



ABOVE: Perth Airport Indigenous Scholarship winners Courtney Lewis, Korine Bennell and Tyler Michie at the Dreaming@ECU event

## Turning dreams into reality

Four Indigenous students, including the granddaughter of *Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence* author Doris Pilkington Garima, have been presented with scholarships worth \$5000 each at a recent ECU event.

Dreaming@ECU saw more than 200 Indigenous high school students visit ECU's Mount Lawley Campus to experience university life first-hand.

*Story continued on page 3*

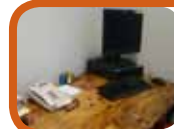
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Tracking our steps



Inaugural Congress Report

# Welcome from the Head of Centre

Welcome to the Djilba edition of *Our Place*, the official newsletter of Kurongkurl Katitjin, Centre for Indigenous Australian Education and Research at Edith Cowan University.

This edition of *Our Place* highlights Indigenous scholarships in Education. It is important to recognise the role these scholarships play in achieving positive education outcomes for Indigenous people.

At ECU, to current and prospective students, we offer a range of scholarships that can provide either financial assistance, alternative entry to university, or perhaps support for a PhD.

Most recently, four ECU Indigenous students received scholarships worth \$5000 each, presented at the Dreaming@ECU event. These funds will go a long way to supporting these students while they are at ECU.

Congratulations to Courtney Lewis, Korine Bennell and Tyler Michie who each received a Perth Airport Indigenous Scholarship and Shari Pilkington, who received the 2011 ECU Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Scholarship.

On behalf of Kurongkurl Katitjin, I wish them all continued success with their studies and future careers.

Happy reading!



Professor Colleen Hayward



## About the Centre

ECU's Kurongkurl Katitjin has a vital role in assisting the University to meet its commitment to Indigenous peoples.



Our mission is to *"provide excellence in teaching and learning and research in a culturally inclusive environment that values the diversity of Indigenous Australian history and cultural heritage"*.

Consistent with this mission, the Centre provides support and academic pathways for Indigenous students and opportunities for non-Indigenous students to enhance their professional knowledge and cultural competence.

## Turning dreams into reality

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The day culminated in the awarding of the scholarships. Perth Airport's Chief Operating Officer, Dr Peter Cock, along with ECU Vice-Chancellor Professor Kerry Cox, presented the Perth Airport Indigenous Scholarships to:

- Bachelor of Creative Industry student Korrine Bennell, Bunbury;
- Bachelor of Arts (Education)/Bachelor of Arts (Creative Arts) student Courtney Lewis, Mundaring; and
- Bachelor of Music student Tyler Michie, Warwick.

Westralia Airports Corporation established the scholarships in 2010 and will award a total of \$90,000 over five years to fund six undergraduate ECU students. Each scholarship pays \$5,000 for the duration of the student's course.

Professor Cox also presented the ECU Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Scholarship to Bachelor of Science Nursing student Shari Pilkington from Marangaroo.

Shari is the granddaughter of Doris Pilkington Garima, the WA-based author of the book *Follow the Rabbit Proof Fence*, which inspired the movie *Rabbit Proof Fence*.

"Nursing is something I've always wanted to do. I've got a child that has a chronic illness and he's been in and out of hospital all of his life," Shari said.

"We've had really good nurses through his illness and watching them do their job and see how rewarding it is, it's something I want to get into."

Shari said the scholarship makes her studies a little easier, particularly with helping to pay for nursing textbooks.

"But it's not just the money. It's knowing that someone else has believed in you enough to give you a scholarship. On those days when it feels too hard and I want to quit, I think 'well I can't, I've got this scholarship'. It helps me to push through."

Shari also had advice for the young Indigenous students visiting ECU.

"I want to say to them that you can do it. Don't think you can't get to university. If you think of it as trying to plan a road trip somewhere, there's lots of different ways to get where you want to go. It's the same with education. There are different avenues to get there, but if you stick with it you'll get there in the end."



