



SCHOOL TO WORK

THE SCOOP

Volume 14



The School to Work Corporate Golf Day

Connection to Culture at the heart of Social and Emotional Well-Being Days



School to Work Participants learn of their Family History with AIATSIS

About Us

The School to Work (S2W) Program was developed in response to research highlighting that Indigenous youth who had not found an employment or training pathway six months after leaving school, had a significantly higher chance of being long term unemployed.

Operational since 2012 and utilises the positive profile of rugby league to support and encourage Year 11 & 12 Indigenous students to achieve their HSC and prepares them as they transition from school to employment or further education.

Our Purpose

Prepare our participants for transition

Connect our participants to culture

Provide our participants with access and exposure to opportunities

Message from the School to Work Program Manager - Luwis Fernando

We are thrilled to announce our first Scoop of the year 2024. This update features the remarkable accomplishments of our School to Work team, who have been providing support to year 11 and 12 students, as well as Post-Secondary participants, across 150 schools in 2023.

In 2023, we supported 453 year 11 students and 364 year 12 students across 11 NRL Club catchments. We are proud to announce that our program achieved a combined completion rate of 94.9% for years 11 and 12. This is a remarkable achievement and a testament to the hard work of collective School to Work team, who have made a significant difference in the lives of young First Nations participants.

We have also successfully placed 302 Post-Secondary participants into employment or further education opportunities in 2023, enabling them to achieve their goals and aspirations.

We would like to acknowledge the dedication of our School to Work Project officers who work tirelessly to provide mentoring support to schools and participants. We also want to recognise the schools and school contacts who provide us with a platform to operate our program. Their commitment to supporting our program for the past 11 years has been a great strength for us.

Lastly, we want to highlight the support and commitment of the NRL and NRLW players, as well as the 11 NRL clubs. Their partnership with our program has been instrumental in inspiring our participants to reach their goals and aspirations.

We are excited to continue supporting our participants in achieving their goals and becoming the future leaders of our communities.





School to Works Corporate Golf Day

We took our annual NRL School to Work Corporate golf day on the road up to Newcastle. This year we expanded the event across two days which allowed us to bring a range of stakeholders together for a networking event on Thursday night before heading off to watch the Knights Vs Roosters game.

The following day saw 18 teams hit the course at Belmont Golf and Bowls with 3 teams coming out on top. The day concluded with a lunch and presentation to award our winners and hand out a few novelty prizes.

A day about bringing stakeholders together to celebrate, acknowledge and connect. A huge success bringing together over 70 people from a range of businesses and industries.

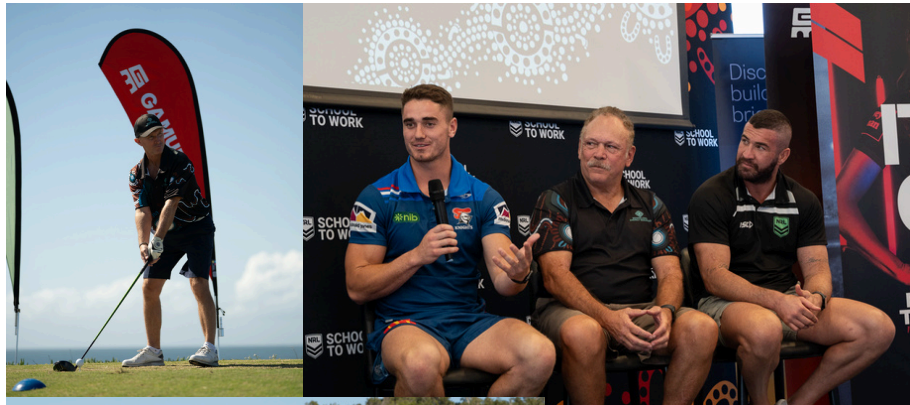
Congratulations to the winners of this year's event:

- 1 - John Holland Gamuda Australia (M1 Project)
- 2 - Green by Nature Group ANZ
- 3 - BRC Roofing & Cladding Australia

We want to thank our major partners for supporting this year's event and making it all possible - Gurugun, Gamuda, Newcastle Knights and Belmont Golf and Bowls

Along with our partners we want to acknowledge and thank all businesses that jumped on and sponsored a hole for the day! Bennelong Energy Services, Coffey Testing, Ward Civil, Green by Nature and BRC Australia

Thank you to everyone who attended, and we look forward to returning next year for an even bigger and better event.



