

QUEST

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Adult learning for absolutely everyone

Mitch Tambo's version of Absolutely Everybody sung in Gamilaraay language kicked off the Adult Learners Week 2022 launch, sending the message that adult education is indeed for everybody. Absolutely.

The launch, with over 200 attendees from across Australia, included an Acknowledgement of Country by Deb Mellet of Nairm Marr Djambana Gathering Place and opening remarks from Senator Anthony Chisholm, Assistant Minister for Education, and President of ALA, Associate Professor Annette Foley.

Musician Rusty Berther, best known as one half of the duo Scared Weird Little Guys, hosted the launch and spoke with Mitch Tambo about the importance of teachers who inspire and motivate.

'By Year 9, I was asking myself when's this school stuff going to end? I wasn't a bad kid but I was more interested in skateboarding, footy and going swimming down the river.'

A teacher who knew Mitch loved music invited him to come along to a music eisteddfod with his didgeridoo.

'I didn't even know what a music eisteddfod was, so I turned up in my footy shorts, wearing "Blackfella" headdress.'

From there, the idea of being a musician was ignited.

Mitch always believed he'd go to uni as well but his performance in Year 12 fell well short. He was saved by a four week bridging program and strongly worded advice from the head of faculty – Aunty Sue Green – who completely changed his attitude to learning. He went on to qualify as a social worker and today he empowers Indigenous kids to embrace their identity.

'I've got to give credit to those teachers who see things out of the box, who themselves are out of the mould.'

Palawa man **Brendan Murray** left school at Year 9. He could barely read or write but he had had enough of racism, bullying and violence.

'It was cold and lonely, like being down in a dungeon. I lived in the shadows. Quiet, unassuming. That was my shield. I avoided conversations. I stayed at my foster home most of the time, except for sport.'

(Story continues on p. 3)

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ADULT
LEARNING
AUSTRALIA

Lifelong and
lifewide learning
for all Australians

Message from the CEO



In the wake of the Summit ALA looks forward to continuing to play an active role representing Australia's ACE sector in government plans and policies for building a stronger and more inclusive workforce and society.

Now more than ever, we need a culture of lifelong learning embedded into our society: one that offers learning and skills for life and work to help us achieve a more prosperous and equal future.

It was in this spirit that ALA attended the National Jobs and Skills Summit held recently in Canberra. The Summit brought together a range of stakeholders, including unions, employers, civil society, not for profits and governments, to address what the federal treasury described as our shared economic challenges.

As the ALA representative at the Summit, I was fortunate enough to have discussions with a range of federal ministers and premiers, to bring attention to and raise awareness of the potential of adult community education in helping to build a bigger, better trained and more productive workforce and to create opportunities for more Australians.

To realise ACE's future potential, we need changes to government policies and planning, research and practices that acknowledge and actively support the broader nature and value of learning for life. Adult learning and education must be seen as being more valuable than individual vocational competencies and recognised, valued and supported as a key contribution to broader social and health and wellbeing outcomes.

Since the Summit, ALA has re-affirmed its commitment with federal ministers to ensuring educationally disadvantaged Australians are not left behind. The adult community education sector is well-placed to prepare people who are disadvantaged and marginalised for entry into further study and/or the workforce. Community-based adult education providers deliver strong outcomes for disadvantaged groups in VET, which is supported by NCVER data, and also provide non-accredited learning programs that build the crucial literacy, numeracy and foundation skills needed for work, study and successful participation in social and community life.

ALA looks forward to continuing to play an active role representing Australia's ACE sector in government plans and policies for building a stronger and more inclusive workforce and society. We have also issued a joint statement with the TAFE Directors Association on the importance of a working relationship that supports equitable access to education and training.

This year Adult Learners Week captured a wide range of exciting events under the theme #ConnectWithLearning. From learning English or Auslan, to finding a new career path, getting digital, learning for earning, taking literacy classes, to joining the tools for trade workshops and more.

During ALW, I was invited to speak at Melton City Council's launch of their learning festival. After 2 years of Covid lockdowns it was a relief to be out amongst people again enjoying and celebrating in their public places and engaging in different forms of learning.

