

# Connecting the dots

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Information Network

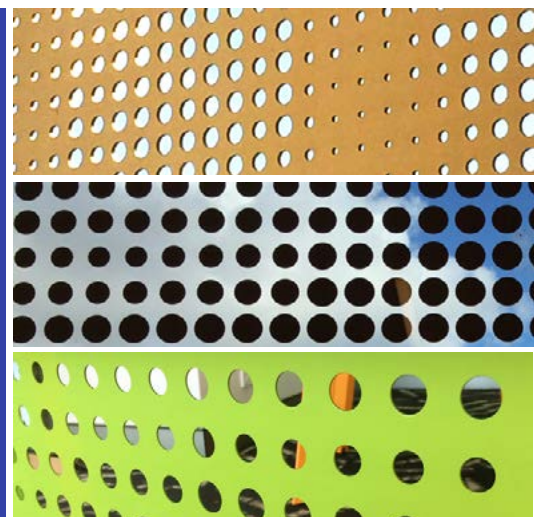
## CAMPUS EVENTS

### ECU Elders-In-Residence honoured in new artworks

ECU's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks collection gained three new stunning pieces this year, commissioned as part of the 2016 NAIDOC Week celebrations. The artworks of Elders-In-Residence Dr Noel Nannup, Mrs Oriel Green, and Mrs Lera Bennell showcase their stories, in keeping with the NAIDOC Week theme of *Songlines*.

Three different artists collaborated with photographer Russell James to create the mixed-medium panels: Nyoongar artists Dr Richard Walley OAM (Noel Nannup) and Peter Farmer (Oriel Green); and Walmajarri artist Clifton Bieundurry (Lera Bennell).

The paintings and photos from the respective photo shoots can still be viewed in the Kurungkurl Katitjin Gallery (15.127) on the Mount Lawley campus, until late November. Don't miss the opportunity to see these amazing works while they are still on display! ■



## News

### Journey on country with Noel Nannup

RRaFT Educators are taking registrations for their next 3-day journey on country with Noel Nannup in November.

These journeys are an amazing opportunity to travel on country with Nyoongar Elder Noel Nannup, listening to stories, visiting significant sites, learning language and following the songlines so important to Nyoongar culture.

For more info email Jaime at [Jaime@rraft.com.au](mailto:Jaime@rraft.com.au) or to register your interest for the November journey [click here](#).

## CULTURE ON CAMPUS

### Yellow lights signal go for *Kambarang* season

The buildings at all three ECU Campuses have again changed colour – from pink (*mirda mokiny*) to yellow (*yoorn*), indicating the Nyoongar season *Kambarang* has arrived.

[Read more about \*Kambarang\* here.](#)

Did you know....?

### **Moodjar (Australian Christmas Tree, or *Nuytsia floribunda*)**

- The Australian Christmas Tree (formerly known as the Cabbage Tree) is called *moodjar*, *mooja* or *muja* in the Nyoongar language.
- A *moodjar* in flower signals that the tree has been temporarily inhabited by the spirit of a departed person waiting to transition to the spirit world. Such flowering trees should not be damaged.
- *Moodjar* grow only in southwest Australia and are the world's largest mistletoe - it is a parasitic plant that taps into the roots of nearby plants.
- The town of Muja, near Collie, was originally a siding called Cabbage Trees and was renamed with the Nyoongar word for the tree.
- When in flower, the *moodjar* signals the beginning of the hot season, *Kambarang*.
- Some Nyoongar groups used the bark of the *moodjar* to make shields.
- The raw, sweet gum produced by the tree can be eaten, as can its edible suckers.
- When soaked in water *moodjar* flowers make a sweet drink.



### BOOK LAUNCHED

## *Elder inspires others to study at University*

Dr Mick Adams (Uncle Mick to most) is a descendent of the Yadhigana/Wuthathi peoples of Cape York Peninsula in Queensland, having traditional family ties with the Gurindji people of Central Western Northern Territory with extended family relationship with the people of the Torres Straits, Warlpiri (Yuendumu), and East Arnhem Land (Gurrumaru) communities.

Mick holds a PhD in Public Health from Queensland University of Technology (QUT) and a Master of Arts (Indigenous Research & Development), Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University of Technology. Prior to undertaking his postgraduate studies he undertook a Bachelor of Social Work (James Cook University), a Bachelor of Applied Science (Aboriginal Community Management and Development) (Curtin), an Associate Diploma in Social Work and a Community Development Certificate (South Australia Institute of Technology).