*ABOVE: Shari Pilkington, 2011 winner of ECU's Vice-Chancellor's Indigenous Scholarship*

## **Nyoongar Season: About Djilba** *as written by Jason Barrow*

Djilba season is a time to look for the yellow and cream flowers starting on mass.

As we've been experiencing this year, Djilba is an unusual time of the year, with some very cold and clear days combining with warmer, rainy and windy days, mixing with the occasional warm sunny day or two.

This is the start of the massive flowering that happens in the South West starting with an explosion of yellows (often with the Wattles and Acacias) and creams, combined with some vivid and striking blues of the Lechenaultias that start to abound.

Traditionally, the main food sources again included many of the land based grazing animals including the Yongar (kangaroo), the Waitj (emu) and the Koomal (possum), with the entire animal being utilised not only for food but for everyday items like skins for clothing and sinews for tool making.

Combining with these meat sources were an abundance of root based plant tubers, including the orchids of the South West, as many come to life after a long period of dormancy and they're at maximum rehydration after the rains.

As the days start to warm up, we start to see and hear the first of the newborns. Their proud parents are out and about, providing them food for a never ending appetite, guiding them through foraging tasks and/or boldly protecting their family units against much bigger animals, including people!

Many of the wetland birds, including the Maili (Black Swan) will be out with their babies, which don't look too much like their parents until they become much older.

Whist the woodland birds will still be nest bound and hence the swooping protective behaviour of the Koolbardi (magpie) starts to ramp up and if watched closely, so to do the Djidi Djidi (Willy wag tails) and the Chuck-a-luck (Wattle birds) but to name a couple of others.

On the plant front, as already mentioned there's a massive explosion of yellow and cream and in the right places some of the most amazing and delicate orchids and huge carpets of everlastings or paper daisies.



Around the Kurongkurl Katitjin building on the south side, you'll start to see Drummond's Wattle (*Acacia drummondii*) and the Grey Cotton Head (*Conostylis candicans*) with their yellows in full bloom and the contrasting blues of the Dampiera (*Dampiera linearis*) as pictured.

Around the Perth metro area this year, you'll see the early arrival of many Balga flower stalks and even some Bull Banksia (*Banksia grandis*) flowers indicating that Kambarang will soon be upon us.

## Wongi Nyoongar – Talking Nyoongar

In this edition of *Wongi Nyoongar*, we take a look at the names of some insects that start to become active with the arrival of some warm weather.

Whilst insects are present all year round, the onset or promise of a return to warmer days means that many insects will start their life cycles with some urgency.

These cycles often provide indicators as to the length of the warm weather to come.

Nyoongar name	Pronunciation	Type
Minga	<i>Min-gar</i>	Insects
Bidit	<i>Bid-it</i>	Ant
Nort	<i>Nort</i>	Fly
Noordoo	<i>Noor-doo</i>	Blowfly
Bardi	<i>Bar-dee</i>	Grubs found in balgas
Bindi-bindi	<i>Bin-di bin-di</i>	Moth
Djilyara	<i>Jil-yara</i>	Bee
Ngarna	<i>Gar-na</i>	Caterpillar
Moodji	<i>Mood-jee</i>	Beetle
Djidily	<i>Jid-i-ly</i>	Grasshopper

### **Nyoongar Story Time** *as told by Dr Noel Nannup*

#### **Djilba: Underneath**

*Djilba* means 'underneath' and refers to the time of year when Nyoongar people would dig up food sources such as bulbs, potatoes and onions.

Children would learn how to dig from the women.

During the *Djeran* season, Nyoongar people would collect zamia nuts and bury those that weren't eaten in preparation for the *Djilba* season.

The buried zamia nuts were then dug up, treated and used for food.

## Have your say on Indigenous Higher Education

On the 19 September 2011, Minister for Tertiary Education Senator Chris Evans and Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Senator Kim Carr launched public consultations for the Review, saying the Government recognises that this participation is well below acceptable levels.

