# UTS: JUMBUNNA
INDIGENOUS HOUSE OF LEARNING

# EXCELLENCE IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

UTS
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

## WELCOME

Professor Michael McDaniel, Director Jumbunna

Welcome to the third edition of Jumbunna's Excellence in Indigenous Education and Research.

At Jumbunna we're committed to nurturing the next generation of Indigenous thinkers, creators and leaders.

In 2015, we've enjoyed growth and success in many areas.

We continue to facilitate mature age and regional access to UTS through our new Bachelor in Primary Health Care, an away-from-base course that is an important pathway for Aboriginal health workers to pursue tertiary studies and career progression – one that hasn't been available until now.

The depth of our Indigenous outreach model continues to grow. We pride ourselves on not only building relationships with future students, but with their family, community, teachers and schools.

Due to the success of our Galuwa program, a five-day residential experience for Indigenous high school students in the Faculty of Engineering and IT, Jumbunna partnered with additional faculties at UTS to offer similar programs in the disciplines of Science, Health, Animation and Visual Communication.

Our academic support services are now second to none. In 2015, our students could access a maths tutor and a communications tutor five days a week. With specialist peer tutors also available in health, design, law, business and science, we provided approximately 2700 hours of tutorial assistance.

Our International Experience program continues to flourish with our fourth cohort of students engaging in an immersive cultural experience in Aotearoa. The UTS target is for 25% of students to have an international experience and I'm pleased to announce 33% of our students have undertaken an international experience this year.

Jumbunna's innovative Academics of the Future program entered its second successful year. Not only are our undergraduate students benefiting from peer support, but our tutors are gaining opportunities for progression into higher degree research.

Applications for undergraduate study at UTS are increasing, as are retention and success rates while Indigenous employment at UTS is also on the rise.

We're proud to share our whole-of-university approach to Indigenous education with you and hope you enjoy reading about our students and our work.

## INNOCENCE BETRAYED
### IN THEIR OWN WORDS

In the early 1990's three Aboriginal children from the Bowraville mission, 16-year-old Colleen Craig (Walker), four-year old Evelyn Greenup and 16-year-old Clinton Speedy-Duroux were murdered. The only suspect, a white man, was brought to trial for two of the murders, but he was never convicted.

The horror of losing three children in just five months is incomprehensible. The impact on the small community was and continues to be devastating. Would this story have been different if they were white? .

Written and directed by Professor Larissa Behrendt, Director of Research at Jumbunna, *Innocence Betrayed* forms part of her advocacy work to support the families in their fight for justice.

The documentary follows the victim's parents in their 23-year-long battle. Aunty Muriel, Aunty Rebecca and Uncle Thomas share their tragic stories of loss and their determination to never give up.

Larissa became involved five years ago when Aunty Elaine Walker, a community elder and Colleen's aunt, invited her to meet the victim's parents. The idea for the documentary came from the community themselves as a vehicle to capture what they'd been through and raise awareness.

"The events are still really traumatic for the parents," says Larissa. "So we worked with them to negotiate what they felt comfortable doing."

Consultation with the families was paramount. It was agreed the film would only proceed if all families participated. They don't relive the murders on camera, but instead talk about how their lives have been affected – in their own words.

"They talk about hearing their kids' voices, seeing them in ghost form and in their dreams," says Larissa. "I get teary now thinking about it. It's so powerful to see what they gave of themselves for the film."

*Innocence Betrayed* also features interviews with Detective Inspector Gary Jubelin who since 1997, has fought alongside the families for justice. Gary believes they were let down by the system and the unsolved case should have been closed 24 years ago.

"One of the exceptional things about this story is it starts out as a failure of justice compounded by the poor relationship between the police and the community," says Larissa. "But Gary's involvement turns it into a story of hope, of the police and families working together."

*Innocence Betrayed* was used in the NSW Legislative Council enquiry into the murders. It had a powerful effect with the committee unanimously recommending a review of the section of the Crimes Act that prevents these cases being retried.

