queensland and South Australia. Her expertise and dedication have greatly influenced the field of education, making her a respected figure in the academic community. <https://experts.griffith.edu.au/18640-donna-pendergast>



Professor Frances Press

Dean and Head of School, Education and Professional Studies, Griffith University

[Synthesis & Communiqué](#)

Biography

Frances Press is Head and Dean of Education and Professional Studies and a professor in early years and education policy. Over many years Frances has worked closely with government, non-government organisations and researchers to consider the ways in which policy and practice can support systems that respond to the needs and aspirations of children and families and promote social justice. Frances has been an investigator on a number of ARC funded research projects examining various aspects of early childhood services, including policy, and how these can best support great outcomes for children and families. She has keen interest in the impact of educational leadership.

<https://experts.griffith.edu.au/41031-frances-press>



Professor Carolyn Evans

Vice Chancellor and President, Griffith University

[Special Welcome Message](#)

Biography

Professor Carolyn Evans is Vice Chancellor and President of Griffith University. In 2019, Carolyn was elected as a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia and became a member of the organisation, Chief Executive Women. She is President of the Australian Higher Education Industrial Association and was Chair of the Innovative Research Universities from 2021-2022 and board member of Open Universities Australia from 2019-2023.

Carolyn graduated with degrees in Arts and Law from the University of Melbourne and a doctorate from Oxford where she studied as a Rhodes Scholar. Carolyn taught law at Oxford and Melbourne Universities. Prior to commencing at

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Griffith, Carolyn held the positions of Dean of Law, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Graduate and International) and Deputy Provost at the University of Melbourne. Carolyn works in the areas of law and religion and human rights and has published and spoken on these issues around the world. <https://www.griffith.edu.au/office-vice-chancellor/university-executive#carolyn-evans>



Shirley Chowdhary

Master of Ceremonies

Biography

Shirley is an internationally experienced executive leader with diverse credentials across law, financial services, investment management, the NFP sector and journalism. She is admitted to practice law in Australia and New York and has worked in the corporate and for-purpose sectors across Asia and Australia.

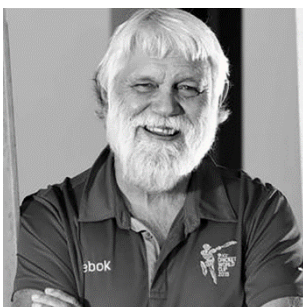
Career highlights include being Regional Counsel Asia Pacific for JP Morgan Investment Management, host of the Women's Agenda podcast series The Leadership Lessons, and author of a range of writings, including a biography for a WW2 POW.

Her previous executive appointment was as the inaugural Chief Executive of the GO Foundation, an Indigenous NFP providing holistic education pathways and support to Indigenous students across Australia.

Key to success in the role, Shirley developed a collaborative Ecosystem model amongst government, philanthropy, corporates and other NFPs, providing funding and other support for Indigenous education. Her role supported the highly credentialled board and GO Foundation founders, Adam Goodes and Michael O'Loughlin, AFL Sydney Swans legends. <https://shirleychowdhary.com/>

Uncle Ted Williams

Yugambeh Elder



Welcome to Country

Biography

Ted Williams, a proud Mununjali man, is a highly respected Community Elder, academic, lecturer, and teacher who has dedicated his life to education and promoting reconciliation in Australia. With a deep understanding of Indigenous issues and his Yugambeh culture and heritage, Ted combines his experiential skills and knowledge to contribute to the nation's reconciliation journey. He had the honor of providing the Welcome to Country at the GC2018 Opening Ceremony, alongside esteemed individuals such as the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall. Ted's expertise extends to speaking engagements at

educational institutions and businesses, where he sheds light on Indigenous issues. Notably, in a historic event, he participated in the Queen's Baton Relay commencement ceremony at Buckingham Palace, delivering a special invitation from Her Majesty, The Queen, to all First Nations People of the Commonwealth to join the celebrations on Yugambeh land during GC2018. <https://www.yraca.org.au/ted-williams>

