

# CONNECTING THE DOTS ...

ECU'S ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURAL INFORMATION NETWORK

ISSUE #1 (November 2015)

*Connecting the Dots* is an initiative designed to keep staff who are committed to Aboriginal cultural respect connected and informed about news, events and resources related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture at and around ECU.

## What's in a name?

The *Connecting the Dots* network is so named not only in reference to the familiar symbolism of dots and lines in some Aboriginal artworks, but also to the idea that the strength of a network is dependent on the connections made between disparate points. Thus it is the aim of this newsletter to keep staff around the University connected not only with what is going on in the Aboriginal cultural space at ECU and surrounds, but also with each other.

## Nyoongar Season Snapshot

Read about [Kambarang](#) season.

## Useful Resource

The website [Australians Together](#) is a fantastic resource for those interested in better understanding the challenges faced by Indigenous people, and building better relationships between cultures.



## Welcome to the first edition of *Connecting the Dots!*

*Connecting the Dots* is an Aboriginal information network on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture for staff at ECU, as well as for colleagues within the Joondalup Learning Precinct. A new edition of this newsletter will be published approximately every 2-3 months, keeping members of the network informed about new initiatives, cultural events, and useful cultural and pedagogical resources.

### Why have I received this newsletter?

If you have received this newsletter it is because you have attended an Aboriginal cultural event at ECU; attended the Moorditj workshop; or signed up for the network at ECULTURE. Details for unsubscribing from the network are at the bottom of this page.

### Benefits of network membership

As a member of *Connecting the Dots* you will receive this newsletter approximately every 2-3 months, and advance notice of upcoming special events.

## Warmun Art Exhibition

The Art Gallery on the Joondalup campus (Building 1) is currently home to an exhibition of Warmun Art pieces from the ECU art collection.



The Warmun Art movement has a long and nationally celebrated history, and is centred in the Warmun Art Centre which is owned and governed by the Gija people in the Kimberley. This exhibition includes works by Centre founders Queenie McKenzie and Hector Jandany.



## *Synergies: Walking Together - Belonging to Country (Djena Koorliny Danjoo Boodjar-ang)*

*Synergies: Walking together - belonging to country* is a Lottery West funded documentary which celebrates the remarkable similarities between Nyoongar and Western scientific understandings of the formation of Nyoongar land, which stretches across the South West region of WA. It features ECU's Dr Noel Nannup and Professor Stephen Hopper from UWA, who together explore the similarities between the Nyoongar boodjar creation story and the climatic, geologic and archaeological history of the land.

### Encore Screening

Watch this space for an encore screening of *Synergies*. Details will be sent soon of a date, time and venue.

## Acknowledgement of Country

Do you do an acknowledgement of country with your students at the beginning of every semester? An acknowledgement can serve as a powerfully reinforcing message to students that the learning environment you create is a culturally safe one, and that the University honours its commitment to reconciliation at every level. Nigel Andrews from CLD can provide groups or individuals with on-demand assistance with how to create and deliver a personalised acknowledgement message in any context. To contact Nigel, email [n.andrews@ecu.edu.au](mailto:n.andrews@ecu.edu.au)



## Reconciliation Action Plan

ECU's Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2018 can be found online by following this link:

[ECU Reconciliation Action Plan 2015-2018](#)

## Yorkrakine Rock Cultural Tour

Eight midwifery students from the School of Nursing and Midwifery were taken on a cultural immersion tour to Ballardong country last month, where they visited Yorkrakine Rock with a local Ballardong Elder.



The Elder explained the significance of the rock to Ballardong women as a birthing place from pre-invasion times up to the early 1900s. As well as telling of the birthing rituals and techniques associated with the rock, she also offered the students advice on working with Aboriginal women and shared stories of her early life in the mission at New Norcia. She is a member of the Stolen Generation.

If you are interested in arranging a cultural immersion tour for your students, contact [Leitha Delves](#) or [Nigel Andrews](#) from CLD to explore possibilities.



## Moorditj Team Building

Have you attended the Moorditj Team Building Workshop yet?

The Moorditj workshop is about developing transcultural relationships with Aboriginal colleagues in the workplace through shared communication and mutual learning.

It is also about understanding the impact of history and government policy on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today, and building empathy for the role intergenerational trauma plays in contributing to social disadvantage.

Moorditj is run four times per year and provides a valuable and transforming opportunity for building your own cultural competence.

**The next workshop is at Mt Lawley on December 10th.** Registration is via the Staff Kiosk in the course category of "Personal Excellence and Self Management."

## Spotlight on Campus Art

**Where:** Building 1, Joondalup Campus

**What:** A collection of totem carvings and burial poles called *tutini*, typically used in the Pukumani (Mortuary) ceremony of the Tiwi people. Made from the trunk of the Ironwood tree, these poles are placed around a burial site to symbolise the status and prestige of the deceased.



The ceremony includes singing and dancing, and decorated bark baskets called *tungas* are also made and given to dancers and pole carvers.

## Do you have something to share?

If you would like to include information in this newsletter about an event, a resource, or even a community story, please don't hesitate to get in touch via email with either [Leitha Delves](#) or [Nigel Andrews](#).

Leitha Delves | Centre for Learning and Development

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