"I look forward to hearing from the higher education sector and broader community on how they view the current outcomes, on what's working and what they think needs to change," Senator Evans said.

"Higher education is central to building the capacity of Indigenous communities and facilitating the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the professional life of the nation."

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people benefiting from a higher education has improved in recent years, but due to increasing rates of participation by non-Indigenous students, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander proportion of total students has remained unchanged at about 1.3 per cent.

"Only 0.5 per cent of students who complete PhDs in Australia are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander," Senator Carr said.

"This highlights a need for strategic investment to support talented Indigenous people to pursue research degrees and research careers."

A panel was appointed in April to lead the review, chaired by Professor Larissa Behrendt, Professor of Law and Indigenous Studies at the University of Technology, Sydney.

The panel includes Professor Steve Larkin, Chair of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council, Mr Robert Griew, Associate Secretary of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, and Ms Patricia Kelly, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

The panel is examining the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the higher education sector, both as students and as staff.

It will provide advice to the Government on measures to improve outcomes for students, researchers and academic and non-academic staff.

Expert analyses are being commissioned to inform the review.

Research will focus on approaches to increasing participation, retention and completion of Indigenous students. It will also focus on the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in universities, particularly in academic and research roles, and the recognition of Indigenous knowledges within the academy.

Submissions close on Friday 18 November 2011.

For more information on how to make a submission: visit: [www.deewr.gov.au/IHER](http://www.deewr.gov.au/IHER)

## You Me Unity: Equality and Recognition

*You Me Unity* is the national conversation about updating our Constitution to recognise our first peoples and define equality for all Australians.

In December 2010, Prime Minister Julia Gillard, with the support of all political parties, appointed an Expert Panel to lead a conversation about change.

Co-chaired by Professor Patrick Dodson and Mr Mark Leibler AC, the Panel consists of a range of respected and accomplished individuals, including Indigenous and community leaders, constitutional experts and parliamentary members.

The Panel agreed on four principles that will guide their consideration of the ideas put before them. In order for the Panel to recommend a proposal for constitutional change, it must:

- Contribute to a more unified and reconciled nation
- Be of benefit to and accord with the wishes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Be capable of being supported by an overwhelming majority of Australians from across the political and social spectrums
- Be technically and legally sound

In April 2011, the consultation process began across Australia to discuss and gather the views of the Australian people.

Some of the ideas that have been put forward are:

- Changing or deleting the 'race' power, which allows the Commonwealth to make laws for any race.
- A prohibition on racial discrimination or guarantee of equality.
- Deleting Section 25, which allows the states to exclude people from voting on the basis of race.

The official period for submissions ends on the 30 September 2011, with the Panel reporting to Government on options for improving the Constitution in December 2011.



For further information, visit: [www.youmeunity.org.au](http://www.youmeunity.org.au)

### Our Constitution

It's been around for more than 100 years, but have you ever taken the time to actually read the Australian Constitution?

To read the full constitution, visit: [www.youmeunity.org.au/blog/view/our-constitution](http://www.youmeunity.org.au/blog/view/our-constitution)

## Adios Peru and Aloha Hawaii for WIPC:E 2014

A small group of Kurongkurl Katitjin staff took leave and embarked on the trip of a lifetime, travelling to Cusco, Peru to attend the *World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPC:E)* on 14-18 August 2011.



ABOVE: Sightseeing the in the Sacred Valley

The conference, held for the first time in South America, attracted delegates from various countries including Alaska, Canada, Hawaii, New Zealand and Australia.

The beautiful city of Cusco is located in the Andes at 3400m (11,155ft) above sea level and has a population of over half a million people, whose main economic activities are agriculture and tourism.

The overall theme of WIPC:E 2011 was *Living Our Indigenous Roots*, with a specialised focus each day:

Day 1 - Indigenous Education for Future Generation

Day 2 - Living Indigenous Language, and

Day 3 - Indigenous Wisdom for Common Welfare



ABOVE: Jason Barrow in the main square in Cusco

Over 800 delegates attended the conference, with most taking the opportunity to sight-see and participate in various tours.

