



40
YEARS
1983-2023

NEWSLETTER

Term 4, 2023

We Believe in Education, Culture + Wellbeing



Presentation Day 2023

On Wednesday 6 December we celebrated the extraordinary efforts of our students on Presentation Day. We recognise the culmination of academic and personal achievements of our students across the Four R's: Relationship, Responsibility, Respect and Rigour. Congratulations to our Year 12 Graduates who have successfully completed their studies and now have the confidence to Walk in Two Worlds.



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For more information visit worawa.vic.edu.au



Presentation Day 2023

At Worawa, we respect the immense sacrifice of being away from family and community to be in a boarding school and so it is on Presentation Day that we celebrate the achievements of our students.

We would also like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts behind the scenes of our Academic, Boarding and Administrative staff who helped make a memorable event for all involved.

A rigorous teaching and learning program is at the core of our student's educational experience so that they are well equipped to take up any opportunity they may wish to access in the future. Our aim is to empower our young women with the knowledge, skills and ability to confidently take their place as the leaders in family, community, or in whatever they choose to do. Knowing our history, holding onto lore and finding voice in self-determining their future.

In the words of our College's founding Patron, Pastor Sir Douglas Nicholls, when at the opening of the College in 1983 he said.

"Aboriginal children must be educated in the way of our people. They must learn their history, about their great ancestors, the language and the law. It's time for them to know and understand themselves. They must also be educated in the ways of the society in which they live, in the very best of what it has to offer, so they can truly be part, not only of Australia's past, but also its present and future."

At Worawa student achievement in every sense is acknowledged and celebrated. In the classroom, in the boarding house, in sport and physical fitness, in health and wellbeing.



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Presentation Day 2023

AWARD WINNERS



ENGLISH AWARD

Joet Collier

This award recognises a student who has demonstrated a strong commitment to developing a high level of skill in their writing. She actively engages in daily practise, resulting in a book of poetry and is passionate in ensuring that her voice as a young Aboriginal woman is heard.



CARING FOR COUNTRY AWARD

Katiana Zboril

This award recognises a student who has demonstrated a key passion for her History, Geography and Civics classwork. She is a future leader and strong independent learner who is actively developing a cultural approach to Caring for Country and her identity as a young Aboriginal woman.



SCIENCE AWARD

Leonorah Williams

This award recognises a student who has demonstrated a keen interest in Science, especially animals. She is an active participant in all theory and practical lessons and takes charge of her learning on topics related to Science and STEAM.

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MATHEMATICS AWARD

Joet Collier

This award recognises a student who has demonstrated a commitment to extending her foundational numeracy and maths skills. She has progressed in all key areas throughout the year. She is eager to achieve independence and mastery in all areas of mathematics.



TECHNICAL ARTS AWARD

Alexis Edwards

This award recognises a student who has taken on opportunities to develop skills within their elective classes. She has demonstrated a strong commitment and engagement to the practical learning environment.



VISUAL ARTS AWARD

Hayley Stockman

This award recognises a student who shows true commitment to visual arts practices, from the practice of traditional techniques from her community to the inclusion of digital technologies. She is always willing to learn new techniques and good arts practice and is actively involved in all art projects on offer at school.



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Dakoda Taylor-Hodgins

This award recognises a young woman who has demonstrated that she is ready to enter the world of work or further study. She has grasped the opportunities afforded through the personal development and work experience programs with confidence and an ability to Walk in Two Worlds.



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Carol Moore

This award recognises a student who has demonstrated tenacity to overcome challenges and has made a commitment to her learning journey. In every aspect of her education here at Worawa she has shown a commitment to personal growth.



SPORTS WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Jackey Sammy

This award celebrates the exceptional dedication of a student who embodies the spirit of sportsmanship, resilience, and commitment to excellence in athletics. This year, the remarkable individual whose passion for sports transcends boundaries and serves as an inspiration to all. Despite facing a challenging setback with a mid-season leg injury. This student faced adversity head-on, displaying unparalleled determination. Despite being unable to take to the field or court physically, her passion for the sport continued to radiate from the sidelines. Not one to be deterred by setbacks, she exemplified true sportsmanship by continuing to support and uplift her teammates, demonstrating rare blend of selflessness and unwavering dedication.

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BOARDING HOUSE AWARD

Shai-Cody Gregory

This remarkable journey as a boarding student reflects an incredible transformation and journey marked by kindness, an infectious sense of humour, and an unwavering commitment to nurturing positive connections. This student's witty nature effortlessly fosters an atmosphere of warmth and camaraderie within the boarding space. Through her humorous ways, she has mastered the art of maintaining not just good but exceptional relationships with both peers and staff alike.