Connection to Culture at the heart of Social and Emotional Well-Being Days



“This day has been very special and eye opening for myself and peers, learning and hearing stories from not only NRL and NRLW stars at the top but also hearing Josh’s story and how much culture and identity means to him. Moving forward I believe not only myself but my peers from today have taken a lot from the speakers and will continue and be better in our lives”. - Brayden Skuthorpe (S2W Participant from our Newcastle Knights region)

Early April, the School to Work Hunter/Central Coast Regions collaborated over two big days to deliver our second annual SEWB on Country Days. SEWB, standing for Social Emotional Well-Being, is an area that our team has identified as one of the most important aspects of our participants' lives, and an area that greatly impacts on their growth and achieving their aspirations.

Over the 2 days, NRL Ambassador and State of Mind Facilitator, Joel Thompson, delivered the State of Mind: Get in the GAAME workshop to our current year 12 School to Work participants. Joel touched on important issues relating to stress management, building a strong support network, asking for help and ways in which you can check-in on friends and loved ones. Joel provided practical skills for our participants to implement in their everyday lives to stay on top of the mental well-being.

Later in the day, students participated in men's and women's cultural workshops, with facilitators Josh Sly and Sheridan Noble (Newcastle), and Michael Laurie and Bianca Nelson (Central Coast). During these workshops, Joel's messages were reinforced and put into context of cultural practices and belief systems for our young First Nations Mob. Students were shown ways to connect to country and people in order to heal trauma and assist others with their journeys.

The School to Work team in the Hunter/Central Coast would like to thank all facilitators, community members, NRL staff and host schools who participated in both days and assisted us spread our message of positive, healthy living to our participants.



Deadly S2W Participants

I ♥ CHURROS



Ava Evans is the eighth generation to own and operate her own food truck 'I Love Churros'

Ava Evans purchased a food truck when she was 13, and with the help from mum and dad she made her exhibition debut at the Royal Easter Show back in 2021. Ava's food truck has been showcased at events such as Vivid, Enlighten, concerts such as Taylor Swift and Pink and the Royal Melbourne Show. Purchasing the truck because, before owning 'I love churros' she worked in an ice cream van for her mum and dad, she developed the drive and passion for working.

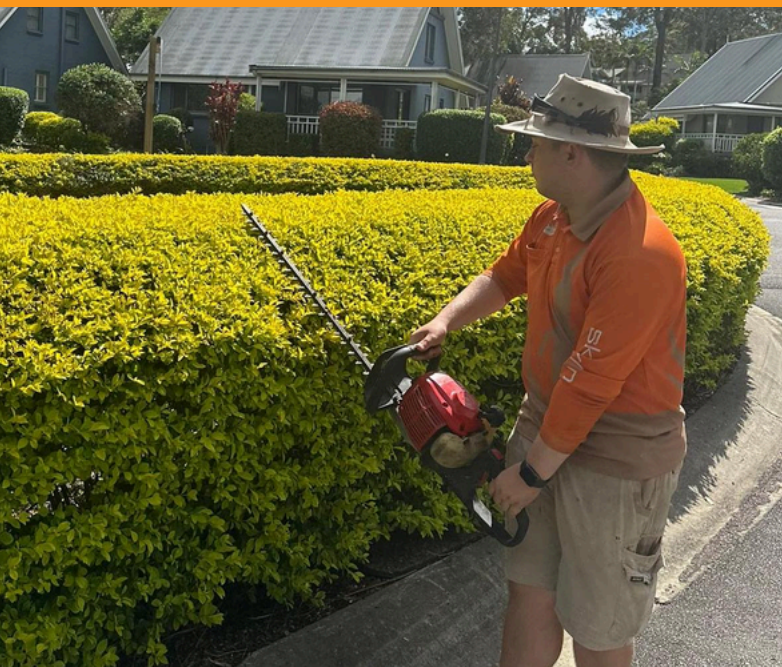
Ava is still in high school and working towards completing her HSC this year, she managed to save up all the money she made previously working at the shows and she looks forward to turning her investment into more savings for the future.

A young entrepreneur, she's not entirely sure what she'll ultimately do after she finishes her final studies, she would like to go to University but working at the shows is in her blood and is such a fun and rewarding job. Aspiring to be working for herself, not someone else.