Mibbun Jinndi (Eagles' Nest) Dance Group

Beenleigh State High School

Performance

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Dr Candace Kruger

Song Woman and Yugambeh Elder

Welcome to Country & Session 3 Performance

Biography

Dr Candace Kruger, Yugambeh Elder and Songwoman. Candace is a Yugambeh yarrabilginngunn (song woman) and proud Kombumerri (Gold Coast) and Ngugi (Moreton Island) Aboriginal woman. She is an author, musician, composer, as well as educator, and is the founder and director of the Yugambeh Youth Choir. Candace's research interests are investigations in the fields of Indigenous musicology, Indigenous knowledges and Indigenous education. Candace's co-composed piece 'Morning Star and Evening Star' is one example of this work and was the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB) Online Orchestra, National 2021 music piece. Candace has taught in school classrooms for over 27 years, and now lectures in the School of Education and Professional Studies at Griffith University, in her speciality area - Indigenous Knowledges and Education. <https://experts.griffith.edu.au/14792-candace-kruger>



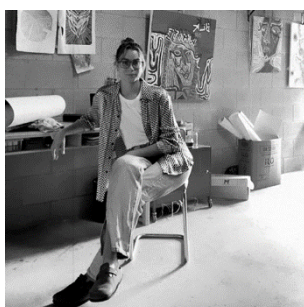
Mark Williams

Wiradjuri man

Didgeridoo player: Welcome to Country & Session 3 Performance

Biography

Mark Williams is a Wiradjuri man on a journey to share the stories of the Land. He works as *Jali Yarabil*, running cultural workshops and camps. Teaching and Artefacts workshops in local schools and Community allows the stories and sharing to continue. With his Didgeridoo starting the conversation, stories of Culture are never far away. Mark's Didgeridoo playing has taken him to many special events and locations. A proud supporter and mentor to the Yugambeh Youth Choir, his passion for cultural sharing continues to drive his narrative.. <https://www.storyfest.com.au/author/mark-williams>



Arabella Walker

Wulli Wulli Woman

Artist

Biography

Arabella Walker is an emerging Aboriginal artist from Wulli Wulli Country. In her practice Walker conveys significant topics such as First Nations histories and the modern challenge as an Aboriginal woman in a western society. Utilising Indigenous ways of knowing and being in creating her works, Arabella weaves protocols, connections and tradition through her work and acknowledges Aboriginal lore.

Walker works with acrylic paints, however coming from a dance background often incorporates multidisciplinary practices. Using explosions of colour and life, Walker fuses contemporary and expressionism with cultural intent. Walker is currently in her last year of studying a Bachelor of Contemporary Australian Indigenous Art at Queensland College Art, Griffith University. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/arabella-walker-a06374222>

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Dr Sue Pillans

Illustrator, *Picture Your Ideas*

Biography

Dr Sue Pillans is a marine scientist, artist and children's author/illustrator who specialises in creative and visual communications.

As a graphic recorder Sue draws out discussions, information and ideas to visually capture and convey your stories. Sue also combines her love of marine science and art by bringing creativity into classrooms as her alter ego Dr Suzie Starfish. As a children's 'authorstrator'

her children's picture books also engage, educate and excite children about the wonders of the ocean, making learning and reading visual and fun. <https://drsuepillans.com/>



Jackie Bennett

Kamilaroi/Bigambul woman

Cultural Consultant and Educator, Connecting 2 Culture

It is not my responsibility: Practical ways to Weave & Connect to your Community.

Biography

Jackie Bennett, a proud Kamilaroi/Bigambul woman hailing from St George in South West Queensland, is the dedicated Director and Cultural Consultant of Connecting 2 Culture, a consultancy business offering cultural guidance and support to Early Childhood Services, Schools, Government, and Not-for-Profit Organizations seeking to enhance their services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. With extensive experience in roles such as the Regional Implementation Manager for the First 1000 Days Australia program and Cultural Diversity Advisor for C&K, Jackie is deeply committed to engaging Indigenous families and promoting the integration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in educational programs and mainstream services. She shares her knowledge generously, fostering safe learning environments that enable educators, family support workers, and government agencies to better support and understand the diverse cultures and tribes within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Jackie's dedication and passion make her a valuable advocate for culturally responsive practices and inclusive service provision. <https://connecting2culture.com.au/connecting2culture/>



Karla Brady

Proud descendant of the Itagal people from Moa Island in the Torres Strait and a Fijian woman

