

THE BULDAU YIOOHGEN PROGRAM PRESENTS

BIG DREAMS

EMBRACING CULTURE AT ANGLICARE VICTORIA

BULDAU YIOOHGEN NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024



WOMINJEKA

Come with Purpose.

Cabbe melemung'il narrin-ik Kellie.

Hello, my name is Kellie.

It's been a busy few months for our Mob, from playing at the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival in Darwin and welcoming 50 participants to our Culture on Court event in Castlemaine, to our 2024 alumni graduating at the Melbourne Zoo! It's certainly been a proud and emotional end to a fantastic year.

We've now completed interviews for our 2025 Leadership Academy and are very much looking forward to walking alongside eight new young people from across Victoria. Uncle Les has been busy planning for next year's Balit events, so keep an eye out for upcoming emails and make sure you get your families and young ones to come along. If you're at the Australian Open in the new year, look out for 11 of our young people who have successfully gained positions in customer service and retail for the duration of the tournament.

We have added two more cultural spaces at the Anglicare Victoria offices in Dandenong and Frankston. Our team will be visiting each site every four to six weeks, so feel free to drop in for a yarn – we'd love to see you! If you'd like to book a meeting you can contact us at by@anglicarevic.org.au.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Buldau Yioohgen program over 2024. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy new year.

Kellie Hunter
Senior Cultural Operations Lead
Buldau Yioohgen

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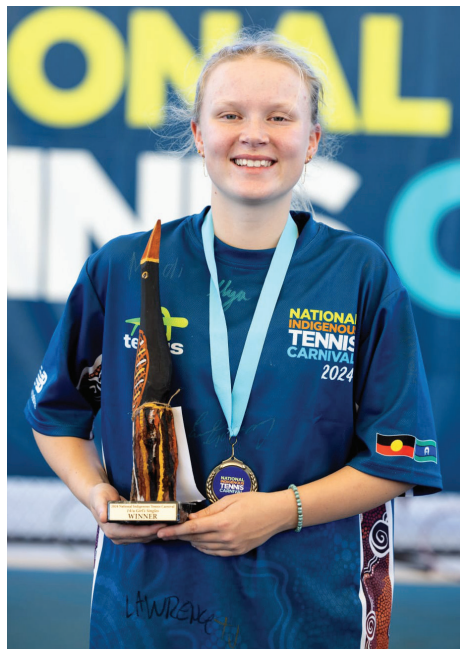


TEAM VICTORIA TRIUMPHS AT THE NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TENNIS CARNIVAL!

In August, the Mob headed north to the National Indigenous Tennis Carnival (NITC) on Larrakia country in Garramilla (Darwin), for a jam-packed week in the Top End. 14-time Grand Slam Champion Evonne Goolagong Cawley (Wiradjuri) headlined the event, which honours the Culture, community, and wellbeing of First Peoples.

The trip began with Kim Mulholland, a Larrakia and Yanyuwa educator, taking the Mob onto Country and connecting Culture with his scientific background. They visited Litchfield National Park and Wangi falls before heading back to the city.

With surprise guests Jessica Mauboy and



hometown hero J-MILLA performing at the carnival, it was a memorable week for the young Mob, who came from across the country. Savannah and Travis presented a gift of two possum skin pelts to Tennis Victoria to thank them for their partnership with Buldau Yioohgen. The possum skins were covered in art by Savannah and Travis, a unique gesture of cultural expression from the south-east.



Team Victoria brought it home, winning the Ash Barty Cup with two of our participants winning awards. Ngatatji won the Deadly Award, given to a participant who demonstrates encouragement and support for their teammates and other players. Lola smashed the 14-and-under singles championship.

Congratulations to all the winners and participants and thank you to our partners Tennis Victoria and Tennis Australia for supporting Buldau Yioohgen to participate in this culturally enriching experience.

YOUNG MOB PREPARE FOR THE GRADUATION CEREMONY

In preparation for the upcoming graduation ceremony, young people from our Leadership Academy worked on their possum skin pelts, getting them ready to receive as part of the big day.

Bobbie Pepper, a Wotjobaluk and Gunaikurnai woman, facilitated the workshop, teaching the young people how to sew two pelts together to make a graduation shawl. The young people burnt art, symbols, and their story onto the pelts as a lifelong keepsake of their journey towards becoming an alumnus with the program.

Anglicare Victoria CEO Paul McDonald joined the Mob at Darrango yan-dhan to sit with the young people during the process and see the shawls come together before the graduation.



Joanna with her possum skin at Darrango yan-dhan.

DANCING UP A STORM AT THE NEWCOMBE MEDAL



Young people painted up and ready to dance at the Newcombe Medal



Dance rehearsals at Yarra Park before the big event

In December, our Buldau Yioohgen alumni were given an amazing opportunity to dance at the opening of Tennis Australia's Newcombe Medal awards. Over the course of a few months the young people, supported by Gunaikurnai yidaki player and dancer Brent Watkins, workshopped a creation and celebration dance for the event. Brent is the creator of Culture Evolves, a dance group which blends traditional and hip-hop dance elements to share stories.

Brent collaborates with us at Culture on Court in Melbourne Park each year, opening the event with a Deadly display of traditional dance and contemporary hip-hop. To close out the year, this partnership was extended to include teaching our young people.

Practicing on the grass at Yarra Park, a traditional gathering place of the Wurundjeri people, the young people learnt a collection of cultural dances in preparation for the big event. On the night of the Newcombe Medal, everyone was painted up in ochre, with the girls wearing emu feather skirts.

This collaboration with Brent opens an exciting new chapter, bringing new cultural practices into the program and the opportunity to collaborate with more partner organisations in the future.



LEADERSHIP ACADEMY WRAPS UP FOR 2024

Our Leadership Academy graduation was held at Melbourne Zoo in November, marking the end of a powerful year for 11 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the Buldau Yioohgen program.

Each young person was presented with a sash featuring the colours of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on each side, with a possum skin graduation shawl placed over the top. After being given their certificates, they were asked to share their highlight from the year. Hiking to Bishop and Clerk on Maria Island and being introduced to Culture for the first time featured prominently in the list of highlights.

“Our Culture is most important, so we place the possum skin over the graduation sash when presenting the certificates to the young people” – Aunty Kellie Hunter

The experiences we offer within the Buldau Yioohgen program wouldn't be possible without support. Thank you to our partner organisations for another amazing year: Tennis Victoria, Tennis Australia, Fire Rescue Victoria, Victoria Police, ANZ, North Melbourne Football Club, Complete Office Supplies, Darley, Godolphin, and many more. Thank you to our volunteers who participated in Anglicare Victoria's on-Country experiences, and to Tyrese who mentored this year's young people as part of our alumni program.

Graduating from the Leadership Academy is never a goodbye, but an open door. We're so excited to see you in the future – including those who have secured retail and customer service positions at the Australian Open – and look forward to you embracing the opportunity to mentor the 2025 Leadership Academy in the new year.

Congratulations to all graduates of the Leadership Academy. Go well on your journey as the leaders of tomorrow.

