



Pictured: (L-R) IAHA members Tahnee Elliot, Elainah Coffin and Jacinta Williams

IAHA STUDENT NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2016

Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) is a national not for profit, member-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health organisation and welcomes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health students (and graduates) as full members of IAHA.

Please enjoy this Newsletter which has been brought to you by the IAHA Student Representative Committee (SRC).

You can contact the SRC via email at src@iaha.com.au or contact the IAHA secretariat on **02 6285 1010** or email admin@iaha.com.au.

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Pictured: (L-R) IAHA student members Kate Thompson , Tionne Seden and Kirrilaa Johnstone

GET INVOLVED WITH IAHA

by Kirrilaa Johnstone

Ngiyampaa Barkindji Woman, IAHA SRC member and Exercise Science student

THE IAHA SRC ENCOURAGES ALL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN IAHA'S ANNUAL EVENTS, WHICH IN 2016 INCLUDE THE IAHA HEALTHFUSION TEAM CHALLENGE (27-29 NOV 2016) AND IAHA NATIONAL FORUM (29 NOV-1 DEC 2016).

And this year, held in between the HealthFusion Team Challenge (HFTC) and the National Forum, is a STUDENT ONLY professional development workshop on 29 November 2016 featuring:

- 2 panel discussions with
 - fab graduates from the IAHA family who will have a yarn about the study to workplace transition and info on some amazing pathways including rural placements and postgrad study.
 - Potential employers and what you should be doing now to help secure your dream jobs!
- A short 'Writing for Purpose' workshop that will be jam packed with tips and tricks on securing those scholarships and grants.

During down time at these events, as a student member cohort we can:

- Get to know each other
- Talk about opportunities within IAHA (the SRC *wink wink*)
- Have your say! What can the SRC do for you next year? Is there any support you need that IAHA might be able to help you with?
- CELEBRATE OUR SUCCESSES

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU EXPECT?

- Our annual HFTC
- 9 unique Professional Development Workshops to choose from
- Many, many networking opportunities
- Get up close and personal with some of the deadliest people in the Indigenous media landscape!! #GOALS

To find out more about these events call IAHA on **(02) 6285 1010** or email **admin@iaha.com.au**.



JOIN OUR STUDENT FACEBOOK GROUP

SEARCH FOR THE IAHA STUDENT NETWORK GROUP ON FACEBOOK. THIS CLOSED FACEBOOK GROUP IS FOR IAHA STUDENT MEMBERS TO CONNECT, SUPPORT EACH OTHER AND SHARE INFORMATION THAT WILL ASSIST THEM IN THEIR STUDENT/ PROFESSIONAL JOURNEYS.



Pictured: 2015 IAHA student award winners (L-R) Kimberley Hunter and Sarah Logan

CELEBRATING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUCCESS

THE 2016 IAHA NATIONAL INDIGENOUS ALLIED HEALTH AWARDS WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2016 AT THE REX HOTEL, CANBERRA DURING THE 2016 IAHA NATIONAL FORUM, WHERE 6 INSPIRATIONAL WINNERS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT A GALA DINNER MC'D BY COMEDIAN STEVEN OLIVER.

Each year there are two student-only awards available, and they are hotly contested! These awards are:

- **Future Leader in Indigenous Allied Health Award**, open to all current IAHA Full Members (Student) enrolled in an entry level allied health degree who demonstrate leadership capabilities, a commitment to their studies and leadership journey and are an inspirational role model for other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- **Indigenous Allied Health Student Academic Achievement Award**, open to all current IAHA Full Members (Student) currently completing their two final years of an entry level allied health course. They must have demonstrated consistently high academic progress throughout their allied health course; contribution to university life and/or community and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health; and evidence of being an inspirational role model for other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The 2016 IAHA National Indigenous Allied Health Awards showcase the outstanding achievements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health and provides identifiable allied health role models to inspire all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to consider and pursue a career in allied health.

Visit the IAHA website www.iaha.com.au to find out more about the 2016 IAHA National Indigenous Allied Health Awards.





Pictured: (L-R) IAHA staff member Kylie Stothers and SRC members Will Kennedy and Tracy Hardy

ARE YOU REMOTELY INTERESTED?