Congratulations to all of the amazing ALW scholarship nominees. Their stories show how connecting with learning can change people's lives. Special acknowledgment of our ALW scholarship winners Maya Wills, Kiama Community College, Terrence Wingfield, Tauondi Aboriginal College, Elsa Debessa, Westgate Community Initiatives Group, and Alaya Begum, Djerrivarrh Community and Education Services.

Thank you to all of the adult education providers, adult learners and volunteers who shared their events and stories with us. It was heartening to see so many lovely smiling faces connecting through our #ALW2022 social media.

Jenny Macaffer, CEO



A pathway program switched Mitch Tambo onto learning and now he is passionate about education and diversity.

(story continued from p. 1)

By 19, Brendan was a father, a recluse feeling ashamed about his lack of education. After his first marriage split up he was on the dole and couch surfing with two young children.

'I was 26 and couldn't fill out a form, but a beautiful woman at Centrelink encouraged me to go to TAFE. First day at TAFE, my heart was jumping out of my chest, but I found others also trying to find their way.'

Brendan did a series of certificate courses, which opened the doors to steady jobs, regular pay, and self-worth. He is now studying a Bachelor of History at the University of Tasmania, with his sights set on a PhD.

'I fell through the gaps at school, but I tell people now not to give up; there'll be a course and a place for you.'

Dottie Wilson, from Deniliquin, was also a foster child who left school early but her foster family valued education. She was a good student, ahead of many of her peers, but the stigma of being a foster child and the bullying, meant that by Year 9 she could no longer cope, struggling with overwhelming anxiety. Dottie eventually completed the equivalent of Years 11 and 12 at TAFE, graduating in November 2021.

'I was a little scared to leave school, but I've realised that education is not linear for everybody. There are other ways, especially if you have a good support crew of family and teachers.'

Dottie went on to win two TAFE NSW Excellence awards and also featured on the ABC Heywire program last December. In 2023, she plans to start a law and criminology degree.

'It's too easy to put people in boxes and make assumptions about them.'

ALW learning ambassadors

The launch featured three ALW learning ambassadors.

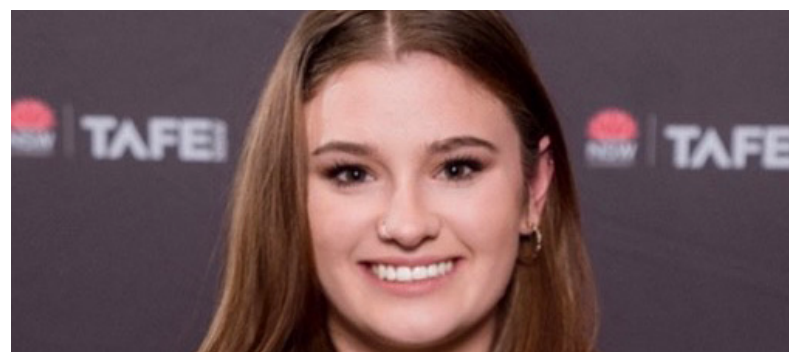
Alyssa Hand does not shy away from the facts of her life. 'I ran amok at school in Adelaide. I couldn't find a connection with learning. I was out of school as soon as I could – 16 years old – and by 17 I was a drug addict.'

'I was an addict until I was 30. That's when I knew I couldn't keep going the way I was going. A careers counsellor told me that if I could get clean, I could enrol in certificate courses at a community centre.'

'My first day back in a classroom was very daunting because there were so many gaps in my education. But I knew I had to do it off my own bat. Those courses changed my life.'

Alyssa, who won an Adult Learners Week scholarship in 2021, is now working with disadvantaged young people, whom she educates and mentors at the same community centre, in Hackham West.

'It might have seemed fun to run amok at high school, but the more you learn as a kid, the lesser chance of distractions for alcohol and other drugs.'



Dottie Wilson found a new pathway into education.



Learning basic home maintenance gave Mandy Gosetti independence and confidence. Photo: Sink repair by TWPinc CC BY 2.0

Nathan Lyons was raised by a single mum in a housing commission flat in inner-city Sydney. Money was tight so his mum stretched their shoestring budget by creating tasty meals with basic ingredients.

