



NSW Department of Education

18th Annual | 2023

# Nanga Mai Awards





**Cover and award title pages**

The artwork was inspired by Country, representing Aboriginal students, staff and families and their wider school communities in a celebration of outstanding achievement in Aboriginal Education.

Artwork by Wallula Bethell.

Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate respects and Acknowledges all the traditional custodians of the land upon which our schools and workplaces stand.

We Acknowledge Elders, past and present and all Aboriginal people attending the awards ceremony today. Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships welcomes everyone to the 18th Annual Nanga Mai Awards.

# Sponsorship

Thank you to all our award sponsors.



# Welcome to the 18th Annual Nanga Mai Awards

The NSW Department of Education is proud to present the 18th Annual Nanga Mai Awards celebrating the outstanding achievements of Aboriginal students, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers, other departmental staff, Aboriginal community members and schools demonstrating outstanding achievement in a range of areas of endeavour.

We thank the members of our regional and state panels and express our appreciation for their time and commitment. It is through their dedication to Aboriginal education that we celebrate excellence today.

## Presenters

### Opening Address

**Murat Dizdar PSM**

Secretary, NSW Department of Education

### Special Guest Speakers

**Karen Jones PSM**

Executive Director, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships

**The Hon. Prue Car**

Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney

**The Hon. David Harris MP**

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs & Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research and Minister for the Central Coast.

**Shahni Wellington**

Journalist/Presenter

**Michele Hall PSM**

Executive Director, Connected Communities

**Ashlee Dawson & Ryan Wood**

West Wallsend High School

# Presenters | Nanga Mai Hosts



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**Zali Reynolds**  
**Year 12, Northlakes High School**

Zali Reynolds is a current Year 12 student and School Captain of Northlakes High School. Zali is also the President of the Junior AECG (Aboriginal Education Consultative Group), a position which provides her with a platform and opportunity to promote Aboriginal Education at Northlakes High School, as a proud Wiradjuri woman. Zali is interested in science and hopes to continue this pathway with a future career in Geriatric Medicine.



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**Max McKimm**  
**Year 12, The Jannali High School**

Max McKimm is a proud Bidjigal man. For the past 12 months he has been an excellent School Captain, leading and being a role model for over 1000 students at The Jannali High School. Max's dedication and strong leadership led to him attaining the ADF Long Tan Award. Max aspires to become an Industrial Technology teacher. He discovered his passion for this subject after creating an Aboriginal-inspired major work. Max's teachers supported and inspired him. He would like to do the same in the future.

# Performers



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## **Symphony Riley** **Year 10, Hunter School of the Performing Arts**

Symphony is a talented Wiradjuri woman from Dubbo/Wellington. She attends Hunter School of the Performing Arts and is in Year 10. Her interests include music, singing, performing, composing her own music, guitar, learning to play a variety of musical instruments, drama, dance and cultural dance. Symphony has just finished the School Spectacular where she was a featured artist and performed Simply the Best in honour of Tina Turner, one of her favourite artists. Today she will be singing a song written by herself called Forgive But Never Forget.



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## **The NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company**

The NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company nurtures and celebrates the talents of 25 students from 21 metropolitan, rural and remote public schools through contemporary Aboriginal dance. Students are mentored by Bangarra Dance Theatre's Youth Program in collaboration with The Arts Unit, NSW Department of Education.

## Guest Speaker



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### **Shahni Wellington**

Shahni Wellington is a proud Jerrinja and Wandj Wandian woman from the south coast of NSW. She is a media professional, news presenter and journalist having worked as the ABC's National Indigenous Affairs Correspondent, host of NITV's The Point and the inaugural First Nations morning show - Big Mob Brekky. She is currently working as a communications specialist and podcast host with the University of Newcastle.



# Nanga Mai Awards Partner



## The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc.

The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. (NSW AECG) is a non-for-profit Aboriginal organisation that provides advice on all matters relevant to education and training with the mandate that this advice represents the Aboriginal community viewpoint.

The NSW AECG promotes respect, empowerment and self-determination and believes the process of collaborative consultation is integral to equal partnership and is fundamental to the achievement of equality.

The NSW AECG advocates cultural affirmation, integrity and the pursuit of equality to ensure that the unique and diverse identity of Aboriginal students is recognised and valued.

For more information:

[aecg.nsw.edu.au](http://aecg.nsw.edu.au)



**New South Wales  
Aboriginal Education  
Consultative Group Inc.**



# Event Program

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## Opening

### **Nanga Mai Hosts**

Zali Reynolds, Northlakes High School  
Max McKimm, The Jannali High School

### **Acknowledgment of Country**

Manny Ward, Dareton Public School  
Jaz Fusi, Menindee Public School  
Jlarni Hinch, Toomelah Public School  
Tamhalii Duncan, Toomelah Public School

### **Opening Address**

Murat Dizdar PSM, Secretary, NSW Department of Education

### **Deputy Premier Address**

The Hon. Prue Car, Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning,  
and Minister for Western Sydney

### **Opening Performance**

Symphony Riley, Hunter School of the Performing Arts

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## Awards

- The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate Outstanding All Round Student Award
- Outstanding Student Leadership Award
- The NSW Department of Education Outstanding School-Based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year Award
- Outstanding Contribution to Early Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award
- Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Award
- Outstanding Achievement in Sport Award

# Event Program

## Student Performance

The NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company

## Address

The Hon. David Harris MP, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs & Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research and Minister for the Central Coast.

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## Awards

- Outstanding HSC Achievement Award
- Outstanding Academic Excellence Award
- Outstanding Achievement in the Creative and Performing Arts Award
- Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education Award

## Guest Speaker

Shahni Wellington

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## Awards

- Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award
- Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-Aboriginal Staff Member Award
- Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-School based Staff Member Award
- Outstanding Early Education and Care Service Award
- Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Languages Award
- Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member Award
- Outstanding School and Community Partnership Award

# Event Program

## **Student Presentation**

Ashlee Dawson and Ryan Wood, West Wallsend High School

## **Connected Communities' Address**

Michele Hall PSM, Executive Director, Connected Communities

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## **Awards**

- Outstanding Commitment to Increasing Knowledge and Understanding of Aboriginal Histories, Culture and Experiences of Aboriginal Peoples Award
- NSW Connected Communities Excellence Award
- Kimberwalli Award
- NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award

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## **Closing**

### **Executive Director Closing Address**

Karen Jones PSM, Executive Director, Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships

### **Final Words - Nanga Mai Hosts**

Zali Reynolds, Northlakes High School

Max McKimm, The Jannali High School



# Student Awards

## Outstanding All Round Student Award

Presented to an Aboriginal student who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and excellence across a range of activities, including attendance, leadership, academic commitment and progress, community service, cultural commitments, and a positive attitude to school.

## Outstanding All Round Student Award



### Callum Abela

Year 6, Narellan Vale Public School

Callum Abela is a member of the Enrichment class at Narellan Vale Public school who excels in academics, particularly in Literacy, Numeracy, Science and History. In the Enrichment program, he has undertaken leadership roles and led some fundraising activities for the school.

Callum is a respected and dependable member of the school who leads by example and takes pride in wearing his school uniform. Callum has an excellent attendance record and is highly committed to creating a happy, inclusive, and safe environment through his consistent positive attitude, outstanding manners and solutions-based approach to resolving conflict in the playground. Callum responds to the needs of others and has acted as a mentor for younger students. He embraces his cultural identity and supports others to do the same. Callum is a highly reflective person who promotes Aboriginal perspectives in the classroom and sets goals to achieve excellence as well as tolerance and peace across the school by actively participating in events such as NAIDOC week, Autism Awareness Day and Harmony Day.

## Outstanding All Round Student Award



### Zali Reynolds

Year 12, Northlakes High School

Zali's commitment to learning has seen her selection in Northlakes' Advancement Via Individual Determination program based on application, academic outcomes and attendance.

Zali was involved in the ABCN Mentoring program in 2020 showing initiative, making sure that she was engaged each week, leading to the successful completion of this program and being awarded the ABCN Scholarship in 2021. Zali utilised this scholarship to benefit her senior schooling by engaging with a mentor, tutoring, networking with peers within the ABCN program and taking part in leadership seminars.

Zali has maintained a strong study routine and commitment routine, along with working two jobs outside of her schoolwork and a School based Apprenticeship as an Allied Health Assistance. She won the 2023 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year Award at the NSW Training Awards due to her outstanding commitment to her studies. Zali was voted in as School Captain of Northlakes High School for 2023 by her peers and teachers as well as President of the Junior AECG (Aboriginal Education Consultative Group) by her peers for 2022 and 2023, a position that provides her with a platform to promote Aboriginal Education as a proud Wiradjuri woman.







# Student Awards

## Outstanding Student Leadership Award

Presented to an Aboriginal student who has demonstrated exceptional skills in promoting, encouraging, and supporting student participation across their school and in their community.

# Outstanding Student Leadership Award



## Tygah Green

Year 6, Kotara South Public School

Tygah's profound connection to her culture and her unwavering commitment to fostering Aboriginal heritage make her an exceptional contender for this student award. Her dedication to promoting and appreciating her or Aboriginal culture has significantly enriched our school community.