Beyond her humour, This student exemplifies the core values of Worawa—Relationship, Responsibility, Respect, and Rigour. Her journey through boarding has been a testament to her growth and development as an individual. She has evolved into an independent woman, navigating challenges with grace and determination, all while fostering an environment of mutual respect and understanding.



JUNIOR LEADERSHIP AWARD

Suassanna Cronin

This award recognises a year seven student who demonstrates strong leadership skills. She is a mediator to other students in the school and in the boarding house. This student models confidence in self and encourages others to pursue their interests.

Unfortunately Suassanna is unable to join us today as she is on a family holiday in Ireland. She has been maintaining her connection with Worawa by sharing video logs of her adventures during weekly assemblies.



COURAGE AWARD

Quanita (Lulu) Gibson

This award recognises a young student who has demonstrated courage and a commitment to growing their cultural, academic and personal life at Worawa. This student has quietly embraced the opportunities the College has offered her and has contributed to and learned from every educational experience.



EILDON ELECTORATE AWARD

Kanelia Gundari

This award recognises a student who encapsulates the concept of community. This student engages with all peers irrespective of mob, age or time at Worawa. She strives to be inclusive and actively supports a positive community which celebrates the achievements of every member.



THE LONG TAN AWARD

Shantay Morris

This award recognises a student who encapsulates the behaviours and attributes expected of leaders in the Australian Defence Force and Australian society. This student has displayed leadership in all aspects of her experiences at Worawa Aboriginal College. This year's award goes to a student who shows absolute determination and respect for hard work and commitment.



HYLLUS MARIS AWARD

Tenika (Shirley) Spencer

This award is presented in memory of the Worawa Aboriginal College founder and advocate Hyllus Maris to a student who embodies the vision of a Worawa Student. A student who:

- Achieves scholastically across a range of subjects.
- Is willing to help others and makes selfless contributions.
- Is exemplary in their personal conduct at all times.
- Participates fully in school community activities.
- Is a role model for other students.
- Displays positive cultural identity and demonstrates Worawa values of Relationship, Responsibility, Respect and Rigour

This year's winner applies herself in all subjects and always produces quality work. This student has consistently set goals for her learning and for her life – then strives to reach those goals.

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BOARDING 2023

As the year draws to a close, we reflect on a vibrant and enriching year for our boarding community at Worawa College. Underpinning each term were experiences that cultivated friendships, laughter, and invaluable learning moments.

Term 1 marked a bustling start as both new and returning boarders joined us on-site for what promised to be an eventful year. The initial weeks were dedicated to establishing routines and fostering connections among everyone.

The weekends were filled with excitement as the girls took part in numerous shopping trips and hosted sporting events, a celebration infused with culture, laughter, and the forging of new relationships with fellow boarders from other schools.

The enthusiasm continued into Terms 2 and 3 as our boarders dedicated their time to the Healesville Football team, sprinting across the football field every Sunday. Their dedication led to an incredible opportunity to attend Hawthorn Football Club

games at the iconic MCG. Notably, they were invited to create a guard of honour for one game and collaboratively adorned football boots with beautiful cultural designs for Hawthorn's Indigenous round.

After the midyear break, the boarding community delved into the arts with their first live theatre experience, choosing between the enchanting worlds of Harry Potter or Mary Poppins. Seniors embarked on a memorable boat cruise across Port Philip Bay to Queenscliff, relishing fish and chips by the beach.

Emotions soared toward the end of Term 3 as senior girls eagerly anticipated the 2023 Debutante Dreaming Ball—a resounding success witnessed by their nearest and dearest. Transitioning from the dance

floor to the basketball court, many students engaged in the Eaglehawks basketball team, culminating in a thrilling grand final cheered on by friends, and staff.

As the year approached its end, the excitement persisted. Term 4 activities ranged from experiencing opera at Hamer Hall to attending the Blacktivism concert, exploring gold digging at Sovereign Hill, sliding down water rides at Funfields, and enjoying late-night movies at local cinemas. Summer evenings with delicious BBQs, water slides, and volleyball.

In summary, Boarding in 2023 was a resounding success—a year brimming with smiles, camaraderie, and numerous accomplishments. We look forward to the new year ahead.

For more information visit worawa.vic.edu.au





WORAWA EAGLE HAWKS WIN 2023 BASKETBALL GRAND FINAL

On Monday 27th November, Worawa Eagle Hawks versed Wessy Lynx Lighting in the Basketball Grand Final at The Yarra Centre in Yarra Junction.