Written and directed by Larissa Behrendt and produced by Jason de Santolo and Craig Longman, *Innocence Betrayed* screened on NITV on 10 August, 2014. It won the UTS Vice-Chancellor's Social Justice/Human rights Award for Staff, 2014.

UTS CRICOS PROVIDER CODE: 00099F

## UTS:HEALTH
# INDIGENOUS PRIMARY HEALTH CARE A FIRST FOR UTS

Widely known as a leader in Indigenous health education, UTS Health has announced another first.

Their new Bachelor of Primary Health Care is the first bachelor degree designed to make a difference to the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Australians through primary care.

While other degrees lead to registration as a midwife, nurse or physiotherapist, this new degree provides a complete theoretical underpinning in all aspects of primary health in particular – Indigenous primary health care.

Course coordinator Rachel Smith, says the development of the degree is part of UTS's commitment to increasing opportunities for Indigenous students to undertake tertiary studies.

"A national report delivered by Health Workforce Australia identified a lack of tertiary pathways for Aboriginal health workers," says Rachel. "Currently they receive their qualification through the VET system. If they want to progress career-wise, they have to leave the Aboriginal health work sector and specialise."

Commencing in 2016, the degree will create graduates who are ready to lead, manage and improve services, access and outcomes for Indigenous people.

"Aboriginal health workers are an important part of our workforce in NSW," says Rachel. "They're cultural advisors who in turn increase the cultural competence of the general health work force. We don't want to take important workers away from their area of practice."

As such, a significant feature of the degree is that it's structured as an away-from-base program so students can continue their employment, family and community commitments while travelling to UTS's city campus to undertake face-to-face classes twice a semester.

"Instead of being Sydney-centric, we can offer this degree to a wider range of people," says Rachel. "Students from regional, remote and rural areas can engage with UTS and share knowledge about their experiences in their community."

There'll also be a blended learning element where students will continue learning online from home.

"Initially we thought the course would appeal to students who are working in primary health care and looking to improve their knowledge," says Rachel. "But we've also had interest from direct school leavers who want to work in Aboriginal health, but aren't quite sure which area they want to work in. So we'll have a wide variety of students learning in a tight-knit group."

Another key feature of the course is its recognised exit points.

"After consultation with community, Aboriginal Health and Jumbunna, we felt it was important to recognise student's achievements throughout the course," says Rachel. "Usually you need to complete the entire degree before you're awarded an accreditation.

For any number of reasons students may be unable to continue with their studies so they can exit with a formal qualification after 12 months, 24 months or three years."

Rachel believes some students will complete the degree and continue working at the front line of Aboriginal health care while others may want to take on a leadership role.

"Our students will be the change that ensures the health system provides culturally competent care for Aboriginal people," says Rachel. "The program will also equip them with skills in project management, program planning and policy development."

Leading academic Professor Juanita Sherwood has played an important role in the development of the degree.

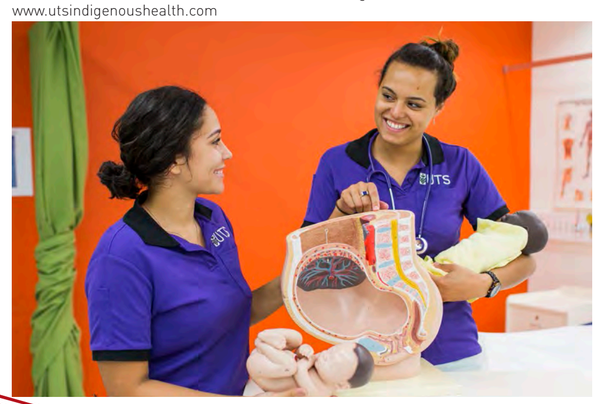
With some 30 years experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and education, Juanita has already worked closely with UTS Health to ensure the faculty acknowledges the effects of colonisation on Indigenous Australians – all staff and students are trained to be culturally competent.

"The idea is perpetuated that Aboriginal health is problematic because Aboriginal people are problematic," says Juanita. "These ideas are a direct result of colonisation. We need to shift our perception and be respectful of many ways of knowing and doing in health. Health isn't just one path. It's many paths."