Now a father of six, Nathan is teaching others his mother's tasty, simple, budget-friendly meals in his video program *Kooking with a Koori*. Kicking off in September 2020, it's a natural mix of cooking, comedy and music, and has attracted over 195,000 followers.

'I believe in that old idea of it taking a village to raise a child. I was raised by my mum, my aunties, my uncles, my nans, and YouTube!'

Nathan has appeared on the SBS program *The Cook Up* with Adam Liaw and last year published a book of his recipes through a major publisher.

Nathan describes himself as a hands-on learner. 'No text books, no instruction books. I find what I can on YouTube and then slice and dice my videos via my phone. I'm always learning.'

After her husband died in 2014, **Mandy Gosetti** found there was much more to deal with than the intense grief of losing her partner. Her role in the world had changed and she was faced with a host of everyday tasks that were new to her. She had to quickly upskill to fill the gaps her partner left.

'I didn't know how to fix a dripping tap,' Mandy recalled. Home maintenance was a mystery to me. I soon realised that my emergency at home wasn't necessarily anyone else's emergency. And I didn't want to become a burden on others.'

Mandy not only learnt how to fix a dripping tap. She now runs *I'm Still Learning*, a not-for-profit organisation that teaches home maintenance, car maintenance, and cooking. Based in Melbourne's north-west, the courses build up women's skills and confidence.

'The courses are about knowing what needs to be done to fix something, knowing what to ask for if, say, you go to Bunnings. And the courses show that it's okay to make mistakes along the way. That's all part of learning.'

ALW 2022 scholarship winners

The launch announced the winners of this year's adult education scholarships: Maya Wills, Elsa Debessa, Terrence Lennon-Wingfield, and Alaya Begum. Maya, Terrence and Alaya gave a short thank you each, via video, while Elsa Debessa's response – smiles and tearful hugs – epitomised the importance of adult learning. For absolutely everybody.



ALW ambassadors Mandy Gosetti, Alyssa Hand and Nathan Lyons share a passion for passing on what they've learned.

Outstanding ALW scholarship winners

Meet the quartet of inspiring adult learners who are this year's scholarship winners.



When Terrence Lennon-Wingfield heard that he had won an Adult Learners Week scholarship he was happily surprised.

'To be honest,' he said, 'I didn't know I'd been nominated. I was just doing my thing, going to classes, working. That was, and is, my focus. That's where all my energy goes.'

'Winning the scholarship shows how much I've improved since starting studies. And how much sacrifice you've got to make.'

Terrence, 27, grew up in Ceduna, a South Australian township nearly 800 kilometres from Adelaide. He was often absent from primary school, due to illness. 'I went back and forward to hospital in Adelaide a lot.'

He stayed in school until two weeks before the end of Year 12, in 2012. 'Even though I'd got that far, I knew I was a long way behind. A long way. So I quit.'

He found odd jobs in-between stretches of unemployment.

'Two years ago, something hit me. I thought I could read okay, but realised I didn't understand as much as I should. And I wasn't too flash at maths either.'

Terrence enrolled at Tauondi Aboriginal College in Port Adelaide in February 2020, in the Certificate I in Access to Vocational Pathways course.

'I was nervous at first, freaking out. But I went right back to basics, to learning the A-B-C. Bit by bit I found my confidence.' Terrence Lennon-Wingfield, Tauondi Aboriginal College

At NAIDOC Week in 2020 he was an ambassador for Tauondi Aboriginal College, fronting the Channel 9 cameras. 'I just said what needed to be said, you know: that Tauondi is a top place for Aboriginal students. Even my cousin in Sydney saw it!'

Terrence then completed the Certificate III in Community Services course in 2021.

'More jargon there! I thought I was in over my head. I thought people might make fun of me. There were students older than me, in the 30s and 40s, and we built connections.'

Terrence's pastor encouraged him to volunteer as a Covid-19 marshal for the church. With his growing literacy he was able to complete a short online course in Basic Infection Control.

