



NEWSLETTER

Term 4, 2020

We Believe in Education, Culture + Wellbeing



Celebrating Culture at Worawa

After leaving early in Term 1, learning from home during Term 2 and learning from the boarding houses in Term 3, COVID-19 restrictions reduced enough for us to come together as a community for an afternoon of celebrating culture. Unfortunately, we were not able to invite guests to join us, however we took this as an opportunity to explore some changes to our Culture Day format.

Students worked in house groups to establish a sense of family and ensure that everyone had an opportunity to help maintain the fire pits, cook kangaroo tail, potatoes and damper. We also prepared a cultural dinner instead of lunch so that we could share the meal with house parents and continue the festivities into the evening.

All girls were invited to participate in sharing dance and they performed as house groups or community groups. It was an honour to have our Central Desert girls share one of their dances with us and to watch them teach each other the steps. It was delightful to see the girls take charge on the day and a wonderful opportunity for staff and students to share and learn together.

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Rose's Story

I came to Worawa Aboriginal College because I struggled with my learning in previous schools and to experience more opportunities from a boarding school in Melbourne. I thought that maybe a school that is furthest away from home would help me learn and achieve more.

When I first came to Worawa it was term 4 in 2016. I was late in year 8, being older than some of the girls there and the only one from my community I felt a bit nervous at first about living this far away from home. Getting used to boarding life was also hard, they did things differently from home, but after a week I started to get into the routine and settled in nicely. I have even made some great friendships that have lasted a long time.

In the 4 years I have been at Worawa some of the opportunities that I have taken are programs like modelling in 'Whispers of the Land' fashion parade at Melbourne Museum, the Deadly Sisters Indigenous Literacy week, Strong Girl play at St Martin's Theatre, Cadet Rangers and Kids Teaching Kids events. I even went

on Art and Technology excursions to RMIT and Melbourne University. Worawa is a place I got to do more of my art and also has opened me up to my interests which has rapidly changed over the years there was only one similarity with all of them is that I mostly had an interest for helping the environment however I can.

This is led me to Marine Biology. Part of why I want to do Marine Biology and Environmental science is because I am passionate about learning about the water crisis, and how to prevent overuse of water in remote communities. I am also interested in the variety of animals and plant life found in the oceans and water systems around the world.

Some of my favourite memories are our weekend trips to fun locations as a whole boarding group and spending

time with my friends. Although we have not been able to go out this year, we have been spending time with smaller groups in the houses and building stronger connections with the house parents and each other. The thing I enjoy most at Worawa is the people. I think I've met about 4 times as many people that come and go at Worawa than in my own community.

I appreciated having people around me for guidance and support. Next year I am going to miss the familiar faces of the people I see at Worawa every day and I have done so for the last few years. I couldn't be more grateful for my time at Worawa because it has helped me find my voice to be more confident person and a stronger leader. I plan to go to RMIT next year.



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Presentation Day 2020

The vision/philosophical statement of Worawa Aboriginal College is 'Sending young Aboriginal women out into the world with confidence in who they are, where they want to be and what they can contribute to their communities and the wider world.' And on Presentation Day we celebrate the achievement of our students.

Our 2020 Presentation Day was like no other. We had cause to celebrate the resilience, strength and adaptability of the girls who engaged in distance-education and those who returned to the College to complete Term 4.

In this context we celebrate academic achievement and personal development of students who exhibit resilience, perseverance and effort.

Our People perform ceremonies for many different occasions these incorporate song and dance events to celebrate many things including joyous celebrations such as Presentation Day. In the absence of parents, families, friends and

supporters who would normally join in our Presentation Day celebrations, our students stepped up and took the reins in managing the day.

Following the presentation of awards students danced and celebrated their achievements and the end of a most challenging year.

We particularly celebrated Rose who has graduated with the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) and will be leaving Worawa to go to RMIT.

Rose is well equipped to take her place in the world beyond Worawa. Rose is the epitome of the quiet

achiever, always applying herself to the best of her abilities and supporting her fellow students to achieve their best.

Rose was awarded the 2020 Hyllus Maris Award, the College's highest award which is presented to a student who excels in academic, boarding, leadership and demonstrates Worawa values of Relationship, Responsibility, Respect and Rigour.

We wish Rose all the very best in continuing her learning journey.



For more information visit worawa.vic.edu.au



ENGLISH – EXPLORE, ANALYSE, CREATE AND REFLECT

The Term 4 English program was developed so that it could be delivered to students still engaging in distance learning while on campus students benefited from small classes with targeted learning objectives. Returning to face-to-face teaching and learning, students quickly adjusted to the school environment.

