



# NEWSLETTER

Term 1, 2024

We Believe in Education, Culture + Wellbeing



# Welcome to 2024

# We Believe in Education, Culture + Wellbeing

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



The beginning of the 2024 school year at Worawa Aboriginal College has been truly amazing. Our students have seamlessly settled into both their academic studies and boarding life, demonstrating remarkable enthusiasm and engagement.

Throughout Term 1, our students have actively participated in a diverse range of activities and extracurricular opportunities. This active involvement not only enhances their educational experience but also fosters a sense of camaraderie, teamwork, and

personal growth. It's inspiring to witness the dedication and passion our students bring to every endeavour they undertake.

Looking ahead to the remainder of the school year, we are excited about the endless possibilities and opportunities awaiting our students.

With a strong start in Term 1, we are confident that they will continue to thrive academically, culturally, and personally as they face new challenges and adventures.

## CELEBRATING DR LOIS PEELER'S INDUCTION INTO THE VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL HONOUR ROLL

We are thrilled to announce the induction of Dr Aunty Lois Peeler AM, a remarkable Yorta Yorta, Wiradjuri, and Wurundjeri woman, into the esteemed Victorian Aboriginal Honour Roll. Aunty Lois joins an illustrious group of Indigenous elders who have made extraordinary contributions to Victoria, enriching our community with their passion, dedication, and leadership.

This celebration of Aboriginal excellence and achievement was attended by Victoria's Aboriginal

community and graced by the presence of the Minister for Treaty and First Peoples, Natalie Hutchins.

Aunty Lois's journey is one of resilience, vision, and service. Her dedication to education and advocacy has left an indelible mark on Victoria and beyond. Working alongside her late sister, Aunty Hyllus Maris, she played a pivotal role in establishing our College. Worawa Aboriginal College has been instrumental in nurturing the next generation of Indigenous leaders since its inception in 1983.

Aunty Lois humbly attributes her success to those who paved the way before her, including her mother, Aunty Geraldine Briggs AO, and her sister, Aunty Hyllus Maris, both esteemed members of the Victorian Aboriginal Honour Roll. Her gratitude and humility serve as a testament to her character and the values she upholds.

From all of us at the College we join together in honoring Aunty Lois Peeler.



## EXCITING ADVENTURES AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN TERM 1 AT WORAWA

It's been an eventful start to the year filled with fun adventures and notable achievements here at Worawa.

Throughout the term, our students have been immersing themselves in the world of swimming. Under the guidance of dedicated instructors, they've not only mastered essential water safety skills and survival strokes but have also developed a genuine love for swimming. One of the highlights for many was the experience of role-playing rescues, which allowed them to put their newfound skills into action and solidify their understanding of water safety.

Our students also had the fantastic opportunity to visit the aquarium this term. Led by our enthusiastic science teacher, they were captivated by the wonders of the sea. From colourful fish to adorable baby penguins, the

experience was truly immersive, leaving a lasting impression and sparking curiosity about the diverse marine ecosystem.

We are incredibly proud of our Year 7s and 9s for their exemplary dedication during the NAPLAN tests. Their hard work and commitment throughout the testing period are commendable, demonstrating their determination to excel academically.

Our boarders have been busy exploring the natural beauty surrounding Worawa. From tranquil walks along the Yarra River to discovering local shops, they've been strengthening their bond with the environment and the community. This term, our students enjoyed some unforgettable experiences, including a trip to a Melbourne Phoenix basketball game. The lively stadium

atmosphere was an experience they won't soon forget.

Our Police Program has been a resounding success. Weekly dinners with local police officers provided our boarders with opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations, fostering trust and support within the community. This initiative culminated in a special presentation at the school assembly, where the girls had the chance to interact with the police and gain valuable insights into law enforcement.

We wrapped up the term with our annual Easter egg hunt, a cheerful celebration for all. Congratulations to Klarissa, a Year 12 student, for finding the Golden Egg! It was the perfect conclusion to a term filled with lots of learning opportunities and experiences.



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## A WEEK OF FUN AND FRIENDSHIP: WORAWA ABORIGINAL COLLEGE CAMP AT CAMP JUNGAI

At the beginning of the term, the Worawa students embarked on an exciting journey to Camp Jungai. Located in the picturesque Rubicon Valley, Camp Jungai served as the perfect backdrop for a week filled with adventure, learning, and bonding.