'I can read a lot better nowadays. If I come across a word I don't understand I look it up on my phone. I've got a dictionary right there.'

Terrence is now a transport officer for an Aboriginal medical clinic, as well as a student at the University of Adelaide.

'It's a preparatory program: challenging but you've got to push through, you know. You've got to ask questions and be prepared to make mistakes. Education catches me. It's got a hold on me.'

Elsa Debessa – WCIG – VIC

Beaming smiles. Tears of joy. Hugs all round. This was the response when Elsa Debessa learnt that she had won a scholarship to assist her continuing commitment to further study.

The expressions of gratitude were caught on video and happily shared as part of the ALW 2022 launch.



Maya Wills plans on finishing a degree and working in the community with her people.

Elsa, 37, came to Australia from Ethiopia in 2004. She was 19 and her schooling had stopped at the equivalent of Year 7. In her new country she struggled with the new language, a struggle that became harder as she became a single mother of three and stayed home much of the time.

Before the birth of her third child, just over three years ago, she attended a new parenting program. 'It wasn't a course with classes,' Elsa explained. 'It had activities and was good for meeting people.'

But one step can lead to another and Elsa enrolled in the Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program at Westgate Community Initiatives Group in Melbourne's north-west in April 2021.

'Before I was scared and looking for excuses to stay inside. For 10 years I stayed home and did nothing and this was my first course. I was nervous but I pushed myself, and the teacher – a very good teacher, like all at WCIG – pushed me too.'

Elsa then enrolled in a Certificate III in Individual Support in November 2021 while continuing with her SEE program.

'The teachers have advice for everyone in the class, not just me. They seem to know which types of jobs would suit each student.'

Elsa now works three days a week looking after a client through the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The hours tie in with her family responsibilities. Amidst all this, Elsa is continuing her studies in the SEE program and Certificate III in Individual Support.

'The scholarship means a lot to me. I want to thank WCIG for nominating me.'

Maya Wills – Kiama Community College – NSW

Maya Wills was excited and honoured to win a 2022 Adult Learners Week scholarship.

'I was over the moon!' the 21-year-old said.

That hard work is a series of qualifications she earned while studying last year at Kiama Community College on the south coast of New South Wales.

A proud Jerrinja-Wandi Wandian and Wodi Wodi woman, Maya was encouraged to study by her workplace, Waminda, a health and welfare service for Aboriginal women. She had started a traineeship there in 2020. In rapid succession Maya completed a foundation skills program, then a Certificate II in Workplace Skills and Vocational Pathways, Statement of Attainment in First Aid and CPR, and Certificate III in Business.

The year of study was capped off with being awarded 2021 Student of the Year at Kiama. But it wasn't plain sailing. Far from it. 'At the start I was a little scared but my teacher, Kim, was amazing and really supported me through everything.'

"Everything" included anxiety, lack of confidence and dyslexia.



Elsa Debessa (R) now successfully combines work, study and family responsibilities.



Learning English has enabled Alaya Begum to find a job and be more active in her community.

'I think Kim realised I was really eager to get things done and finished quickly. She really helped ground me and remind me that I can slow the pace down a little bit. I started to come out of my shell and ask questions. The college really supported me along the way and the things I was learning were helping me with day-to-day tasks at Waminda.'

And there is no shortage of those day-to-day tasks now that Maya has completed the traineeship and is working full-time as an admin officer and receptionist at Waminda.

Maya is now also in her first year at Charles Sturt University doing a Bachelor of Health Science (Mental Health). 'I'm keen to finish my degree and get out into my community and help my people.'

Maya said the scholarship would be very helpful in paying for university supplies.

And what would she say to others anxious about studying? 'At the start it may be nerve racking but it's honestly such a great thing to do and can really help you to develop some great new skills. Don't be afraid to reach out for help.'

Alaya Begum – Djerriwarrh Community and Education Services – Vic

For Alaya Begum the past three years have been a succession of new experiences: first time in a new country; first time in a classroom, first time volunteering, first job, first time winning a scholarship.

Alaya was awarded the 2022 Learning Changes Lives Foundation scholarship, sponsored by Adult Learning Australia, and announced at the ALW2022 launch.

