

YIRAMALAY/WESLEY STUDIO SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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.

Partnership is key to the successful working of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School

Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School Annual Report 2020

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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

2020 was a year like no other, and the global pandemic that emerged had a major impact on the operations of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School. The school in the Kimberley is situated in a biosecurity zone; extensive measures were implemented onsite and remote learning was provided to students from the Pilbara to the Northern Territory. All teachers, students and staff made an extraordinary effort to support remote learning, admirably led by Acting Director Felicity Pearson.

I congratulate the graduating Year 12 students of the Class of 2020, who continued their education in the face of remote learning and who demonstrated resilience and fortitude to complete their schooling. We wish them well for their futures.

The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School is a collaborative endeavour between the Bunuba community in the Kimberley and Wesley College in Melbourne. It was borne out of broad, shared objectives between the two communities. Those objectives as described in the 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 was established following on from this initial Memorandum of Understanding. Partnership is key to the successful working of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School.

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 as to the preferred operation and management of the business affairs of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School. The Committee typically meets four times a year and has equal representation from the Bunuba and Wesley College communities, reflecting our shared contribution to the development and delivery of this unique program. This year, due to restrictions, meetings proceeded via Zoom, though it was disappointing for the committee members to be unable to visit the school to see the developments firsthand and to meet students and staff. I thank all involved with the Steering Committee during 2020.

The success of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School provides effective 'proof of concept', showing that

the model has great potential to provide further opportunities for the provision of a culturally appropriate education to a greater population. In seeking to expand the approach for both teachers and students, a new entity, Studio Schools of Australia has been established under the leadership of Dr Helen Drennen AM, the former Principal of Wesley College. Helen, with partners in the Bunuba community, was instrumental in forming the original Yiramalay/Wesley educational partnership. In 2020, the Bunuba community and Wesley College decided to explore transitioning the governance of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School to Studio Schools of Australia and its suitably qualified Board of Directors. This decision has strong support from the Steering Committee. Wesley College is providing continuity and ongoing support in developing transition plans and new governance arrangements.

Felicity Pearson was Acting Director for five incredibly unique terms at the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School. Felicity has been with the program for 10 years and 20 years with Wesley College. She is now taking the next step in her career and we all wish her well and thank her for her outstanding leadership.

Matt Watson has been appointed the inaugural Principal of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School, commencing in 2021. Matt has extensive experience of the Studio School, including as the Deputy Director of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School and Deputy Head of Learning in Residence in Melbourne. Matt brings an understanding of the Studio School together with extensive leadership experience in schools with Indigenous students and he is very committed to the continuity of Yiramalay. We look forward to going from strength to strength under his leadership.

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

I look forward to another successful year for the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School in 2021.

Estelle Bowman
Chair, Yiramalay/Wesley
Studio School Steering Committee



OUR OBJECTIVES 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.

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.

In December 2020, Felicity Pearson resigned as Acting Director, Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School. A true pedagogist and driver of Indigenous education, Felicity played a key role in the development of curriculum rigour at the Studio School and we sincerely thank her for her efforts and wish her all the very best for the future. Matt Watson will step into the role of Principal, Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School in 2021.

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 is also a member of the Association of Business Psychologists and a Chartered Member of the Institute of Personnel and Development. Estelle is an associate of Creative Management Associates in the UK and a virtual team member of Pentacle, the Virtual Business School. 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.



Harrison Oscar

Harrison Oscar is a Bunuba man from the Waringarri Muwayi. He grew up and worked for Bunuba Dawangarri

Aboriginal Corporation on Yaranggi (Leopold Downs) Station almost all his life. He really enjoys working and the way of life on cattle stations. Harrison would like to see growth and opportunities for his community and for all Bunuba people to work together as one. Harrison is proud that Bunuba and non-Bunuba kids can come to Yiramalay and graduate and do well for themselves, and for the teachers and mentors who build the kids up to be stronger students. Yiramalay has been very successful so far and he would like to see it grow more in the future.



Selina Middleton

Nyaurru guru Selina Middleton is a mother of five and a grandmother of five. A Bunuba woman, her muwayi

is Malanggu up on Mornington Station. A Bunuba leader, she has been a board member for the Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation (BDAC) for more than 20 years. She also works with the Bunuba Rangers, giving cultural advice and knowledge. Her passion is to support Bunuba people to be strong now and into the future. Yaninyja.