This camp was more than just a getaway; it was a chance for students to connect, build friendships, and learn the value of teamwork.

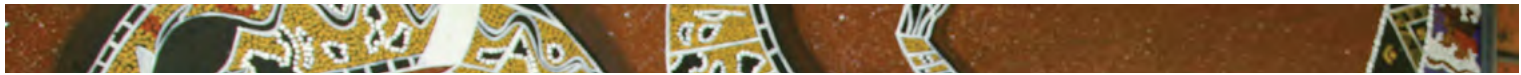
Each day brought new activities designed to challenge and motivate. Students hiked through scenic trails, conquered the high ropes course, and participated in various team-building exercises. Every moment was an opportunity to grow, both individually and as a group.

One of the camp highlights was the Minute to Win It challenge, where teams raced against the clock to complete hilarious tasks. A standout moment was when students had to fashion wedding dresses out of toilet paper, demonstrating a lot of creativity in their designs.

Evenings at Camp Jungai were just as special. Gathered around the campfire, students shared stories, roasted marshmallows, and enjoyed the simple pleasure of being together under the stars. These beautiful and peaceful moments were the heart of the camp experience.

Camp Jungai was not just about the activities; it was about creating memories and forming bonds to help with the transition into the new school year. Students returned to school with a sense of sisterhood and ready to face the term ahead with confidence and new friendships.





For more information visit [worawa.vic.edu.au](http://worawa.vic.edu.au)



## HIGHLIGHTS FROM TERM 1 EXIT WEEKEND

The Term 1 Exit Weekend was packed with fun and excitement for the students to enjoy on the Labour Day long weekend.

The action-packed itinerary kicked off with thrilling games of laser tag at Timezone. After the girls strapped into their gear and divided into teams, they raced through the course, competing to become the ultimate laser tag champions. The excitement carried into the

evening with a sleepover in the College's recreational room, featuring a late night filled with movies, games, music, and dancing. And that wasn't all!

The boarders also enjoyed a lively shopping excursion, exploring the latest fashion trends and indulging in tasty treats. It was a weekend of fun and a perfect break before heading into the final weeks of the term.



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# INTRODUCING THE STAFF OF 2024: A Team of Highly Qualified Professionals

We have recently expanded our team at Worawa to ensure that we have the best professionals to support our students on their educational journey. Therefore, we are thrilled to introduce you to our highly qualified and dedicated staff who make up the academic and boarding teams for the 2024 school year.

## OPERATIONS TEAM



### Head of College Operations

Tanya F.

Previously known as the Head of Boarding, we are pleased to announce that Tanya has been promoted to the position of Head of College Operations. In her new role, Tanya now oversees the smooth operation of various departments, including Academic, Boarding, Health & First Aid, Wellbeing, Catering, and Laundry.

Drawing from her extensive background as Head of Boarding & Child Safety Lead, as well as her earlier role as a Team Leader & House Parent, Tanya brings a profound understanding of student welfare, particularly for Indigenous boarders navigating education away from their communities. Her insights into the unique supports required in such settings are invaluable in creating a nurturing environment for all students.

Beyond her professional commitments, Tanya is an avid volunteer, dedicating her time and expertise to organisations like the Country Fire Authority and Challenge. Here she has developed innovative youth programs and honed her leadership skills in managing dynamic and challenging situations, further enriching her ability to effect positive change.



### Register

Mari

Mari is the Registrar at Worawa, managing all aspects of student enrolments and the application process, from new admissions to student departures. Mari places great importance on working closely with families, taking joy in assisting them with submitting their applications and overcoming any barriers they may encounter.

Before joining Worawa, Mari worked in the construction industry as a diversity lead, focusing on improving the workplace for LGBTQIA+ individuals. Outside of work, Mari enjoys spending time with her energetic Border Collie and tackling home renovation projects..



### Health & First Aid Administrator

Kelly

Kelly is a proud Martu woman from the Manyjilyjarra Clan of the Gibson and Western Deserts of Western Australia. Kelly is a dedicated professional overseeing first aid and health programs. With a keen focus on safety and wellbeing, she ensures our students/ boarders receive prompt and effective care. Kelly's expertise plays a vital role in maintaining the health and safety standards within our College.