WILL AND TRACY ON THE 2016 ARE YOU REMOTELY INTERESTED CONFERENCE

IN JULY 2016, STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS TRACY HARDY AND WILL KENNEDY ATTENDED THE 2016 ARE YOU REMOTELY INTERESTED CONFERENCE IN MOUNT ISA, QUEENSLAND.

ALTHOUGH THEY ARE IN FIELDS UNRELATED TO EACH OTHER, WITH TRACY STUDYING NUTRITION AND DIETETICS AND WILL STUDYING MENTAL HEALTH, BOTH ENJOYED CONNECTING WITH LIKE-MINDED INDIVIDUALS AND WALKED AWAY WITH LOTS TO THINK ABOUT.

WILL

The conference was amazing. Mt Isa and all the people there really know how to make a person, especially a student, feel welcome.

All the staff at Mt Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health, (James Cook University) went above and beyond. That is the feeling I got, not only for myself, but I think all who ever have had the chance to visit would feel the same.

The content was delivered in short 15 minute presentations and was very informative.

The variance of content was interesting and exciting – from workplace safety to student research topics and great information from Government representatives on the workforce plans for QLD Health.

As a student on my own journey into a field I love and feel so passionate about, it is very comforting to feel supported and understood by all who attended.

The real highlight for me was meeting Dallas Leon, the CEO of Gidgee Healing, and all the staff that were able to attend.

Gidgee Healing is at the front of Indigenous Health – the pride and motivation they have for not only their own mob up that way but mob everywhere will be feeling results of having such good strong people at the table for Indigenous Health.

To sum it up I can say I was very privileged to meet some really amazing people. From academics, professional, and like-minded students from all areas of health and from all over the country. I got to sit, speak and more importantly I got to listen and take in all I could.

For any student interested in a remote and rural placement, or just to yarn to someone about it, the people at JCU's Mt Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health will only be happy to help or assist in any way they can.



TRACY

My experience at my first remote and rural health conference was overwhelmingly positive. The best aspects of such an incredible opportunity, other than exploring the friendly town of Mt Isa, was being able to network with an extensive group of up-and-coming health professionals.

Having the chance to form bonds and new relationships with like-minded individuals, forming potentially lifetime friends was invaluable.

We had the amazing opportunity to meet and listen to professionals already working and researching within this space.

Learning about the wealth of opportunity that exists to work and/or research and have a positive impact within the remote and rural allied health space was definitely encouraging and motivating.

Another benefit of attending the conference was being able to attend concurrent sessions and learn about the incredible community services available within the remote and rural health sector.

For example, Gidgee Healing, The Normanton Recovery and Community Wellbeing Service (NRCWS), Headspace, Primary Health Care Clinics, Deadly Choices, to name just a few. All of the staff members working within these services were inspiring to say the least.

We also had the opportunity to learn about all of the remarkable research, placement and professional opportunities to grow and develop as allied health professionals through Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health and Gidgee Healing.

The perspectives, experiences and information shared from all speakers and delegates were both inspiring and insightful.

Being immersed in this conference environment has definitely shaped and inspired me to be a valuable member of a multidisciplinary health workforce.

After attending the conference and learning what is required from potential employers and learn of remote and rural communities' needs, I am even more motivated that the health career I have chosen is the right one for me.



Pictured: (L-R) IAHA 2015-16 SRC member Celeste Brand and 2015 SRC member Ashleigh Hull


CELESTE'S JOURNEY WITH THE IAHA STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE

CELESTE BRAND WAS BORN IN ARRERNTJE COUNTRY IN ALICE SPRINGS, WHERE SHE HAS LIVED FOR 19 YEARS OF HER LIFE. CELESTE JOINED THE IAHA SRC IN 2015 WHILE STUDYING A BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK AT CURTIN UNIVERSITY AND WILL BE FINISHING UP ON THE SRC WHEN SHE GRADUATES AT THE END OF 2016. CELESTE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS AND HAS TREASURED HER TIME WITH THE IAHA SRC. CELESTE TALKS ABOUT HER EXPERIENCES AND WHAT SHE WILL TAKE WITH HER INTO THE WORKFORCE.

