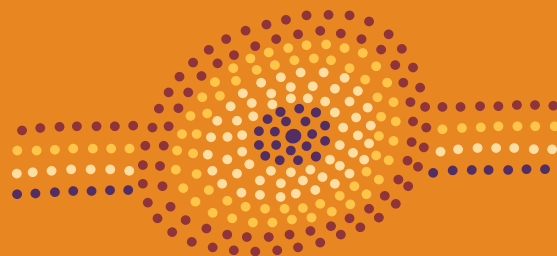




*Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School Class of 2021 Graduation in Broome WA*



**YIRAMALAY/WESLEY  
STUDIO SCHOOL**  
ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Fairfield, Leopold Road, Fitzroy Crossing, Western Australia



*Kaylene Marr sharing cultural knowledge with a young visitor at Yiramalay*

**We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's first people, and pay respects to the Elders both past and present as owners of this land where we stand.**

**Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School Annual Report 2021**

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**Vision**

The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School holds an important place within a world-class coeducational independent school developing the whole person through timeless principles of learning to know, learning to do, learning to live with and learning to be – with innovation and wisdom.

Within these important principles, the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School seeks to bring about positive change through education to the children and families of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities who are part of the school. Fostering harmony within the school community, where cultural diversity is respected and a sense of belonging is cultivated, is key to bringing about this change.

**Values**

With shared respect for people, language, culture and country, the partnership between Bunuba people and Wesley College, Melbourne values:

- expanding the horizons and life choice expectations of our youth
- enriching and enhancing the whole-of-life experiences for both communities
- developing cultural understanding and a capacity to relate to others
- supporting and enhancing community cohesion

**These values co-exist alongside Wesley's distinctive ethos which values:**

- the individual talents and worth of each in its community
- an open-entry policy and achievement of personal best in all areas
- a diverse, balanced curriculum, enabling students to excel academically
- openness and creativity
- care for the emotional and social wellbeing of everyone in its community
- a broad understanding of human and cultural diversity, nurturing commitment to social justice
- spirituality, embracing Christianity and other faiths
- its history and traditions.

# GOVERNANCE



**The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School is now in its 12th year of operation, with 2021 being another challenging year due to the global pandemic. All aspects of the operations of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School have been impacted, with all students and staff having to be alert to the changing medical requirements and differing border rules, giving rise to exceptional logistical challenges and a need for flexibility.**

As expected, there was a drop in enrolments in 2021. However, as in the previous year, all teachers, students and staff demonstrated exceptional resilience and a “can do” attitude to enable the school to continue to support student learning in these very difficult circumstances. I congratulate the graduation of Year 12 students in 2021 for demonstrating great determination and fortitude to complete their schooling. These qualities will stand them in good stead in the future and we wish them every success.

Matthew Watson took up his appointment as the inaugural Principal of Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School from the commencement of 2021. Matt brings extensive experience at the Studio School together with dedicated commitment to the continuity of Yiramalay. He is an outstanding leader and has proven to be a steady hand in these difficult times.

The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School is a collaborative endeavour between the Bunuba community in the Kimberley and Wesley College in Melbourne. It was born out of broad, shared objectives between the two communities. Those objectives, as outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding, are to expand the horizons, life choices and expectations of our youth; to enrich and enhance whole-of-life experiences for both communities; to develop cultural understanding and the capacity to relate to others; and to support and enhance community cohesion.

The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School Steering Committee was established as part of the initial Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School agreement as a vehicle to advise on and make recommendations regarding the preferred operation and management

of the business affairs of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School.

The Committee typically aims to meet four times a year and has equal representation from the Bunuba and Wesley College communities, reflecting the shared contribution to the development and delivery of this unique program. Meetings this year, again, proceeded via Zoom. It has been disappointing for Committee members to be unable to visit the school administration to see the developments firsthand and to meet students and staff.

As well as updates on the School's progress financially and operationally, the Committee learned about the amazing activities and experiences delivered throughout the year to support shared learning, a major focus of the school. Meetings were also a chance to affirm the Steering Committee's strong support for opportunities to expand the Studio School concept via a new entity Studio Schools Australia (SSA). I thank all involved with the Steering Committee during 2021.