Juanita believes the Bachelor of Primary Health Care is further evidence of UTS Health's Indigenous commitment.

"This degree will help our students achieve fantastic wellbeing not only for Indigenous Australians, but also for non-Indigenous Australians."

Enrolments are now open. More info email: atsirecruitment@uts.edu.au
Learn more about UTS Health's commitment to Indigenous health:
www.utsindigenoushealth.com



Lake Condah, Victoria

# CONTROLLING THE NARRATIVE
## NATION BUILDING IN THE ABSENCE OF RECOGNITION

Unlike Canada, the United States and Aotearoa/New Zealand, the Australian Government has never acknowledged a right to Indigenous self-government.

Colonisation, dispossession, assimilation and paternalism have left many Indigenous collectives unable to self-govern.

"The Australian state refuses to recognise Indigenous peoples in nation-to-nation or government-to-government relations," says Jumbunna's Dr Alison Vivian, a Senior Research Associate for The ARC Linkage Project, *Indigenous nationhood in the absence of recognition: Self-governance strategies and insights from three Aboriginal communities*.

"The national narrative promotes a deceptively simple claim that Indigenous sovereignty ended at British settlement," says Alison. "Without a treaty, constitutional recognition or legislation, there's a climate of constraint for Indigenous collectives who are actively pursuing self-government."

A group of seven universities and three Aboriginal nations are exploring how Indigenous nations can self-govern within the current system so they can pursue their social, economic, cultural and political goals.

"The Gunditjmara People and Ngarrindjeri Nations present outstanding examples of Aboriginal nations creating capable governing institutions," says Alison. "They've established governing systems based on entirely different structures, but with many similarities."

These similarities include strategic innovation, review and self-reflection, disciplined negotiations, intention to control the narrative and sustainable partnerships with non-Indigenous governments.

In October, Alison organised an Inter-nation Summit to explore innovations in Australian Indigenous governance and develop an Australian network for sharing strategies. Over 50 delegates from different nations, communities and groups around Australia were generously hosted by Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation at Lake Condah in Victoria.

"Participants stressed the importance of learning strategies from each other so they can avoid reinventing the wheel," says Alison.

Inspirational ideas emerging from the summit included leader-to-leader meetings, visits to communities, creating a Facebook page to share issues of common interest, developing case studies and training nation building facilitators who can conduct workshops on their own country and within other communities.

Dr Richard Luarkie, former governor of Laguna Pueblo, a US based Native nation, and Angela Wesley, former Constitution Chair from Huu-ay-aht First Nation, a Canada-based Indigenous nation, were keynote speakers.

"Dr Luarkie gave an inspiring speech about Laguna pre-invasion, through an imposed governing structure, to the 'Laguna made' constitution they have today," says Alison. "They underwent an exhaustive process of community engagement to understand how the values Laguna people learn from childhood could frame their government and constitution."

Like Australia, British Columbia is the only other territory considered 'terra nullius' so Angela Wesley's address was keenly anticipated – especially given the Canadian government has started a 'modern treaty' process where First Nations can negotiate to self-govern.

"Angela was a driver for the Huu-ay-aht First Nation and told us how they formed government through community meetings, focus groups and home visits so every citizen could be heard," says Alison. "Angela also emphasised the need to review processes. It was a deliberate strategy not to set their constitution in stone for a few years so it could be tested."

While the Australian delegates learnt from their Northern American counterparts, Angela and Richard also learnt from the Australian experience.

"One comment we frequently heard was that although the political and historical structures in North America and Australia are different, the colonial experience was incredibly similar," says Alison. "So many stories applied on either side of the world. There's enormous potential for fruitful ongoing relationships across the board."

*The Indigenous Nationhood Linkage Project brings together the Gunditjmara People, the Ngarrindjeri Nation and the Wiradjuri Nation with UTS, University of Arizona, University of Melbourne, Flinders University, CSU, RMIT and ANU.*

# DIRECT ENTRY PROGRAM
## BIGGER AND BETTER IN 2015

Over three days in November, 55 students took part in Jumbunna's Direct Entry Program. They took an academic communication test, a faculty-based test, (eg: a task set by the Business School if applying for Business), a library task and engaged in a group work project, which involved a public speaking presentation.