My two-year journey as a member of the Student Representative Council (SRC) is coming to an end. My journey with the IAHA family continues! I'm beginning to reflect on the opportunities and experiences I have had since I became a member of the SRC in 2015. I've particularly enjoyed:

- Networking with a bunch of awesome SRC members who are just as passionate as I am about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health student experiences.
- Learning about group processes, the dynamics of the SRC has changed with every meeting I've been a part of.
- Contributing to discussions about issues affecting allied health students.
- Understanding governance, being able to see how a committee works.
- Having the opportunity to demonstrate and develop my leadership skills.
- Being invited to attend conferences, namely the Caring for Country Kids Conference in Alice Springs.

As a social worker, I believe this experience will contribute to my future and lifelong practice as an allied health professional. Thanks to my fellow SRC members and my IAHA family for your support over the past two years. I would encourage anyone who is interested in joining the SRC in 2017 to give it a go! You have so much to look forward to!



*Pictured: 2015 SRC Chairperson
Sophie L'Estrange*

SOPHIE'S REFLECTION

TRANSITIONING FROM A STUDENT TO A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

by Sophie L'Estrange

Oral Health graduate & former IAHA SRC Chairperson

HI EVERYONE! I'M SOPHIE, A WIRADJURI WOMAN AND A 2015 GRADUATE FROM BACHELOR OF ORAL HEALTH. THIS YEAR HAS BEEN A REALLY BIG YEAR FOR ME - TRANSITIONING FROM A STUDENT TO AN EMPLOYED HEALTH PROFESSIONAL WAS NEVER GOING TO BE THE EASIEST TASK; BUT I'VE LEARNT MORE ABOUT MYSELF THAN I HAD EVER ANTICIPATED.

Starting a new chapter in life is daunting. For me, getting a job meant moving away from country. I know this is often a hurdle that many people have to face when they first decide to go to university, but I was lucky enough to study on country and close to family. So starting in a fresh location was intimidating.

At first, I found it hard to meet people my age around town because I didn't work in the CBD area, and I travel a lot for work so I had an ever-changing schedule.

But I found solace in the small opportunities such as shadowing a senior for the day, or the chance to go have coffee with a colleague who is a local to the area. You may also get introduced to people that you otherwise wouldn't have crossed paths with.

I love my job! When I was job-hunting last year I made it very clear to all potential employers that I needed a role that was supportive and had time to dedicate to my learning and growth. I think this was one of the most important factors in choosing a position.

I have so much support in the role and I feel that there is a huge understanding for new graduates. You should never feel like you need to know all the answers, even for something you feel is basic, and that goes for more than just your clinical work too.

Another thing that I have learnt to appreciate was my prior connections. Just because you are finished uni and out in the big world now doesn't mean you can't contact your lecturer from uni to ask for some guidance.

Or call up someone from your class and chat with them. All of these people have been, or are going through similar situations to you.

The same applies if you were someone's helping hand at uni - keep being that helping hand, because it can often keep your mind open to different views and options to help sort through your own situations.

I hope these examples from my experience help you to confidently step into your journey as a strong Indigenous health professional, so we can all contribute to making strong, healthy mob.



SRC ATTENDS UQU NAIDOC BALL

by Zoe King,

Bundjalung woman, IAHA SRC member and speech pathology student



Each year thousands of NAIDOC Week events are held around Australia beginning the first Sunday of July, and going until the next. One of which was the UQU NAIDOC Ball which was organised by the Goorie Berrimpa Student Collective of the University

of Queensland. In attendance was (pictured L-R) IAHA's Membership Officer, Judy Bell, along with SRC member, Lauren Hutchinson and SRC and Goorie Berrimpa Student Collective Executive Zoe King.

The Goorie Berrimpa Student Collective extended invites to other universities who attended the event as well. The night included a traditional Welcome ceremony, performances by the Yuggera Aboriginal dancers and the Mabuyag (TSI) dancers and a bush tucker inspired menu.

This event was organised by Yuggera man Jahmayne Coolwell who is the Goorie Berrimpa, Student Collective President, IAHA member and UQU student. On behalf of the Goorie Berrimpa Student Collective we thank IAHA for their attendance at the event and hope to see more IAHA faces next year.