Studio Schools Australia (SSA) builds on the success of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School model showing opportunities exist to bring a culturally appropriate education to an even greater population.

In seeking to expand the approach for both teachers and students, this new entity - Studio Schools Australia (SSA) - has been established under the leadership of CEO, Dr Helen Drennen AM, the former Principal of Wesley College who, with partners in the Bunuba community, was instrumental in forming the original Yiramalay/Wesley educational partnership.

The Chair of Studio Schools Australia is Jennifer Westacott AO, and the Board will comprise a highly qualified representation of people familiar with the Studio School model. In 2020, the Bunuba community decided transition its governance to Studio Schools of Australia, a decision which has support from the Steering Committee. Wesley College continues to support this decision and is providing continuity and ongoing support in developing transition plans and new governance arrangements. Studio Schools Australia and Wesley College are working toward transition during the 2022 school year.

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**ALL TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND STAFF DEMONSTRATED EXCEPTIONAL RESILIENCE AND A “CAN DO” ATTITUDE TO ENABLE THE SCHOOL TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING IN THESE VERY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES.**

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During the year, Studio Schools Australia received Government funding to establish three new Studio Schools across Northern Australia, as well as an Indigenous Education and Research Centre on country to support the professional development of teachers across the system.

Teachers, staff and students who have been involved with the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School over the past 12 years should be proud of the role they have played, as the success of Yiramalay has been instrumental in this educational systems change for Indigenous education in Northern Australia. The Steering Committee wishes SSA every success.

I would like to thank Leadership and staff of the school for their ongoing dedication, commitment and resilience in coping with the challenges of the pandemic, the vagaries of the seasons and support while the School transitions to this exciting new future under Studio Schools Australia.

The Friends of Yiramalay, a group established by parents from Wesley College, continues to play a positive and active role in supporting the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School. Their ongoing support is greatly appreciated.

Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School has a bright future. I am sure that post pandemic, we will see even further growth and a continuation of exceptional student outcomes.

**Estelle Bowman  
Chair, Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School  
Steering Committee**

# YIRAMALAY/WESLEY STUDIO SCHOOL STEERING COMMITTEE

## Overview

The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School Steering Committee (the Steering Committee) was established in 2011 under the Studio School Agreement between Wesley College, Bunuba Cattle Company, Bunuba Aboriginal Corporation and Bunuba Inc. The function of the Steering Committee is to assist the partnership between Wesley College and the Bunuba community to fulfil the purposes of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School.

That purpose is to offer full-time study to students in Years 10, 11 and 12, industry learning, personal and social learning and academic study towards accredited Year 12 qualifications for Aboriginal students from regions across western and northern Australia and students from Wesley College in Melbourne. The Steering Committee includes three members with voting rights appointed by Wesley College and three members with voting rights appointed by the Bunuba people.

Matt Watson commenced as Principal of Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School in 2021 and joined the Steering Committee. He has been instrumental in supporting the partnership by overseeing the transition of Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School. Matt is passionate about education and how it influences the decisions young people make about their future and changes it makes to people's lives.

## Profiles



**Estelle Bowman**

Estelle Bowman's expertise spans the public, private and academic sectors in Australia and overseas. She has

held senior positions in the Federal Public Service in Canberra, in the UK Cabinet Office in the Prime Minister's Efficiency Unit and on the faculty of a leading business school. Estelle is a Chartered Occupational Psychologist (UK) and Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society.

She has held various board and committee roles and conducted consultancy assignments in the business and voluntary sector and is a managing partner of a boutique management consultancy business. Estelle is a graduate of the University of Adelaide and the Canberra CAE (now the University of Canberra).



**Nick Evans**

Nick Evans (OW1985) is Wesley's 17th Principal. Nick has a long association with Wesley College both as a student

and in teaching and leadership roles spanning 20 years. Following five years as Deputy Headmaster and Head of Senior School at Melbourne Grammar School, Nick has returned to Wesley as an accomplished leader with extensive experience in contemporary curriculum development, in the implementation of academic and cocurricular programs to complement a holistic education and in building connected relationships with staff, students and community. Nick also brings to Wesley extensive experience in coeducational and residential schooling, teacher appraisal and the development of programs to support teaching excellence.



