

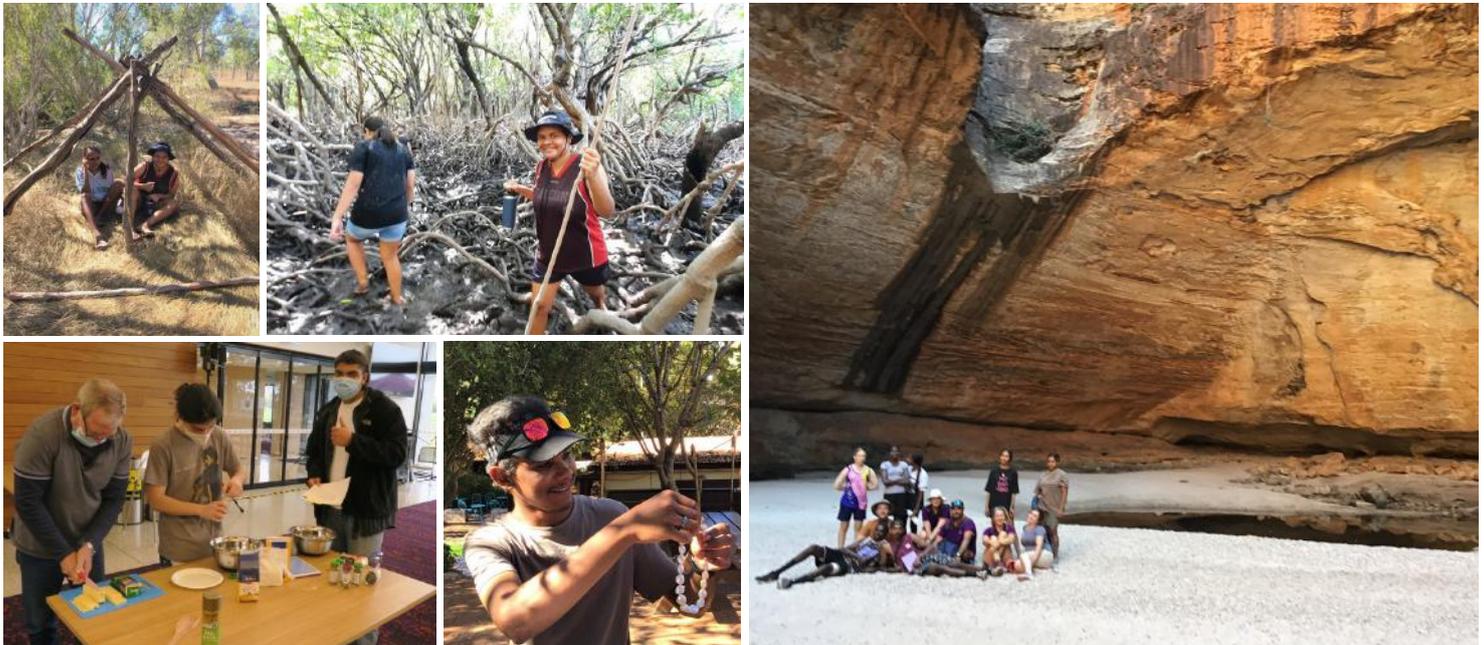
Learning naturally results

In Week 7 of term, our students embarked on academic camps to Halls Creek/Purnululu National Park, and the Dampier Peninsula. With our Year 10 Humanities/Science curriculum focusing on 'Changing Habits for Habitats' and our Certificate II program, the Tourism Industry, participation in these camps enabled our students to engage with community in on-country, experiential learning approaches. This allowed students to make connections by returning to learnt knowledge, hereby facilitating the opportunity for deeper understanding and introspection as they reflected on what they had understood.

Our use of the 8-Ways Framework, allows for more contextualised learning, enabling students to see how education is relevant and meaningful in their own lives. This approach is effective, as according to Yunkaporta & Kirby (2011), 'Students know "they are learning about something real, from a real place. It gives learning context rather than a whole lot of 'facts floating around in space".'

It was evident from the student's engagement and enjoyment in all of the activities as well as their assessment outcomes, that 'when pupils are given something to do, not something to learn; and doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results.' John Dewey

Monique Fewkes, Head of Teaching and Learning



Learning by doing - images from Term 3

Values education, Learning by Doing.

Learning in Residence (LiR) aspires to cultivate a strong and vibrant community where positive relationships are nurtured and personal qualities like empathy, persistence, respect, and courage are observable. In stark contrast with years gone by, in the 'new normal' at LiR, there are no opportunities to leave the campus, no external activities, like movies, football or festivals and no visits or physical contact with parents or close family. We could've been forgiven for anticipating tough days ahead.

We have seen tremendous examples of generosity, compassion, gratitude, empathy and resilience: Students who may once have shared a polite greeting sharing conversations and friendship. Students seeking opportunities to contribute to the upkeep of the facility, helping their mentors with tasks and generally looking after the place. Students taking genuine delight in identifying opportunities to include less confident students in activities and make them feel comfortable.

Equally important to acknowledge is the learning and growth that takes place on the shadow side of this. Experiencing feelings of despondency as friends depart early and the melancholy of loneliness. Finding the tenacity to push through, week after week, and day after day of the same routines, increasingly familiar surrounds and trying not to think about when things will ever return to normal. I have been so proud of all the students, in particular our Yiramalay legends, Banjo McIntosh and Alena Landers. These holidays Banjo will spend another term break away from mum and dad and brothers in Broome as he stays with extended family in Bendigo. Alena will stay with her LiR buddy, Ella Rees, at their farm in Hamilton. These circumstances have provided rich experiences for our young people to develop those important qualities of courage, resilience, determination and self-belief, which will contribute to a happy and balanced life.