Dr Heidi Norman who interviewed students for the Communications degree was impressed with the calibre and talent of the students. She has high hopes for next year's cohort. All 55 students have been offered a personalised pathway to UTS.

In December, 40 more students will participate in Jumbunna's Direct Entry Program hoping to secure a place at UTS. It looks like 2016 will be the biggest intake of first year students for Jumbunna yet!

# A WAVE OF CHANGE

## CHARTING THE COURSE OF ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS IN NSW

When Dr Heidi Norman was growing up, land rights was the main subject of discussion around the family dinner table.

"We felt that land rights was a wave that would wash over us and uplift our lives," says Heidi. "There was so much optimism for what it would bring. Aboriginal people believed if they could achieve land rights, they could achieve anything."

Now a Senior Lecturer in Communications in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at UTS, Heidi's new book *What do we want? A political history of Aboriginal land rights in NSW*, charts the enthralling process towards achieving legal recognition of land rights in 1983.

There are no other books that explore the successes, disappointments and continuing importance of these far-reaching Aboriginal land rights laws.

A descendant of the Gomeroi people of north-western NSW, Heidi interviewed 30 people for the book and speaks passionately about the research process.

"This kind of research is so much fun," says Heidi. "Field work, in-depth interviews, years spent in the Mitchell Library going through archives – it's fascinating. I encourage young academics to get involved in research like this."

Heidi recalls a pivotal moment in her life when as 17-year-old office clerk she witnessed a rally against the Greiner Government, which was trying to repeal the Land Rights Act put in place by the former Labor Government. Since that moment, she's yearned to put things in place, to fully understand what the movement was about and what it meant for Aboriginal people.

"It was an incredible time," says Heidi. "It came on the back of the 1965 Freedom Ride and the 1972 Tent Embassy. But this was a new generation. People like Kevin Cook and Marcia Langton were creating change through The Black Defence Group."

The Black Defence Group were an alliance of young Aboriginal people who were helping to financially aid the roll out of Aboriginal Medical Services across the country.

"Their minds were exploding with ideas and possibilities," says Heidi.
"They were de-colonising themselves. They were creating a new Aboriginal identity."

In 1977 South Coast Elders, Jack Campbell and Ted 'Gaboo' told the young activists that land rights was the most important issue. So The Black Defence Group held a state-wide land rights conference and from that, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council was born.

"They built an incredible network of support across church groups, trade unions, politicians and Aboriginal people," says Heidi. "They took up the political call for self-determination all the while grappling with the expectations of the government."

When it came to New South Wales, compared to the rest of the country, land rights was a very different landscape.

"New South Wales received the full brunt of colonisation," says Heidi. "It was the longest and most violent settlement. How can a sympathetic state government redress the effects of two hundred years of colonisation in the most densely populated state in the Commonwealth?"

In 1978 a government select committee actively went out into communities. They were deeply moved by what they saw. On one occasion they visited a camp where they sat on old car seats around a campfire. There was no running water, sewerage, or electricity. The committee wanted to make significant change.

But translating that need for change into law is a very different story.

"Expectations were raised so high that many in the community felt betrayed by the eventual Land Rights Legislation," says Heidi. "There was no recognition of protecting scared sites, no right to claim privately owned land or Crown land that had been leased. Aboriginal people felt they were left with scraps."

Heidi spoke with Frank Walker, the man who developed the laws as the inaugural minister for Aboriginal Affairs, to get his side of the story.

"Frank was trying to manage a political fall out," says Heidi. "He called it 'the art of the possible.' He had to get the laws passed through parliament and protect them against conservative forces. The fact that these laws have prevailed when there's often a reset button for Aboriginal Affairs is testament to his hard work."

Thirty-two years later, the resulting network of more than 115 land councils remains the largest Aboriginal representative body in the country. It has realised the possibility of an Aboriginal economy with more than a billion dollars in land assets and a near billion-dollar investment fund.