A fun fact about Kelly is that she has travelled across the Nullabor over 10 times and loved every minute of it.



### **Boarding Administrator**

Amy

My name is Amy and I am the Boarding Administrator at Worawa. I am your first point of contact when it comes to your child's travel requirements once they have been enrolled at the College. As the Boarding Administrator, I also assist in the coordination of the boarding activities. My background in Early Childhood Education and extensive knowledge of this industry supports my goal of providing the best care for our students whilst they are at Worawa.

I firmly believe that the key to a successful education is a holistic approach and I aim to use my experience to build respectful and reciprocal relationships with the students. My focus is to ensure that our students are informed of the care provided to them as well as minimising travel related anxiety.

In my spare time I enjoy riding my 2 horses.



### **Head Chef**

Neil

Neil, our Head Chef, has been making delicious meals for our college for over two years. He loves using local ingredients to create tasty and healthy dishes. Neil is dedicated to making sure all boarders eat well-balanced and wholesome meals. His passion for cooking shows in every dish he prepares.



### **Chef**

Benjamin

Meet Chef Ben, a valued member of our kitchen team who has been cooking for our boarders for over a year. Ben brings a special touch to every meal with his creativity and dedication. His unique style makes every dish he prepares something special.



### **Laundress**

Pam

For over two decades, Pam has been an invaluable part of the College community. Her support has empowered girls to learn essential life skills like laundry, while efficiently managing the daily laundry workload. Pam's dedication ensures a seamless experience for all.

## ACADEMIC TEAM



### Senior Teacher

Jessica

My name is Jessica and I am originally from Melbourne, Victoria. I grew up between Australia and America, but am happy to be back in my homeland of Australia.

I have been teaching for over 15 years and spent a big chunk of time teaching a variety of grade levels and subjects in Denver, Colorado, USA. The last school I taught at in America was a school dedicated to supporting refugees. My parents worked with Indigenous people all my life and I grew up among the Native American First Nations people.

I am currently the Senior Teacher at Worawa and teach English to Years 7-10 and Maths to Years 7/8. Some of my favourite things include listening and dancing to music, spending time with family and friends, travelling and exploring the world, being out in nature and relaxing with a good movie or book. I love to laugh and enjoy working with youth.



### Art Teacher

John

My name is John and I teach Visual Arts/Media and Horticulture. I started my teaching here in Victoria before spending 17 years teaching in community on Groote Eylandt in the NT. Upon return to Victoria I studied Horticulture and worked in historical and vegetable gardens with an education focus. I am very happy to have returned to the teaching profession at Worawa Aboriginal College. My art interests include photography, painting and printing.



### English Teacher

Lauren

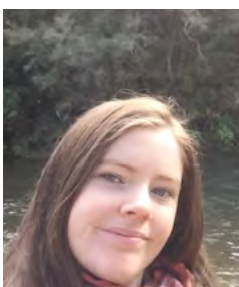
Lauren is a Trawoolaway/Palawa woman raised on Wurundjeri land. Lauren is experienced in the education space as she has worked as Learning Support for 8 years specialising in working with students with trauma, ADHD and Autism. In 2023, she graduated from Swinburne University with a Bachelor of Education. This year Lauren has moved into the teaching space as a graduate English Teacher. Lauren has a keen interest in English and Art, in particular 3D design and digital art.



### Maths Teacher

Renee

I've had the pleasure of working at Worawa for two years. I teach mathematics and enjoy seeing the girls develop confidence in the subject. When I'm not at work, I like to create art, work in the garden, and go bush walking.



### Science Teacher

Rebekah

My name is Rebekah and I am the Science and junior cooking teacher. I have been working at Worawa for 6 years and used to teach Maths too. On my time off, I enjoy spending time with my husband and baby girl. I also like cooking, craft, reading and gardening.



### **Music Teacher**

David

Dr. David, with 14 years of teaching experience, holds a PhD in Australian Music History, Theory, and Literature from the University of Queensland. He also possesses a Master of Music (Baroque Trumpet and Countertenor) from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and the University of Sydney, along with a Bachelor of Music (Trumpet) from the University of Melbourne.

