



University of
Western Sydney
Bringing knowledge to life

KooriLife

THE SIX-MONTHLY REVIEW OF NEWS AND EVENTS AT UWS

Spring 2011



Melissa Silva

From uni to school

Indigenous student Melissa Silva is already putting what she is learning in her Bachelor of Arts (Pathway to Teaching) degree into practice.

A former Wyndham College student, Melissa combines her studies with working at the school as an Aboriginal Student Assistant.

"I work with all the Aboriginal students as a form of support and tutoring for those who need help with assignments and class work. I liaise with students and teachers to ensure that both parties are happy, and aim for Aboriginal students achieving the same results as non-Indigenous students, if not better," Melissa says.

"I chose to study teaching because I've always wanted to work with children and sport is my passion, so studying physical education combines both of these. I see the need for education within Aboriginal communities. I want to help my people achieve the highest outcomes to create more opportunities for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people."

She has found her time at UWS "challenging and enjoyable" and says she would not have been so successful at uni if it wasn't for the support of the Badanami Centre.

"The first year at uni is the most difficult because you have to adapt to a heavier workload and being able to manage your time is essential to keep on top of your studies.

"All the staff here are so helpful, not just in university life but for life in general."

Melissa is looking forward to getting straight into a teaching position at the end of her degree, and her NSW DET scholarship guarantees her a permanent position in a public school.

"I would love to work in Aboriginal communities and use my skills from my studies and my experience from working at Wyndham College to be the best teacher I can be."

Providing opportunities for Indigenous Australians

The University of Western Sydney has a wide range of study options for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

- Arts
- Business
- Communication Arts
- Engineering, Information and Communications Technology
- Environment and Tourism
- Forensics
- Health Sciences, Nursing and Sports Science

- Law
- Medicine
- Policing and Criminology
- Psychology
- Sciences
- Social Sciences
- Teaching and Education

Study by Block Mode

You don't need to leave your community. Study in your own environment, with scheduled on-campus visits throughout the year.

Programs currently available for study in block mode include:

- Bachelor of Education (Primary) (AREP)
- Bachelor of Community and Social Development

A one-year Diploma of Community and Social Development is available on Penrith campus only.

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN FOR 2012

Did you know that you don't need to have an ATAR or to have completed formal study to apply to UWS? All Indigenous Australians can apply via the Badanami Alternative Entry Program.

The University of Western Sydney's exciting new major – Indigenous Australian Studies – is now open to all undergraduate students. Apply today.



For further information please contact UWS on 1300 897 669 or visit www.uws.edu.au/indigenous



Welcome to Spring 2011



I acknowledge the traditional owners of Greater Western Sydney, the Darug, Gandangarra and Tharawal peoples, whose land the University of Western Sydney's six campuses span.

The 2011 academic year evidenced the increase in the number of Indigenous people choosing University of Western Sydney (UWS) as their preferred place to study. A total number of 405 Indigenous students were enrolled in UWS courses in Autumn 2011.

Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education enrolled its first cohort of Indigenous students in the Bachelor of Community and Social Development degree, which is offered as a block program on the Bankstown campus. The Diploma of Community and Social Development has also had its first Indigenous student intake in 2011. The Diploma course is being offered as a day program on the Penrith campus, Kingswood for Indigenous people who reside in Western Sydney.

Badanami Centre also offered for the first time the newly developed Indigenous Australian Studies Major (IASM). The major is one strategy to implement the Indigenous graduate attribute through students' courses of study at UWS. The major was developed to be rewarding – intellectually, socially and culturally. The graduate attribute provides non-Indigenous people with a greater awareness of Indigenous Australian knowledge and culture and the opportunity to become involved in productive partnerships with Indigenous people and communities.

Badanami Centre's student services offices on the Penrith campus, Kingswood site have relocated from Building P.G.02 to Building N.1.01. The new space is larger with newly refurbished offices which provide more space for staff and increased space for student computers and learning facilities.

The University of Western Sydney, through Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education, looks forward to supporting Indigenous students to gain access to, participate in and be successful in their choice of studies at foundation, undergraduate or postgraduate levels throughout 2012, and in the future for new students.

Associate Professor Berice Anning
Dean, Indigenous Education and Director,
Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education.

Disclaimer

Views expressed in articles are contributors' own and not necessarily those of UWS. Statements of fact are believed to be true but no legal responsibility is accepted for them.

KooriLife is produced by the Office of Public Affairs, University of Western Sydney.

Support Along the Road

Indigenous doctoral student Jack Gibson has had a longer road to hoe at UWS than most.