The 2016 NAIDOC Week theme "Songlines: The Living Narrative of Our Nation", recognised the importance of the telling of Dreaming stories through traditional songs, stories, dance and art as they describe the beginning of our lands.

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"IF YOU CAN'T FLY, THEN RUN. IF YOU CAN'T RUN, THEN WALK. IF YOU CAN'T WALK, THEN CRAWL. BUT WHATEVER YOU DO, YOU HAVE TO KEEP MOVING FORWARD."

— MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.





Pictured: (L-R) IAHA SRC members Celeste Brand and Nellie Pollard-Wharton

CARING FOR COUNTRY KIDS CONFERENCE:

NELLIE AND CELESTE SHARE EXPERIENCE AND LESSONS LEARNT

THE CARING FOR COUNTRY KIDS CONFERENCE WAS HELD IN ALICE SPRINGS FROM APRIL 17 – 19. AS MEMBERS OF THE IAHA STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE, NELLIE AND CELESTE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO REPRESENT IAHA AT THE CONFERENCE, ALONG WITH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, KYLIE STOTHERS.

We heard from Ministers, professionals, and many academics who work in this space and are passionate about country kids – children in remote and rural Australia.

Some of the topics covered in the concurrent sessions included nutrition, ear health, mental health, FASD and heart disease, and many more! There was a great Welcome to Country, and the weather was just perfect!

The first two days challenged many of our views, particularly the statistics of health conditions affecting the lives of children in remote and rural Australia.

Although this challenged our thinking, we were able to reflect and appreciate the work people are doing to improve health outcomes for country kids. Luckily, we had each other, Kylie and Kerry Arabena there to debrief with us when our views, values and beliefs were challenged.

On the last day, we were particularly inspired to hear from Aboriginal Women who spoke about their work in this space.

These women included June Oscar and Emily Carter from Marninwarntikura Fitzroy Women's Resource Centre, Fitzroy Crossing; Kerry Arabena, Chair, Indigenous Health; Director, Indigenous Health Equity, Melbourne University; Donna Ahchee, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress; Pat Anderson, Indigenous Health Advocate; Chair, The Lowitja Institute; and our own Kylie Stothers who spoke about Indigenous Allied Health workforce issues.

We enjoyed the entertainment throughout the conference. We heard from several Alice Springs schools who performed dances and songs for us, we heard the deadly girls from Drum Atweme and watched the Dusty Feet Dancers.

We were able to assist with scribing sessions and Celeste chaired a session about children's nutrition. We also contributed to recommendations which will be fed back to government as we are in an election year.

This conference allowed us to share our knowledge, learn new knowledge and skills which we both hope to apply and use in future practice.



Photo supplied by Brien Holden Vision Institute

DISCIPLINES UNDER THE IAHA BANNER: AN INSIGHT INTO OPTOMETRY

by **Lauren Hutchinson**

Wiradjuri woman, IAHA SRC member and optometry student

LAUREN HUTCHINSON IS A WIRADJURI WOMAN, BORN AND RAISED IN THE SMALL TOWN OF MOLONG NSW. SHE IS CURRENTLY LIVING IN BRISBANE UNDERTAKING A BACHELOR OF VISION SCIENCE/MASTERS OF OPTOMETRY DEGREES OF WHICH SHE IS ABOUT TO ENTER HER FOURTH YEAR. SHE SHARES WITH US HER THOUGHTS ON OPTOMETRY AND EYE HEALTH...



I bet you never realised that your local optometrist does so much more than sit in a dark room all day and ask if you prefer 1 or 2 or 1 or 2...although that is part of what we do.

Despite our reputation as the vampires of the allied health world, optometry is so much more about the health of your eyes than a lot of people realise. Actually, checking your vision and giving you those specs that are sure to get that special someone's attention is only a part of what we do. We're like your eye's own personal GP.

A lot of systemic conditions are actually first picked up by an optometrist. The blood vessels in the back of your eye are so small that they are the first to be affected by change. High blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and even some more sinister conditions can first manifest as changes in the eye.

