

**Welcome to the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated Newsletter.**

## **New Staff**

VAEAI would like to welcome new staff Luke Briggs - Receptionist at Namalaata, April Pender - Schools Senior Project Officer and Justin Downing - Schools Project Officer.

## **Policy and Research Unit**

[vanessa@vaeai.org.au](mailto:vanessa@vaeai.org.au)



### **Transition to primary schooling for Indigenous children in Victoria (working title)**

The Premiers Drug Prevention Council (DHS) funded project aims to look at the role of the early years / early intervention and the role of education as a preventative strategy. This project has been a joint effort between the Research Unit, the Early Childhood Unit and the Schools Unit.

The outcome of the project is to develop strategies to improve the participation, transition and educational outcomes for Koorie children in pre-school and primary education.

The first draft of this report has been finalised and is currently in the editing process. Once finalised and accepted by DHS, it will be presented to the project working Party to be approved. It is expected that printed copies should be available shortly.

### **VQA Research – Koorie experiences of qualifications pathways in VET: Obstacles or opportunities?**

This project, which was conducted through Melbourne University, aims to track and document the pathways of Koorie students through VET; their experiences of pathways planning and course advice services, access to credit transfer and RPL; and the extent to which the VET qualifications system has supported the achievement of their learning goals to date.

An important part of the project was the employment and training of seven Koorie research assistants to conduct the interviews with Koorie students.

The report has been finalised and is currently in the approval process, through the project working group. Once this has been finalised it will then be printed and available for distribution.

### **World Indigenous Peoples Conference: Education 2008**

VAEAI have submitted a letter of intent for the next WIPC:E, to be held in 2008, to the 2005 WIPC:E committee. We are currently working on a full bid proposal, to be submitted in August. We have secured the support of all other State AECG's to do this on their behalf; and they will be part of a reference committee if we are successful in our bid. We have also secured commitment from the Education Department for financial support, and organisational support from the Melbourne Convention Bureau. We will know in December if we have been successful.



## Budget new initiatives

Some of the new **Commonwealth** Budget measures for the Early Years include:

- 84,000 additional outside Schools hours Care, 2,500 family day Care and 1,000 In-Home Care places to be established throughout Australia over four years;
- Further support to be available through Jobs Education and Training (JET) Child Care for an additional 52,000 low income families to meet the "gap" in child care fees;
- A package providing practical support to be introduced to help some parents return to the Workforce as Family day Care workers;
- Support to be provided for the establishment of new services through the Child Care Support Program.

*The State in "Towards a Fairer Victoria" announced a series of new initiatives including:*

- Establish the Office for Children to improve the health and well being of all Victorian children by bringing together the range of children's services provided outside school, from maternal and child health services to kindergartens and foster care.
- Introduce a new Children's Act to provide a unified and cohesive framework for legislation relating to children in Victoria.
- Invest \$19.3 million over four years to provide incentives for childcare services to offer kindergarten programs for four year olds, i.e. kindergarten programs more available in childcare settings.
- Increase the **kindergarten fee subsidy** by 25 per cent from \$255 to \$320 per child from January 2006.
- Provide \$4.2 million in **minor capital grants** for community based not-for-profit childcare center's, kindergartens and outside school hours care services
- Invest \$2.6 million over four years for new supported parent groups and **playgroups** for families and children who are from disadvantaged backgrounds or who live in isolated areas.
- Provide \$10.8 million over four years to expand the Best Start Program, which has been highly successful in thirteen demonstration projects across Victoria. Best Start will be expanded to a further fourteen local government areas across the State including **four Best Start projects in Indigenous communities**.
- Provide \$5.8 million over four years to strengthen support for Aboriginal mothers and their children in the crucial early years. Families will receive **outreach support and parenting education** of up to 100 hours a year for two years. This initiative will **raise awareness of the importance of the early years'** universal services and how children can benefit from them.

## Working with Boys Building Fine Men

Welcome to the "Working with Indigenous Boys Forum". When the Family Action Centre approached VAEAI with a proposal to put on an Indigenous Forum in conjunction with their conference in Melbourne, we were pleased to accept because we thought it was about time all the hard work our communities have done was acknowledged. There are a great many issues facing our boys and young men and the solutions will come from our communities. Our boys and young men have many strengths to offer. You can see that when you listen to them speak and see the kids from Wolithita perform...

The Welcoming words of Geraldine Atkinson, President of VAEAI, sum it all. The Indigenous Forum on April 3 was a great success and was very well attended. Joy Murphy Wandin welcomed the participants to country on the Sunday and Monday and the Opening Performance was provided by the Wolithita Dance Group. Geraldine Atkinson opened the Indigenous Forum, welcoming the participants and the many presenters as well as paying tribute to the work done by the Working Group, chaired by Rose Bamblett, ECH Specialist representative, which included the ECH Advisory Committee, Schools Specialist Representatives, and representatives from OTTE, DET, VACCA, and VACSAL.



Aunty Rose Bamblett, James Atkinson, Aunty Laura Bell and Aunty Melva Johnson



Margaret Cossey from Indij Readers, Lionel Bamblett and James Atkinson



Craig Hammond, Stephen Walsh, Esme Bamblett, Alf Bamblett and Lionel Bamblett



Wolithita Dance Group

## Farewell

The Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services is fare welling Peter Quick in August. Peter, Director of Family Services, is retiring after a long career in the Commonwealth Public Service, mostly served in the Child Care Section of the Department. We wish him many long happy years of retirement.