CEO, Hymba Yumba Independent School

Planning, Programming and Practice. Prioritising and Promoting Culture in Senior Curriculum Spaces

Biography

Karla Brady is a proud descendant of the Itagal people from Moa Island in the Torres Strait and a Fijian woman. Karla has worked in the social service sector for over 30 years in early childhood, housing and First Nations community development. Prior to joining Hymba Yumba Independent School (HYIS) as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Karla was the CEO for 11 years at Inala Wangarra. Inala Wangarra is a First Nations community-controlled organisation that is owned, staffed and managed by local First Nations people. Walking alongside the community, Inala Wangarra provides opportunities for people to be the changemakers in their own lives. For the past 9 years, Karla was also the Chairperson

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of HYIS, that seeks to educate and inspire young First Nations jarjum (child/ren) to learn and lead in both worlds. Karla is a strong advocate for First Nations community led services and believes that strengths-based approaches are critical for First Nations empowerment and self-determination. <https://connecting2culture.com.au/qualifications/>
<https://hyis.qld.edu.au/>



Phillip Brooks

Descendant of the Bidjara Tribe (Great Grandfather), the Kairi Tribe (Great Grandmother) and the Ducabrook Clan located at Springsure, Central Queensland

Deputy Director General, First Nations Strategy and Partnerships, Queensland Department of Education

Beyond the school gate

Biography

As the Deputy Director-General for First Nations Strategy and Partnerships, Phillip brings a wealth of experience and expertise in improving education outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. With a strong focus on collaboration and community partnership, Phillip's role involves providing strategic leadership, advice, and direction to develop effective policies, services, and programs that cater to the specific needs of Indigenous communities. With a diverse background that includes positions such as Deputy Director-General and Chief Operating Officer of Service Delivery, Youth Justice, and Commissioner at the Queensland Family and Child Commission, Phillip's commitment to supporting youth and families is evident. As a proud descendant of the Bidjara Tribe, Kairi Tribe, and Ducabrook Clan, Phillip's deep connection to his heritage further fuels his dedication to creating positive change and promoting cultural understanding and inclusion. <https://au.linkedin.com/in/phillip-brooks-32aa2740>



Professor Tracey Bunda

A Ngugi/Wakka Wakka woman who grew up on the lands of the Jagera/Jugera/Yuggerapul peoples.

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, The University of Queensland.

Taking a Barometer to Indigenous Futurities

Biography

Tracey Bunda is a Ngugi/Wakka woman and the UQ Professor of Indigenous Education. She has an extensive 3 decade career in the university sector as a leader of Indigenous Higher Education. Her research and scholarly interests address the value of storying as methodology, power inequities in white institutions and Indigenous women's leadership. Her most recent co-authored book with Louise Phillips is *Storying Social Movement/s*.
<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-09667-9>
<https://education.uq.edu.au/profile/6173/tracey-bunda>

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Kylie Captain

Proud Gamilaroi woman

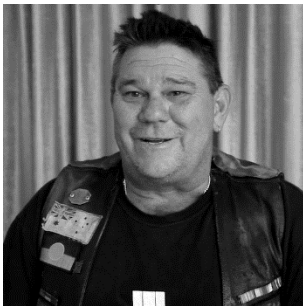
Education Wellbeing & Consulting, Founder and Director, Dream Big

DREAM BIG & Imagine the What If

Biography

Dream Big Education Wellbeing & Consulting is a 100% Aboriginal-owned business founded by proud Gamilaroi woman, Kylie Captain, with over 22 years of experience in education, wellbeing, and community service. Kylie and her co-author, Dr Cathie Burgess, offer high-impact professional learning for teachers and leaders, inspirational student programs, and cultural capability training to help individuals and organizations reach their full potential. As a published author and sought-after speaker, Kylie brings strength-based and aspirational strategies to every workshop and speaking engagement, empowering participants to live and lead with passion and purpose.