"The challenge ahead will be negotiating our increasing entanglement with modernity," says Heidi. "We're yet to see the full benefit of land rights, but the time will come."

*What do we want? A political history of Aboriginal land rights in New South Wales* by Dr Heidi Norman is available now. Published by Aboriginal Studies Press, Australia's leading publisher of Australian Indigenous studies.

Author Dr Heidi Norman



# HIGHER DEGREES OF RESEARCH IN THE PIPELINE

## WINGARA EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

In a 2012 Federal Government review of higher education access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, it was recommended that universities 'grow their own' staff by encouraging students to become employees.

In response, UTS implemented a key multi-year initiative to build a pipeline to grow and maintain an Indigenous Academy across UTS.

"Wingara designed the pipeline initiative as a way to grow academics from the amazing students we see at Jumbunna," says Indigenous Employment Officer Matthew Walsh. "The idea came as we started to join the dots. We needed to provide additional tutorial assistance for Indigenous students, we wanted to grow our academic work force and we were also seeking to grow the number of Higher Degree Research students. This project ticked all the boxes."

There are four programs that form the backbone of the pipeline:

**Indigenous Cadetships** provide a bridge for undergraduates to gain paid employment within the university.

**Indigenous Academics of the Future** are undergraduates who gain academic-like employment at UTS with a view to progress into higher degree research. They're employed to mentor Indigenous first year students and engage in a research activity.

**Indigenous Academic Interns** are studying a PhD or Masters by Research and are interested in an academic career. They're employed two days a week in their faculty to teach or undertake research.

**Indigenous Academic Leaders** are Indigenous academics recruited to progress Indigenous knowledge and provide leadership in Indigenous teaching, learning and research.

"We spent a year investigating what we wanted to achieve and then stepped the problem back to gain a solution," says Matthew. "By 2018 we hope to have 40 Indigenous academics across all our faculties who can grow Indigenous knowledge and support their Indigenous and non-Indigenous colleagues."

One of those academics may well be Allan Teale who is currently an Indigenous Academic Intern at UTS.

Allan was born in Dubbo and lived in many locations in Western NSW before finishing his secondary education in Cobar. After school he joined the Navy.

"My great grandmother was a Wiradjuri woman from the Nyngan area," says Allan. "I wasn't aware of my cultural heritage until I turned forty. That's when my wife researched my family tree as part of my fortieth birthday celebrations and discovered my hidden cultural heritage. Hiding Aboriginal lineage was apparently a common way to approach heritage for the generations before mine."

Allan's journey to UTS involved articulating through a TAFE NSW Graduate Diploma in Valuation to study a Master in Planning, which focused on urban planning, development and sustainability. He loved the degree so much he applied for a PhD and was accepted.

Allan's PhD explores the social impact that infrastructure has on communities and has allowed him to travel to Vancouver, Canada and Portland Oregon for research.

"I'm also working on two other projects," says Allan. "Associate Professor Sara Wilkinson and I are exploring the sustainability of rooftop gardens with a view to growing Indigenous food on the rooftops of Sydney's CBD. And I'm working with Dr. Michael Er to establish a teaching and experience centre at Murrin Bridge, a remote community in New South Wales that I'm a member of. The office of the Prime Minister and Cabinet is supporting the program as is The Fairfax Foundation."

Allan recalls how he was introduced to the Academic Intern Program in an unexpected way.

"I was at Jumbunna when one of the staff asked me if I'd considered being academic," says Allan. "It was a life changing moment."

Academia wasn't a career Allan had considered, but as soon as he joined the program he realised it was the right path for him.

"I'm now able to move forward in a research and teaching role," says Allan. "This change in lifestyle has been frightening and exciting. I've been greatly supported by the staff at UTS and Jumbunna. The journey may not have been sustainable without their support."

Allan is also a member of the Vice Chancellor's Indigenous Strategies Committee and is impressed by the strides UTS is making in Indigenous Research.