He joined the Aboriginal Rural Education Program at what was then the Macarthur Institute (now UWS Bankstown) in 1988, studying a Diploma of Teaching. Following further study, Jack is now on track to complete his Doctorate of Cultural Research in 2014 through the Centre for Cultural Research.

He puts down his positive experiences at UWS to the strong backing of staff who have helped him achieve his goals along the way.

"I have been offered a great deal of support as a student at UWS, especially from the Badanami Centre. The staff and my supervisory panel have done their utmost to support me," he says.

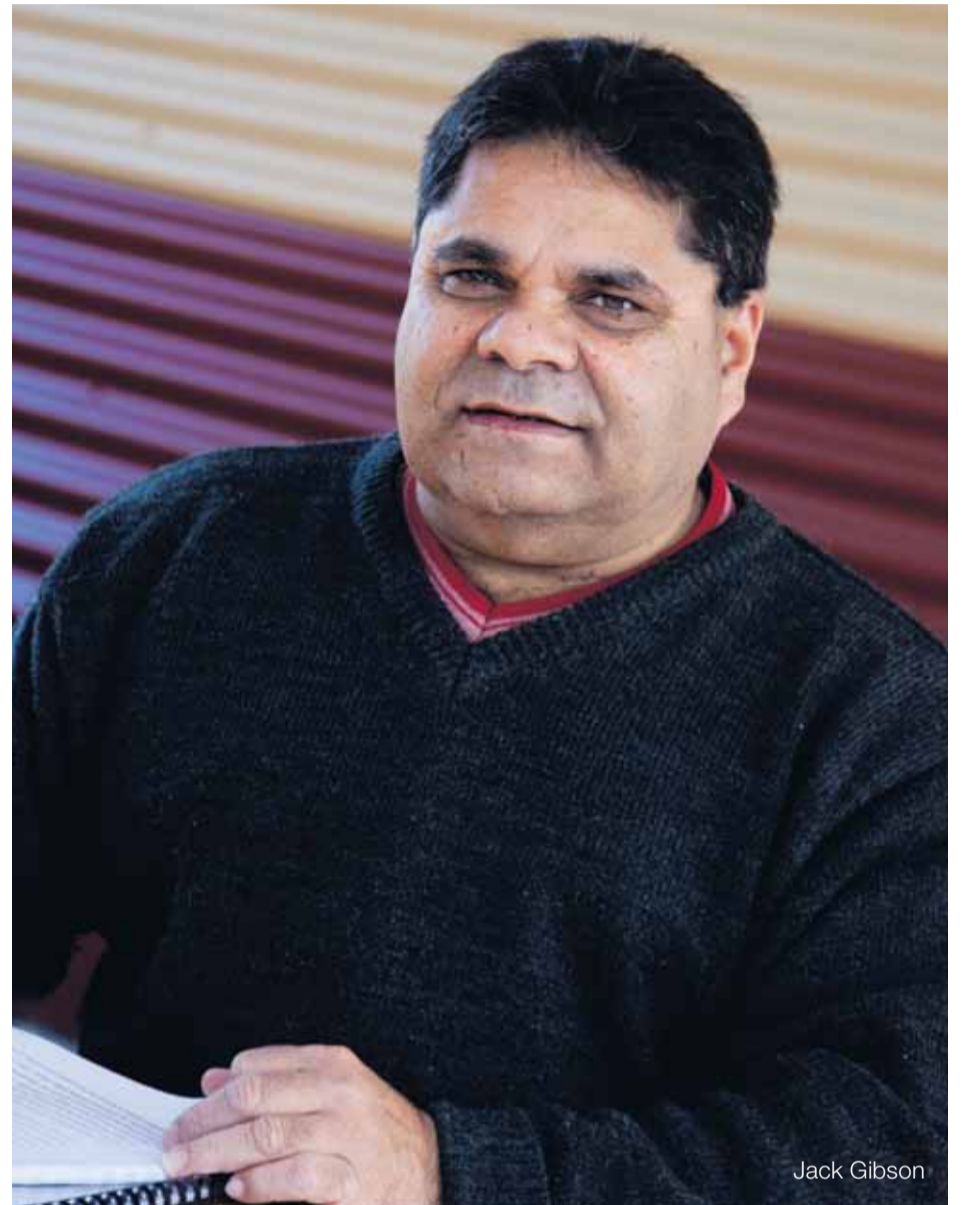
For Jack's doctoral studies he is researching Aboriginal organisations.

"In particular, I am interested in the conditions and specific circumstances in which Aboriginal organisations are constructed, and sometimes fail. In other words, what are the specific processes, power relationships and structures by which such organisations are legitimised," Jack says.