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.



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.



Felicity Pearson

Felicity Pearson has been a teacher at Wesley College since 2000, and the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School since

2010. During that time she has co-directed and choreographed more than 15 award-winning full-scale musicals and theatre productions. Her senior leadership roles include Head of Humanities, Head of Teacher Development (acting), Induction Coordinator and most recently Deputy Director. She has been travelling to the Kimberley since 2007, and was the leader of the first group of students to study at the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School – Induction 1 in August 2010. She is the mother of two children and has been a member of the Bentleigh West Primary School Council. She holds a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education, and Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Felicity is passionate about her work and committed to the growth and development of young people.



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.

PRINCIPAL'S OVERVIEW



The disruption provided by the pandemic was substantial, but the way in which the majority of students rose to these challenges was wonderful to witness.

This year proved a challenging one for the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School, as it did for the entire country and world. The disruption provided by the pandemic was substantial. Whilst Western Australia was left largely untouched by the ravages of COVID-19, the dislocation early in the pandemic meant a move to remote learning for a substantial period of time. This provided many challenges for our Yiramalay students. Some of these challenges were similar to those other students faced while enduring remote learning. Others were unique to the particular circumstances of these students. The way in which the majority of students rose to these challenges was wonderful to witness.

Towards the end of the year, we were able to welcome students back to the campus from all parts of Australia. We look forward to 2021 being a year free from dislocation.

Year 12 Graduation 2020

This year we held a very different graduation for our Yiramalay graduates than in previous years. For the first time in many years, the graduation occurred in the Kimberley, with Melbourne staff attending virtually. The difficulties of travel across Australia made this an inevitability in 2020.

A record 15 Yiramalay students graduated from Year 12 this year. The lack of travel involved in the graduation in no way detracts from the extraordinary series of stories behind each of our alumni. The fact that a pandemic did not derail them from their education is testament to the dedication, commitment and determination each of them have shown.

The addition of the 15 new graduates brings the total number of graduates since the school's inception to 59.

Since October 2010, Yiramalay student enrolment has grown ten-fold. Stories of growth and success for both students and staff abound and 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 are far reaching, affecting not only those students who attend the school, but their families, their communities, and all those whose lives they touch.

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.





In a year characterised by the challenges of remote learning and travel limitations, the performance of our Year 12 students was impressive.

Outstanding staff

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 Felicity Pearson, Kaylene Marr, Matt Watson, Felicity Byres and Monique Fewkes for the leadership and commitment they have shown, and to all teachers both at Yiramalay and in Melbourne. They are assisted by formidable support staff who do a magnificent job. Of crucial importance to the success of Yiramalay are also the Aboriginal staff who are pivotal to the program.

I would like to pay particular tribute to Felicity Pearson. Felicity has been with the College since 2000, having joined as a Drama and Dance teacher. In the subsequent 20 years of outstanding service, Felicity has choreographed and directed numerous musicals for the Adamson Theatre Company, taught Theatre and Dance and Humanities in both the Middle and Senior Schools, and been Head of Learning of Humanities, all on the St Kilda Road Campus. In the past 10 years, Felicity has been an integral

part of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School, having been Program Coordinator, Induction Coordinator and Deputy Director (Teaching and Learning). This culminated in her appointment as Acting Director of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School last year. In the past 18 months, Felicity has been tireless in her efforts to improve all aspects of the Studio School. She has done an outstanding job. Felicity has been appointed to the position of Deputy Principal, Haileybury Rendall School in Darwin. She takes up this position at the beginning of next year.

Matt Watson has been appointed Principal of Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School and I both congratulate him and wish him all the best in this significant step forward in his career.

2020 was truly a year like no other. I am sure 2021 will see the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School roar back into action and continue to make a profound difference to the lives of the young people who attend.

Nick Evans
Principal, Wesley College

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



ACTING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Never was a Reconciliation Week theme more apt or all-encompassing as 2020's 'In This Together.' The imperative of Australians to protect their vulnerable population during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance and value placed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, history and culture. 2020 called for creativity and innovation in ways only dreamed of in the past. To emerge from lockdowns, shutdowns, border closures and remote learning with a keen eye on the vision, *creating positive change through education*, and with 15 Year 12 graduates from the program, was testament to the resilience,

courage and determination that the Bunuba and Wesley College communities brought to the partnership during this unique year.