Alaya, 32, arrived in Ballarat from Bangladesh in late 2019 and soon began attending English classes in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) at Djerriwarrh

Community and Education Services.

There was no formal schooling in her village in Bangladesh, so it was Alaya's first time in a classroom. But within a few weeks lockdown had hit and Alaya and her classmates were attending classes via Zoom.

Alaya adapted and thrived. After lockdown, she enrolled in a Learn Local course at the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre called Cooking up Jobs. This led to volunteering at the centre's Community Lunch where over 70 people meet weekly.

The Cooking up Jobs teacher was so impressed by her enthusiasm and willingness to work, that he recommended her to the cleaning contractor at Myer in Ballarat. Alaya works there part-time now. She proudly presented a photo to her English class in her new uniform saying, 'It's my first job in my whole life'.

With her literacy skills ever-improving Alaya is now more involved with her nine-year-old daughter's schooling. 'She helps me, and I help her. We read together but sometimes, if I get stuck on a word, my daughter will say, "I'm not your teacher, Mum!"'

Alaya's teachers have all been impressed by her fearlessness, optimism, and commitment.

'My teachers, my classmates, and the staff at Myer have all been very friendly. I have been shy and nervous at times but I feel better now, more confident.'

For over 12 months Alaya has been having extra one-on-one tuition, also through the AMEP, at her local library, finding new reading material, always seeking ways to improve. With her increasing independence, Alaya is now looking at taking driving lessons, so she can get to classes, to work, to volunteering, to the library and to her daughter's school.

'I always want to learn.'

Connecting with Adult Learners Week

Hundreds of events around Australia celebrated Adult Learners Week and awards for best events went to three winners.



During the first week of September neighbourhood houses, community colleges, libraries, local councils, TAFEs and more offered hundreds of events and activities that demonstrated the many ways Australian adults can connect with learning and enjoy the benefits of adult education.

The three awards for 'Best Events' went to First Impressions Clothing Exchange (Vic); Noosa Library Services (Qld) and Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre (Vic).

First Impressions Clothing Exchange (Vic) Making an impression

First Impressions Clothing Exchange (FICE) ran two pop-up shops and fashion parades during Adult Learners Week. Lilydale and Yarra Junction libraries hosted the one-hour events, which also served as introductions to work skills courses.

FICE aims to empower women for brighter futures through training, networking and affordable clothing.

'The events were a way of getting out into the community and having a bit of fun,' said FICE

coordinator Renee Cooke. 'Our models, from young adults to women in their mid-60s, were all volunteers from FICE.'

'Bella and Lexi, Sarah, Geni, Trish and Barbara all enjoyed striding the catwalk at each of the libraries. We loved seeing their confidence shine.'

'One library visitor who bought some clothes from the pop-up shop has donated some of her own and is hoping to volunteer with us at some stage.'

Renee said that Adult Learners Week events are about making such connections, about opening doors to future possibilities. 'Word of mouth gets out, people talk to people and hopefully some enrol for courses. Then they might make friendships, build confidence. It's a flow-on effect.'

FICE began in 2019 and is part of CIRE Services in Melbourne's eastern suburbs. Stymied by Covid-19 the past two years FICE embraced the chance to be out with the public again and Adult Learners Week provided a great opportunity.

'We wanted to have fun, especially in light of the past two years. We wanted to provide something tangible. Our audiences at the events were enthusiastic and appreciative.'





First Impressions Clothing Exchange (FICE) hosted a fashion parade to promote the range of training and support available to empower women to achieve their employment goals.

'Some people can be daunted by the prospect of adult education,' said Renee, 'but you're never too old to learn or adapt.'

Noosa Library Services (Qld) Taking steps

Noosa Library Services in Queensland marked Adult Learners Week by developing and sharing stories of the adults whose lives have been transformed by learning.

Helga, 82, showed it's never too late to start learning. She came to Australia 20 years ago from East Germany to join her family but speaks mainly German with friends and relatives. Three years ago, she decided to do something about improving her spoken English and joined a conversation class at the library where she is thriving.