And while the finish line is still a way off, Jack has no doubt plenty of exciting career opportunities ahead of him – but not before he takes a breather.

"Following the completion of my studies, I hope to have a well-earned rest!" Jack says. "Then I am thinking about going overseas for a couple of years to do some teaching."

For more information on Badanami and Indigenous studies at UWS contact the Course Information Centre on 1300 897 669 or visit <http://studyias.com.au>



Jack Gibson

Spectacular Celebration of Culture

Bachelor of Arts student Lauren Oldfield was given the opportunity of a lifetime at this year's Garma Festival

Founders of the event Yothu Yindi Foundation, a not-for-profit Aboriginal Organisation, have made this festival the largest meeting event of Indigenous groups from across the nation. In fact, the event is that well known international travellers come to Australia just to attend the five-day line up of cultural exchange, entertainment, education, forums and presentations.

Each year the festival has a key theme and this year's was "Academic Excellence and Cultural Integrity" which forms topical issues for the many forums and presentations that are held throughout the festival to highlight Indigenous issues.

For Lauren, born and bred in Sydney, being able to attend such a cultural celebration was an opportunity of a lifetime. "The Garma Festival was a fantastic experience, the academic forums were informative and focused on issues currently affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders".

Lauren not only participated in the academic forums, she had the opportunity to

engage with daily music performances, attend cultural seminars as well as visiting the surrounding community to get a sense of local Aboriginal cultural, traditional and education methods.

"Much of my learning experience occurred on a cultural level, as I learned new and traditional crafts, watched ceremonies, and interacted with Yolngu people."

As Lauren is studying to become a teacher this experience has reinforced her passion to become an educator. "Being able to attend such a celebration of culture has been incredibly motivating in a fun and exciting atmosphere," she says.

Lauren is excited by the prospect of putting into practice the many things she learned in the short time she spent in the Northern Territory. "The Yolngu people continue to live their traditional way of life which I'll be able to share with my students. I feel very privileged to have been welcomed to their land, and I can't wait to visit again."



Lauren Oldfield

UWS celebrates NAIDOC Week

Each year, the University of Western Sydney celebrates NAIDOC Week to commemorate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This year UWS celebrated NAIDOC Week with a range of activities. UWS staff and students, together with members of the greater western Sydney community were invited to attend these events.

To mark this important week in 2011, UWS held a number of exciting and engaging activities on the Bankstown campus including the annual Yarramundi Lecture.

Since the inaugural Yarramundi Lecture in 1997, this public event has been considered an important and unique opportunity for the University community to embrace Indigenous education, employment and to support reconciliation.

This year, Leah Armstrong, Chief Executive Officer of Reconciliation Australia featured as

Brown from Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education said, "The workshop was a huge success, registrations were at capacity hours after opening. I believe this is something we as a University will continue to support".

As part of the celebrations, the Indigenous Employment and Engagement team devised a NAIDOC Week quiz to share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge with UWS staff and students in a fun way. More than 400 students and staff members entered the online NAIDOC quiz during NAIDOC Week celebrations at UWS.

Bachelor of Health Science/Master of Physiotherapy student Kathryn Watkinson was selected as the lucky winner by members of the UWS Aboriginal and Torres Strait

'UWS is a very progressive environment that is leading the way in sharing Indigenous knowledge to the broader UWS and greater western Sydney community'

the guest lecturer. Leah Armstrong was born in Mackay, Queensland and is a Torres Strait Islander who worked within Aboriginal communities for more than 20 years. Aunty Mae Robinson, an Aboriginal Elder, delivered the Acknowledgement to Country.

Leah shared her insights on this year's theme for NAIDOC, 'Change: the next step is ours'.

To support the Yarramundi Lecture an exhibition by Trish Amichi, 'Big Ones, Little Ones – Thoughts, Feelings, Imagination' was open at the Margot Hardy Gallery. The exhibition was a unique visual arts program, which brought together Indigenous Australian artists and children from 27 remote and marginalised communities in 15 countries around the world, including 13 schools in remote, regional and urban Australia.

University staff and students were also treated to a unique experience where local Aboriginal women delivered a workshop on traditional basket weaving. Joanne

Islander Employment and Engagement Advisory Board.

As well as answering the 10 multiple choice questions correctly, Kathryn impressed judges with her thoughtful responses to three short answer questions, scoring an Apple iPad (16GB) for her efforts.

Runner up Daniel Evans received a \$100 gift voucher. There was a tie for third prize, with student Dominika Weber and staff member Jan Brown both receiving a \$50 gift voucher.