Mick's journey through the academic mist began in 1976. Launched in July this year, his latest book is about the challenges, frustrations and blocks he needed to overcome to reach his goals. It is hoped that the book titled *My Journey through the Academic Mist* will inspire all students to realise their full potential. The book retails at \$40 plus \$5 postage and handling. The book is available for purchase by contacting the author direct at [mickadams47@gmail.com](mailto:mickadams47@gmail.com) ■



From L to R: Colleen Hayward, Neil Drew, Mick Adams and Noel Nannup.

### BUSH TUCKER PLANTS FOR YOUR GARDEN

If you would like to know about growing bush tucker plants in your home garden, download the brochure and factsheets produced by the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL). Most of the plants can be obtained from native nurseries (native flora is protected and should not be picked from the wild without a licence).

Most of the plants listed are local natives and were used by the Nyoongar people. [Checkout the bush tucker brochures here.](#)



## Spotlight on campus art

**Where:** Building 5 - South-west Campus (near room 5.122A - AIME ECU Coordinator's office)

**What:** "Birol grounds and the warm after the sunset" (circa 2009) is a painting by celebrated Western Australian Nyoongar artist Meeykba Shane Pickett (1957-2010). A Ballardong man, Shane was born in the wheatbelt town of Quairading. From these humble roots Shane grew to become a nationally acclaimed artist whose works now hang in State galleries across Australia as well as the National Gallery in Canberra. Through respective periods as a landscape artist, magic realist, and abstractionist, Shane's artworks represent a modern expression of his Nyoongar culture and values. During his adult life Shane was also a highly respected figure in the West Australian artistic community. ■



## Learning Connections

The 8 Ways of Aboriginal Learning is a framework that depicts the best ways of learning at the interface between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal worlds. It is not a set of pedagogies unique to the Aboriginal world that must be somehow incorporated into Western pedagogy, but rather a depiction of equal balance and overlap between the two ways of learning.

While each symbol represents a single way of learning, the whole picture is modelled on a kinship system to show the dynamic and interactive nature of these complex processes. In each issue of *Connecting the Dots*, two of the 8 ways of learning will be featured as a guide to assist teaching academics.



**The Fifth Way  
(Land Links)**  
Symbol of the river

### **Aboriginal Perspective**

From an Aboriginal point of view, all animals, plants and geographical features of the land contain deep knowledge and therefore all knowledge is drawn from the living landscape. These things also provide a multitude of metaphors for different concepts.

### **Teaching & Learning Perspective**

In a teaching context this can mean applying place-based learning, linking content to local land and place, and using physical elements to provide important metaphors for difficult concepts.



**The Sixth Way  
(Non-linear processes)**  
Symbol of circular logic and interface between opposites

### **Aboriginal Perspective**

In the Aboriginal worldview, when opposite elements meet they create something new. Symmetry and balance are more highly valued than oppositional thinking. Knowledge brought in from the side creates deeper understanding and richer learning.

### **Teaching & Learning Perspective**

Problems can be solved laterally by linking new knowledge with existing knowledge. Also important is repetition and returning to concepts to cement deeper understanding.

## The Wadjak Northside Community Exchange

More than 300 people threw boomerangs, made Nyoongar tools, measured PH and investigated polymers as part of the ECU-supported Wadjak Northside Community Science Exchange on Saturday, 20 August. The free event aimed to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to study and work in STEM-related areas and to redress underrepresentation in these areas.



Caroline Bishop from ECU's Engagement Unit said, "The Wadjak Northside Community Science Exchange was just one more way to reach out to potential students and build their confidence in their ability to study science at university, and the feedback we received after the day was overwhelmingly positive."

[Read the full story here.](#) ■

### News

In August Australian Aboriginal Health/InfoNet launched a new Tackling Indigenous Smoking portal as part of the Health Department's Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) Program.

Produced by Health/InfoNet, the portal is one component of the programs run by the National Best Practice Unit for Tackling Indigenous Smoking (NBPU TIS) of which Health/InfoNet is a partner. The free-to-access online portal is located on the Australian Indigenous Alcohol and Other Drugs Knowledge Centre (AIAODKC) web resource and can be used by anyone interested in or working in the area of smoking reduction ([www.tacklingsmoking.org.au](http://www.tacklingsmoking.org.au)).

The TIS portal will be a valuable resource for the TIS grant recipients, to enable them to access relevant and current information on smoking cessation, and strategies and guides to help encourage people to not take up smoking. It's all about sharing and learning.