Tygah's genuine and wholehearted embrace of her cultural roots has had a lasting impact. Her efforts have made Aboriginal culture more visible and accessible to both educators and peers, creating a more inclusive and diverse learning environment. Her passion for culture is infectious and has sparked interest and understanding among those around her.

Taking on the vital role of school Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Minister during its inaugural year, Tygah has exemplified exceptional leadership. She has not only nurtured and grown this role but has also extended her support to all students across the school. Tygah's leadership is underpinned by a strong sense of integrity and pride, which resonates in every facet of her engagement within the school community.

# Outstanding Student Leadership Award



## Ashlee Dawson

Year 12, West Wallsend High School

Ashlee Dawson is an exceptionally proud Kamilaroi woman and an inspiring driving force to ensure a culturally inclusive landscape at West Wallsend High School. Ashlee demonstrates a passionate commitment to community and an unwavering dedication to academic excellence. Her sense of integrity and qualities of kindness and care have given her a powerful voice and agency as a school leader. This has been amplified in her role as 2023 School Captain and founding Junior AECG Co-President where she has used her leadership platform to collaborate alongside staff, students, and community stakeholders to grow and improve a range of initiatives to benefit students and the school, creating meaningful and impactful change.

Ashlee depicts the values of integrity, excellence, respect, responsibility, cooperation, participation, and fairness through an unwavering commitment to improving outcomes for others. Ashlee's kindness, care and consideration for others shines through in everything she pursues. Ashlee's unique voice and perspective will leave a lasting and powerful impact on West Wallsend High School.

Ashlee is the recipient of the 2023 Minister's Award for Excellence in Student Achievement.

## Outstanding Student Leadership Award



### Ryan Wood

Year 12, West Wallsend High School

Ryan is an exceptional young Bunjalung man who is driving the cultural landscape at West Wallsend High School. Ryan proudly embraces his Aboriginal culture and is a passionate and inspiring advocate for his peers and community as the 2023 School Captain and founding Junior AECG Co-President. A key achievement has been his presentation at the Term 2 Staff Development Day. Ryan, and his fellow school captain, independently planned, developed, and delivered a highly engaging session to more than 100 staff which provided a powerful and informed perspective.

Ryan is a leader in his community. His sense of respect and care for others coupled with attributes of empathy and a passion for social justice has allowed him to advocate for others with insight, sensitivity, and perspective. Ryan is diligent and self-motivated - both as a leader, team member and as a learner. He exudes values of integrity, social advocacy and diplomacy.

Ryan is the recipient of the 2023 Minister's Award for Excellence in Student Achievement.



# Student Awards

**NSW Department of Education**

## **School-Based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year Award**

Presented to an Aboriginal student who has maintained outstanding commitment, effort, and application in completing their School Based Traineeship, which includes high application to workplace training and VET course, alongside their HSC.

# NSW Department of Education School-Based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year Award



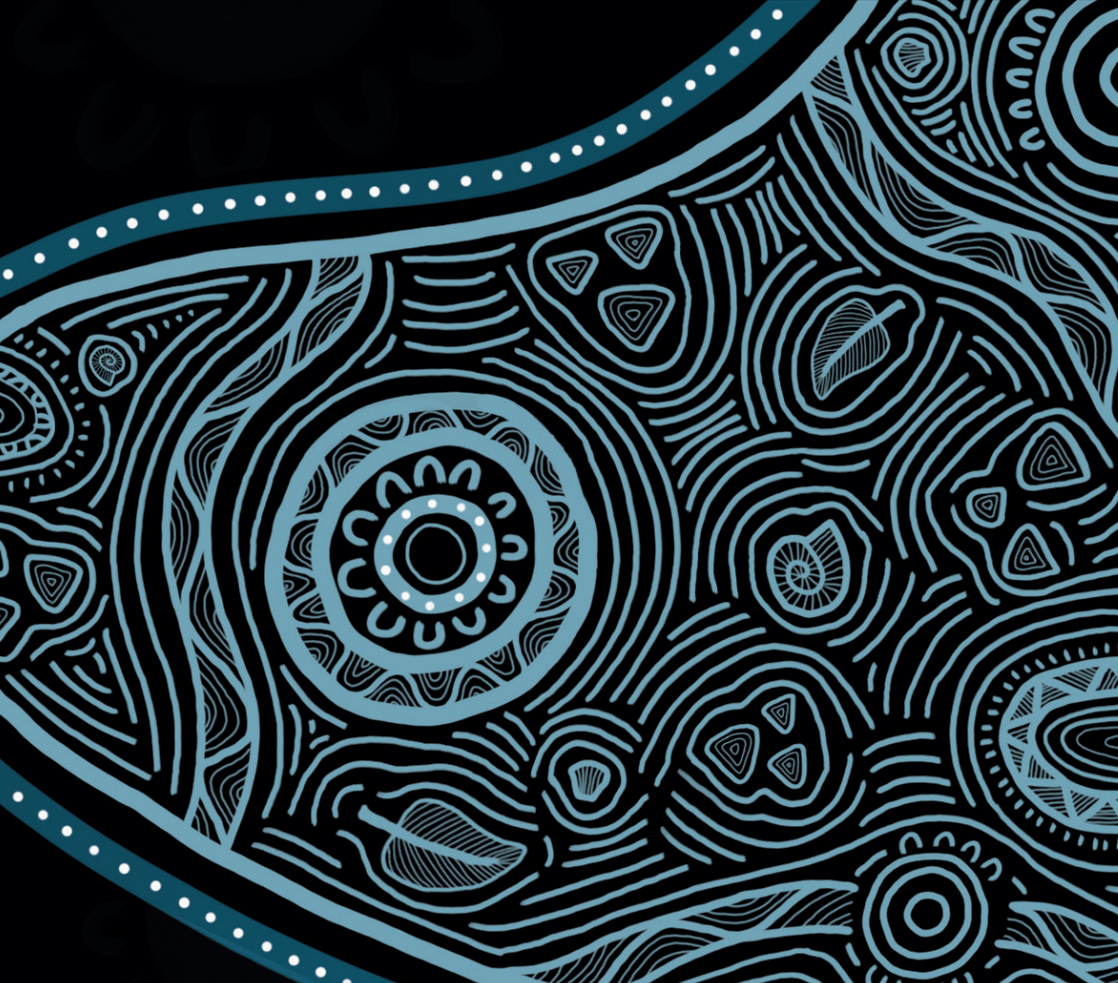
## Aaliyah Morley

Year 12, Peel High School

Aaliyah is an outstanding Year 12 student who has excelled in her School Based Traineeship in Educational Support-Certificate 3 whilst achieving to a high level in her HSC subjects.

In 2023, Aaliyah was recognised as the regional winner of the State Training Awards for Aboriginal Student of the Year. She has now progressed to the state final after being recognised as one of the top three Aboriginal students. Aaliyah has completed her workplace training ahead of time and she is a valued member of staff at her host employer- Hillvue Public School. Aaliyah supports Kindergarten in their curriculum learning and leads cultural programs regularly. Aaliyah runs her own cultural programs at recess and lunch and has played an integral part in developing the rich culture for all students at Hillvue.

At Peel High School, Aaliyah is a Cultural Leader among her peers and staff. Aaliyah delivers traditional dance, weaving, language and Sista Speak workshops frequently. Aaliyah is a role model for all students and staff. Aaliyah has applied herself diligently to her studies and ranked first place in Aboriginal Studies Year 12.



# Staff Awards

## **Outstanding Contribution to Early Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award**

Presented to an Aboriginal employee within the NSW Early Education and Care sector who delivers authentic, culturally responsive care for Aboriginal students, showing outstanding commitment to improving the educational outcomes for the students, their families, and communities.



## **Outstanding Contribution to Early Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award**



**Margaret Pengelly**  
Parkview Public School

Margaret Pengelly plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of multiple early childhood programs at Parkview Public School and forms a critical connection between the school and community.

She was instrumental in the establishment of our Winhangara playgroup, originally an outreach program in community that welcomed families into a non-threatening and positive early childhood setting. Stemming from this success, Margaret has been integral in extending our Early Childhood Program 'Bright Beginnings', an initiative that ensures children are able to engage in meaningful pre-schooling opportunities in the year prior to school commencing.

Her consistent and fair approach ensures all students develop respectful relationships with staff and promote the importance of participation in prior to school programs. Margaret has also been a key member of our schools Aboriginal Education Committee for many years and provides a wonderful sounding board for all community members.



# Student Awards

## Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Award

Presented to an Aboriginal student who has demonstrated exemplary skills in public speaking. The award recognises Aboriginal students' ability to speak with authority and confidence and the ability to maintain audience interest.

# Outstanding Achievement in Public Speaking Award



## Eden Lowrie-Jones

Year 6, Narrabeen Lakes Public School

Eden Lowrie-Jones is an exceptional and proud Aboriginal student and has outstanding achievements in the realm of public speaking.

Eden is a shining example of eloquence, confidence, and cultural pride. Her ability to engage and inspire audiences through her voice has been inspirational. She has won the public speaking competition for the last 2 years with some insightful and well-prepared speeches with a focus on multiculturalism and has gone on to represent our school at regional level. With a deep connection to her Aboriginal heritage, she has been able to weave insightful narratives that educate, challenge perspectives and promote understanding.