All winners received a Darug Information & Research Centre Resource Kit.

Manager for Indigenous Outreach, Maree Graham supported the celebrations across each of the campuses saying, "UWS is a very progressive environment that is leading the way in sharing Indigenous knowledge with the broader UWS and greater western Sydney community". She goes on to say "Congratulations to all those involved in making NAIDOC Week such a success".



Leah Armstrong



Aunty Sandra Lee, Darug Elder



Aunty Edna Watson, Darug Elder

UWS Elders on Campus Program

The University of Western Sydney has recently launched a unique Elders on Campus Program which will see Elders provide protocols, leadership, cultural workplace relations, engagement, support and mentoring of staff, cadets and trainees across all of the University's six campuses.

The Elders on Campus program commenced on 30 June 2011 and provides a means to formally recognise the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to the University of Western Sydney and the wider community that the University serves.

The esteemed group of Elders include the Woman of the West Award Winner 2009, 2010, UWS Honorary Doctorate recipient, IHEAC Elder of the Year 2010, Blacktown City Council Woman of the Year, direct descendants of Yarramundi, two Order of Australia recipients to name a few.

The Elders currently participating in the program are highly respected members of the

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community at large. The Elders firmly believe in the importance of the continued development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through education and employment opportunities to enable success and acknowledge the value and unique contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

"We all walk in the footprints of our ancestors through all cultures, and contribute to the wellbeing of ourselves through celebrating our diversity and acknowledging our strengths and values." Aunty Mae Robinson, Elder on Campus.

For further information about the Elders on Campus Program please contact the Office of Indigenous Employment and Engagement on (02) 9678 7587 or at success@uws.edu.au.

Look out for Elder profiles in upcoming issues of Koori Life.

www.uws.edu.au/indigenous_employment_and_engagement

Sports support

While Kyle James pursued his passion for rugby union, moving away from his family in Belmont to Sydney as a teenager to join the NSW Waratahs' Junior Academy, he wisely also made plans for an alternative career.

"I chose to study physiotherapy as I knew I could not play rugby forever, and that I needed a back-up plan if something unforeseen such as an injury happened. Physiotherapy would allow me to still be involved in the game if I was unable to play," Kyle says.

Now studying Physiotherapy at UWS, he has found the course "amazing", with helpful staff, down-to-earth fellow students and an array of first-class practical opportunities. Not only has Kyle had the chance to put his skills into practice by helping out at major events such as the AFL's International Cup, he is also completing a cadetship with Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC), a division of the NSW Government's Family and Community Services.

"That in itself is a great experience. Normally as uni students, we don't get a great insight into disability services and how we as health professionals can help those people."

Given he is a self-confessed die-hard sports fan, Kyle aspires to work as a physio for a big team such as the Wallabies or Aussie Sevens in a national or international competition.

"But if that proves out of my reach, I would definitely consider going into disability services as it is such a rewarding job, and as I have realised already, no day will be the same."



Kyle James

Providing pathways for Indigenous Australians

After many years of providing quality opportunities in the areas of education and employment, the University of Western Sydney will again open its' doors to prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people considering tertiary study in 2012.

UWS recently conducted a series of Indigenous information sessions on the Penrith and Campbelltown campuses. These are a valuable tool for prospective Indigenous students to source quality information about gaining entry to UWS.

Organiser for the Indigenous information sessions, Maree Graham, from the Indigenous Outreach unit says, "The University has received enormous amounts of feedback to continue to engage and communicate with its local communities in providing study and course information."

Prospective Indigenous students are encouraged to attend the upcoming Course Decision Day on Tuesday 3 January on the UWS Parramatta campus to learn more about alternative entry pathways, Indigenous scholarship opportunities, student support and tutorial assistance.

Prospective students will have the opportunity to meet support staff and academics from the Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education, a facility specifically established to support and nurture the academic pursuits of Indigenous students, plus support cultural awareness and identity.

For more information about UWS Course Decision Day, contact UWS on 1300 897 669 or visit www.uws.edu.au/indigenous



Join UWS in 2012

UWS Course Decision Day

Tuesday 3 January, 2012

Where: Paramatta Campus

Time: 4.00pm to 8.00pm

Alternative Entry Testing Dates

24 & 25 November, 2011

Bankstown and Penrith Campuses

19 & 20 January, 2012

Bankstown Campus

Course Information Centre: 1300 897 669, study@uws.edu.au

Badanami Centre for Indigenous Education: 1800 032 923, www.uws.edu.au/badanami