Kylie is President of the Aboriginal Studies Association, an Accredited Teacher and an educational leader. Kylie is also a National Trainer with SMART Recovery Australia and Consultant and Facilitator at Mackerel Sky, Leadership Matters. Kylie's lived experience as a proud Aboriginal woman growing up in community enables her to lead participants on a thought-provoking journey of change to work towards a more united country with improved outcomes for Aboriginal students, families, and communities. <https://www.kyliecaptain.com.au/>



Gary Crosby

Larrakia man

Teacher, Waterford West State School

Embedding Yugambeh language into the curriculum

Biography

Gary Crosby is a Larrakia man, who teaches Yugambeh at Waterford West Primary School with support and assistance from Yugambeh community members.

<https://vimeo.com/236592017>



Nathanael Edwards

Principal, Radiant Life College

Ways of the old, connecting culture to classroom. Murrun gurrun guwal learn as a family

Biography

Nathaniel has a strong commitment to supporting the development and platform of Indigenous First Nations people. Nathanael is currently School Principal at Radiant Life College and serves as a non-executive director on Family Day Care Queensland.

<https://radiantlife.qld.edu.au/>

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Toby Finlayson

Co-Founder and Creative Director, Desert Pea Media

Live from project location in Bourke with young Indigenous artists

Biography

Co-founder of Desert Pea Media, Toby has been working in remote Indigenous communities around Australia and the world since 2003.

Toby trained in Thailand with acclaimed CCD organization The Makhampom Foundation in 2003 and completed a BA Communications in Theatre & Media in 2004. Toby co-ordinated art programs in Sri Lankan tsunami refugee camps in 2005.

Toby's commitment to the cause has seen him dedicate his adult working life to Desert Pea Media, delivering a host of Indigenous media programs, effecting real lasting change for young Original Nations' peoples, touching the lives of a generation of disenfranchised Indigenous youth and giving them a voice... a bridge to a positive future.

He continues to direct and facilitate programs today. <https://www.desertpeamedia.com/our-team>



Dr Justine Grogan

A First Nations Wongaibon descendant

Senior Advisor, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education, Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

Moving across the Intercultural development continuum toward responsiveness in Teacher Education

Biography

Dr Justine Grogan is a First Nations Wongaibon descendant and Senior Advisor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education at the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). Prior to working at AITSL she was Course Coordinator and Lecturer in First Nations Education for over 10 years at the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC). Her PhD, Honours and research areas focus on embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges and Perspectives in early years, primary, secondary and higher education with key areas in colonisation, Critical Race Theory, anti-racism, white privilege, power and professional responsiveness. A few years ago, she was awarded the prestigious Aurora International Scholarship which gave her the opportunity to study Native American and African American Studies at universities in the United States of America including Berkeley, Stanford, Harvard, Columbia and New York University (NYU). Justine has written and published many journal articles with highly ranked publishers such as Cambridge University Press and Higher Education Research and Development.

<https://www.sunshinecoastnews.com.au/2022/07/12/justine-grogan-indigenous-studies/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/justine-grogan-phd-26b75490>

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Libby Hammond

Principal, Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School

Giving preference to Aboriginal voices in remote schools: Listening and learning with community

Biography

Libby Lee-Hammond has been working alongside Gija mob at Woorreranginy Community and Purnululu School since 2020, prior to that she was Associate Professor of Education at Murdoch University, her research and practice have been centred in Aboriginal Education for the past 20 years. She is passionate about language revitalisation, learning on Country and developing authentic partnerships with communities, families and kids to achieve the best possible learning and life outcomes for students.

<https://www.bunglebungleguidedtours.com.au/news/aboriginal-connection-to-country-at-purnululu/>



Aric Kruger

Kombumerri/Ngugi Man

Performer

Session 3 Performance

Aric Kruger is a Kombumerri/Ngugi musician and educator. Having completed a Bachelor of Business at Griffith University in 2022, he is currently studying a Master of Secondary Teaching with the goal of improving Indigenous student outcomes. Prior to commencing his Masters, Aric worked for four years as a Student Support Officer for Indigenous Youth.

Aric has been a member of the Yugambah Youth Choir since its conception in 2014 and has performed alongside them at Suncorp Stadium, at BLEACH Festival, and at the 2018 Commonwealth Games Closing Ceremony. He is focused on pursuing further development of cultural knowledge, and sharing this through his work.



Associate Professor Kevin Lowe

Gubbi Gubbi Man from South East Queensland.