Beautiful new classrooms featuring the artwork of Azeza and Khatija Possum provided a space that was inviting despite the challenges imposed by COVID-19. They also provided students with an example of the infinite possibilities that lie ahead of them.

Each student worked with the English teachers to develop their own learning goals specific to the subject. Student driven goals with frequent check-ins provided teachers with an opportunity to continue the personalised learning available to students at Worawa. Reading fluency, Warm-ups, to

transfer content from short to long-term memory, and a differentiated spelling program enabled students to develop their understanding and mastery of spelling patterns and morphology. It has been incredible to watch the growth of students in the shorted term.

Year 7 and 8 students analysed the work of Roald Dahl exploring his journey to becoming an author before studying and responding to Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Students explored Dahl's use of figurative language and his ability to create amazing worlds and learnt how to develop characters and settings. The novel was also used to teach fundamental grammar concepts in context. Creative and analytical tasks were developed as students connected with different ways of responding to a written text. Viewing the film provided students with an opportunity to compare the texts

and analyse the way that they can be varied to share a story.

In Year 9 and 10 students studied a range of texts exploring ways people tell their story. The term commenced with the class analysing the Spiritual Song of the Aborigine, written by the founder of Worawa, Hyllus Maris. Reflecting on the lyrics of Archie Roach, students explored how stories can be told through song. The students then read and analysed Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence by Doris Pilkington – Nugi Garimara.

Exploring the use of primary sources to construct a narrative, the use of language and devastating impact of colonialism, they were introduced to three remarkable and resilient girls whose story will be told for generations to come.

Viewing the film provided the class with an opportunity to consider, debate and reflect on how stories can be shared in different ways.

HEYWIRE COMPETITION

In 2020 Worawa students participated in the ABC Heywire Competition. The format this year was different and staff gave younger students the opportunity to participate in the writing workshops. Students planned, created and edited their pieces sharing stories about their passions and challenges.

It was a unique and fantastic learning experience for those involved. Congratulations must go to all girls who participated, especially those selected as finalists. Miranda Rose, whose piece was about challenges she faced on her journey to Worawa and Shontay Gregory who wrote about her passions, her community and challenges she has triumphed over. We would also like to acknowledge and congratulate Mary Cruz, Sarah and Ooen-s'tae for receiving Highly Commended for their pieces. We are lucky to have such remarkable young women at our school.



Miranda and Shontay



HEALTHY HEART CHECK

Worawa Aboriginal College provides a holistic program that includes education, wellbeing and culture. The College places emphasis on health and wellbeing to enable students to focus on their learning. To facilitate this Worawa has partnerships with a number of organisations that assist the College to address the health and wellbeing needs of our students.

In many of our Aboriginal communities, Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) and other heart diseases are common and can cause life-long health problems and many Aboriginal families are touched by Rheumatic Heart Disease. Worawa believes that if these problems in our children are found early there's lots that can be done to keep their hearts healthy and strong.

We are pleased to advise that as part of the College's health and wellbeing program, we have partnered with Monash Children's Hospital.

A cardiology team headed by Dr Ari Horton, Paediatric Cardiologist, Monash Heart, who work specifically in screening children to ensure that they have a healthy heart recently visited the College.

This team is highly experienced in caring for young people from communities all around Australia and young people with all sorts of heart problems including Rheumatic Heart Disease. The visit by this Monash Children's Hospital team provided the opportunity to ensure students have a healthy heart and to provide opportunity for early detection of possible heart health issues.

Each student had a recording of their heart's electrical signals (ECG) and an ultrasound video of their heart (echocardiogram). The specialist children's heart doctor then met with each student to explain the results.



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VCAL BUSINESS STUDIES

Throughout the term VCAL students continued study of the subject, 'Preparing for Employment'. This built on previous study with students having been given extension work to increase their knowledge and skill set in preparing to enter the work force. Students wrote examples of cover letters to suit their experiences and characteristics. Discussion took place on the importance of honesty when writing a resume and cover letter.

Preparing for an interview included discussion on how to answer interview questions such as "tell me about yourself, what are your strengths and weaknesses, where do you see yourself in five years' time?" Students then did mock interviews asking each other these questions. All students have completed the term with a better insight into who they are as a person and explored careers for life beyond Worawa.

WHO'S THE BOSS?

For careers this term, our year 7-10 students explored the investigation stage of the \$20 Boss Project. This project develops Enterprise Skills. Engaging the girls in awareness and understanding about small business concepts such as startup costs, operating costs, purchase prices and profit. The aim of the project is to allow the girls to develop a small business idea that they can create with \$20 per person involved in the team.

A student working on their own would only have \$20 start up, but a team of 4 would have \$80. Through a series of team building games students realized that we often need another person for support, skill or encouragement. Large teams, however, can mean that the group spends more time coming to an agreement rather than focusing on the product.