Through her speeches, Eden consistently sheds light on important social issues and amplifies the voices of underrepresented communities, including fellow Aboriginal students. Her dedication to fostering unity and encouraging open dialogue has led to positive change within our school and beyond.

Beyond her impressive speaking skills, Eden embodies the values of resilience and determination. Her journey is a testament to overcoming adversity and striving for excellence, serving as an inspiration to peers and the wider community. Eden is not only a role model for her peers but is also an advocate for meaningful change through the power of words.



# Student Awards

## Outstanding Achievement in Sport Award

Presented to an Aboriginal student who has represented their school and community, demonstrated fairness, integrity, and outstanding achievement in sport.

## Outstanding Achievement in Sport Award



### Peytyn Donovan

Year 6, Wauchope Public School

A proud Biripi, Worimi, Bundjalung man, Peytyn's achievements in various sports truly exemplify the spirit of athleticism and leadership. Peytyn's remarkable journey as a student athlete at Wauchope Public School (WPS) is marked by exceptional accomplishments. As a skilled multi-sport athlete, he has showcased his prowess, representing NSWPSA State Carnivals in League, Union, and Touch. His current involvement in the NSWPSA Schools Knockouts with the WPS Soccer and Touch teams reflects his unwavering commitment to sports excellence.

Beyond his remarkable sporting achievements, Peytyn's involvement extends to Cricket, Basketball, Netball, Swimming, Athletics, Cross Country, Aboriginal Dance and Brospeak which underscore his versatility and dedication.

In recognition of his impressive representation at various levels, Peytyn is a deserving candidate for Outstanding Achievement in Sports. He embodies the qualities of dedication, leadership, and sportsmanship, setting a remarkable example for his peers and inspiring the entire school community.

## Outstanding Achievement in Sport Award



### Abbie McTeare

Year 11, Gorokan High School

Abbie is a proud Dharawal woman who has accomplished outstanding results in her chosen sport of Boxing. Not only is she a talented and hardworking competitor in the ring, she possesses skills and attributes that set her apart as a thoughtful, compassionate and confident leader. Abbie has always been proud of her Aboriginal identity and immerses herself in cultural education programs at school. She is a member of the Junior AECG committee and leads students in the running of various events.

Abbie has a strong passion for nutrition and health and is currently completing a Certificate 4 in Fitness, while also completing Year 11 and training for her boxing career. Recently, she competed at the Australian National Championships in Adelaide for Boxing. Abbie encountered tough competition in each round and managed to make it through to the final where she took out Gold. Abbie is the Under 19's Women's 60kg Champion of Australia, an outstanding sporting achievement and a true example of what hard work, determination and commitment can achieve. She is on track and determined to secure a place at the upcoming World Youth Championships.





# Student Awards

## Outstanding HSC Achievement Award

The Outstanding HSC Achievement Award recognises the highest ATAR result in 2022 by an Aboriginal student.



## Outstanding HSC Achievement Award



### Rebecca Hoffman

Northern Beaches Secondary College  
Manly Campus (Finished 2022)

Rebecca is a descendant of the Budawang peoples and a former student of Northern Beaches Secondary College, Manly Campus. She demonstrated outstanding academic excellence by being an HSC All Rounder achieving the top Band 6 achievement in all studies including Chemistry, Biology, English Extension, Maths Advanced (Accelerated in 2021), Maths Extension and Modern History. This enabled Rebecca to achieve an impressive ATAR, gaining entry into a Double Law degree at Australian National University. At school Rebecca was a committed member of the NBSC Manly Campus Chamber Orchestra and Symphonic Wind Orchestra. She completed the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Program and represented the school at both zone and regional swimming carnivals. Outside of school she tutored younger students and provided her digital transcribing skills voluntarily through the pandemic lockdowns to assist organisations in their archival process.

Rebecca was an active Student Wellbeing Advocate through pastoral care programs and provided significant mentoring support to younger and older Aboriginal students during her time at Manly. Rebecca was a founding member of our First Nations Leadership group at NBSC Manly Campus and advocated strongly for greater opportunities to connect to country and culture.



# Student Awards

## Outstanding Academic Excellence Award

Presented to an Aboriginal student who has demonstrated outstanding academic excellence in any curriculum area in 2023 and who has displayed a positive attitude to school and a commitment to their future.

# Outstanding Academic Excellence Award



## Spencer Locke

Year 3, Corindi Public School

Spencer is an exceptional, independent Year 3 student who is working at an outstanding level in all Key learning Areas. He has incredible general knowledge and loves sharing this with his classmates. Spencer tackles all educational challenges with perseverance and optimism. Spencer's current attendance level is 95%.

Throughout 2023, Spencer has demonstrated academic excellence by:

- Receiving a High Distinction in the Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge run by the CSIRO. Spencer's score was 117 compared to Australia's average of 74.
- Featured in the Double Helix magazine with a winning riddle about turtles.
- Top 5 in the Regional Premier's Spelling Bee for Stage 2 students.
- Spencer is an exceptional mathematician who encourages his peers to be better, by challenging them, or sharing his ideas. Spencer is a critical thinker, and he is able to verbally explain his mathematical reasoning using appropriate vocabulary and will often encourage other students to challenge their way of thinking.
- Spencer is an avid reader participating in the Premier's Reading Challenge this year.

Apart from excelling academically, Spencer has represented the school in the Inclusive Sports Bocca, Bowling and Come and Try Athletic teams.

## Outstanding Academic Excellence Award



### Zach Pacey

Year 12, Macksville High School

Zach Pacey has exhibited remarkable academic prowess across various curriculum domains while exemplifying a constructive outlook towards his educational journey and a resolute dedication to his forthcoming prospects. Zach has demonstrated not only scholastic brilliance but also a genuine enthusiasm for learning, fostering a positive atmosphere within the school community.

Zach has achieved the following awards, Year 11 academic Dux, outstanding achievement in English Standard, outstanding achievement in Mathematics Advanced, outstanding achievement in Mathematics Extension, outstanding achievement in Industrial Technology - Engineering and outstanding achievement in Software Design and Development. Zach was also awarded The Long Tan STEM Award, Olympic Change Maker award and Sportsman of the year award in 2023. Zach was also accepted to attend the Tahgara (Winter) Program and the Gadalung (Summer) Program at Sydney University. Macksville High School applauds Zach on these outstanding accomplishments, proactive engagement, and his potential to positively influence his own futures and the broader community.





# Student Awards

## Outstanding Achievement in the Performing, Creative and/or Visual Arts Award

Presented to an Aboriginal student who has demonstrated outstanding talent and application in the Performing, Creative and/or Visual arts.

## Outstanding Achievement in the Performing, Creative and/or Visual Arts Award



### Lennox Monaghan

Year 6, Grafton Public School

Lennox is an extremely proud Bundjalung student who has achieved excellence in Performing and Creative Arts. He shows his strong leadership skills through his role as School Captain at Grafton Public School and by leading by example in everything he participates in throughout the school and community in creative and performing arts.

Lennox has been selected to be a 'Specialist Performer' at the NSW Schools Spectacular in 2023 where he will play his Yidaki (Digeridoo) and dance. This is a rare achievement for any primary student in regional NSW and highlights the exceptional talent Lennox has in the performing arts to be selected for such a prestigious role at his age.

Lennox has also been successful in his recent audition for the 2023 STAN feature movie 'Windcatcher' where he has gained the lead actor role of Percy which will be filmed over the next three months.

Lennox is also a very talented dancer and when not playing the Yidaki, he performs traditional Bundjalung dances and songs in language with Garimaa Nghari Dance Group. This year his dance group has been invited to perform at the Sydney Opera House in the DanceRites competition. He has worked alongside his younger sister with the ABC Listen App team and features in some of their 'Little Yarns' podcasts.

## Outstanding Achievement in the Performing, Creative and/or Visual Arts Award



### Maisie Monaghan

Year 2, Grafton Public School

Maisie is an extremely talented, Bundjalung artist and dancer who has achieved some amazing accolades. In 2021, Maisie was the winner of the Clarence Valley Indigenous Art Award (Junior category) which meant her artwork was on display at the Grafton Regional Art Gallery.

In 2022, two of Maisie's original artworks celebrating the endangered coastal emu were projected onto the Sunshine Sugar building as part of the 'Building Bridges Emu Project'. This project went on to win the 2023 National Trust Heritage Award in the 'Events, Exhibitions and Tours' category with Maisie's artwork being used for event promotions. Maisie was also recognised for this achievement in Parliament.

Maisie is also a very talented dancer and performs traditional Bundjalung dances and songs in language with Garimaa Nghari Dance Group at events throughout the Clarence Valley and beyond. Maisie has performed at countless opening ceremonies, NAIDOC events, Closing the Gap days, festivals including Byron Bay Bluesfest (Boomerang Festival), Kinship Festival and as a support act for Jessica Mauboy at Groove on the Grass, just to name a few. She has worked with the ABC Listen App team and features in some of their 'Little Yarns' podcasts. Maisie will also be an extra in the STAN feature movie 'Windcatcher'. Maisie has recently turned 8 years old and has achieved feats beyond her years, helping share the Bundjalung culture and language with her school and community.