**Kaylene Marr**

Kaylene Marr was born in Derby and grew up in Fitzroy Crossing and on Leopold Downs Station on Bunuba

country. She is a traditional owner of the land and an artist whose connection to the land inspires her artwork. Mother to three children, Kaylene works at the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School as a Cultural and Community Advisor and lives and works with the students in both Melbourne and the Kimberley. She is also an actor who has featured in several major film productions. Kaylene is passionate about preserving the language and culture of the Bunuba people while embracing white fella education to improve outcomes for Indigenous people.



**Marianne Stillwell**

Marianne Stillwell is the President of the Wesley College Council. She has been a member of the Wesley College

Council since 2006, and is the Chair of the Strategy, Ethics, Compliance and Governance Committee, and Remuneration Committee. In her professional career, Marianne spent 12 years in finance management roles with Ford Credit Australia Limited, and has 10 years of secondary teaching experience in Catholic and independent schools. Marianne is currently Executive Director of the Stillwell Family Council and a Director of Stillwell Motor Group, a family company specialising in prestige motor vehicle retail. She is also Deputy Chair of the Board of Management for Independent Schools Victoria. Marianne's daughter currently attends Wesley College and her two sons are graduates of Wesley.



**Matt Watson**

Matt Watson is well known and respected at Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School and within the Wesley College communities.

For the past year, he has been the inaugural Principal of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School and in the years prior, the Deputy Director of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School and Deputy Head of Learning in Residence in Melbourne. Before Yiramalay, Matt was Principal of Nhulunbuy Primary School in East Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory for four years. He was also Principal of Batchelor Area School in the Northern Territory for two years.

Matt holds a Bachelor of Education, Bachelor of Arts and Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. With an understanding of the Studio School and extensive leadership experience in schools with Indigenous students, he is well placed to take on the challenge of achieving the best possible outcomes for the Indigenous students at the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School.



**Cameron Moroney**

Cameron Moroney is the Business Director and Chief Financial Officer of Wesley College. Cameron has held

senior executive leadership positions at the Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Information Officer level across complex, multi-site businesses including RMIT University, Epworth HealthCare, Ericsson and BHP. His executive responsibilities have encompassed strategy/business planning, market/business development, customer service delivery and support, financial and performance management, facilities management, information systems, supply/major contract negotiation, insurance and risk management.



**Wendy Lasica**

Wendy Lasica is an award-winning theatre producer. She has been a director and board member of the Next Wave

Festival, chaired funding panels for Arts Victoria, been general manager for Stonnington Symphony, written a how-to book for emerging artists and managed a playwrights' award at the State Library of Victoria. Wendy has also worked extensively in New York. She holds a Masters in Urban Planning and operates a niche practice working at the intersection of cities and culture. Wendy's son currently attends Wesley College and her daughter is a graduate of Wesley.

# WESLEY COLLEGE PRINCIPAL'S OVERVIEW



**This year has once again proved a very challenging one for the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School.**

**While Western Australia was left once again largely untouched by the ravages of COVID-19, the dislocation early in the pandemic meant that Yiramalay students studying in Melbourne were removed from their families and communities for much of the year. It also meant that the majority of inductions from Melbourne did not go ahead.**

We had looked forward to 2021 being a year free from dislocation. Sadly, as this is written, the first real impact of the pandemic is reaching Western Australia. We hope the associated dislocation will be short-lived.

This year witnessed, once again, a very different graduation for our Yiramalay graduates than in previous years. For the second time, the graduation occurred in the Kimberley, with Melbourne staff and NT students and families attending virtually. The difficulties of travel across Australia made this an inevitability again last year.

2021 did not see the enrolments of Yiramalay recover to pre-pandemic levels. The impact of the pandemic on the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School is hard to underestimate, as it has made travel across the Western Australian border impossible for almost two years. That said, we are proud of the impact the Studio School has had on the lives of its students. Key metrics measuring impact are now regularly reported across school retention rates, pathways to employment and further education, and in areas of the development of strong Indigenous culture and leadership skills.