Culturally Nourishing Schooling

Biography

Kevin Lowe is a Gubbi Gubbi man from southeast Queensland. He is a Scientia Indigenous Fellow at UNSW, working on a community and school focused research project on developing a model of sustainable improvement in Aboriginal education. Kevin has had experience in education as a teacher, administrator and lecturer. He has expertise in working with Aboriginal community organisations on establishing Aboriginal language policy and school curriculum implementation. Recently Kevin has worked with colleagues to review research across key areas of schooling and established the Aboriginal Voices a broad-base, holistic project which is developing a new pedagogic framework for teachers.

<https://www.unsw.edu.au/staff/kevin-lowe>

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Allison McClean

Principal, Waterford West State School

Embedding Yugambeh language into the curriculum

<https://waterfordwestss.eq.edu.au/>



Sophie Mung

Gija Woman

Gija Assistant Principal, Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School

Giving preference to Aboriginal voices in remote schools: Listening and learning with community

Biography

Sophia Mung is a Gija woman from Woorreranginy Community in the East Kimberley, she has worked at Purnululu School for 20+ years as an Aboriginal Teacher Assistant, Gija Language Teacher and Early Years creche co-ordinator and now as Assistant Principal. Her children and grandchildren have attended the school over many years. Sophia is passionate about passing on the Gija language to all Gija kids who attend the school. She is about to complete an official qualification as a Language Teacher through WA Department of Education.



Dr Sam Osbourne

Associate Director , Regional Engagement, University of South Australia

Kulini: ethical listening and lifting the curse of the externally imagined. An Anangu education story.

Biography

Dr Sam Osbourne is the Associate Director for Regional Engagement APY Lands at the University of South Australia. He coordinates the Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Language and Culture programs at UniSA and has worked in Anangu Education and teaching Pitjantjatjara language since 1995. Sam was Principal at Ernabella Anangu School before moving to Alice Springs to do a PhD. Sam's research focus is on remote education, first languages and education, and culturally responsive pedagogies. <https://people.unisa.edu.au/Samuel.Osborne>

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Professor Yin Paradies

Wakaya Man

Alfred Deakin Professor, Chair in Race Relations, Deakin University

Decolonising Modernity: Unveiling the veils of racism

Biography

Yin Paradies, the Alfred Deakin Professor and Chair in Race Relations at Deakin University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia started his academic life studying applied mathematics and computing. His first job, at the Indigenous Health Statistics Unit of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, took him towards his work in health inequalities, on racism as a determinant of Indigenous health in Australia, and his current focus on decolonisation and Indigenous knowledges and perspectives. Paradies, who is a Wakaya man, and “the first person”, he says, “in any part of my family to get a PhD”, has since published widely on experiences of racism, and the impacts of racism on social and emotional wellbeing of Indigenous Australians, as well as on anti-racism theory, policy, and practice. He is also a co-author of the Lancet Series on racism, xenophobia, discrimination, and health in this issue. <https://www.deakin.edu.au/about-deakin/people/yin-paradies>



Matthew Priestley

Proud Mehi Murri man from Moree, NSW; a member of the Terry Hie clan of the Gomilaroi Nation

Co-Founder and Chair Person, Desert Pea Media

Live from project location in Bourke with young Indigenous artists

Biography

Co-founder of Desert Pea Media, Matt is a proud Mehi Murri man from Moree, NSW, a member of the Terry Hie clan of the Gomilaroi Nation.

Matt has a long history of working with contemporary and traditional Indigenous media. Matt was principal artist of CCD organisation BigHart (1989-99) and AFI Laureat for his short film Hurt in 1991.

Acclaimed in both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous arts industry as a traditional and visual artist, Matt works across media platforms to communicate a powerful message of Indigenous cultural sustainability and development. He sees education as an important tool for empowerment and self-determination. Matt is a visual artist, film maker, traditional dancer, song writer and theatre-maker. <https://www.desertpeamedia.com/our-team>



Professor Lester-Irabinna Rigney

Descendant of the Narungga Kurna and Ngarrindjeri peoples of South Australia

Co-Chair: Pedagogies for Justice Group, Centre for Research in Educational and Social Inclusion, Education Futures, University of South Australia

New Frontiers In Culturally Responsive Teacher Pedagogies: Teachers Working with Aboriginal and Super-Diverse Learners