The remarkable optimism that the Leadership team held saw them working tirelessly to ensure that Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School students were receiving the best possible support and quality of education, no matter what the challenge or circumstance. Grateful acknowledgements went to Kaylene Marr (Cultural and Community Advisor and Traditional Owner), Matt Watson (Deputy Director – Melbourne), Felicity Byres (Deputy Director – Kimberley), Monique Fewkes (Head of Teaching and

Learning), Helen Grist (Administrative Team Assistant) and Sheryl Chaplin (Business Support Officer), along with our Student Wellbeing Coordinators, who all gave an incredible amount of energy and support to the entire community.

Year 12 Graduation and results

In a year characterised by the challenges of remote learning and limited opportunities for student travel to both Western Australia and Melbourne, the performance of our Year 12 graduates was impressive.

The expanded syllabus of on-country programs and personal development camps saw students flourishing and experiencing growth and development in many forms.



Coronavirus restrictions saw graduation celebrations and ceremonies hosted in Broome in December rather than in Melbourne, as has been the tradition. Staff, students, family and community members from all over Australia 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.

The tireless contributions of staff to provide high-quality and empowering programs for students ensured that education, training and employment opportunities continued to be the benchmark of success for the school.



In the three circles of learning that comprise the Senior Years Learning Framework (SYLF), we achieved our best results to date.

Academic Learning

- SYLF – Advanced Level: Three students completed the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE).
- SYLF – Standard Level: Nine students completed the Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways.
- Three students unable to return to school due to COVID-19 restrictions completed a selection of units from the Certificate II.
- 12 students completed Level 2 First Aid Certificate.

Personal Development

- 13 students completed more than 150 hours of leadership, teamwork and/or community service activity.
- Two students completed 95 to 140 hours of leadership, teamwork and/or community service activity.

2020 saw significant enhancements made with regard to the health and wellbeing programs in

both Melbourne and the Kimberley, with cultural identity the cornerstone 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 flourishing and experiencing growth and development in many forms. The approach was well-supported by highly valued community relationships with Nindilingarri, Boab Health, Fitzroy Valley District Hospital, Theatre Kimberley, Bunuba Rangers, the Australian Ballet, the Unframed Project and Jira Models. PALS funding supported the new healthy eating and cooking programs, and the program of 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

- Two students completed more than 10 weeks of structured industry placement.
- 13 students completed one to nine weeks of structured industry placement.

In addition to the annual industry learning opportunities in Hospitality, Building and Construction and Horticulture provided by the school, during the final weeks of Term 4, all Kimberley-based students participated in five days of structured

2020 saw significant enhancements made with regard to the health and wellbeing programs in both Melbourne and the Kimberley, with cultural identity the cornerstone of the improvements.

workplace experience in Fitzroy Crossing and Broome for the first time. 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 for work and employability.

Award of the Senior Years Learning Framework

Two students, Coen Wright and Alena Landers, were awarded the complete Senior Years Learning Framework certificate by the awarding body, the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), having completed all three circles of learning – an outstanding achievement.

Induction Program

Induction 43 was the only one of the six anticipated Inductions to go ahead. Despite a delayed start due to weather, and an early finish due to COVID-19, the Term 1 Induction staffed by Kym Adams (Induction Coordinator), Monique Fewkes (Head of Teaching and Learning), Jamie Skehan (St Kilda Road Campus), and Sophie Adams (OW2009), fulfilled its aims as an immersive educational program. It afforded students and staff a real-life experience and opportunity to learn from elders and mentors of the local community, and to enjoy culturally appropriate, hands-on, on-country activities shaped by the physical context of season and time. The school was proud to be nominated for the 2020 Australian Boarding School Association's Most Innovative Program in Boarding Award for the Induction Program.