The breadth of educational opportunities at Yiramalay are many and include the Induction program, Senior Years Learning Framework, VCE and Learning in Residence. The impact of learning and personal growth is far reaching, affecting not only those students who attend the school, but their families, their communities, and all those whose lives they touch.

The quality of a school is always reflected by the quality of staff and in this regard, Yiramalay is blessed. As Principal, I know that we are fortunate to have exceptional staff and I would like to thank Matt Watson, Kaylene Marr, Eliza Barlow, Kym Oakley and Brent Simons for the leadership and commitment they have shown, and to all teachers both at Yiramalay and in Melbourne. They are assisted by a team of formidable support staff who do a magnificent job. Of crucial importance to the success of Yiramalay are the Aboriginal staff who are pivotal to the program.

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**THE IMPACT OF LEARNING AND PERSONAL GROWTH ARE FAR REACHING, AFFECTING NOT ONLY THOSE STUDENTS WHO ATTEND THE SCHOOL, BUT THEIR FAMILIES, THEIR COMMUNITIES AND ALL THOSE WHOSE LIVES THEY TOUCH.**

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*Induction 45 students climbing the Big Boab on the way to Yiramalay*



*Yiramalay students and staff at the Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre*

I would like to pay particular tribute to Matt Watson. In his first year in the new position of Principal of Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School, Matt has been a tower of strength for his community and school. The manner in which he has dealt with the continuing complications of the pandemic has been wonderful to witness. Matt has been removed from his family by the pandemic for the vast majority of last year, and his dedication to the school and to its students was seen in no more powerful a gesture than his willingness to endure this separation. I thank him on behalf of the entire Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School community.

2021 was once again a year like no other. As the pandemic reaches WA for the first time this year, let's hope that the inevitable impact will be mild and that the Studio School can roar back into action before its transition to Studio Schools of Australia.

**Nick Evans**  
Principal, Wesley College

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**THE QUALITY OF A SCHOOL  
IS ALWAYS REFLECTED  
BY THE QUALITY OF STAFF  
AND IN THIS REGARD,  
YIRAMALAY IS BLESSED.**

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# YIRAMALAY/WESLEY STUDIO SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Reconciliation Week theme for 2021 'More than a word: Reconciliation takes action,' called for innovative and creative measures to advance the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School's vision of creating positive change through education for the Fitzroy Valley and Wesley College communities in a year characterised by adversity and challenge for staff and students.

From lockdowns, shutdowns, border closures and impassable roads due to the wet season, few would question the dedication and commitment of staff and the resilience, courage and determination of students. Despite the challenges, the

school emerged stronger than ever in many areas, including our on-country experiential learning programs and approaches to the pastoral care and wellbeing of our students.

Our Leadership team worked actively to ensure that Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School students were supported and received quality of education, no matter what the situation or challenge.

Many thanks to Kaylene Marr (Cultural and Community Advisor and Traditional Owner), Eliza Barlow (Deputy Principal), Kym Oakley and Brent Simons (Residential Student Wellbeing Coordinators) who gave

an incredible amount of energy and support to the entire community during this unique year, and to Helen Grist (Administrative Team Assistant) and Sheryl Chaplin (Business Support Officer) who supported them.

## Community Development

An integral part of the Yiramalay program is the involvement of local Elders who offer invaluable cultural knowledge and the ability to place local and Wesley students on-country by affirming their cultural relationships to each other.





*Induction 46 students enjoying a swim at Wire Springs*

Elders Kaylene Marr, Marilyn Oscar, Camillia Rogers, Susan Hoad, Helen Malo, Edna Cheryl, Olive Knight, Mervyn Street, Jimmy 'Dillon' Andrews, Ralphie Green and Sandra Nuggett representing the Bunuba, Gooniyandi, Nyikina, Walmajarri and Wankatjunka language groups who live in communities around Fitzroy Crossing, generously shared their culture, land and community, spending days with our new students speaking about their own stories, as well as giving lessons around skin groups, kinship ties and bush foods. For the local students not from the Fitzroy Valley, this provides a cultural safety net by ensuring that they understand the unique culture of the Valley, as well as linking them through kinship to connections that run across the country.