Biography

Professor Lester-Irabinna Rigney is a highly esteemed Aboriginal educationalist and a descendant of the Narungga, Kurna, and Ngarrindjeri peoples of South Australia. With over 20 years of experience in Aboriginal Education, he holds the position of Professor of Aboriginal Education at the Centre for Research in Education at the University of South Australia. Throughout his career, Professor Rigney has played significant roles in advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait

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Islander Education, serving on State and Federal Government advisory boards and contributing to research projects funded by the Australian Research Council. He is widely recognized for his pioneering work on Indigenist Research Epistemologies, advocating for the integration of Aboriginal cultures and community partnerships to foster transformative and culturally responsive education. His ideas have influenced teachers and policy writers, emphasizing the importance of valuing students' experiences and abilities in creating culturally responsive schooling. Beyond Australia, Professor Rigney has also worked on Indigenous Education initiatives across the Pacific. <https://people.unisa.edu.au/lester.rigney>



Lystra Rose

Descendant of the Guugu Yimithirr, Birri Gubba, Erub and Scottish nations

The Circle of Stories: Empowering Voices, Uniting Canoes, and Decolonising Narratives

Biography

Lystra Rose, a descendant of the Guugu Yimithirr, Birri Gubba, Erub and Scottish nations, is an award-winning writer and editor who lives in a land where the rainforest meets the sea... Yugambah-speaking country (Gold Coast), Australia. When she's not catching waves

with her husband and their two groms, Lystra is editing Surfing Life magazine. She is the first female editor-in-chief of a mainstream surf magazine in the world.

Surfing is Lystra's daily reminder to 'let fear be your friend, not your foe, and use it to do the things you love or were meant to do'. It's also her creativity generator.

The Upwelling is Lystra's debut novel, which won the 2023 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards (Indigenous Writing) and shortlisted for the 2023 NSW Premier's Literary Awards (Ethel Turner Prize for Young People's Literature and UTS Glenda Adams Award for New Writing). Her publishers Hachette are taking The Upwelling global this year. Lystra also invented Auditory Editing. <https://lystrarose.com/> <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lystra-rose-25208b92/>



Dr Peta Salter

Senior Lecturer (Curriculum and Pedagogy) Education, James Cook University

RTA Program Pathways Building Bridges

Biography

Dr Peta Salter is the RATEP Academic Coordinator at James Cook University. RATEP is a community-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initial teacher education pathway and partnership between TAFE Queensland, James Cook University, and the Queensland Department of Education. Her career focus is on work-integrated learning approaches to

enriching pre-service teachers' efficacy and understandings of the contexts and communities in which they teach. In 2018 Peta's teaching and research achievement were recognised with an Australian Award for University Teaching Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning through enabling teachers as change agents through service learning to maximise professional capacities, community outcomes and local global citizenship. In 2021 her teaching and professional development was recognised with a JCU Citation for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning for curriculum renewal to strengthen evidence-informed practice of preservice teachers from novice to graduate standard of practice. <https://research.jcu.edu.au/portfolio/peta.salter/>

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Professor Cindy Shannon AM

Descendent of the Ngugi people from Moreton Bay

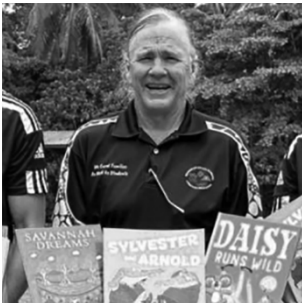
Vice Chancellor (Indigenous Diversity and Inclusion), Griffith University

Transforming Indigenous education - A call for action and equity

Biography

Professor Cindy Shannon is a distinguished academic and leader of Ngugi descent, known for her outstanding contributions to Indigenous health and education. Currently serving as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion) and Head of the Logan campus at Griffith University, she previously held the position of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement) at the University of Queensland. With an impressive career spanning policy development, program implementation, and advocacy, Professor Shannon has played a pivotal role in advancing Indigenous health and education at both state and national levels. Her notable achievements include leading the establishment of Australia's first degree-level program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers, spearheading major reforms in Indigenous health, and supporting the creation of the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health in Southeast Queensland. Professor Shannon's contributions have been widely recognized, with accolades including being named a Queensland Great, receiving the Order of Australia, and being awarded the AMA Queensland Excellence in Health Care medal. She continues to serve on various boards and advisory committees, actively promoting diversity, inclusivity, and the well-being of Indigenous communities.