## Outstanding Achievement in the Performing, Creative and/or Visual Arts Award



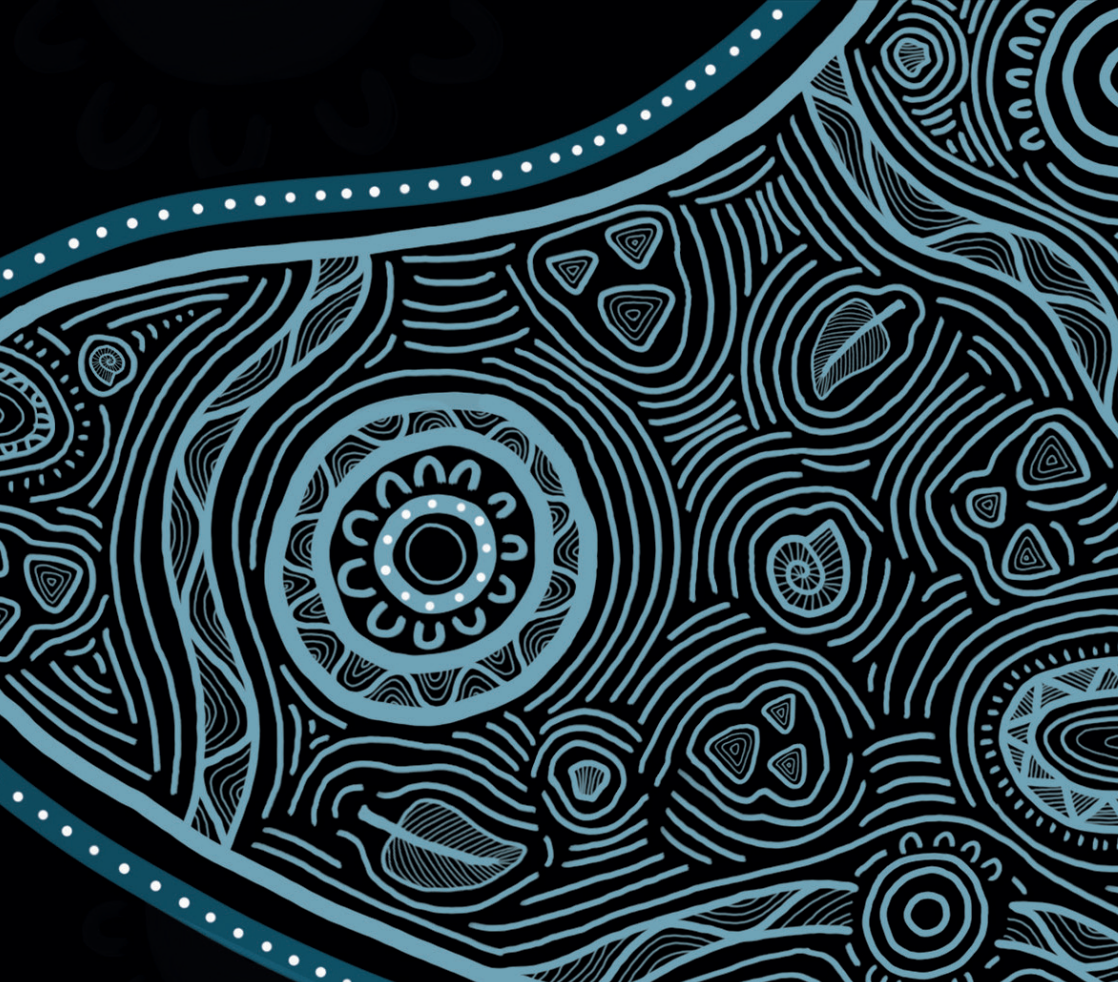
### Ivy Simpson

Year 12, Koorungal High School

Ivy is as highly talented young lady who has aspirations to follow her talents into a career as a professional dancer with the Bangarra Dance Company.

She is a current member of the Bangarra Dance Ensemble, and has been recognised as a twice featured Artist in this year's School Spectacular for both Dance and singing. She was selected as a member of the State Dance Ensemble and starred in this year's school musical 'Murder on the Dancefloor'.

Outside of her school commitments, she is a teacher of dance at the Wagga Wagga Academy of Dance, and is an active musician playing gigs all around town in multiple ensembles. Ultimately, Ivy aims to open her own series of dance schools across regional New South Wales, so that she can bridge the inequity of access to Creative and Performing Arts for children in regional NSW.



# Staff Awards

## Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education Award

Presented to a NSW Department of Education employee who has demonstrated exemplary leadership and capacity building among staff, schools and the school community and an ongoing commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students.

## Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Education Award



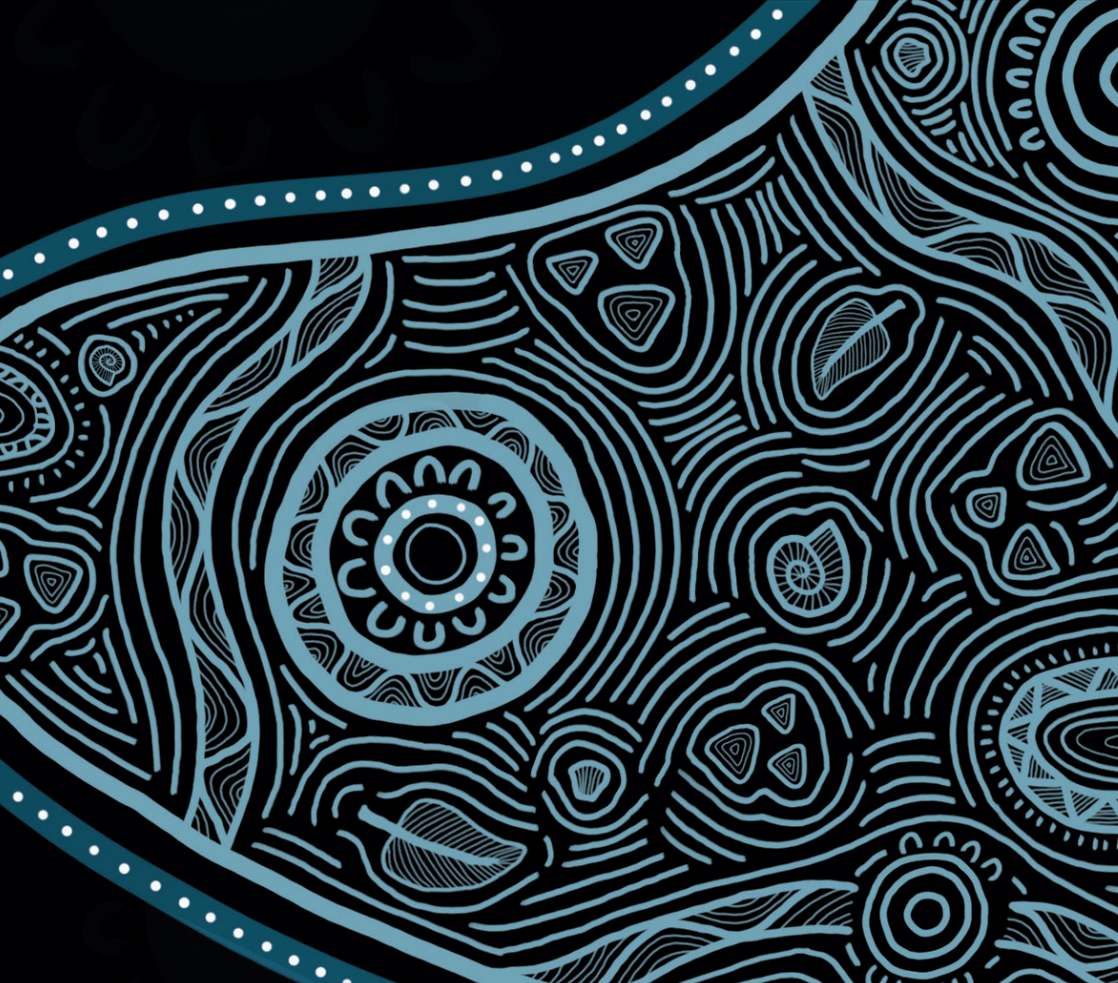
**Kim Witt**

Toronto Public School

Kim's passion towards reconciliation has had a profound impact on Toronto Public School. She thinks creatively about new ways to nurture genuine partnerships, build cultural competence and open pathways towards reconciliation. Kim has led the development of the school's Reconciliation Action Plan, making it the first school with a RAP in Western Lake Macquarie. Kim is responsive to community voice and has transformed the school's physical environment, promoting a culturally safe space.

Kim's leadership extends to the Toronto Learning Community, advocating for the critical role that schools play in shaping Australia's journey towards reconciliation. She has worked with the school's Aboriginal Education Team, AECG, Elders and Land Council to initiate a yearly Reconciliation Walk, with over 1500 students across four preschools, seven primary schools and two high schools participating.

Kim is reflective, considered and sincere. She demonstrates a genuine commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students and contributing to a more just, inclusive and equitable future.



# Staff Awards

## **Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award**

Presented to an Aboriginal employee of the NSW Department of Education who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students, their families and communities.

## Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Staff Member Award

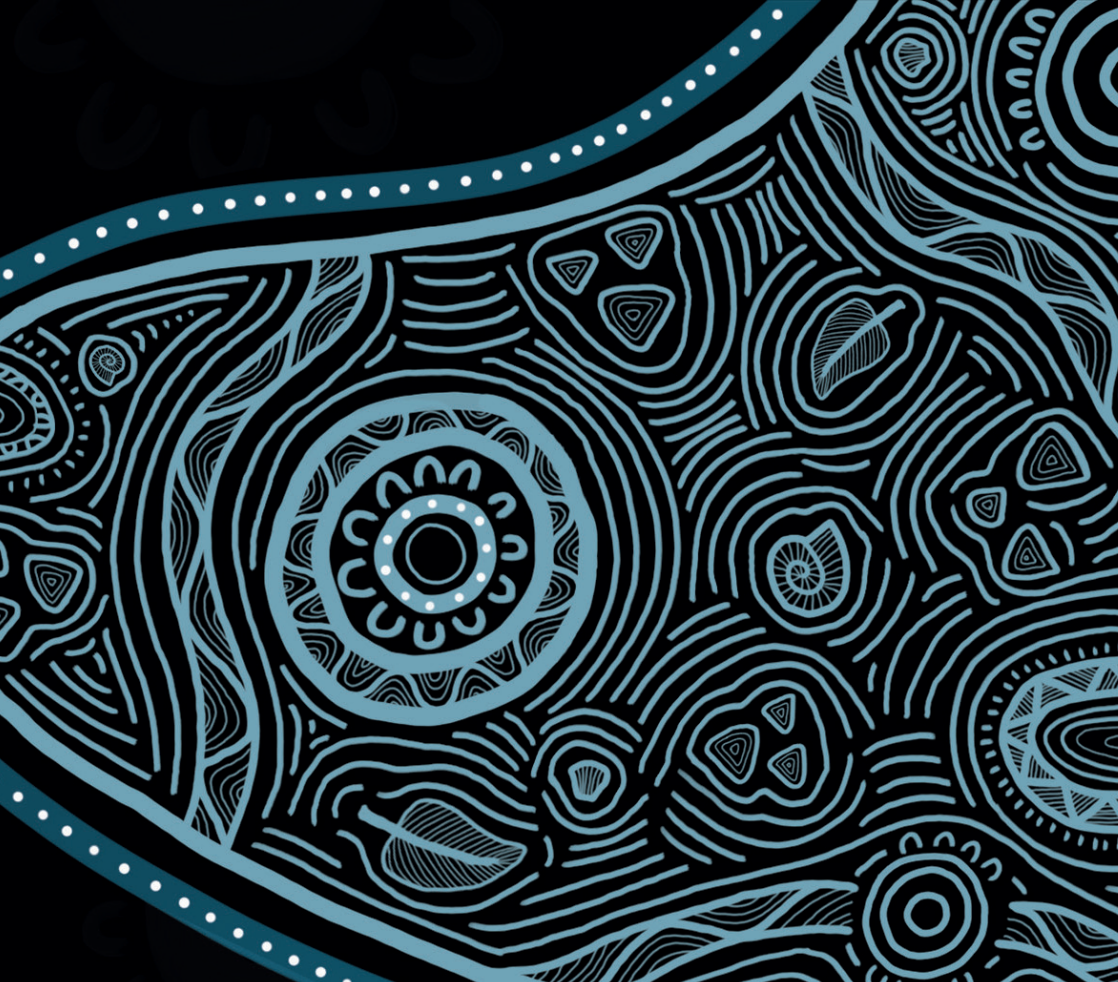


### Gordon Mitchell Wilcannia Central School

Uncle Sunno is a proud Paakantji man is in his 20th year working tirelessly to support the learning of children and young people in Wilcannia. He is a vital link for teaching staff to the local community and his deep knowledge of Paakantji culture supports non-Aboriginal staff to develop the cultural competence required to be effective educators.

He shares the stories of his ancestors willingly with teachers, students and staff and demonstrates every day that by sharing knowledge he is helping to keep it alive for the next generation.

At school he watches over all his family and has supported two generations of children, cousins, grandchildren, nieces and nephews to be safe and successful at school. Uncle Sunno is a successful artist and acts as a positive role model to all aspiring artists in the school community and demonstrates to all the ways art can not only offer financial independence but is also soothing for the soul.



# Staff Awards

## **Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-Aboriginal Staff Member Award**

Presented to a non-Aboriginal employee of the NSW Department of Education who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students and a commitment to working with Aboriginal students, their families, and communities.

## **Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-Aboriginal Staff Member Award**



**Kirsty Adams**

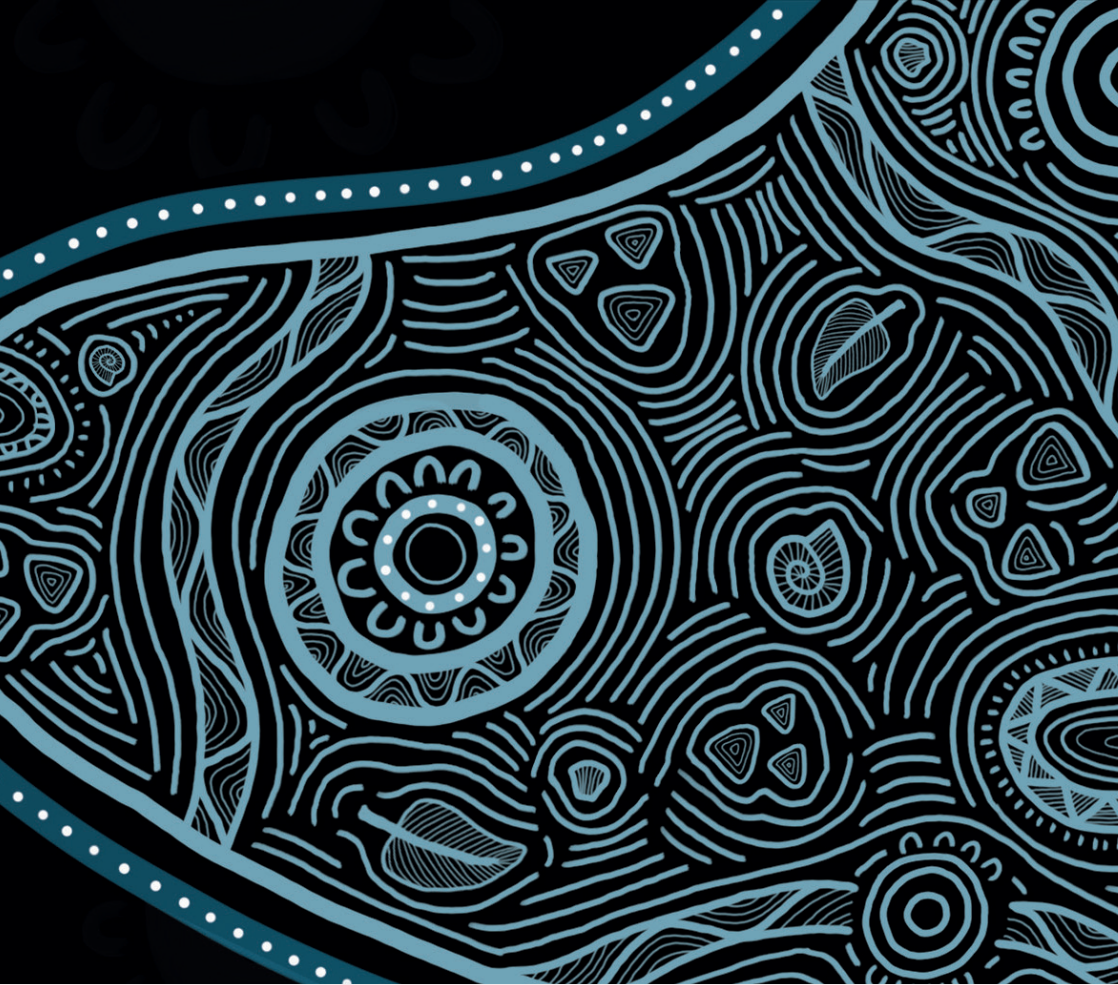
**Tharawal Public School**

Kirsty has made a significant impact in Aboriginal Education. Her commitment to high-quality education for all students, particularly Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander students, sets her apart as a compassionate and devoted educator.

Under Kirsty's leadership, the 'Deadly Kids Program' was successfully implemented, empowering students to set personalised learning goals and celebrate their cultural heritage. Collaborating with parents, students, and staff, Kirsty fostered a culture that embraces the richness of Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander cultures.

She collaboratively initiated and led a comprehensive Professional Learning program for staff, equipping teachers with the tools to integrate Aboriginal perspectives into their teaching approaches.

Kirsty's outstanding qualities and achievements in Aboriginal Education have fostered a positive and inclusive school environment, embracing Aboriginal Histories and Cultures authentically. Her unwavering dedication to promoting cultural awareness and supporting individual student goals exemplify her exceptional leadership at Tharawal Public School and beyond.



# Staff Awards

## **Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-School Based Staff Member Award**

Presented to a non-school based employee of the NSW Department of Education who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to the well-being and educational achievements of Aboriginal students.



## Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by a Non-School Based Staff Member Award



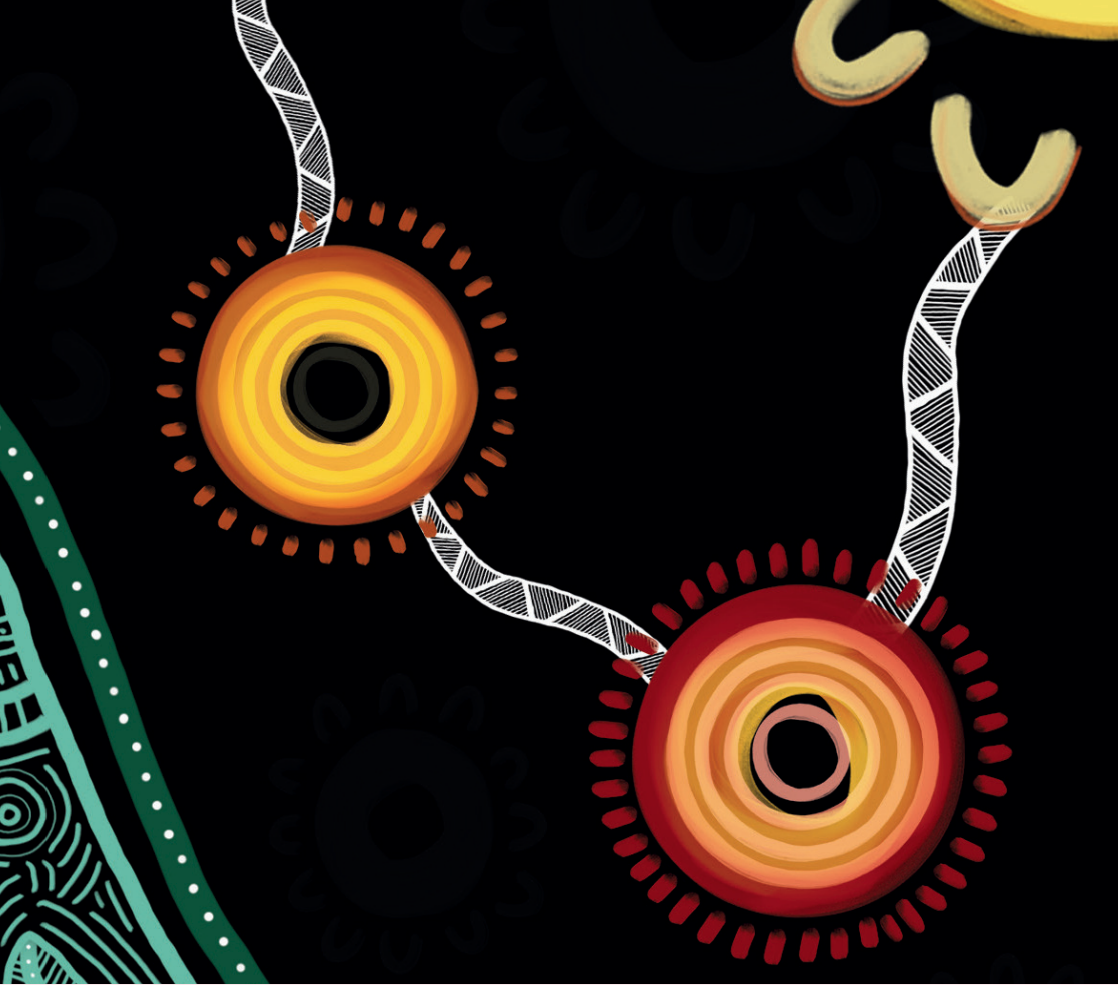
### Luke Allen

#### Reconciliation Action Plan

Luke has overseen and driven the development of the department's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. The Innovate RAP is founded on building trust and confidence with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, families and communities to create safe workplaces and to ensure Aboriginal children get the best possible education outcomes.

To support the implementation of the Innovate RAP, Luke has developed a professional learning module outlining the country's reconciliation journey and the current Innovate RAP. He also developed a supporting toolkit, to enable schools and workplaces across the department to implement practical strategies to support reconciliation.

Luke's passion and commitment to ensure the well-being and educational achievements and outcomes for Aboriginal students shines through in everything he does. Through the work of the Innovate RAP, Luke is supporting the whole department to build an inclusive workplace built on mutual respect, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and cultures are recognised, valued and celebrated.



# School & Community Awards

## Outstanding Early Education and Care Service Award

Presented to a service that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to creating a respectful and culturally responsive learning environment for students, staff, families, and their local Aboriginal communities.

## Outstanding Early Education and Care Service Award



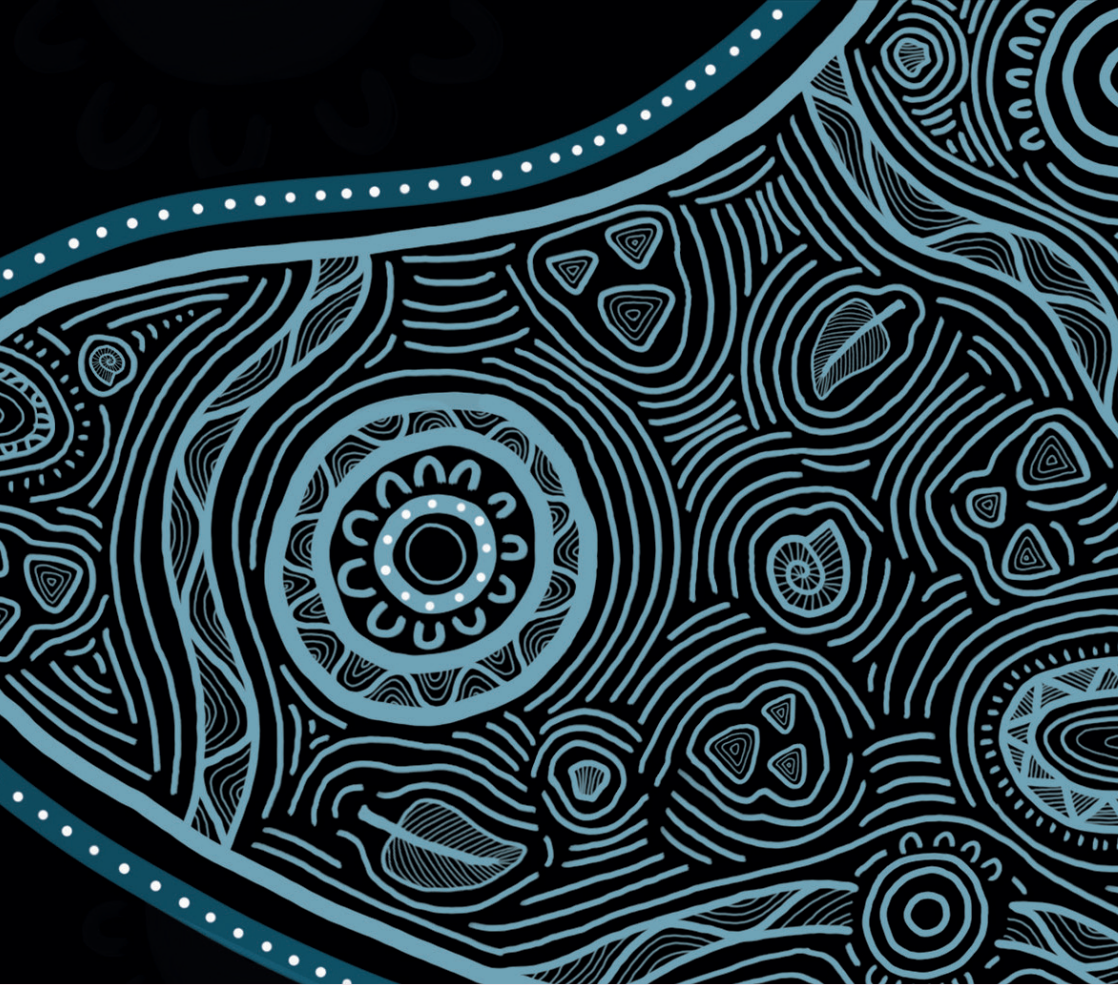
### Dalaigur Preschool and Children's Services

Dalaigur Preschool and Children's Services and Scribbly Gum Dalai are sister services operated by Dalaigur Preschool and Children's Services Aboriginal Corporation in Kempsey on the NSW Mid North Coast. The services have had a long history in the Kempsey area and have been established for over 50 years.

Connection to culture is a major component of their philosophy, teaching practices and children's learning. Educators incorporate the Dunghutti culture into every aspect of the program through customs, language, connection to country and art.

The service works with Northcott Disability Services to implement the Aboriginal Therapy Project where allied health professionals are flown in, train and mentor assistants who are able to implement the therapy program. They have over 50 children in this program and have 3 assistants based at the service.

The Northcott managers identified the uniqueness of the service which has at least 60% of the children enrolled on a NDIS plan. This is making a significant difference for these children and their families and the long-term trajectory for their educational outcomes.



# Staff Awards

## Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Languages Award

Presented to a NSW Department of Education employee who has demonstrated strong commitment to improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal students through the implementation of a school Aboriginal languages program.