## Alpine School

The Alpine School has approached the VAEAI with an opportunity for 45 Koorie students to attend the Alpine School in term 1 2006.

This will be a one off opportunity for 45 year 9 Koorie students to attend the Alpine school for a period of six weeks.

Application forms will go out in term 2 to all schools with Koorie students attending.

Application will need to be back by the 18th August 2005 to your regional RKEC. Successful students will be informed by the end of term 3. Mark Reeves will then travel around Victoria doing Community consultations.

## Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) – Commonwealth Games Curriculum

VAEAI have been in consultation with the VCAA and Deakin University representatives to assist in developing an Indigenous component to the Commonwealth Games Curriculum.

The curriculum is being developed to be used before, during and after the Commonwealth Games. There are a number of units being implemented and subjects include:

- What is Celebration?
- Identity.
- Change.
- Participation.
- Karak – Mascot.

Teachers will be able to use this curriculum as part of Victorian Indigenous Material that is useable and accurate.

## Australian Electoral Commission

The AEC are working in consultation with VAEAI in developing a Koorie friendly electoral package, targeting students from the grade 5/6 through to year 12. This resource package will have Koorie art work, catchy phrases and also photos of local Koorie people that Koorie students can identify with and that they may encounter in their own community.

## Croc Festival

VAEAI has been invited to be part of the Crocfest Committee 2006. This year the Crocfest will be held on 13th – 14th October 2005, due to the cold nights in the month of September. To date 95 schools have registered their interest in participating in this years Crocfest.

The Crocfest targets participants between the age of 9 – 18 years from Primary secondary schools, non government and government. VAEAI continue to be involved and provide advice to Croc Fest organizers.

## Youth Forums 2005

The youth engagement forums will take place over the next few months, VAEAI will be targeting youth aged between 9-18 who are not attending school. Our focus will be to explore the reasons why Koorie youth are not attending school. The youth forums will be taking place over the 8 VAEAI regions, in consultation with the LAECGs.

For further information call VAEAI Schools Unit: 9416 3833, ask for April or Justin.

# TAFE & Wurreker [wurreker@vicnet.net.au](mailto:wurreker@vicnet.net.au)



The TAFE unit has been very busy in the first quarter of 2005 undertaking extensive community and stakeholder consultation in preparation for the Koorie State Training Plan. We were successful in completing our task by the April deadline with much of the congratulations going to the 8 Wurreker Brokers. They demonstrated the commitment to complete this task and ensure all stakeholders had valuable input into the planning process.

One of our biggest tasks we hope to undertake this year is developing stronger relationships with mainstream industries and target the industry growth areas in the 8 regions.

We would like to extend our congratulations to Roberta Atkinson on her mainstream award for VCAL teacher of the year.

## Wurreker Awards

Our Wurreker awards luncheon is on again in 2005, a venue is currently being considered in the metropolitan area, the month of this luncheon will be August. The 10 award categories will be:

<b>Individual Awards</b>	Community Based Employee Private Sector Employee
<b>Training Provider Awards</b>	Koorie Organisation TAFE Institute ACE Provider University
<b>Organisational Awards</b>	Private Sector Employer Community Based Employer Public Sector Employer Local Government Employer

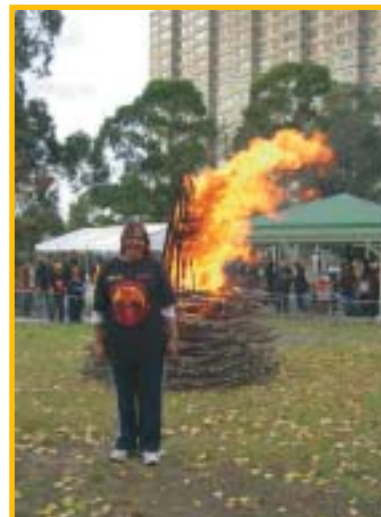
A package will be forthcoming shortly to all stakeholders.

## **Congratulations**

VAEAI broker Suraya Bin Talib gave birth to a beautiful little girl; we congratulate Suraya and Jamie on the birth of their first child. Deon Davis TAFE Manager on the birth of his baby girl earlier in the year.

## **Farewells**

VAEAI sadly said goodbye to Danni Hamilton, our best wishes go out to Danni who is due to give birth to twins later in the year. We also extend our love and appreciation to Danni for her tireless effort and support she has offered each of us over the years.



VAEAI President, Geraldine Atkinson  
at the National Day of Healing

## **Dates of Interest**

### • Wurreker Awards •

26th August 2005, Aboriginies Advancement League,  
2 Watt St Thornbury, commencing at 11.30am

### • Crocfest – Swan Hill •

11th – 13th October 2005

### • World Indigenous People's Conference: Education – New Zealand •

28th November to 1st December 2005

## **VAEAI Newsletter**

VAEAI Newsletter can be downloaded from the VAEAI  
Website at [www.vaeai.org.au](http://www.vaeai.org.au)



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*Education and land go hand in hand*