### STORIES OF CULTURE

## Intergenerational learning through art

A project established in a nursing home in the remote central desert community of Wanarn, WA, is helping elderly residents maintain their connection to country through painting. Every week people from the Warakarna Artists Centre in the Ngaanyatjarra lands near the Northern Territory border bring their expertise and art supplies to the aged care facility in Wanarn and help the residents record their memories of their old country and Dreaming stories through art. Being separated from family because of health care needs, the elderly artists are able to pass on their stories despite the separation. [Full story on the ABC website.](#) ■

### TV EVENT

## *First Contact* season two on SBS

After the thought-provoking success of season one in 2014, *First Contact* is back again in late November with a new twist - this time the participants experiencing Aboriginal Australia are six well known Aussie celebrities. Free educational resources associated with season one for use in the classroom are available for download [here.](#) ■

### ON THE NET...

#### **Synergies: Walking together - belonging to country**

Glen Stasiuk's film celebrating the remarkable similarities between Nyungar knowledge and western science, featuring Dr Noel Nannup and Dr Stephen Hopper (UWA).

YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeGqTpLDYjQ>



## ANTONIO CARLUCCIO'S 6 SEASONS

If you haven't seen it already, *Antonio Carluccio's 6 Seasons* is a must see. High profile celebrity chef Antonio Carluccio goes on a journey through Nyoongar country with Dr Richard Walley as his guide, learning about Nyoongar culture, history, traditions, language and foods.

Aligned with the 6 Nyoongar seasons, the 6 episodes feature Rottnest Island, New Norcia, Pinjarra, Walyunga National Park, the York Balladong area, and Margaret River.

All six episodes are available through SBS OnDemand.

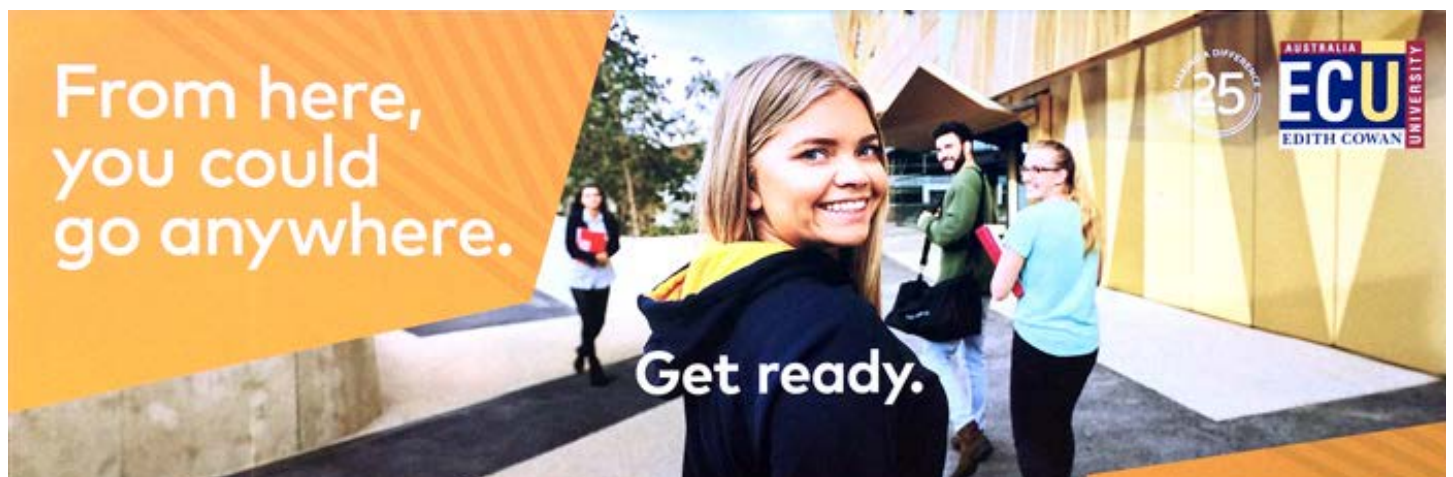


### STUDENT NEWS

## Acknowledging student achievement

In August the Vice-Chancellor announced the recipients of his 2016 Student Awards and among those receiving Special Commendations for Contribution to University Life was Nursing student Ahmi Narkle. Ahmi was given the commendation for improving and enhancing the student experience for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students through the organization of programs and events while representing ECU and the School of Nursing and Midwifery.

Coincidentally Ahmi also appeared at the same time larger than life on this billboard poster near ECU's main entrance as part of the new *Get Ready* campaign earlier this year.



*Do you have something to share?*

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

To stop receiving this newsletter, please send an unsubscribe request via email to [Leitha Delves](#).