The girls playing for Worawa Eagle Hawks were Teigan Ricky from Elliot, Marie Cameron and Elena Nelson from Urapunga, Tamisha Morris and Quanita (Lulu) Gibson from Nyirripi and Joet Collier from Wagga Wagga.

Wessy Lynx led in the first half of the game but the Worawa Hawks made an amazing comeback in the second half, catching up the score. It was a close match coming down to the Wessy Lynx free throw in the final 2.8 seconds, but they missed the second shot!

Everyone played really well which made the Worawa crowd go crazy!

The final score was 28-26. Thank you to the Worawa cheer squad who were yelling so loud because Worawa won!

It was Teigan's last game with Worawa and she was awarded the runner up best player for the season. Thanks to Tanya Ferguson for coaching the team and congratulations to all the girls on the team!

NINJA PARC

All those Worawa students not involved in work experience participated in a Parkour program every fortnight at Ninja Parc in Bayswater. Parkour is a non-competitive physical discipline of training to move freely over and through any terrain using only the abilities of the body, principally through running, jumping, vaulting, rolling and climbing. The concept is to overcome all physical and mental obstacles in the quickest, most efficient manner possible. Ninja Parc is an indoor obstacle course and described as the 'place to play, move and adventure'. They run high-energy obstacle-based activities that combine fun with physical challenges to inspire the students to develop a love for movement. The activities are designed to teach the participants the best way

to deal with obstacles while improving cardio endurance, strength speed and general fitness. All the girls were tested with climbing walls, balance beams, vaults, rope courses, the 'wall', laiche training and more. Parkour rolls, like the safety roll to soften a landing and the dive roll to cover distance, were part of the program. Climbing obstacles helped develop grip and upper body strength. The instructors were very impressed with the athletic ability of the girls and their willingness to give new things a try.

The final session involved the girls completing a specially designated obstacle course individually and against the clock. The students all supported each other, cheering and running beside each participant and encouraging them along the way. The Nina Parc trainers complemented

the girls on the way they supported each other saying that they were the most encouraging group that they had seen. This is the kind of feedback to we love to hear about the Worawa students. The Nelson sisters - Elena and Desharna - came third and second respectively in the time trial. Marie Cameron was the winner. All the students are to be congratulated for the manner in which they participated in this program. Some of the activities required the students to move out of their comfort zone and test themselves against the challenge. The students are to be admired for their bravery in doing so. The students loved the program and are hoping that there will be the opportunity to further develop their Parkour skills and test themselves against the obstacles in the future.



SYNCHROTRON EXCURSION

As part of their Science learning, Baggup and Kombadik students had a great opportunity to visit the Australian Synchrotron. The Synchrotron is a large facility that uses intense beams of light made from accelerated electrons to complete research. As the students discovered, there have been researchers from broad range of fields that have used the Synchrotron, including chemistry, paleontology and history. One example of research that the students found interesting was that dogs were being cured from cancer during 2020. Another, is that the Synchrotron was used to reveal a hidden portrait behind a famous Edgar Degas painting.

When the students arrived at the synchrotron, the students met a current research assistant who explained how it worked a scale model of the facility. They then went on a tour around parts of the facility, explaining past and current research. Lastly, the students participated in a Lab session which included experimenting with laser and other equipment the researchers use. Though it was a long day, the students enjoyed learning more current research and what scientist do. Hopefully their excursion to the Synchrotron inspired them to see what they could do in the future.

HEALTHY HEARTS PROGRAM

The Healthy Hearts Program is a holistic program including education, wellbeing and culture. Dr Ari Horton, Paediatric Cardiologist and his team from Monash Health have been coming out to Worawa for a number of years and in November this year, he and his team came out once again to meet with the students over two days, to chat with them about good heart health and conduct ECG's (heart electricity check) and echocardiogram's (heart ultrasound test).

The program has a specific focus on Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) and Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF), which Australia has some of the highest rates worldwide. The program is aimed to educate and empower our students to maintain a healthy heart and protect themselves from the

impacts of RHD and ARF. On the Sunday before, Dr Ari and Dr Emma came and spent the afternoon with the students and shared about how the heart works, and ways in which we can keep our hearts strong and healthy. Some of the students also shared about their experiences and their family members having RHD. After a yarning circle, Dr Ari showed an RHD documentary and many of the students recognised the communities and other young people in the documentary.

On the Monday the ECG's and echocardiogram examinations were conducted in House 3, by the Paediatricians. These tests check to see if there are any changes that may be associated with heart disease. All students came back with good heart reports.