Emily wanted to improve her maths and writing skills and has been taking a Back-to-Basics class at her library for six months and highly recommends it. 'The classes were interesting ... and our teacher has been wonderful, with challenging classes and homework!'

Saleap from Cambodia started adult literacy classes in 2017 because she wanted to improve her knowledge of English and feel part of the community but initially

it wasn't easy. 'When I arrived for the first time I felt very nervous.' Saleap proudly shared a photo of herself at her Australian citizenship ceremony.

Kath Rose, Literacy Coordinator at Noosa Library Services, said of the learners, 'They are very proud of putting themselves out there. They are proud of the courses and speak of their good fortune in being able to do them. They are keen to spread the word.'

Volunteer adult literacy tutor Kym, who took up the role after a late-in-life redundancy, and whose classes are often filled with 'raucous laughter' described the joys of her job. 'I love the wealth of information adult learners have, sharing laughs, frustrations, and the joy of the "Aha moment" when something a learner has struggled with for years falls into place. And I never stop learning.'

The shared stories prompted interest from potential learners and volunteers. 'We were very pleased with the response,' said Kath. 'It's all about rebuilding after the Covid lockdowns.'

Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre (Vic) The right ingredients

You can't go wrong with a feel-good movie. Or two. Or a visit to the Melbourne Museum. Or a fine feed.





At Noosa library, Helga (R) shared her experience of the benefits of learning late in life during Adult Learners Week.

These were the ingredients for another successful celebration of Adult Learners Week at Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre. The centre hosted a movie night with a strong dose of Aussie culture. The 30 movie-goers chose between the dance-hall charm of *Strictly Ballroom* and the mischievous canine joy of *Oddball*.

'Most of our community at GEALC are migrants, so we screened two local movies at the centre,' explained Client Support and Community Engagement Officer, Lindy Lifszyc.

The movies were preceded by a barbecue and then included, of course, plenty of popcorn.

About 60 people visited Melbourne Museum, many for the first time. 'We had level 1, 2 and 3 English students, plus some local residents who were keen to come along.'

The teachers of the lower levels guided their students through the Museum, while higher level students had already researched the Museum in class, had worked out which areas they wanted to visit and explored in small groups. Level 3 students did some pre-reading on the Museum website and also wrote up reports in class afterwards about their experiences.

An ALW bingo brunch proved popular, with admin staff spinning the balls and calling the numbers.

'There were lots of laughs!' said Lindy.

GEALC, in Melbourne's inner south-east, opened in 1986, so it is well-versed in putting on activities for Adult Learners Week.

'Although the online Learners Week activities during Covid were good fun, we were keen to have face-to-face events this year, keen to bring people together.

'The response was very positive, very enthusiastic. Our students work hard all year, so deserve to be able to celebrate. They relish the opportunity to learn, and to relax and have fun.

'At GEALC we love to cater to our students and to welcome newcomers.'

Lindy said the key to running events is to know your audience and to keep everything manageable.

'And people love a good feed too!'

Lindy added that organising ALW activities is very much 'a team effort, working together on ideas and bringing them to fruition.'

The centre will put the funds from being an ALW event winner towards the events' expenses and to subsidise programs for vulnerable learners in Term 4.



Member round up

News from ALA member organisations around Australia



Reading Writing Hotline have launched a free handbook on making communicating in Plain English easier. The handbook includes strategies for making your writing more reader friendly, tips for presenting information more effectively and uses case studies as practical examples of Plain English and its benefits in action. readingwritinghotline.edu.au/plain-english

Arnhem Land Aboriginal Progress Corporation's (ALPA) Deputy Chairman Micky Wunungmurra attended the Australian Government's Jobs and Skills Summit and Remote Employment Roundtable hosted by Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians Linda Burney. ALPA welcomed discussion of remote employment policy reforms including replacement of the Community Development Program – the remote 'work-for-the-dole' scheme, which adversely affects thousands of Aboriginal Territorians seeking work.