"I believe UTS has a genuine desire to involve and nurture Aboriginal people in the fabric of the university," says Allan. "Some of the numbers I've seen suggest that we're leading the way in Indigenous Research. I've seen many presentations by my Aboriginal colleagues. Only recently one of our researchers (Dean Jarrett) was awarded the Fulbright Scholarship."

Allan's advice to younger students considering higher degree research at UTS is to 'just do it.'

"The challenge is hard, but the rewards are great," says Allan. "If I can do this then anyone can. The only barrier may be you. Talk to Jumbunna and they will show you the way. The time it takes to complete a postgraduate degree initially appears to be long, but the reality is that time travels quickly, at times too quickly."

Allan Teale

Tanikka is a first year Nursing student who received a Wingara cadetship this year to work at St. Vincent's Private hospital. There's a few nurses in her family so it wasn't hard for Tanikka to see why she wanted to be a nurse.

"I actually get to work in the field and have a lot more experience interacting with patients than your average first year," says Tanikka. "I definitely feel on track and the clinical I've encountered so far is evidence that I feel prepared to do this job in the real world. Having this cadetship has made me so excited for the future. It's really kick started my career."

Tanikka's ultimate goal is to be in a rural Indigenous community helping Aboriginal people.

"I want to be able to give the people I care for the best care possible, no matter what."

## GALUWA EXPERIENCE
### ANIMATING CREATIVE LIFE AT UTS

This December artistically inclined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students will experience the vibrancy and creativity of our leading design school through the first **UTS Animation and Visual Communication Galuwa Experience**.

Working with a blend of traditional and new technologies, students will participate in hands-on animation, visual storytelling and graphic novel workshops.

They'll experience UTS as if they were a uni student, hear from industry professionals and enjoy screenings of world-class works.

Working in groups they'll also produce a graphic novel or a short animated film, which will be showcased at the end of the workshop.

Galuwa means 'to climb' in the Gadigal language, and that's exactly what these students will do.

## ON THE EDGE OF KNOWLEDGE
### THE TRUE VALUE OF LEARNING

Tui Nolan always wanted to do science. "It's a natural passion," says Tui. "When I was a kid I was obsessed with dinosaurs, although I think that might be a common thing. Dinosaurs are cool!"

Tui, whose Indigenous family originates from the Gudjal mob in modern day Charters Towers, came to UTS to increase his mathematical analysis skills studying a Master of Science after completing his undergrad degree majoring in Physics at The University of Sydney.

Tui recently aced his thesis defence and is putting the final touches on his thesis.

"The thesis defence is a presentation of your research to a group of people in your research area," says Tui. "It's mostly written except for the final chapter. At the end they grill you to see if you know what you're talking about. It really challenges you to dig in and throw back your knowledge."

With a title like *Accuracy Comparison of Variational Approximations*, Tui is used to explaining what his thesis is about.

"It's about machine learning," says Tui. "You watch a computer learn off its mistakes. You feed data through the computer and it tries to predict how the data is behaving. The computer keeps making mistakes, but it learns off them and each time it gets closer and closer to the true value."

Machine learning is everywhere. Our email providers use it to identify spam, Google employs it to provide search recommendations while Siri's speech recognition on the iPhone is another popular example.

Tui worked on two forms of data approximations for his thesis. The approach that makes mistakes and builds on them and a variation of that approach which simplifies the behaviour of the data making it easier for the computer to do its calculations. The results were not what he expected.

"I thought the second approach, an approximation on top of an approximation, would be faster, but I didn't think it would be more accurate. It was!"

In 2014, Tui was invited to join Jumbunna's innovative Academics of the Future program.

"It was a really exciting opportunity," says Tui. "I'm intrigued by a career in academia. It's a hard field to get into so I saw the program as a way to get a foot in the door and gain experience."

Tui is employed one day a week as a peer tutor at Jumbunna supporting students studying engineering, sports science, maths and physics and one day a week as a research assistant in his faculty.

When Tui came onboard he immediately felt at home and has made lasting friendships with Jumbunna staff as well as getting to know many of the students. The appointment hasn't come without its challenges.