Kurongkurl Katitjin staff visited one of the seven wonders of the world, the breath-taking Macchu Picchu as well as the Sacred Valley.

Planned for 2014, WIPC:E is set to be hosted in, Hawaii.

## Warmun artists exhibit through the Jimmy Pike Trust Scholarship

Before internationally renowned artist Jimmy Pike died, he and his wife Pat Lowe established the *Jimmy Pike Trust*, with the aim of assisting the education and development of emerging Aboriginal artists.

This year, the Jimmy Pike Trust Scholarships were awarded to Roseleen Park and Lorraine Daylight, two emerging artists from the Warmun community.

These artists made the long journey from Turkey Creek to be artists-in-residence in the Visual Arts Studios at ECU, through the Open Bite Australia Programme.

Over the 3-12 September 2011, Roseleen and Lorraine exhibited their paintings, drawings, prints and works in progress in the Breathing Space Gallery in the Library.

In 2010, this inaugural scholarship was awarded to sculptor Hanson Boxer and painter Edwin Lee Mulligan, a father and son team from the central Kimberley.

## **Secondary Education scholarships offered to Indigenous students**

School Education Minister Peter Garrett recently welcomed the historic ten-year partnership between the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation and BHP Billiton, which will see at least 70 Indigenous students from Western Australia attend some of Perth's leading secondary schools.

"Under the new partnership, the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation and BHP Billiton will provide Indigenous secondary scholarships to Western Australian students, with more than 50 per cent of these students from the Pilbara," Mr Garrett said.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for a group of young people who may have seen a dispiriting number of closed doors in front of them in the past.

"This partnership is part of the Government's commitment to closing the gap in education outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

"The Australian Government agreed to contribute \$20 million to the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation scholarship program, with the Foundation undertaking to raise an additional \$20 million from individual, philanthropic and corporate investors.

"The Government is extremely proud to support the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation, which has assisted over 200 Indigenous students in New South Wales and Queensland since its inception in 2007; and we welcome the expansion of this work in Western Australia.

"BHP Billiton is providing \$4.275 million to the partnership, to be matched by the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation, with the support of the Australian Government.

"The Australian Government commends BHP Billiton for its ongoing work in building education opportunities for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

"The Australian Indigenous Education Foundation scholarships for Western Australia will allow families to offer their children a great start in life," Mr Garrett said.

## **ECU's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group established**

ECU has established a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG) after launching its inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in May 2011.

The RAPWG is made up of staff and student representatives that will monitor the implementation and progress of the RAP.

Members of the RAPWG includes Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Engagement, Equity & Indigenous) Professor Brenda Cherednichenko, Head of Kurongkurl Katitjin Professor Colleen Hayward, staff representative Ms Danielle Brown, student representatives Mr Jesse Fleay and Ms Nicole Fitch and the Director, Planning, Quality & Equity Services Centre Mr Tony Lazzara.

Professor Brenda Cherednichenko and Professor Colleen Hayward co-chair the group.

To view ECU's RAP, visit: [www.ecu.edu.au/about-ecu/indigenous-matters](http://www.ecu.edu.au/about-ecu/indigenous-matters)

## Solid tables reflecting Solid Futures

Five unique, hand burnt tables were presented recently to four Western Australian universities in a special ceremony to mark the graduation of Central Institute of Technology's *Solid Futures* and *Solid Ground* students.

The tables were made by the students as part of their studies at Central. The project was titled the Dardy Design Project. Under the guidance of an artist-in-residence, the tables pay homage to traditional wood burning practices and incorporate design ideas that reflect each university's specific culture and locale.



ABOVE: Dr Noel Nannup being presented with the two tables at the ceremony

The MC for the event was Dale Kickett, a former AFL star, who now works for the David Wirrpanda Foundation mentoring Indigenous youth and adults.

