

THE BULDAU YIOOHGEN PROGRAM PRESENTS

BIG DREAMS

EMBRACING CULTURE AT ANGLICARE VICTORIA

BULDAU YIOOHGEN NEWSLETTER

MAY 2024



WOMINJEKA

Welcome.

Cabbe melemung'il narrin-ik Kellie.

Hello my name is Kellie.

Welcome to another full year of adventures with the Buldau Yioohgen Mob! We opened 2024 with the amazing First Nations Day and Kids on Court at the Australia Open. We're very proud that one of our own Buldau Yioohgen leadership alumni from 2023 successfully secured a role at the AO, working in client services.

Our first on-Country Camp on Maria Island took place in March. The young people came together as a family, supporting and building strong friendships while conquering over 40 kilometres of hiking!

Culture on Court at Melbourne Park was a great day with our partner organisations Tennis Australia, Tennis Victoria, Fire Rescue Victoria, and North Melbourne Football Club. It's great to see the numbers increasing every year at this event!

As always, a very big thank you to our partner organisations for your commitment in supporting our young people and their career opportunities for 2024. Our team are looking forward to working with you all throughout the year, building stronger partnership but creating further opportunities for our Mob.

We will see more events happening across the state this year, and we're looking forward to seeing you there!

Kellie Hunter

Senior Cultural Operations Lead





CULTURE ON COURT A REAL HIT IN NARRM

Culture Evolves and Brothers in Arms Dance Crew warm up the crowd.



Each year those in the Buldau Yioohgen program gather in the heart of Narrm for a unique opportunity – a chance to play tennis wrapped with Aboriginal Culture at the iconic Melbourne Park.

This year we were joined by Wurundjeri senior Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin and her son Craig Murphy-Wandin, who opened the event with a welcoming and smoking ceremony. This was followed by traditional and contemporary dance performances by Culture Evolves and Brothers in Arms Dance Crew.

Culture Evolves hosted traditional dance workshops with the young people, teaching the emu, kangaroo and Bunjil dances to the next generation. Fire Rescue Victoria put on a great barbeque for the crowd, and the young people enjoyed taking turns to operate the sirens on the truck. And of course, there was tennis, tennis, and more tennis.

Thank you to Fire Rescue Victoria, Tennis Australia, Tennis Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, North Melbourne Football Club and City of Melbourne, who came along to this deadly event.

Look out for more Culture on Court events happening in regional Victoria throughout 2024.

Senior Elder of the Wurundjeri, Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin, welcomes the crowd to Culture on Court at Melbourne Park.



Wurundjeri man Craig Murphy-Wandin shows off a tennis racquet designed with traditional materials and possum skin ball.



BRIGHT FUTURES ON THE HORIZON AT THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN 2024

For Yorta Yorta brothers Travis, 16, and Dwight, 13, joining Buldau Yioohgen in 2024 meant a chance to further connect to their culture – together.

“We’re excited and looking forward to getting into it as soon as possible. It’s a good opportunity to go on Country and it’ll be good to have someone I’m close to there,” Dwight said, looking to his older brother.

“It’ll be fun to get out of our boundaries and learn, just having that experience together,” he said.

Travis said he hoped to expand the leadership skills he had gained at his previous football club, where he won awards for his role as team captain.

“I’d give talks to the boys, make sure they were in their positions, make sure they were following plans we’d made before the game, and make sure everyone was in a good headspace,” he said.



**“You’ll be okay.
You’ve got Auntie
Kellie and Uncle
Les who will guide
you.” – Tahlia**

Auntie Kellie and Tahlia catch up on First Nations Day.

“My strategy was to be a good role model, show the team it’s not just individual effort, it’s about everyone chipping in and going hard in the game,” said Travis.

It’s an approach that will serve the brothers well at the Buldau Yioohgen academy. In fact, 2023 graduate Tahlia, 18, had some advice for new participants: “Jump in the deep end.”

“At first, it’s hard going away from home. I struggled a little bit, but it’s a once in lifetime opportunity. I was just so grateful to be able to join the program. So take every chance,” she said.



The hot shots have a crack at playing tennis on the courts.



Yorta Yorta brothers Travis and Dwight, joining Buldau Yioohgen in 2024.

Thanks to the connections she made through Buldau Yioohgen, the Yorta Yorta teenager has secured ongoing employment with Tennis Australia after graduation.

Other community, cultural and sporting partners of the academy include Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative (BDAC), ANZ Bank, Seven West Media, Fire Rescue Victoria, Tennis Victoria, Victoria Police, Darley/Godolphin, North Melbourne Football Club, and Complete Office Supplies (COS).

For Tahlia, the most meaningful part of the experience comes back to the deepened understanding of Country and Culture she gained.

“It means a lot going through the Buldau Yioohgen program. At first, I wasn’t very culturally connected, but I’ve learned so much and I can take that now and share it with others,” she said.



THE NEXT YOUNG MOB COMPLETE THEIR JOURNEY TO THE SUMMIT



Flying the Aboriginal flag at the top of the Bishop and Clerk summit.

When Tyrese (Taungurung and Kurnai) came along to the Hike to the Maria Island on-Country experience with the Buldau Yioohgen Leadership Academy in 2023, he didn't expect that he'd be returning the following year to mentor the next young Mob beginning their journeys.

The annual camp is packed with hiking, bushwalks and Cultural business. Across four days of activities the young people are surrounded by the beautiful scenic views of fossil cliffs, wombats, and wallabies.

In 2024, the Buldau Yioohgen program has begun bringing alumni along to the on-Country experiences as part of the ongoing Nyarrn-gak-go ngulu-ik (Hear My Voice) stage of the leadership academy, helping them build their volunteering and leadership experience for the future.

"I only realised this year why they do it for us, to get us out of our comfort zones," Tyrese said, reflecting on the hike to Bishop and Clerk, a 10km round trip to the summit of the island.

One of the participants, Mia, was pleasantly surprised by her own endurance. "I didn't think I could do it, but I did it!" she said.

Many of the young people expressed how much they enjoyed the experience, and how beginning their Buldau Yioohgen journey by overcoming a great physical challenge as a team really set the tone for the year.

This is the third consecutive year that the Maria Island trip has been run as an Indigenous leadership camp, integrating Cultural activities throughout the trip such as visiting sacred sites and practicing Cultural business with the guidance of palawa Elders.