CAE, part of Box Hill Institute, celebrated its 75th anniversary as a leading adult education provider with a day-long celebration featuring a series of free or low-cost events and activities at their iconic home in Flinders Lane, Melbourne (pictured). The Centre was founded by the Victorian Government in 1947, as a place to increase community education in the aftermath of World War II. Since then its educational offerings have evolved although book groups and arts courses remain popular.

The **Tasmanian Council of Adult Literacy** (TCAL), supported by the Department of State Growth, Libraries Tasmania and 26TEN, have launched the first in a series of eight short videos that demonstrate a range of contemporary, evidence-based activities recommended for adult, one-on-one literacy tutor training. The 10-minute video shows how to teach phonemic awareness and includes relevant theory as well as practical examples. Created as a resource for Tasmanian practitioners they will also be freely

available online for use in the wider adult literacy sector. tcal.org.au/instructional-videos

Congratulations to **Batchelor Institute** which was announced Large Training Provider of the Year at the annual NT Training Awards during a gala event held on 3 September. The NT Training Awards recognise excellence in the Vocation Education and Training sector. Congratulations also to Tamworth Community College for being awarded the Excellence in Customer Service in Education and Training in the the 2022 Quality Business Awards.

TasTAFE has partnered with the Tasmanian Council of Social Services (TasCOSS) in a new initiative to address a critical workforce shortage in community services, which is the fastest growing industry in the state. The partnership aims to increase the number of qualified trainers in the sector by delivering a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment program for to up to 120 Tasmanians from the social services, disability, aged care and education and care sectors. tastafe.tas.edu.au/news-folder/tastafe-and-tascoss-providing-vital-training



ALPA Deputy Chairman Micky Wunungmurra with Federal Indigenous Affairs Minister Linda Burney. Photo: Emma Kelly

ACE update

In **VIC**, Neighbourhood Houses Victoria welcomed a new CEO Keir Paterson an experienced leader in the community, health sector and private sector. In good news for the sector, the Andrews Government committed \$19 million in additional funding to Victorian Neighbourhood Houses over three years – as well as ongoing annual funding of \$6.6 million – for the network of nearly 400 Neighbourhood Houses across the state. nhvic.org.au

At the annual Learn Local conference, ACEVic CEO Tamsin Rossiter presented on the Koorie modules of the highly successful Adult Literacy and Numeracy Practitioner Program developed with Adult Learning Australia. vic.gov.au/adult-literacy-and-numeracy-practitioners-program

In **NSW**, state peak for community colleges CCA held a two day conference on the theme of rebuilding community. The conference included an award for Education Trainer of the year, won by Peter Wilson, Trade Trainer, Metal Fabrication and Welding, at Central Coast Community College. A Recognition of Lifetime Achievement Award was won by Bruce Spence, Engineering Trainer, Community College Northern Inland. Congratulations to all the finalists. cca.edu.au

In **WA**, Read Write Now celebrated its 45th birthday. Since it was established in 1977 the service has assisted over 40,000 West Australians wanting to improve their language, literacy and numeracy through a network of 650 local volunteers trained and supported centrally through TAFE WA. read-write-now.org



Photo: Corrugated Road – Iby yaruman5 CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Nationally, ALA was pleased to represent the ACE sector at the National Jobs and Skills Summit as well as participating in a series of pre-Summit roundtables with Commonwealth Minister for Skills and Training Brendan O'Connor and his senior staff. ALA reiterated the importance of the not-for-profit adult and community education (ACE) sector and the crucial role it can play in assisting people who may not be ready for work or training to gain the skills they need to take next steps on the pathway to participating in Australia's economy and society. Minister O'Connor has since announced a review of foundation skills training in Australia and we look forward to participating and representing the views of adult and community education providers across Australia. You can see our detailed statement here: ala.asn.au/jobs-and-skills-summit-ace-and-equity/

ALA is proud to announce that our Board President Associate Professor Annette Foley from Federation University will be awarded with an Honorary Doctorate from Cyberjaya University in Kuala Lumpur, Indonesia for her contribution to the field of lifelong learning. ALA is thrilled that this honour is being bestowed on our President in recognition of her leadership in the field.

Visit our website to find previous issues of Quest and individual stories for sharing. ala.asn.au

QUEST

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