Delaraya Stanley: Indigenous Allied Health Australia Deadly Student Award by the Greater Western Sydney Academy

Delaraya attends Wyndham College and is from the Wiradjuri, Ngiyampaa and Biripi mob. She enjoys working with community and mob as they inspire her to chase her goals. Chasing her future goal to become the first Aboriginal Pediatrician in her family, her motivations are family, community and Aboriginal children who can't afford to see Pediatricians. Delaraya hopes to take her career out to her community in Cowra and allow Aboriginal children to have free access to medical professionals.

The Deadly Student Award is mostly known to be awarded to Yr 12 students, but Deleraya is in Yr 11, which shows her hard work is being recognised. Demonstrating qualities such as respect, passion and interest in her own learning, through her work and willingness to always give it a go, Deleraya demonstrated all the qualities that the award represents.



Nash Haynes gains apprenticeship with Skyline

Nash Haynes has been a part of the School to Work Program since 2021 within our Newcastle Knights region. Graduating from Swansea High School in 2022, Nash has always been interested in the outdoors and a hands on job. Project Officer - Zoe Khan, supported Nash in his transition from school to employment by referring Nash for a landscaping apprenticeship with Skyline Landscape Services who are apart of Green by Nature a stakeholder of the program. He was successful in gaining an apprenticeship with Skyline starting in 2023. Commencing at Rafferty's resort, Nash is now going into his second year with Skyline and completing his apprenticeship.



Raiders Connection to Culture Day

In a first of its kind initiative, the Canberra Raiders region organised a Connection to Culture Day aimed at empowering School to Work participants by fostering a deeper connection to their Indigenous heritage. The event, held in collaboration with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the National Museum of Australia, marked a significant milestone in the region's commitment to supporting its youth in their cultural journey.



“My Indigenous culture is really just who I am and it's who my family is. It really shapes my morals and just how I look at life”

- Maddi Warren (S2W Participant from the Canberra Raiders region)

The day began at AIATSIS with a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony performed by Ngunnawal Elder Bradley Bell. Participants then took a visit to the National Museum of Australia, where they immersed themselves in the rich history and heritage of Australia's First Nations Peoples. Walking through the Gallery of the First Nations exhibit, they were provided with insight into the diverse cultures and traditions that have shaped Australia for thousands of years.



Following the museum visit, participants engaged in a workshop at AIATSIS, delving into the origins of their own Indigenous family histories. Led by experts from the team at AIATSIS, the workshop provided a platform for students to uncover historical family information, including photos and documents that are unavailable to the public.

Damon Knight, Canberra Raiders Project Officer, emphasized the significance of the event in providing students with an opportunity to deepen their cultural understanding. Saying the purpose of the event is to provide an opportunity for School to Work students across Canberra and Goulburn to connect further with culture and learn a little bit more about themselves and their family history.



The day's activities not only facilitated cultural connection but also fostered a sense of community among participants. As they embarked on their cultural journey together, bonds were formed with one another, strengthening their collective identity and pride.

In reflecting on the event, Damon Knight expressed hope for its lasting impact. With hope that the students learnt a bit more about themselves and that the workshop equipped them with resources to further their own development.

Zali Reynolds: 18th Annual Nanga Mai Awards

Meet Zali Reynolds, a proud Wirdajuri women that has grown up on Darkinjung Land. Zali was awarded for her outstanding contribution to Aboriginal Education at the 18th Annual Nanga May Awards. Amongst 13 academically successful students, confident public speakers, talented performing artists and outstanding sportspeople, Zali was the recipient of the Outstanding All Round Student Award.

Acknowledged for her dedication to all areas of her life, both personal and career driven. Zali was recognised for her efforts during her School Based Traineeship as an Allied Health Assistant in Wyong hospital, working within the Bara Barang community. Zali was actively engaged in the Indigenous community at the hospital, being a mentor to younger SBATs and an ambassador for the Traineeship Program. Whilst completing her School Based Apprenticeship, Zali worked two jobs but still maintained a strong study routine. Her outstanding commitment to her studies was highlighted as she also received the 2023 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year Award at the NSW Training Awards.

Outside of her prestigious awards, Zali was also heavily engaged with her Aboriginal community at school - Northlakes High School, where she was the President of the junior Australian Education Consultative Group (AECG) and School Captain. She also received Dux of her year, which just shows and shines light on all her hard work throughout her final year of schooling.

Bradley Nelson, Zali's Project Officer within the program supported her through her final year of schooling with providing access to cultural programs at both Newcastle and Sydney University, Bradley also helped Zali with utilising the Universities Admissions Centre to achieve - early entry into University.