Highlights of 2020

Academic

- The creation of new and innovative online learning platforms and approaches connecting students and staff across Australia to learning offsite, and away from school.
- The award of SYN Radio Melbourne's Learning Broadcast of the Year Award to our Year 11 and 12 Certificate II students.
- Impactful hands-on academic camps to Halls Creek and Purnululu for the Humanities unit Changing Habits for Habitats, and the Dampier Peninsula for Certificate II Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways tourism studies.
- Year 10 student broadcasts on Wangki Radio in Fitzroy Crossing as part of Year 10 Literacy.
- Years 10-12 students regularly working alongside Bunuba Rangers in the Kimberley in their cane toad eradication program.
- Year 12 SYLF Advanced students exhibiting their culturally influenced work in the Wesley College Glen Waverley Graduate Art Exhibition. Alena Landers was awarded the Emerging Artist Award, with Coen Wright and Kyhona Fraser both winning monetary Art Prizes for their work.
- Year 10 student Banjo McIntosh designing and constructing his own guitar in Systems Design and Engineering class.

Personal Development

- The inaugural International Women's Day Breakfast in the Kimberley with guest speaker Kankawa Nagarra (Olive Knight).
- Years 10 to 12 girls modelling for Jira models in Design Within Country, a Melbourne Fashion Festival event.
- Meaningful NAIDOC week program activities around the theme of 'Always Was, Always Will Be,' with the Fitzroy Valley District High School and local elders working onsite with students and staff at in the Kimberley.
- The extraordinary student success experienced as a result of the ongoing partnership with Theatre Kimberley. The creation, innovation, confidence and bravery exhibited when preparing and performing in *Te Kore: A world beyond in Broome*, was testament to the mentoring and encouragement offered by staff working within the partnership alongside the tenacity of the Year 10 and 11 students.
- Years 10 to 12 boys competing in the Clontarf Boab Basketball competition in Derby where, out of 16 teams and more than 100 students, Memphis Hunter was awarded Most Valuable Player and Kyle Wurramura the Spirit Award, while Kelwin Unghango won the Dunk Competition.
- SYLF Advanced students exhibiting growth in their resilience and courage whilst away from home in Learning in Residence in Melbourne for the longer periods of time that travel restrictions demanded.



'Yoramalay/Wesley Studio School aims to expand the horizons and life choice expectations of our youth.'

Industry

- High levels of student engagement and achievement in the weekly industry learning program, resulting in Years 10 to 12 students achieving their White Cards (Prepare to Work Safely in the Construction Industry) and Food Handling certificates.
- Every student being placed in a structured supervised week-long work experience program.

Alumni

The appointment of a Careers and Transition Coordinator enabled 2019 graduates to be well supported into viable work and study options for 2020. Opportunities taken up in the Kimberley and Pilbara included roles in residential mentoring, retail, construction and administration.

- Brigalow McIntosh (OW2018) was awarded the Wyvern Medal for academic achievement, by Queens College at the University of Melbourne.
- Kahlia Rogers (OW2016) featured in *Vogue*, modelled in International Fashion week activities, competed in the Kimberley Girl competition in Broome, and provided positive role-modelling as a mentor in the Yiramalay Kimberley residential environment.
- Tenielle Francis (OW2016) was recognised in the Royal Australian Navy's National *NAIDOC Week Defence News* for sharing her culture with others contemplating a career in the RAN.
- Torey Brooking (OW2017) featured in the RMIT Deadly STEM Experience advertising artwork, as well as mentoring new Indigenous students in the Ngarara Willim Centre at RMIT.

Wesmob

Wesmob Prefects Tim Cundall (GW) and Saskia Powles (SKR) with the passionate support of Wesley College staff members Rohan Chiu (SKR) and Angela Forthun (GW) moved their advocacy into an online environment to overcome the COVID-19 restrictions, and were acknowledged for their time, commitment and passion to this important work.

Friends of Yiramalay

The ongoing engagement and efforts of the Friends of Yiramalay led by Romy Moshinsky and Georgie Raik-Allen have been once again appreciated by the School. The *In My Blood It Runs* movie fundraiser at the Classic Cinema in Elsternwick was a very successful and enjoyable evening, raising funds for the Formal. With the cancellation of this event, the funds were redirected to the Year 12 graduation gifts for students, table arrangements and family support. Romy and Georgie were acknowledged for their outstanding leadership of, and commitment to, Friends of Yiramalay over the years and wished all the very best as they begin the process of handing over leadership.