A DAY AT LUNA PARK

Monday 6th of November, Exit Weekend, students on site had the opportunity to have a fun day at the historic Luna Park in Melbourne. It was a bright, sunny day and the small group of students remaining on site enjoyed spending their time experiencing some of the oldest rides in the world, such as The Great Scenic Railway, which is heritage listed, and noted as the oldest operating roller coaster in the Southern Hemisphere and the second oldest in the world!

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ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

The students at Worawa were treated again this term to a visiting Indigenous artist. Aunty Glenda Nicholls is a Waddi Waddi, Ngarrindjeri and Yorta Yorta artist. Her cultural name is Jule Yarra Minj which (Little River Girl) and maternal totem is Ngarrinjeri totem is the Writcharuki (Willy Wag-Tail).

Aunty Glenda is a master weaver, constructing elaborate sculptural works that connect the present with her ancestral past. She applies cultural weaving techniques acquired from her ancestors alongside intimate knowledge of the waterways, plants and grasses on her country.

Aunty Glenda is determined to share her cultural knowledge with younger First Nations generations, seeing this exchange as crucial to ensuring cultural practices to survive into the future. This term Worawa students were the beneficiaries of this exchange.

Aunty Glenda was very generous with her time spending an entire week with Worawa College. The students listened attentively as Aunty Glenda recounted her family story and how knowledge was passed down to her. She explained her journey to

becoming a full time artist and was very encouraging of the students exploring and honing their creative talents into the future.

During the week instruction centred on the cultural weaving technique of creating nets. Instead of traditional grasses we used jute string. The girls quickly got into a rhythm and were soon producing wonderful nets. Aunty Glenda explained how utilitarian techniques can be utilised as an art form and showed the girls examples of much praised and awarded art installations created with this technique. Aunty Glenda also instructed the girls in how to make feather flowers and taught the cultural significance of feather flowers in Koorie communities.

At the core was her belief in showing respect to birds and animals. It was a wonderful exchange. We thank Aunty Glenda for the generosity with which she shared her skills and the manner in which she encouraged and supported the students as they applied newly learned techniques.

As further encouragement, Aunty Glenda left us with a huge supply of material to continue our own journey as net weavers and feather flower creators.



We look forward to any opportunity to work with Aunty Glenda again.

Bringing in recognised Indigenous artists to work with the Worawa students is a key plank of the Visual Arts program. Having Aunty Glenda and Aunty Lois this year has reinforced the many benefits that accrue to the students from this approach and Worawa College will continue to look for similar opportunities in the coming year.



Congratulations Aunty Lois!

Aunty Lois receives Honourary Doctorate in Education from La Trobe University

In accepting the award Aunty Lois said "My direction has been shaped by experiences of our People following dispossession, dislocation and dispersal from traditional lands. My values and my passion were shaped by my family Clan's experiences which included life on Maloga Aboriginal Mission, then Cumeragunja Aboriginal Reserve, then fringe dwellers on the riverbank of the Goulburn River in Mooroopna in the Goulburn Valley. The solidarity of working together in the continual fight for basic human rights and striving for a better future for family, clan, and our Aboriginal community.



Farewell Katharine Smith

A PILLAR OF DEDICATION

It's with mixed emotions that we bid farewell to Katharine Smith, a dedicated member of our staff for over six remarkable years. Katharine's journey with us began as a teacher and evolved into a pivotal role as a STEAM and curriculum coordinator at the College. Her time has been defined by a commitment to infusing structure and fun within our classrooms.

Rising through the ranks, Katharine became the Head of Teaching and Learning, where she brought forth innovative ideas and diligently upskilled her colleagues, leaving an indelible mark on the educational landscape of our institution. Her dedication extended beyond the academic realm, as she seamlessly supported the boarding space in 2022, showcasing her unwavering commitment to the holistic well-being of our students.

In her most recent role as Deputy Principal, Katharine's leadership, passion, and tireless efforts have been instrumental in shaping the future direction of our college. Her contributions have touched the lives of students and staff alike, leaving an enduring legacy that will continue to inspire.

As Katharine embarks on a new chapter in her journey, we express our heartfelt gratitude for her unwavering dedication, tireless efforts, and the invaluable support she has extended to us over these six remarkable years. We extend our warmest wishes for her future and know that her impact will resonate within our school community for years to come.

Thank you, Katharine, for your immeasurable contributions.



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Happy Holidays

To all our families friends and supporters,
we thank you for your support.

We wish you peace, joy and all the best
this Holiday Season has to offer. Happy Holidays.

From all at Worawa

CELEBRATING



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