"I've learnt that I have to improve as a teacher!" says Tui. "It's quite challenging teaching someone. I've had to take myself back a few years and remember what the gaps in my knowledge were as a way into understanding how to help my students."

Already the program has ensured higher retention rates for Indigenous students and encouraged Tui to pursue further education – he's just applied for his PhD.

"I'll be doing something a bit more interesting," says Tui. "It's the same field of mathematics, but I'll be exploring a different type of approximation called variational message passing – it's the new kid on the block."

Tui is also used to explaining what variation message passing is...

"Big data is the current and the future of science," says Tui. "I'll be looking into algorithms for computers to learn how to manipulate big data. If you look at bioinformatics, how genes vary among species, they have all this data. The next step is how to deal with it. The algorithms I develop will help with that."

While Tui's time at UTS isn't over, finishing his Masters has caused him to reflect on the past two years.

"If you'd told me when I was doing my undergrad degree that I'd be applying for a PhD in machine learning, I'd be like – what?" says Tui. "I'm fortunate I've found my passion. I've always wanted to sit on the edge of knowledge and build upon it."

## THE ART OF STORYTELLING
### THERE ARE NO WRONG ANSWERS IN ART

**Author Anita Heiss teaches Year 6 students from Darlington Public School how to create their own story book characters**
Photos: David Lawrey

We've all stared at the sky and watched the clouds pass as we've dreamed big. It's a universal experience that continues to make Michael Riley's iconic cloud series the most popular works in UTS ART's collection.

"They certainly are our hero images," says UTS ART Education and Outreach Coordinator Cara MacLeod. "Those images connect students with their own childhood as well as to the artist's childhood growing up in Wiradjuri country. In Michael's images of a cow, locust and feather, there's specific references to Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi culture. These objects are suspended, yet heavy in the sky. They refer to the impact of colonisation on country, community and culture."

Riley's images alongside Christian Thompson's *Untitled (Kangaroo Paws)* and works by artists such as Mavis Ngallametta and Gordon Bennett provided evocative sources of inspiration for UTS ART's recent exhibition and workshop series *The Art of Storytelling*.

Over three weeks in October and November, over 600 people explored the power of storytelling and considered how artists document contemporary life revealing hidden histories or inventing fictional worlds.

*The Art of Storytelling* included a diverse selection of artworks from the UTS ART collection and offered participants a unique opportunity to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

"Art is a great medium for all of us to share stories, make connections with others and build confidence in our own creativity," says Cara. "These contemporary Indigenous artists provide new perspectives and challenge our preconceptions about history, identity, country and culture."

Led by Aboriginal high profile mentors who were artists, designers and writers, the workshops series emphasised the importance of sharing cultural knowledge. Primary and high school students experienced hands-on activities in art making and writing and created their own responsive artworks.

Blak Douglas led an audio drawing workshop playing Yidaki as students drew musical tones to create colourful compositions. Current UTS Masters student Danièle Hromek created a site-responsive spatial mapping activity, providing examples of sensory and conceptual maps while author Anita Heiss talked about her books *Yirra And Her Deadly Dog*, *Demon* and *Harry's Secret* and taught students how to create their own characters. UTS alumnus, Amy Tracey designed graphics for the signs, cushions, bookmarks and windows, which represented aspects of her family stories and dreaming.

"The students gained an understanding of how deeply rooted art is in these artist's lives," says Cara. "They really appreciated the generosity of the Aboriginal artists who shared their processes and techniques as well as discussing their personal journey towards becoming an artist."

The gallery space was designed to facilitate creative and critical thinking with cushions, tables and chairs providing comfortable spaces for discussion and art making.

"We welcomed all ages from grade six students to high school students to adults," says Cara. "We worked with Kirrawee High School, Darlington Public School and Aboriginal students from The Chapel School in East Merrylands. Thirty-five Masters of Project Management students developed their stories in the gallery and the Faculty of Health celebrated their Indigenous Cultural Respect initiative with a session facilitated by Jennifer Newman."

The sessions were two to three hours long so students could settle in and explore new ideas and practices.