It is always special for the school staff group to see how knowledgeable and comforting the Elders are when providing this invaluable information. Not only do the Elders enjoy coming out to Yiramalay and visiting their beautiful Bunuba country, but they bring a special energy to the school which all members of our community highly respect. We would like to pay our respects to these Elders and thank them for generously sharing their cultural knowledge with us.

### Year 12 Graduation

Our Year 12 graduates for 2021 are to be commended and congratulated. Jason Baird, Hiki-Lee Kinley and Rohan Watts are three young people who made an important choice... to NOT give up on their education or leave their destiny in the hands of someone other than themselves.

In a year of challenges with limited opportunities for student travel, the performance of our Year 12 graduates was impressive to say the least. Graduation celebrations and ceremonies were once again hosted in Broome in December, rather than Melbourne, due to Coronavirus restrictions. Staff, students, family and community members who were not able to be at the event in person were able to join via Zoom to recognise and share in the outstanding achievements of our students over their three years of senior study.



*Kelwin Unghango and Kyle Wurramara during a Certificate II class at Yiramalay*

In the three circles of learning that comprise the Senior Years Learning Framework (SYLF), students achieved personal successes in many learning areas:

### Academic Learning

- SYLF – Advanced Level: One student completed the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE).
- SYLF – Standard Level: Three students completed Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways.
- Two students who were unable to return to school completed a selection of units from Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways.
- Three students completed a Level 2 First Aid Certificate.

### Personal Development

- 23 students completed 489.5 hours of leadership, teamwork and/or community service activity.

The health and wellbeing programs in both Melbourne and the Kimberley in 2021 saw significant enhancements made, with cultural identity the keystone of the improvements. The inclusion of pastoral care time each morning to enhance readiness to learn, as well as an expanded program of personal development camps, on country programs, afternoon, evening and weekend activities

saw students flourish and experience growth and development in many forms.

The approach was well-supported by highly-valued community relationships with Nindilingarri, Boab Health (Lovebites Program), Fitzroy Valley District Hospital, Theatre Kimberley and Bunuba Rangers. PALS funding supported the healthy eating, cooking and community development programs and student community contributions in the kitchen and residential environments continued to support the timeless principles of learning to do and learning to live with.

### Industry Learning

- 23 students completed 54 days of structured industry placement.

During the final weeks of Term 4, Kimberley-based students participated in five days of structured workplace experience in Fitzroy Crossing and Broome. The program was enthusiastically embraced by local community workplaces, providing students with practical work tasks and guidance to further develop skills and knowledge learned in class. Through participation in the workplace learning program, students developed and demonstrated increasing competence in the core skills required for work and employability.

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**THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAMS IN BOTH MELBOURNE AND THE KIMBERLEY IN 2021 SAW SIGNIFICANT ENHANCEMENTS MADE, WITH CULTURAL IDENTITY THE KEYSTONE OF THE IMPROVEMENTS.**

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Highlights of these experiences include:

- Two students both offered places to study with KAMS Cert IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care;
- Two students successfully achieving their Learners' Permits with the support of Garnduwa in Derby;
- Three students offered casual and part-time jobs with Derby Youth Centre, and Garnduwa in Fitzroy Crossing.

## Induction Program

Each individual joining the Induction Program brings their own ideas and life experiences to this journey. Each individual leaves having had a rare opportunity to live and learn in the Studio School context. The partnership is alive in these moments and I hope all Induction students take with them a readiness to act and play their part in truth-telling and making reconciliation *More than a Word*.

COVID-19 continued to restrict our Induction program in 2022. Of the six planned Inductions, only two that included Melbourne students were able to proceed due to the introduction of a 2-week quarantine requirement for Victorian travellers entering Western Australia. Accordingly, we ran three Inductions solely for our local students ready to experience the Studio School and all that it offers.

- Induction 44 in February with 8 local students, led by Monique Fewkes (Head of Teaching and Learning)
- Induction 45 in April with 29 Melbourne and 6 local students, led by Kym Adams (Induction Coordinator).
- Induction 46 in May with 27 Melbourne and 3 local students, led by Kym Adams (Induction Coordinator).