Infrastructure

In 2020, improvements were made to the Milnggi Big Tent, with glass doors and air-conditioning installed to create more functional learning spaces. Similarly, the eco-tents were improved to create more viable accommodation options throughout the year. A fit out of the Biliga Mayaru Learning Centre created more workable spaces for learning and recreation. A new bore was installed to improve onsite water quality and delivery.

Staff

Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School teachers, mentors, ancillary staff, administrators and community members worked hard throughout 2020 and were paid grateful recognition and sincere thanks for their unwavering commitment to the program. Their tireless contributions to providing high-quality and empowering programs for students ensured that education, training and employment opportunities continued to be the benchmark of success for the school.

Staff members Frank Concilia, Tegan Gluschenko and Ryan Ali-Akil were farewelled, and went on to pursue opportunities both within Wesley and beyond at the end of 2020, after many years of service. Tribute was also paid to the ongoing generous support and friendship of the Wesley College Council and College Executive, Glen Waverley Learning in Residence, along with the Bunuba and Fitzroy Valley communities, whose

encouragement and assistance sustained focus through the many challenges.

As the Wesley College theme for the year, 'Sustainable Futures' anticipated, 2020 indeed demanded the implementation of best practice in the academic and personal social domains. The school played its role in enhancing community cohesion through difficult times and is proud to have lived out one of the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School's most important stated values – to expand the horizons and life choice expectations of our youth.

Felicity Pearson,
Acting Director

REGISTRATION AND FUNDING



The creation of new and innovative online learning platforms and approaches connecting students and staff across Australia to learning offsite, and away from school.

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

Almost 10 years on, the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School partnership between the Fitzroy Valley community and Wesley College continues to set a precedent for outstanding education with, by and for First Nations people. In 2020, Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School staff, administrators and community members generously continued to contribute their time and energy to building an exceptional and empowering program for students.

It is the role of the Yiramalay Foundation to connect with funders, donors and others in our community who share a vision of Australia where educational opportunities and life outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people are equal. Despite the uncertainty and setbacks that came with the pandemic and nation-wide lockdowns in 2020, the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School, in close partnership with the Fitzroy Crossing community, has been

steadfast in continuing to support young Indigenous students with the highest quality learning experiences.

The Yiramalay Foundation would like to thank the many generous donors that have supported the Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School. Your generosity has contributed to the successful graduation of 15 students from Year 12, all of whom completed the Academic and Personal Development components of the Senior Years Learning Framework (SYLF). Our Standard level students will leave us with a Certificate II in Work and Vocational pathways, alongside vastly improved literacy and numeracy skills. Our Advanced level students leave with their Victorian Certificate of Education. Most leave with 150 hours of Personal Development activity in the areas of teamwork, leadership and community service. In addition, all students leave having completed 50 days learning in industry, a requirement of the SYLF program.

Irreplaceable educational experiences for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants were made possible by the

financial contributions raised throughout the year. The mentors, community members, staff and of course, students, all benefitted greatly. This year, some of these experiences included:

- the Induction Program that gave local students a taste of Yiramalay
- NAIDOC week celebrations through cultural activities and actions
- a week-long Industry Learning experience for Year 12 students
- an opportunity to collaborate with Theatre Kimberley and travel to Broome to perform in *Te Kore – a world beyond – Worn Art Revamped*
- academic camps to Halls Creek/ Purnululu National Park and the Dampier Peninsula
- travel and accommodation for parents of Year 12 Yiramalay students to attend the graduation ceremony held in Broome

The Foundation would like to acknowledge the support of the Federal Government and Western Australian government and AISWA for their ongoing support of the

Students performed for the first time in *Te Kore - a world beyond - Worn Art Revamped*



program. We would like to express our gratitude to the alumni, parents and other supporters from both communities and acknowledge their generous contribution. Of course, we also could not have made it through this year without the significant support of the Friends of Yiramalay who have worked hard to facilitate community engagement programs and this year supported the Year 12 Graduation. Joining our growing list of supporters is Wesley Pride, the St Kilda Road Campus parents' association, who this year contributed funding to support our students.

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.

In 2021 and beyond, the Wesley/Yiramalay partnership will continue to explore possibilities of expanding the Studio School model as our collective aspirations evolve.



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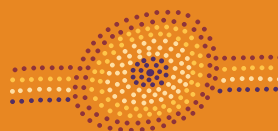
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WE GROW TOGETHER**

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