Receiving multiple offers Zali has decided to take a gap year and work Full Time at Wyong Hospital to save up for a trip to Europe with her friends. After that she will then commence her University studies in Advanced Science with a Major of Biology at The University of Newcastle, Australia.



Empowering our Youth Through Enriching Experiences



“Community means a lot to Gamuda, in terms of the legacy that we leave. The involvement with our Aboriginal community and the lands in which we’re building on is important to us. We felt like this was an important journey for us to be on with the NRL”
- Sianne Bennett (Gamuda Head of Human Resources)

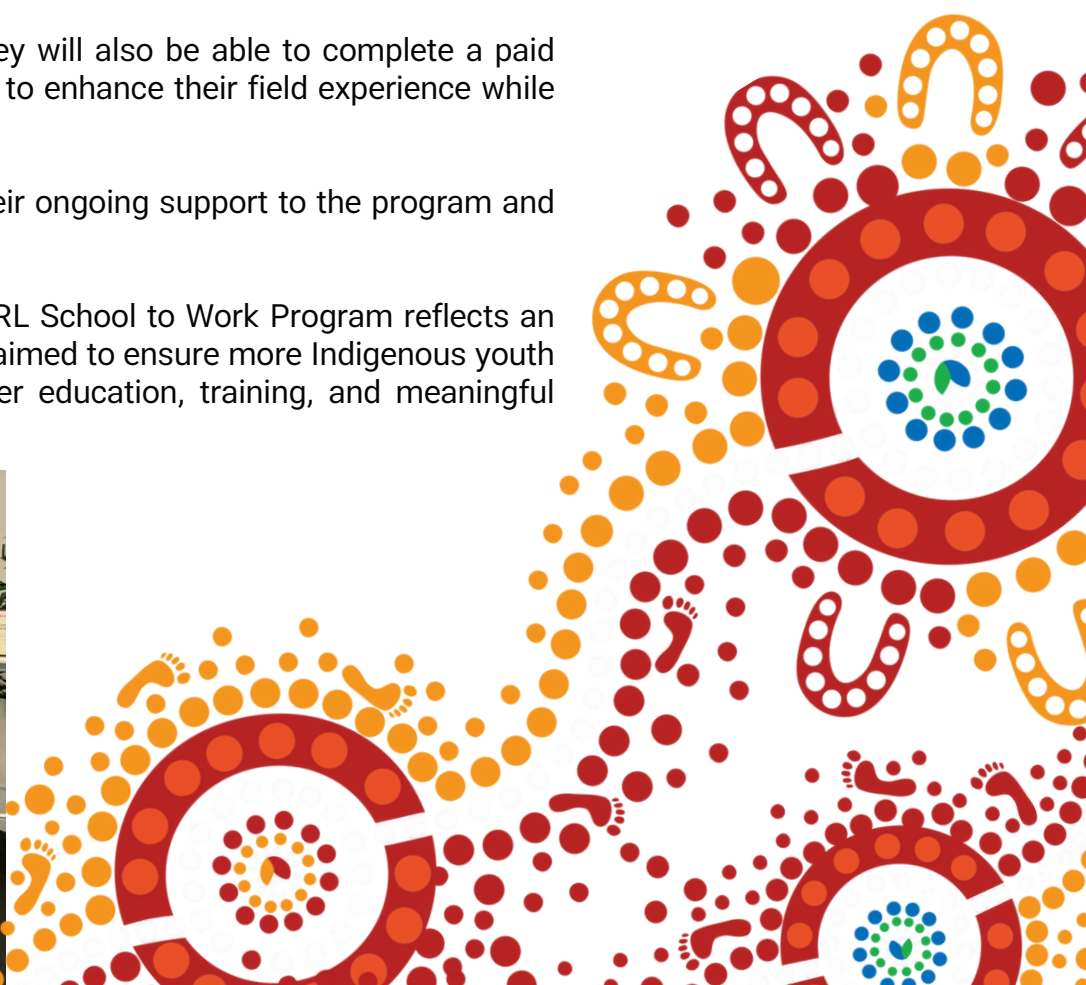
In December of 2023, we announced our national partnership with Gamuda Australia, as part of this partnership Gamuda is providing construction scholarships to two of the School to Work participants. These two scholarships are tailored for University students pursuing relevant tertiary pathways, these scholarships come with the added advantage of a paid internship at Gamuda, underscoring the company's dedication to supporting academic excellence and practical experience.