Because of this susceptibility to change, they can cause some major issues if left unchecked and untreated. As we age, it's not only the vision of our eyes that is affected; we become more susceptible to conditions such as glaucoma and macular degeneration, which are also both manageable if caught early on, even more of a reason to get 2 yearly check-ups done!

Did you know that 94% of vision loss among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is preventable or treatable, yet more than a third of us mob have never had an eye exam? Seems crazy doesn't it.

As most of you would already be aware, we as Indigenous people have a higher incidence of diabetes. This can wreak havoc with our retinas, and those tiny little vessels that live back there. Diabetic retinopathy (the damage and haemorrhaging of the small vessels in the back of the eye) is a leading cause of vision loss within our community, and again it is preventable and treatable. Your optometrist can pick up on even the smallest changes back there, before it becomes a big problem.

QUICK VISION TIP: THE 20/20 RULE

- When doing close up work like reading and computer work, every 20min take a 20 second break to stare off into the distance (think about that cute guy/girl or that amazing sandwich you are going to have for lunch.)
- This prevents eyestrain and lessens your chance of headaches and fatigue.
- For those short-sighted peeps out there it may also help to stop your prescription from increasing so fast!



GET INVOLVED IN THE IAHA MENTORING PROGRAM

'I'M GLAD I FINALLY MADE THE STEP TO SIGN UP TO IAHA'S MENTORING PROGRAM. I'VE HAD A MENTOR FOR A FEW MONTHS NOW AND I'VE FOUND IT VERY HELPFUL. WE PLANNED OUR ENGAGEMENT ABOUT WHAT SUITS US BOTH. I REALLY ENJOY BEING ABLE TO BOUNCE IDEAS OF ONE ANOTHER AND TO DEBRIEF ABOUT CULTURAL ISSUES, IT'S REALLY HELPED ME.' - CELESTE BRAND

Several SRC members have signed up to IAHA's Mentoring Program. We've found it to be a positive and unique experience!

IAHA's mentoring program provides mentors and mentees an opportunity to share and develop together. It also contributes to ongoing professional development for IAHA members. IAHA's Mentoring Program is flexible, and is a great opportunity to develop your knowledge and skills, including cultural responsiveness and responsibility.

If you are unsure who you want as a mentor, the IAHA secretariat aims to match you with someone based on what you want to get out of the mentoring relationship.

For more information about IAHA's Mentoring Program OR to request a mentor, call Judy Bell on 02 6285 1010.



Pictured: (L-R) IAHA 2016 SRC members Will Kennedy, Zoe King, Tracy Hardy, Kirrilaa Johnstone, Celeste Brand (on iPad), Lauren Hutchinson, Nellie Pollard-Wharton and Mark Mann.

A MESSAGE FROM THE IAHA STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE (SRC)

This newsletter has been brought to you by the IAHA SRC - a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying allied health degrees at universities across Australia. The SRC was brought together to advise the IAHA Board of Directors on issues and strategies affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health students.

The SRC represent students from all allied health degrees including audiology, chiropractic, counselling, dentistry, dietetics, exercise physiology, exercise science, mental health, nutrition, occupational therapy, optometry, oral health, orthoptics, osteopathy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, prosthetics & orthotics, psychology, public health, radiography & sonography, social welfare, social work and speech pathology.

We brought you this newsletter because we want you to know you are not alone!!! Join us and get involved because together we can really make a difference!

You can contact us via email at src@iaha.com.au

Become a
STUDENT MEMBER of
**INDIGENOUS ALLIED
HEALTH AUSTRALIA**
JOIN TODAY... IT'S FREE!



'Interested in becoming an IAHA student member? Want to see what all the excitement is about? Are you passionate about allied health, enhancing your student experience and want to be a part of the IAHA family? Head to iaha.com.au, click on 'Get Involved' and fill out your details by selecting 'Join IAHA now'.

If you're not ready yet or you want to know more, you can sign up to receive the IAHA newsletter or you can contact the office and have a yarn with our membership officer, Judy!

NETWORKING | LEADERSHIP | LEARNING | DEVELOPMENT | SUPPORT

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