<https://www.griffith.edu.au/office-vice-chancellor/university-executive#cindy-shannon>



Randal Smith

Principal, Mossman State School

Keeping Kuku Yalanji Language alive

Biography

<https://mossmans.eq.edu.au/>



Nathaniel Tamwoy

Proud Arugun Man from Badu Island in the Torres Strait

Who are you?

Biography

Nathaniel is a proud Arugun man from Badu Island in the Torres Strait. Having graduated from the University of Sydney with a degree in Occupational Therapy, his 20 year journey in the Australian education system has been harrowing. From racism to bigotry to low expectations and inequity, Nathaniel has swum against the tide. His voice and perspective is critical in leading the way for system change so that environments of love and trust are created where First Nations students can thrive. <https://indigenousboarding.au/student-voice-nathaniel-tamwoy/>

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Tate Williams

Principal, Hymba Yumba Independent School

Planning, Programming and Practice. Prioritising and Promoting Culture in Senior Curriculum Spaces

Biography

Tate Williams is a passionate educator who strongly believes in the power of education to transform lives of both staff and jarjum. She is an experienced senior teacher who has taught in NSW and QLD as an HSC/QCE teacher, Senior curriculum writer and marker and ATAR expert in English, Literature and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. In Sydney, Tate was the Indigenous Liaison Manager at St Augustine's College and worked with Tribal Warrior in Redfern to provide educational partnerships for jarjum, staff, and families. Currently, Tate is the Secondary Principal of Hymba Yumba Independent School and is using her love of curriculum to create engaging, high quality, and purposeful academic programs and outcomes for the jarjum. <https://hyis.qld.edu.au/>



Carmel Ybarlucea

Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Governance, First Nations Strategy and Partnership

Beyond the school gate

Biography

Social justice, human rights and reform have been a continuing theme in Carmel's career. As a community sector and legal aid lawyer for more than a decade, Carmel has worked to increase access to justice for some of the most marginalised people in Queensland. For the last seven years, Carmel has worked in positions driving reform across government and the community sector to Close the Gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage, to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Queenslanders at the Queensland Mental Health Commission. She joined the Department of Education in 2017 and led reforms to support inclusion in state schooling and improve outcomes for students with disability. Carmel is currently the Executive Director Strategy, Policy and Governance in the First Nations Strategy and Partnerships Division. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/carmel-ybarlucea-327bb888>



Group Biographies



**DESERT
PEA
MEDIA**

Desert Pea Media

Forward Thinking. Imagining it better: Yaburuhma Always doing

Biography

DPM is a charitable organisation established in 2002, that works with Indigenous young people and communities in regional and remote areas of Australia. Their collaborative projects utilise contemporary storytelling techniques and audio-visual media to facilitate important social and cultural dialogue.

For almost two decades, they have collaborated with young people, Elders, knowledge holders, community members and local service providers around Australia to create an inter-generational conversation, proper way, about positive social change and identity. Their media and creative works are an outcome of these yarns.

<https://www.desertpeamedia.com/our-story>

<https://www.desertpeamedia.com/our-yarn>



Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts

Group performance

Biography

The Aboriginal Centre for the Performing Arts provides teaching excellence and innovation in contemporary performance. Our vibrant and diverse training centre offers performing arts courses in the genres of dance, song, stage and screen. ACPA students come to our state-of-the-art studios at the Judith Wright Arts Centre to experience a learning environment which is challenging, demanding, motivating and, above all, nurturing of the talents of our young and emerging artists.

Our strong global network ensures ACPA students are trained by industry experts to build the technical capability and confidence they need for professional public performances, and to launch careers in the arts and entertainment sectors. ACPA is a Registered Training Organisation registered by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and delivers vocational education and training (VET) services. <https://acpa.edu.au/>



Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School

Video

<https://www.bunglebungleguidedtours.com.au/news/aboriginal-connection-to-country-at-purnululu/>



Kombumerri Together

Video

<https://kombumerritogetherproject.com/>



The Southport School

Video

<https://www.tss.qld.edu.au/>