The beautiful, hand crafted tables were unveiled by the *Solid Futures* students and presented to representatives from each of the universities.

Dr Noel Nannup, Kurongkurl Katitjin's Elder-in-Residence, accepted two tables on behalf of Edith Cowan University. An office desk and coffee table now sit proudly within the Elders Room at the Mount Lawley campus.



ABOVE: Solid Futures students with Dr Noel Nannup

Dr Nannup commented "We will sit around this table and reflect on this program bringing profile back to our people; one that gives them confidence, passion and desire to believe in themselves".

"The tables are a wonderful statement, made through an incredible program, for wonderful people, you and me - all Australians together."

The *Solid Futures* program is a joint venture between the Central Institute of Technology and the David Wirrpanda Foundation (DWF) which aims to support Indigenous people through training and employment.

"The *Solid Futures* course is all about generating confidence, self esteem and providing opportunity and the graduates here are a credit to their people, their culture and themselves", he said.

David also thanked those companies present for their commitment to employing the participants at the conclusion of their training programs. He also paid tribute to the collaboration between Central and the DWF, which he hoped would continue working together in partnership for another ten years.



ABOVE: The new desk set-up in the Elders Room at Kurongkurl Katitjin

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## Staff Snapshot

*Dr Noel Nannup*



Elder-in-Residence

### **Favourite book:**

*Anything by Henry Reynolds*

### **Favourite music:**

*Rhythm and Blues*

### **Favourite food:**

*Spaghetti Bolognaise*

### **Favourite TV Program:**

*Sports - AFL*

### **Favourite Movie:**

*Bourne Identity, any of the Bond movies*

### **If you could meet anyone, who would it be?**

*Nelson Mandela*

### **What is something that people don't know about you?**

I used to play base guitar in a band.

## **GCC: Tracking our foot steps**

After 16 weeks, the Global Corporate Challenge (GCC) came to an end on the 6 September 2011.

This annual 'walk your way around the world' pedometer challenge saw Kurongkurl Katitjin's team *Djena Balanginy* take 6,619,989 steps towards a healthier and more active lifestyle.

Averaging 11,906 steps per day, the team made it to location 82 (out of 84) - Ypres, Belgium.

The Global Corporate Challenge for 2012 will kick off on the 24 May and concludes on 12 September.

For more information or to get involved, visit:  
[www.gettheworldmoving.com](http://www.gettheworldmoving.com)

## **Inaugural National Congress Report**

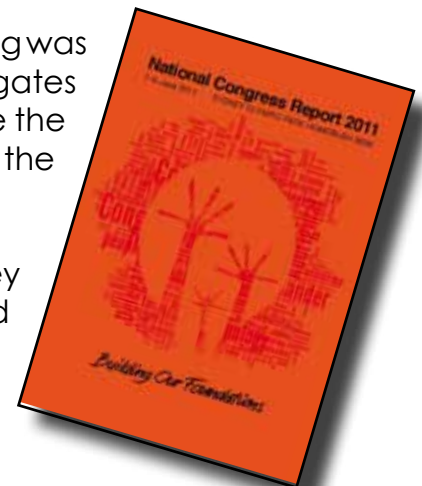
On the 31 August, the Co-Chairs of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, presented **Building our Foundations: National Congress Report 2011** from the inaugural Delegates' meeting in June.

The 100-page report is seen as a foundational document of the new national representative body and the start of a national conversation between Congress members, communities, organisations and Governments.

It also stands as a record of the historic meeting of Congress Delegates, a new and important voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The National Congress meeting was the first opportunity for Delegates to discuss issues and to advise the Board on policy directions for the Congress.

The report contains key policy backgrounders and speeches, a discussion paper on Constitutional reform and Member survey reports.



To view or download a copy of the Report, visit:  
[www.nationalcongress.com.au](http://www.nationalcongress.com.au)

*Our Place* is Kurongkurl Katitjin's official newsletter and is produced six times a year.

It is circulated electronically to a range of stakeholders including staff, students and the broader community.

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