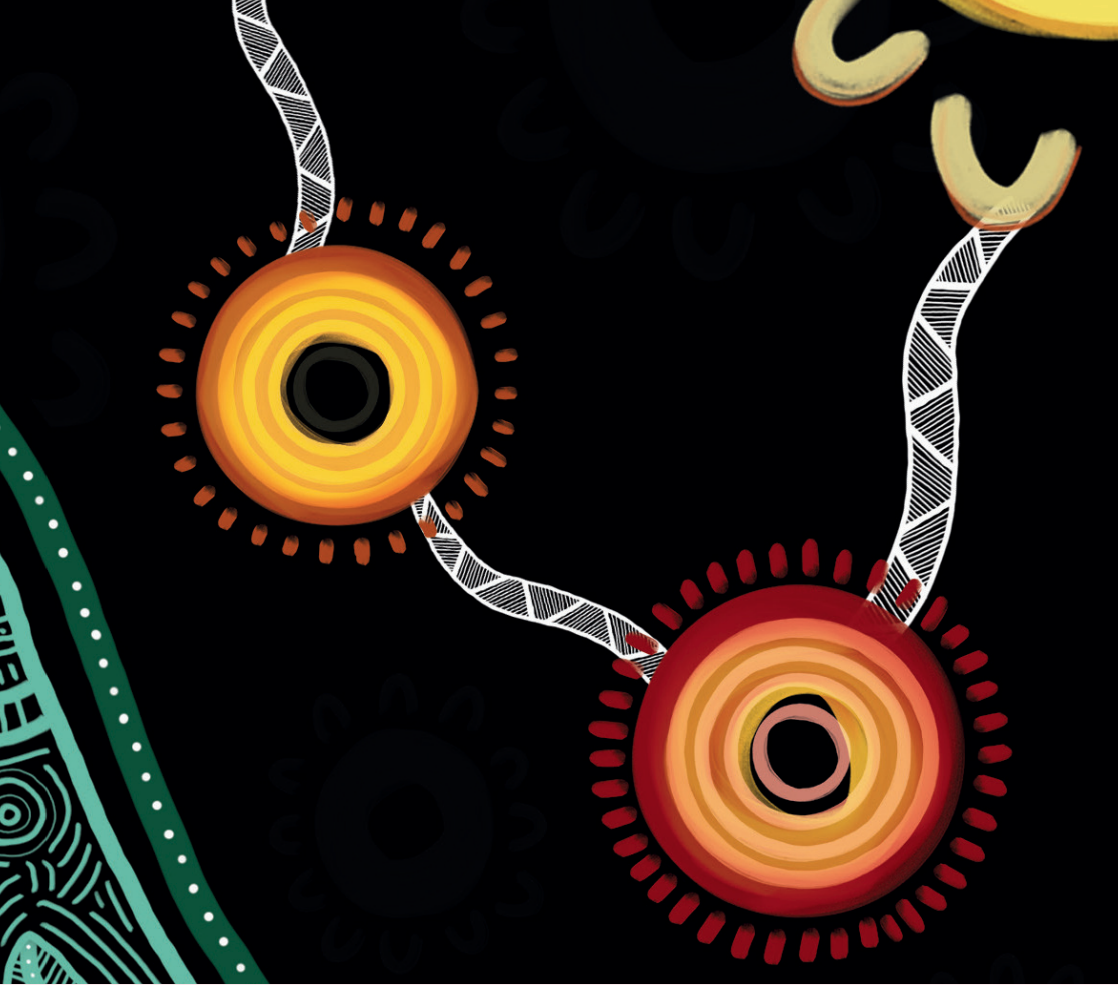
## Outstanding Leadership in Aboriginal Languages Award



### Adrian Harrington Goonellabah Public School

Adrian, or Uncle Ajay to us at Goonellabah Public School, is an outstanding role model to the young Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children at our school. His passion for their wellbeing is exceptional. Ajay works hard to build relationships across the school community and is passionate about ensuring the best educational opportunities for all. Ajay's significant cultural passion is with Aboriginal Language/s, and he has been a substantial contributor to the school Bundjalung Language program. This program is delivered across 11 classes each week has significantly added to the cultural pride among our students. Ajay's language and cultural knowledge is an asset to us here at school.

As a Leader within our community, Ajay is widely respected for his dedication to both Aboriginal culture and education across the Lismore network. As the Lismore AECG President he works tirelessly to ensure that the schools in the region are supported and all voices are heard, school, student and community.



# School & Community Awards

## Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member Award

Presented to an Aboriginal community member who has contributed significantly to the successful educational achievement of Aboriginal students.

## **Outstanding Contribution to Educational Achievement by an Aboriginal Community Member Award**



### **Aunty Lexie Carroll**

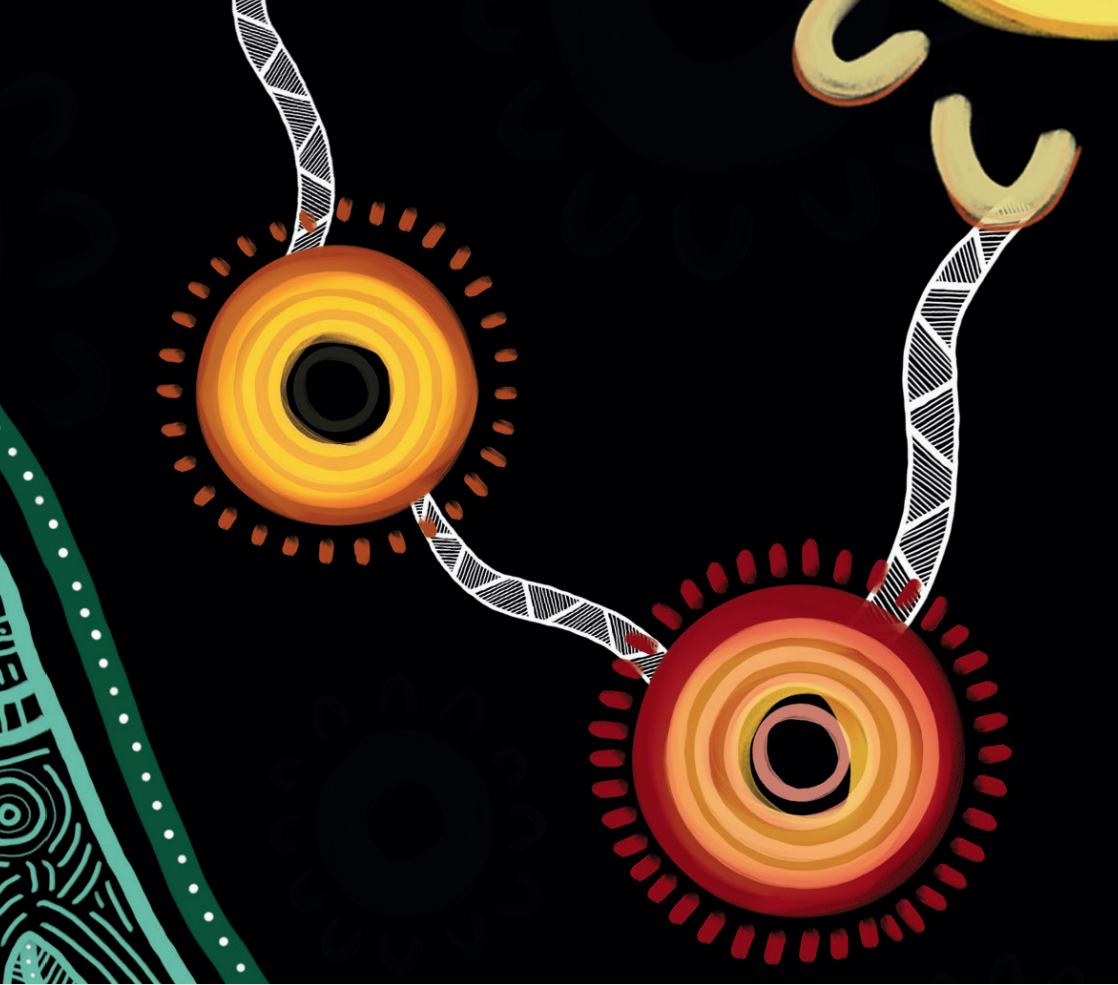
**Sarah Redfern Public School**

Aunty Lexie Carroll, is a highly valued volunteer, working in partnership with staff, students and community at Sarah Redfern Public School.

Aunty Lexie ran story time Zooms during lockdown, and supported staff with answers to questions regarding her culture. She has engaged in staff professional learning on Aboriginal Education and led professional learning for our Aboriginal Education Committee, giving us the tools to build staff confidence in incorporating Aboriginal Education in classrooms.

Aunty Lexie set up a female staff and a female student dance group and gave up her time to teach them the Emu Dance, from her Wiradjuri culture. This was performed during NAIDOC Week in 2022 and 2023.

She has accompanied us on cultural excursions, as well as being a guest speaker at major assemblies. Aunty Lexie was successful in winning Liverpool's Elder of the Year and her 'Elder's Coffee Club' was successful in winning Group of the Year.



# School & Community Awards

## Outstanding School and Community Partnership Award

Presented to a school that has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to respectful and productive partnerships with students, staff, parents and their local Aboriginal communities.