With a Master of Teaching (Secondary) from the University of New England, David has taught internationally and conducted research on various musical traditions, notably specialising in Isaac Nathan's music and the Neapolitan bel canto tradition.

## **BOARDING TEAM**



### **Assistant to the Head of Boarding**

Megan

Megan started at Worawa in 2021 as a House Parent. Her dedication quickly led her to become Assistant Head of Boarding, and in 2022, she stepped up as Acting Head of Boarding. Megan always puts the girls' welfare first, supporting and advocating for them to succeed in their studies and personal lives.



### **Assistant to the Head of Boarding**

Charlotte

I'm Charlotte and I'm an Assistant to the Head of Boarding. As a Youth Counsellor, I am passionate about supporting and empowering others to improve their wellbeing, mindset and achieve their fullest potential. I love working at Worawa and witnessing the girls establish themselves in the world whilst honouring their heritage and I feel very privileged to be a part of that journey. When I'm not working, I love being in the outdoors and exploring the natural world with my doggo!



### **Boarding Assistant**

Carol

Meet Carol, our dynamic Boarding Supervisor, brimming with enthusiasm and a can-do attitude. Passionate about supporting boarders with faith, she leads the church program in our boarding community. Carol excels in conflict resolution, ensuring the highest levels of wellbeing for our boarders.



### **Boarding Assistant**

Rosalina

Introducing Lina, our dedicated Boarding Assistant, renowned for her calm demeanour and attentive listening skills. With over 5 years of experience, she excels in supporting homesick students, drawing from her background in learning support and leadership roles within the boarding space. Lina is a reliable pillar of support for our boarding community.

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## Boarding Assistant

Ignacia

Hi, my name is Ignacia, but everyone calls me Iggy. I'm a Senior Boarding Assistant, mainly working with the Junior girls in Term 1. I focus on creating a positive and supportive environment where these amazing young girls can develop important skills with cleaning, personal care, and building relationships, helping them thrive in both worlds.

Outside of work, I'm studying for my Bachelor's in Primary and Secondary Education, with the goal of becoming a teacher one day. My hobbies include Pilates and crocheting, and some of the girls have even asked me to teach them how to crochet. Hopefully, as we get closer to winter, we can all crochet together!



## Boarding Assistant

Aurora

I'm Aurora, my role at the College is Boarding Assistant.

This involves supporting the Boarding Supervisors, by ensuring the wellbeing of the girls, and managing routines and health needs. Outside of Worawa, I have six months left of my degree in Criminology and Psychology. In my spare time, I volunteer as a mentor for at-risk young women. Like my role at Worawa, I aim to empower these young women to make positive choices and plan a path for the future. I have a strong passion for mental health and incorporating self-care into my routine. Some ways I practice self-care are through listening to podcasts, visits to the sea and going to the cinema.



## Boarding Assistant

Luci

Hi! My name is Luci.

My role is split between the boarding team as well as assisting Aunty Lois and Principal Tanya Peeler in the Conference and Social Media space.

I am lucky to work between both the boarding team, as well as in our Conference & Socials Media space assisting Aunty Lois and Tanya where I can! If you have been following along [@worawastudent](#) on Instagram as well as our Facebook, this is where I post what the girls have been up to in and out of school!

Aside from my studies in Biomedical Science (specialising in maternal and paediatric health), out of work, I am a keen runner, swimmer and love snow sports, something I hope I can share with the Worawa girls.



## Boarding Assistant

Michelle

Michelle's position is as Senior Boarding Assistant and is one of our longest-serving staff members. Well-known for her enthusiastic manner and attentive nature, Michelle is passionate about the outdoors. She leads both the walking club and the cross-country team at the College, embodying leadership and fostering a love for nature amongst the boarders.



### **Boarding Assistant**

Jessica

Jess is a senior Boarding Assistant here at Worawa. You'll generally see her floating between the junior and senior houses, supporting the girls during the weekdays. Jess thoroughly enjoys connecting with every boarder, taking the time to understand their interests and explore their unique worlds. Jess has a special interest in wellbeing and is currently studying a Bachelor of Psychology. She finds this helps her guide the girls through challenging emotions they may experience during boarding. When Jess isn't taking the girls to their sports or making sure they've done their washing, she loves to garden, grow her own veggies, and spend time with family.