"If only they could've stayed longer!" says Cara. "The students discovered there are no wrong answers when it comes to art. The workshop leaders encouraged the students to respond spontaneously to the art works. Responses that at first seemed outrageous were shaped into original and though-provoking art works in their own right."

Cara noticed the student's perceptions of Aboriginal art shifted markedly during the workshops.

"As they learnt to read images and codes in the work they started to see layers of meaning," says Cara. "The more knowledge they gained, deeper meanings were revealed. It challenged them to appreciate a diverse range of ideas and art practices rather than trying to categorise Aboriginal art."

Cara is quick to point out that the workshops wouldn't have been a success without the support of Jumbunna, UTS ART curators and installers, the workshop leaders and collector Pat Corrigan who loaned key artworks.

# KICK STARTING A NEW CAREER PATH

## UNISTART

Reece Griffiths is an outdoors man. When he was growing up in Gunnedah in north-eastern NSW, he dreamed of becoming a Rugby League player. Reece left school after completing his Year 10 certificate – it wasn't for him. So for Reece, the idea of going to university was never on the cards.

Now at 21 years of age, Reece has just completed Jumbunna's Unistart program and completely changed the direction of his life.

Reece first heard about Unistart through his cousin Heath who was studying a Bachelor of Business at UTS. News of the program came at a time when Reece was asking big questions about what he wanted from life and how he could secure himself a brighter and healthier future.

Unistart is one of Jumbunna's flagship student-centred programs that eases students into campus life. Unistart students study faculty-based elective subjects alongside core subjects offered by Jumbunna.

"Unistart is a great way to find your feet and really understand what university is all about," says Reece. "It provides you with a clear understanding of where you want to go in life."

Reece chose to study sport and exercise management in the Faculty of Health and absolutely loved it.

"The environment at UTS is truly amazing," says Reece. "The teachers are fantastic, especially the ones at Jumbunna. They were always there for me. From financial support to essays, without them I wouldn't have finished the program. I hope the Jumbunna staff are on the big bucks because they do a wonderful job!"

For Reece, studying at UTS has offered him a lot more than academic success. Reece has made strong life-long friendships, learnt time management and self-presentation skills as well as the value of hard work.

"I've learnt how to communicate with others in a professional yet polite way," says Reece. "I've learnt how to write correctly and my research and problem-solving skills have increased dramatically. I've become more opened-minded. I guess you could say I've matured from a man with teenager ways to a man with big plans for the future."

And that future is already knocking on the door.

Reece is in the final round of interviews for a four-year apprenticeship working for Masters Building Association and Mullane Plumbing in Newcastle.

"I'm ready to start working in the real world," says Reece. "Working in a trade is exactly the type of work I love. It's hard, it's a good income and it takes a lot of sacrifice to achieve the end result. At this point in time, I feel like this is the right step in my journey."

Reece was homeless for a year when he was a teenager so it's important to him that he has job security. He has plans to own a home, a business and have a family. But his dreams don't stop there – he wants to use his life experience to help others.

"I just love all three areas – sport, education and having a trade," says Reece. "After I've finished my trade, I plan to explore a uni degree which will help me develop programs that support Australian children and young adults who are struggling. They may be involved in criminal activity, drugs or come from a poor environment. I want to help them gain education, health and fitness and ultimately a happy and healthy future."

Reece feels Unistart helped him realise his long-term goals, "It's a beneficial program for all aspects of your life."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"I love how you learn at your own pace and I really value the tutoring Jumbunna provides. It's one-on-one and so accessible. The best bit about UniStart is I'm enjoying the opportunities study is bringing me and I'm meeting so many new people from all different parts of the world."

Mikasa Donald, Bachelor of Sport and Exercise Science

UNISTART JUMBUNNA PATHWAY

Whether you're a current school leaver ( with or without an ATAR ) a recent school leaver or mature aged, you can apply for the Jumbunna Pathways Program to enter UniStart and Insearch courses at UTS.

Our Pathways Program offers you an opportunity to show your capability for higher education through a testing, assessment and interview process.

Contact our Outreach Officers for more information:
atsirecruitment@uts.edu.au or call (toll free) 1800 064 312

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