- Induction 47 in August with 3 local students, led by Kaylene Marr (Traditional Owner) and Kym Oakley (Teacher).
- Induction 48 in November with 7 local students, led by Eliza Barlow (Deputy Principal), Marilyn Oscar (Program Assistant) and Toby Tracy (Community Engagement Officer).

## Highlights of 2021

Our 2021 School Captains, Rohan Watts and Hiki-Lee Kinley, are Year 12 students in the Senior Years Learning Framework program. As part of their roles, they performed official duties including introducing speakers, welcoming guests and elders, as well as attending meetings and advocating for their fellow students around matters concerning living and learning in our unique setting. Rohan and Hiki-Lee are to be commended on a great year.

The Kimberley Cup event in Broome was an opportunity for our students to do themselves and the school proud. There were many excellent individual and team efforts, as well as displays of fairness, teamwork, perseverance and determination. Year 10 student Devan Wunungmurra, won Most Valuable Player for the mixed basketball competition. We also congratulate the boys football team and the mixed basketball team on their Grand Final wins.

In July, Yiramalay students travelled to Broome to compete in the U19s Kimberley Colts Football Championship. Year 12 student, Rohan Watts, was recognised by Claremont representatives and the Central Kimberley coaching group as the best player from the Central Kimberley team.

Three of our students, Rohan Watts, Elizah Dingo and Joharn Oscar, were selected to represent the Kimberley in the U17s team and will travel to Dampier in September to compete against the U17s Pilbara team. Rohan Watts was also identified as a top five player at the Carnival and was selected to travel to Perth to participate in the Kimberley Spirit Program.

For the first time, the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School participated in the annual Interschool Athletics Carnival in the Kimberley. The Carnival was attended by schools from eleven different communities, including Wananami, Kulkarriya, Wulungurra, Djugerari and Yiyili. Our students performed admirably. We collected a total of 27 ribbons (1st, 2nd or 3rd). Miranda Brooking won every single event that she participated in. Wayne Watts received Runner-Up for the Senior Secondary boy's division and Elizah Dingo was the Champion in the Senior Secondary boys' division.

As part of the Academic and Industry Learning program, students attended the Strong Women's Business Gathering in Derby. Workshops in bush medicine, screen printing and painting with ochre were among the offerings sampled. Students also travelled to Broome and visited ABC Kimberley, PAKAM (Pilbara and Kimberley Aboriginal Media) and Goolari Media radio stations to learn more about the media industry.

While in Broome, students examined the impact of tourism on the Dinosaur Coast at Gantheaume Point and visited the aquaculture facility at Broome TAFE, observing the innovative and sustainable breeding and farming of wild fish species such as Barramundi.



Yiramalay students with Residential Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Brent Simons, at the King of the Kimberley annual basketball competition at Halls Creek

Reconciliation Week in the Kimberley was celebrated with community involvement and the introduction of our student leadership team, including 2021 School Captains. The theme, *More than a Word, Reconciliation Takes Action*, was celebrated by sharing stories, experiences, cultural practices and understandings with Induction Group 46, with a “Sea of Hands” activity giving participants an opportunity to reflect on their reconciliation actions.

At Wesley College, Glen Waverley, a Reconciliation Breakfast and themed assemblies across the campus celebrated Reconciliation Week. At these events, Yiramalay students at the Glen Waverley campus and Wesmob, the student advocacy group for First Nations people, collaborated and shared their insights and perspectives on Reconciliation.

Students, staff and family from the Yakanarra Community School and Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School visited the Studio School as part of our Community Development program. Our students and staff facilitated school tours, Welcome to Country, on-country learning and much more for these VIPs.

Our students also made wonderful contributions to local Fitzroy Crossing radio station Wangki Yupurnanupurra and continue to participate in the Bunuba Rangers program, assisting to clear invasive species and rubbish from local areas and contributing to important work assessing cane toad movement in the Kimberley region.

Our ongoing partnership with Theatre Kimberley continued in 2021 with a weeklong circus skills development workshop in Term 3 for students as part of their outreach program. They returned in Term 4 for our Community Open Day and ran sessions where students could showcase their circus skills for family and community members.

High levels of student engagement and achievement in the industry learning program resulted in Years 10 to 12 students achieving their White Cards (Prepare to Work Safely in the Construction Industry). Every student was also placed in a week-long structured, supervised Industry Learning Program.