Congratulations to Jai Trewlynn and Breanna Rae on securing two scholarship positions with our national partner Gamuda. Jai will head off to Western Sydney University to commence a Bachelor of Constructions Management while Breanna will start a Bachelor of Science - Environmental Science.

As a part of their scholarship, they will also be able to complete a paid internship with Gamuda Australia to enhance their field experience while they study.

We want to thank Gamuda for their ongoing support to the program and our participants.

Gamuda's partnership with the NRL School to Work Program reflects an investment in three pivotal areas aimed to ensure more Indigenous youth successfully transition into further education, training, and meaningful employment.





NRL Indigenous Youth Ambassadors attend the Harvey Norman All-Stars

The 2023 NRL Indigenous Youth Ambassadors, Talleira Swain, Noah Doig, Axel Welling and Emillia Cartwright attended the NRL Harvey Norman All Stars on the beautiful lands of the Wulgurukaba and Bindal People.

Spending the week in the Indigenous Men's and Women's camp the four ambassadors got to experience up and personal what the week looks like from, Captains run to NITV interviews. They were able to watch the team practise their cultural performances and have personal yarns with the players and coaches of both teams. One of the highlights for the students was getting to meet aunty Gail Mabo and attending her ART exhibition run by Gail herself. They also got to attend a leadership dialogue with ARLIC, Uluru statement from the Heart and Greg Inglis.

“Being around so many proud Indigenous and Māori people, embracing their culture throughout every aspect of the week was inspiring. It truly made me realise just how prominent culture can be, even when working hard towards your goals. It felt like such a loving and understanding community. Seeing the players on that more personal and cultural level was also so amazing and puts the game and the people at the NRL in general into such a different perspective”.

- Emillia Cartwright Chami (2023 Female Youth Ambassador)

It was a special moment and opportunity for these four young students who can now take back to their communities what they learnt during their week's experience.





Industry Visits

Multiplex Site Tour Visit leads to Work Experience Opportunity

Our Gold Coast Titans region teamed up with Multiplex to deliver a site tour visit of the Destination Gold Coast Tower 2 which is currently under construction and soon to be a world-class hotel with a stylish mix of contemporary apartments.

Year 12 students Taiton, Henry, Addison, Caleb & Manny attended the visit and were able to connect with Darren McGrath from Superior Walls and Ceilings to discuss apprenticeships for when they finish school at the end of 2024.

These five students identified early at the Multiplex Visit that they had an interest in Carpentry or Plastering, further down the track they meet with Darren to discuss work experience opportunities, what a day looks like in the trade, what Superior Walls and Ceilings specialise in, the building industry shortage, offered benefits to work in construction and what growth they can make within the industry. At the end of the meeting Darren was able to talk to each student and set up a plan with each of them for when they finish school and look to signing up for an apprenticeship with Superior Walls and Ceilings.

Each student got a lot out of the meeting and are now able to think more about their futures in the industries and what pathway best suits them.



Taking on the World of Technology and Business with Google and Westpac

A group of participants visited the Google and Westpac headquarters located in Sydney CBD. The day was all about delving into the world of technology and business, highlighting the various routes into these industries.

A big thank you to Google and Westpac Group for welcoming us on such a fantastic day. Special recognition goes out to all the guest speakers and individuals who generously imparted their expert advice and industry knowledge with our participants.

Clay Riley, the Indigenous Careers & Programs Consultant at Westpac said "My experience speaking with the NRL School to Work students as they visited Westpac was truly rewarding. It was inspiring to engage with such motivated and enthusiastic young individuals eager to explore various pathways and opportunities".





Thank you for your support!

School to Work would like to acknowledge and thank the following organisations & educational institutions for their commitment to support the program:

- AIATSIS
- Bennelong Energy Services
- BRC Roofing & Cladding Australia
- Coffey Testing
- Gamuda Australia
- Google
- Green by Nature ANZ
- Gurugun
- John Holland
- Multiplex
- Newcastle Knights
- NRL State of Mind
- Skyline Landscape Services
- SRN Coaching
- Superior Walls and Ceilings
- Wambuul Woodworks
- Ward Ciovil
- Westpac

FEEDBACK

For all feedback & enquiries,
please email
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 02 9359 8583

 www.nrl.com/community/school-to-work/



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