### **Boarding Assistant**

Carin

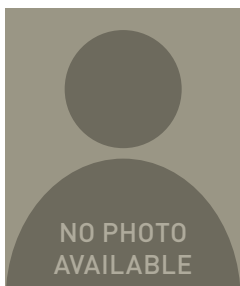
Carin, one of our Boarding Assistants, exudes a calming presence and takes the time to engage with our boarders. With her exceptional skill in supporting newcomers, she ensures a smooth transition into boarding life, fostering a welcoming environment for all.



### **Boarding Assistant**

Rose

Roseanne is one of the Boarding Assistant staff at Worawa. In her role, she supervises and assists students in their daily activities and routines within the boarding house, ensuring their safety at all times. Additionally, she provides emotional support and guidance to students, especially those who may feel homesick or are experiencing difficulties adjusting to boarding school life. Outside of work, Roseanne enjoys a variety of hobbies including reading, crafting, tending to animals, and gardening. These activities bring her a lot of joy, and she often shares these with the students, fostering connections beyond our professional roles.



### **Boarding Assistant**

Barbara

Barbara is new to her role as Boarding Assistant. Working hand in hand with the Boarding Supervisor, Barbara plays a crucial role in fostering a supportive and enriching environment for our boarders. With a keen eye for detail and a compassionate approach, Barbara collaborates closely with the boarding staff and students to ensure a positive atmosphere within our boarding community.

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## CULTURE DAY

Culture Day at Worawa is the final full day on campus before students head home for the term break holidays.

During Culture Day, the campus is abuzz with activities showcasing various aspects of our Aboriginal culture, such as traditional dance, arts and crafts, and cultural performances. Sport is also featured,

with students participating in competitive matches of footy, soccer, and basketball. We were delighted to have the Hawks Community Foundation as special guests to join in on all the fun.

A much-anticipated focal point of the day is our chefs cooking and serving a buffet of student-favourite

dishes. It's a time for us all to come together—students, staff, and guests—to share in laughter and conversation over lunch.

As always, it's a fun-filled day that we all look forward to and serves as a lovely send-off at the end of term.



## DELAYED IN GOING HOME

Due to the ongoing floods, four boarders found themselves unable to fly home, resulting in an unexpected and extended stay in Melbourne. We want to express our sincere gratitude to the dedicated staff members who stayed on to provide support during this time. Despite the unforeseen circumstances, the girls made the most of their extended stay, exploring

the city's attractions and activities, which included museums, karaoke booths, bounce houses, dinners out, Gold Class movies, and lots of shopping. Although their journey home was delayed, we are happy to report that they have since returned home safely after an enjoyable few days together.



## TERM 2 CALENDAR

### Get Ready for an Action-Packed Term 2 at Worawa!

Get ready to shine on stage as rehearsals kick off for the highly anticipated Worawa Production! Stay tuned for more thrilling details as we prepare to entertain audiences with our talent and creativity. The stage will come alive in Term 3 with a show-stopping performance that you won't want to miss!

### But that's not all—mark your calendars for these exciting dates in Term 2:

**29th April:** Diabetes Victoria visit to create and raise awareness and support for those affected by diabetes. Get ready to learn, inspire, and make a difference!

**8th May:** Step into the world of possibilities at the Trade Expo! Our students will explore innovative ideas, connect with industry leaders, and discover exciting opportunities that awaits them.

**24th May – 27th May:** Brace yourself for an unforgettable Exit Weekend filled with adventure, laughter, and camaraderie. Get ready to see memories that will last a lifetime as the boarders embark on thrilling excursions and bond with friends.

**28th May:** It's time to unleash your competitive spirit at the Sports Carnival! Students, showcase their athletic prowess, and celebrate the power of teamwork and sportsmanship.

**26th of June:** Immerse yourself in a vibrant celebration of diversity and culture on Culture Day. From traditional performances to delicious cuisines, get ready to see the rich tapestry of cultures that make Worawa truly special.

Get ready for a Term 2 packed with excitement, growth, and unforgettable moments. Whether you're taking center stage in the Worawa Production or cheering on your classmates at the Sports Carnival, there's something for everyone to look forward to. Let's make this term one to remember!



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Worawa by following us on social media!  
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