## Alumni

- Jayden Landers (OW2019) enrolled at UWA and joins Alena Landers (OW2020) Brigalow McIntosh (OW2018), and Coen Wright (OW2020), undertaking tertiary studies in Victoria and Western Australia.
- Kahlia Rogers (OW2016) mentor at the Studio School is invited to be a model at the Darwin Aboriginal Art Fair showcasing their annual fashion parade, called ‘Country to Couture’.
- Maxie Coppin (OW2019), Nelson Coppin (OW2019), Kahlia Rogers (OW2016), and Shaniqua Shaw (OW2018) take up employment opportunities at the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School in the Kimberley during COVID restrictions.
- Kahlia Rogers (OW2016) competes and wins the 2021 Kimberley Girl competition in Broome, providing positive role-modelling at the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School and for her community.
- Opportunities taken up in the Kimberley, Alice Springs and Adelaide by alumni included roles in sport, retail, construction, and administration.

## Infrastructure

In 2021, improvements were made to staff accommodation. Gilinygiliny and Dirrarri had major refits, with new bathrooms and flooring installed.

## Staff

At Yiramalay, the powerful effect of exceptional and dedicated teachers and staff consistently exceed all expectations. They are exemplary role models and I am privileged to work with them. We said farewell to staff who left at the end of 2021 and wish them well in their future endeavors. We look forward to welcoming several new staff who will be joining the Yiramalay team in 2022.

Together, Yiramalay teachers, mentors, ancillary staff, administrators and community members worked diligently throughout 2021. They are to be congratulated for empowering our students to be the best they can be amidst very significant challenges in 2021. Their hard work and dedication to Yiramalay students does not go unnoticed and they are commended for their unwavering commitment.

## Our Supporters

The value and impact of our funders, donors and volunteers enables the Studio School to further enrich the positive impact we deliver to our students and the wider community and we are thankful for their generosity.

The continued unfaltering advocacy and support of the Friends of Yiramalay, led by Romy Moshinsky and Georgie Raik-Allen, requires highlighting once again this year. *Firestarter - The Story of Bangarra* movie fundraiser at the Classic Cinema in Elsternwick was one of their most successful screenings, raising funds for Yiramalay students and alumni. This very important support that Yiramalay receives from the Wesley community speaks volumes of the impact the program has made in Melbourne. Yiramalay is now embedded into the fabric of the Wesley community, not as another program offered to Wesley students, but as a way to build understanding, create real friendships and move forward with reconciliation with our First Nations people.

The ongoing generous support and friendship of the Wesley College Council and College Executive, Glen Waverley Learning in Residence, along with the Wesley College and Fitzroy Valley communities, provided crucial encouragement and assistance to the Studio School in 2021.

Despite the continuing hurdles created by the pandemic, this past year has seen the staff and students of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School continue to work and thrive together on-country. As 2022 unfurls, we look to the future with optimism, perseverance and an eagerness to continue exploring the expansion of the Studio Schools model, to scale access to high quality education for Indigenous young people across Australia.

**Matt Watson,**  
Principal, Yiramalay/Wesley  
Studio School

# REGISTRATION AND FUNDING



*Devan Wunungmurra with Noelle Yunupingu at Fitzroy Crossing radio station Wangki Yupurnanupurra*

## **Ongoing registration and Government funding arrangements indicate strong support for the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School.**

The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School was registered by the Department of Education in Western Australia in 2010, for Years 11 and 12, for the period 2011 to 2012. Registration has been renewed for consecutive three-year periods and, in 2018, for a five-year period, the maximum registration renewal possible, until 31 December 2023.

The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School is reliant on both state and Commonwealth government funding, along with donations and funding from philanthropic and other organisations and individuals.

## **Commonwealth government funding**

A Commonwealth Government funding agreement, signed in 2013, provides full funding for students.

The needs-based funding model introduced by the Commonwealth Government in 2014 significantly improved the amount of funding provided to the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School. This model includes loadings on top of base student funding (with Indigenous loadings), which are linked to the size of the school, its remote location and its boarding facilities. This funding has continued on an annual basis.