One of the interesting parts has been the chance to explore how a hobby or interest can become a business.

We have been looking at the options and the girls have the chance to boost their skills and ask for help with ideas over the holiday break before we come back for the action and implementation phase in term 1.

We are all looking forward to seeing how the ventures pan out for our \$20 boss and the opportunities that may come out of students participating in the experience.

This challenge developed our understanding of material costs and communication. We will not tell the year nine and tens, but year seven and eight were more successful at completing the challenge.

HEALTH EDUCATION

Our health focus for Term 4 was on emotional literacy and healthy relationships. Students learned to identify what can trigger their emotions and what are the coping strategies to deal with them.

Awareness of emotions is an important skill for our students to acquire as it enables them to cope, manage and navigate their way through any challenges they may face.

They can gain strength through their ability to recognize problems and solve any issues that arise through the different coping strategies. Students also studied positive self-talk and the use of mindfulness for positive mental health.

PATHWAYS TO WOMANHOOD

Girls commenced the Pathways to Womanhood program, This program is conducted throughout the year based on action learning which includes personal development and self care. The program started with girls in a sharing circle. The aim of this section is to deepen connection and relationships. To assist students to find what it is that motivates them and makes them happy. To speak and share.



On the way home, girls were up to a 3.00am departure.

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STEAM AND THE SEASONS

In STEAM this term, we explored the seasons that we experience across Australia. This included looking at the Seasonal Calendars that our communities experience, the signals and natural events that show us the change of seasons, the names given to seasons and exploring the impact of settlement on season identification.

Our Seasons traditionally connected people and animals to our food supply, settlement has meant we can eat the fruits and vegetables of our choosing from supermarkets, but our traditional foods are something that

are still determined by our weather, animal interaction and connection to fire which we talked about in term 3. Our clouds, night sky and sunlight also helping us predict the timing of events, travel and gatherings,

Students had the opportunity to explore the seasons in connection to plant growth and animal behaviours within and outside their home community and compare areas that experience dry conditions and monsoonal conditions. We looked at the seasonal calendar for the Wurundjeri people (the country that

Worawa is found in). We identified entering into the Poorneet (Tadpole) Season and Buath Garru (flowering grasses). We used the flowering of the Coranderrk Bush as an indicator for when it would be time to prepare for our journey home and heading to the end of Term.

In the Yarra Valley where Worawa is located, a well known season is in spring, when the wattles bloom, made famous by esteemed Aboriginal leader, William Barak.





Teigan enjoys yummy traditional food at Worawa.

HUMANITIES

This term in years 7 and 8, students continue with their Unit Changing Nations. Students further understand population densities around Australia and the Globe, investigating why larger populations live near coastlines within a country, or why fewer populations live in countries such as Russia and Greenland. Students engage in a case study task of 'Dangerous Ways to School' and compare their journey to school with the journey of a 13 years old Papua New Guinean girl, Ruth. As students analyse Ruth's 7 day trek through the jungle to boarding school, they find apparent differences, however, Ruth is embarking on a journey that requires great strength and bravery to leave her home, similar to what students may experience when they are leaving for boarding school. Additionally, Ruth is involved in cultural ceremonies before embarking on her journey, where she will eat lots of yummy traditional

foods, dance and say prayer. Students write a comparative analysis of the case study, editing their own work and adding pictures where they see fit. The analysis entails an introduction to Papua New Guinea and Ruth, differences in their journeys, similarities in their journeys and a conclusion of personal opinion. The skills of understanding, analysing, comparing, writing and personal reflection are focused on throughout.

In years 9 and 10, students continue on their Unit of Geographies of Interconnection. Students learn how the world is connected through production, consumption and trade. Alongside, students understand the importance of ethics in production as they study the process of manufacturing a Nike shoe, creating a flowchart on where Nike shoes are made, the wages the labourers receive, how much the shoe sells for and who receives the largest percentage of money. Students draw conclusions on the importance of fair pay to all employees regardless

of their geographic location, as well as the importance of companies such as Fairtrade. Next, students explore the means of how population dense megacities provide housing and accommodation, focusing on the Hong Kong Cage Homes. Students design, sketch and label their own 'tiny home', ensuring each item within the one bedroom home has a double use and is an essential item. Finally, students create a five day itinerary for a country of their choice in Asia. Within this trip, students need to describe the locations of where they will go, sights and landmarks they will visit, traditional food they will eat, ceremonies and important dates to the country and any customs they should be aware of. The skills of understanding, interpreting, special awareness, communication and personal opinion are focused on throughout. All students have thoroughly enjoyed their units and have approached all topics with curiosity, respect and engagement.



Season's Greetings

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