# Outstanding School and Community Partnership Award

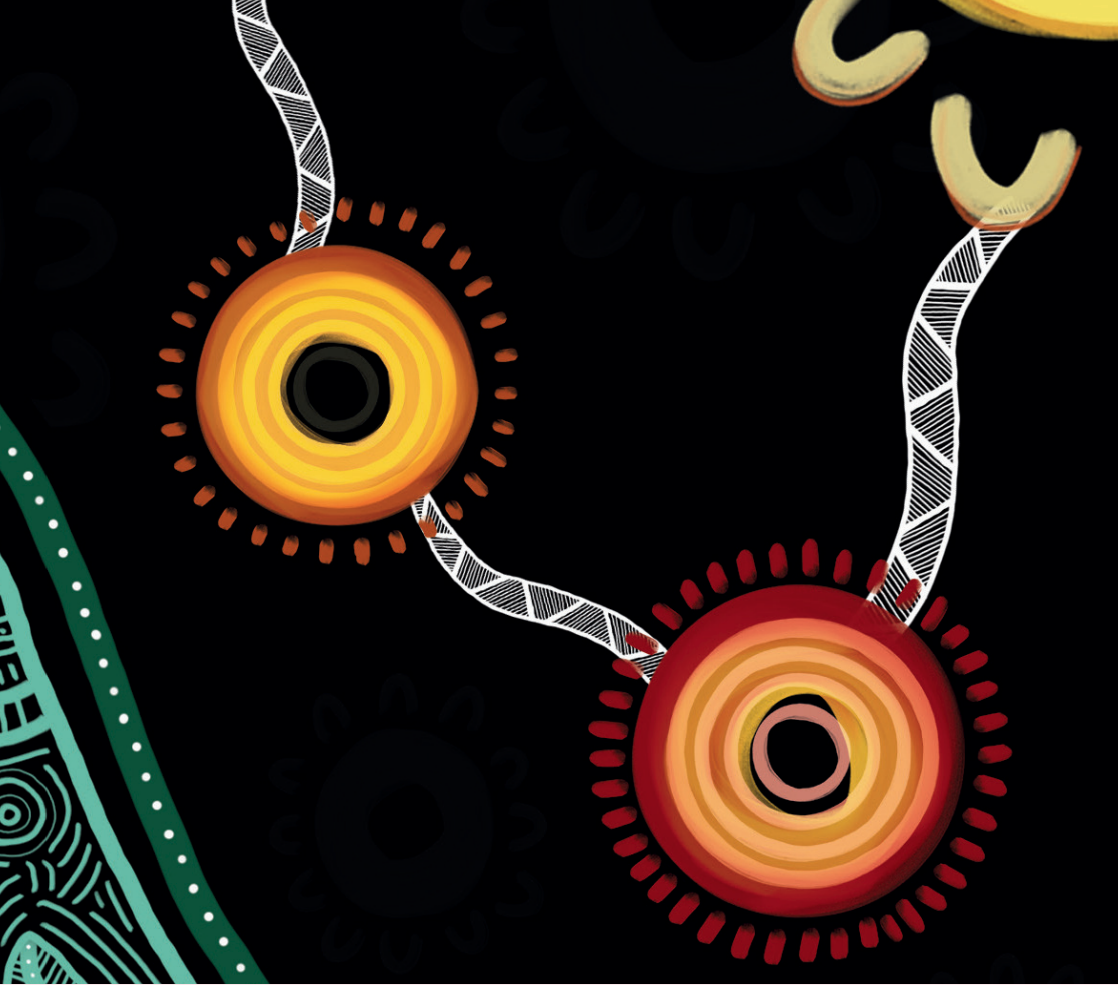


## Narromine High School

The school's collaborative approach, exemplified through its affiliations with our local medical centre providing us with a doctor, 10 community non-governmental organizations (NGOs) support and help case manage our students and families showcases a commitment to holistic education.

Narromine High School's collaborations extend the boundaries of conventional learning, providing students with invaluable real-world experiences. Partnering with Dubbo TAFE, creating the Ginhii Gurray year 10 equivalency program for our disengaged students. This program nurtures a sense of accomplishment and pride in our students and community.

The school's efforts go beyond textbooks, instilling life skills and community values in students. Narromine High School's commitment to collaboration demonstrates a forward-thinking approach to education.



# School & Community Awards

## **Outstanding Commitment to Increasing Knowledge and Understanding of Aboriginal Histories, Culture and Experiences of Aboriginal Peoples Award**

Presented to a school or a community of schools that have demonstrated a strong commitment to establishing a culture of respect, caring and inclusive teaching practices which recognise, value and meet the diverse needs of Aboriginal students.

## **Outstanding Commitment to Increasing Knowledge and Understanding of Aboriginal Histories, Culture and Experiences of Aboriginal Peoples Award**



### **Briar Road Public School**

Briar Road is a beacon of leadership in Aboriginal education, fostering reconciliation and unity within its school community. The impactful engagement ranges from advising on system-wide Cultural Awareness Training to sharing best practices through the CESE case study 'Stronger Strides'. The school is a national finalist in Reconciliation Australia's 'Narragunnawali awards' and 2023 finalists in the National Educator's award.

This commitment transcends the school and is magnified through innovative initiatives. The school annually offers week-long cultural immersion learning 'on country', hosts network corroborees, and facilitates first nations professional development. Collaborative partnerships with AECG, health, early childhood, and wellbeing agencies further the impact.

The strategic workforce mirrors the Aboriginal student population, fostering an environment where academic attainment matches or surpasses that of non-Aboriginal peers. Attendance rates surpass state averages, affirming our success.



# Recognition Awards

## NSW Connected Communities Excellence Award

Nominated by the Executive Director, Connected Communities, this award is presented to a NSW Department of Education employee or a community member who has displayed a strong commitment in collaborating with the Connected Communities Directorate.

# NSW Connected Communities Excellence Award



## Daryl Currie

### Professional and Ethical Standards (PES)

Being strong in his commitment to ensure equity and fairness is realised and upheld, Daryl Currie has given outstanding commitment to the Connected Communities Strategy.

Daryl's relentless quest to combat disadvantage, particularly experienced by the schools implementing the Connected Communities Strategy, has reflected his integrity of character and formidable leadership. He has captured the confidence of many of the local Aboriginal Community members through his willingness to meet and discuss with them the challenges faced and the hope they have for their children and their communities. This has led him to guide his team to work differently and creatively to ensure NSW Public schools are well positioned to deliver a high standard of inclusive education that has a positive cascading effect on students, parents and the whole school Community.

He has gallantly championed the department's anti-racism strategy and has been relentless in persuading and influencing colleagues to think, reflect and manifest a sense of Cultural humility that can only lead to more positive and respectful relationships and understandings.

Connected Communities schools and the directorate have valued the admirable leadership, expertise and collegiality provided by Daryl and the Professional and Ethical Standards team (PES) and are grateful for the ongoing assistance they so capably provide. We congratulate Daryl on receiving this award of exceptional recognition.



# Recognition Awards

## Kimberwalli Award

Nominated by the Director, Kimberwalli, this award is presented to a NSW Department of Education employee or a community member who has displayed a strong commitment to Kimberwalli and its community.

# Kimberwalli Award



## Steve Trist

### Djirabitty Dancers

Steve is a proud Darug and Muruwarri man and cultural educator in Western Sydney. Steve is the CEO of Djirabitty, an Aboriginal owned Business in Western Sydney that is focused on creating experiences to engage in and learn about Aboriginal culture. Steve has worked in partnership with Kimberwalli to co-design and deliver the Kimberwalli Academy for Excellence cultural engagement programs.

Each Term, Steve delivered two x 10 weeks after school cultural engagement workshops at Kimberwalli, supporting over 150 students from 37 schools to engage in and feel good about their culture through dance, art, exploration of artifacts and storytelling.

Steve has been an integral part of the design and delivery of two pilot Kimberwalli Cultural Immersion School Excursions to over 120 primary and secondary students across 8 school in the Madang Gurang Junior AECG.

Steve is a constant, positive, and active Kimberwalli partner, known and respected by many Aboriginal families and schools, and a role model to many Aboriginal students in Western Sydney.



# Recognition Awards

## NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award

This award is presented to a NSW Department of Education employee or a community member/organisation who has displayed a strong commitment to collaboration.



# NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Award



## The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate

The Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships Directorate (AOPD) Family has again demonstrated a year of disciplined delivery, courage and agility particularly in the delivery of the School Development Day (SDD) focused on Aboriginal Education. All members of the AOPD Family contributed in various ways, demonstrating their ongoing and collective commitment to learning, clarity and accountability.

Passion, energy, creativity, innovation, leadership and collaboration within and beyond the directorate were evident from the inception to the evaluation of this SDD and reflect the daily practices embedded in the AOPD Family's ways of working.

All AOPD staff have again engaged enthusiastically this year in their laser focus on delivering a difference.


All AOPD staff have again ensured a relentless focus on reducing red tape for staff in schools.

All AOPD staff have again recognised the importance of their individual roles to the department's priorities to the highest levels.

All AOPD staff have again demonstrated and delivered evidenced based approaches to their daily work.

The success of the SDD reflects the department's and the AOPD Family's Ways of Working which are the required behaviours to drive critical shifts necessary for improvement across the department.

Thank you to each and every member of our AOPD Family. You really do make a difference!



The NSW Department of Education would like to thank you for attending the 18th Annual Nanga Mai Awards.