## **State government funding**

At the state level, Western Australian Ministers for Education have been very supportive of this unique studio school model from the outset in 2010 and have supported the provision of the highest level of funding across the full school year, including the period that students are based in Melbourne.

## **ABSTUDY funding**

ABSTUDY funding commenced in 2013. This specific funding for Indigenous students is provided under provisions of the Commonwealth Government-funded Centrelink program.

The complexities of the ABSTUDY funding application process, combined with a lack of reliable telecommunication for many families in remote areas, make the application process an onerous task.

Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School staff continue to work closely with families to ensure the necessary documentation and information to support their ABSTUDY funding application.

# PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

**Despite the unprecedented turbulence over the past two years, the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School, in partnership with the Fitzroy Valley community and Wesley College, continues to forge its own frontiers in outstanding cross-cultural education with, by and for First Nations people. Once again, the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School staff, administrators and community members have gone to great lengths in 2021 to ensure that students experience a supportive, challenging, and empowering program.**

The role of Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School Foundation is to ensure that these experiences continue to reach the young people and communities who benefit from them by connecting with funders, donors and others in the community who share a vision of Australia where Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people receive the same educational and vocational opportunities. Although the pandemic has continued to create hurdles toward this

end, the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School has remained determined to continue to provide the enriching learning experiences to young Indigenous youth.

Exceptional educational experiences for Indigenous participants were made possible by the financial contributions raised throughout the year. The mentors, community members, staff and of course, students all benefited greatly.


In 2021, some of these experiences included:

- The Induction Program that gave local students a taste of Yiramalay
- Celebrations through cultural activities and actions including Harmony Week, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week
- Travel to Broome for Kimberley Cup for students and staff
- Industry Learning experiences for Year 12 students
- Collaboration with Theatre Kimberley
- Supporting Alumni travel

The Foundation acknowledges the support of the Federal Government, Western Australian government and AISWA for their ongoing support of the program.

The Yiramalay Foundation would like to thank the many generous donors, volunteers and organisations for their ongoing contributions that support our efforts to provide enriching learning experiences to Indigenous youth. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Wesley College and the OWCA community and other supporters from across Australia and overseas for their ongoing endorsement of the Studio School.

Of course, we could not have made it through this year without the ongoing engagement and efforts of the Friends of Yiramalay group led by Romy Moshinsky, Georgie Raik-Allen and Wesley Pride, the St Kilda Road parents' association. Their annual movie "Firestarter" fundraiser at the Classic Cinema in Elsternwick was once again a sell out and a most enjoyable evening. Despite the cancellation of the Year 12 formal due to the pandemic, funds were redirected to support the Year 12 Graduation celebrations in Broome and much needed support for our Alumni.



The Yiramalay Foundation is grateful for the guidance and support from its board members, Nick Evans, Dr June Oscar AO, Kaylene Marr and Marianne Stillwell, and our company secretary, Cameron Moroney. Together with Geoff Allen, Wendy Lasica, Joe Ross, Hugo Stephenson and Estelle Bowman, they diligently advocate and champion the Yiramalay cause, and we are indebted to all of them for their commitment.

In 2022 and beyond, the Yiramalay/Wesley partnership will begin its transition to expand the Studio School model and maximise the value created by this collaboration in providing opportunities and improved access to education for Indigenous students across Australia.

*Yiramalay student Wayne Watts  
at Bandilngan (Windjana Gorge)  
National Park*

# DONORS

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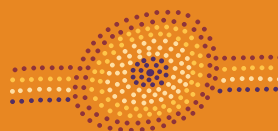
*Snapshots of the Yiramalay community in Melbourne and the Kimberley in 2021*

A scenic view of a riverbank. In the foreground, several young men are standing on the grassy bank, looking towards the water. The water is calm and reflects the sky. A large tree trunk is visible on the right side of the frame. The background shows a rocky cliffside and more trees. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

**WHEN WE LEARN TOGETHER,  
WE GROW TOGETHER**



Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School  
+ 61 3 8102 6244 or + 61 3 8102 6252  
PO Box 391 Fitzroy Crossing WA 6765  
[www.yiramalay.edu.au](http://www.yiramalay.edu.au)



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