Matt Watson, Deputy Director Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School, Deputy Head Learning in Residence - Melbourne

Camps, calitropis and cane toads

The Year 10 - Senior Years Preparation Program (SYPP) camp was a five-day field trip which took us through Gidja, Jaru and Gooniyandi country. We saw how different habitats are used, the threats to these habitats, and how places are being protected by traditional owners, government bodies, tourism operators and some pastoralists.

On Gidja and Jaru country just out of Halls Creek, Seaniquah and Elizah shared the tale of a cave underneath Palm Springs in which the Rainbow Serpent lives. Being there in person helped us to appreciate this habitat in a way we never could have in the classroom. After rubbing rocks under our armpits (so the serpent could become familiar with us), we dove in for a refreshing swim.

Sitting around the fire at Sawpit Gorge, staff and students were inspired by Seaniquah welcoming us to country and advising us which parts of the gorge were culturally appropriate for us to walk in. Seaniquah and Tanika also demonstrated awesome bush skills and sheer grit to break down big logs so we could keep the fire burning while we had dinner, played games and shared stories.

Our trip continued to Purnululu National Park, a World Heritage site of international importance. Here we did LOTS of challenging walks and staff noted how well students supported and encouraged each other, and how their persistence and resilience built up each day. We learned to understand and respect the rules of the National Park - even though we wished we could have a campfire. Instead, we laughed together, playing games like I spy and charades, and encouraging each other to take a safe risk and just 'have a go'.

The hardest hike, which all students tackled with gusto, took us into Mini Palms Gorge and close to a sacred women's site. We learned that being near sacred sites can affect people in different ways, with mentor Jeremiah later becoming unwell. We were very grateful and inspired when Elizah was able to heal Jeremiah. Later in the classroom, we discussed whether these types of sites should be marked on a map - and what the possible impacts of this could be.

This trip was a great combination of academic and on-country learning. Our proud and confident students behaved maturely and respectfully (most of the time!), welcoming us to their country and sharing their stories of country, spirits and sacred sites. Staff and students forged stronger relationships, trust and respect for one another, and for the habitats we visited.



Images from Gidja and Jaru country on the Year 10 (SYPP) camp and students supporting the Bunuba rangers program

This term students also worked with teachers and rangers to learn about threats to habitats from invasive species, including the declared weed *calitropis* and the ubiquitous pest the cane toad. Our night-time toad hunting resulted in the discovery of the new cane toad frontier and Bunuba rangers are now planning for a taste aversion program; while our day time efforts led to the clearing of *calitropis* almost entirely from a creek crossing near Yiramalay.

Leonie Starnawski, Teacher

Farewell Oz

Austin (Oz) Smith has been with Yiramalay Kimberley for just shy of one year, spoiling us with his now famous brunches that would be the envy of any good restaurant. The kitchen will not be the same now that Oz is moving on to a fantastic opportunity running the kitchen at the San Remo hotel near Phillip Island in Victoria. We are sad to see Oz depart and will miss his great sense of humour and support of the program; I am not sure we will all miss the black pudding sausage that this Scottish treasure tried to have us all eating! All the very best for your next adventure, Oz.

Felicity Pearson, Director (Acting)



Oz with Yiramalay students and one of his many famous brunches

Consumers to providers

Each term of the Year 11 and 12 Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways, focusses on a different industry context and engages students in a package of learning experiences relating to that area. Term 3 2020 embedded units within the tourism industry and set the scene for unmatched opportunities of learning by experience, during our academic camp up the Dampier Peninsula, north of Broome.

Schooling at Yiramalay offers students many occasions to learn on-country. During camp we did that on Jabirr Jabirr, Nyul Nyul, Bardi, and Nimanburr country; wading in crystal clear salt water, touring the islands off Cygnet Bay, and knee-deep in mangrove mud. Through each one of their five senses the students were engaged with tourism as they stepped out of the familiar into the unknown.

They heard nature up close and personal, as they tuned in to native bees buzzing deep within tree trunks. They listened to stories around the camp fire, spoken by local family members keen for them to know more. They smelt the sea air, inhaled aromas of crushed bush medicine leaves, and breathed in wafts of the catch of the day roasting over the coals. They learnt how to pick up a mud crab boldly yet safely, after spotting it well-camouflaged in a sandy hiding spot. They held the smooth round orb of a perfect pearl in the palm of their hand, as they heard the five factors that make up its worth. They sat around the fire at night rejoicing at salty sweet oysters, or picking the previously mentioned mud crab's claws, fresh from the boiling pot bright orange, juicy and tasty.



Images from the Dampier Peninsular Year 11 and 12 Certificate II tourism industry camp

They looked upon the seemingly endless stretch of blue water and white sand, meeting those red moonscape cliffs. The landscapes and seascapes etched an indelible mark behind our eyes, even for those who have seen it all before. Local Indigenous tourism operators spoke to us with joy and passion about their own journey into the tourism industry and were full of enthusiasm for the many opportunities available to our students - jobs, funding, and the sweet satisfaction of being able to work with their own knowledge on-country and close to home.

The change in location from freshwater to salt water country was evident all around us, as was the potential shift in perspective of our group from tourism consumers to future tourism providers.

Mary Zbierski-West, Teacher

The low-down on lock down

For Yiramalay students in the LiR in Melbourne, each day blends into the next, the only difference being no classrooms and sleep ins on weekends, students continue to show a great deal of tolerance and commitment through this challenging time.

Confined to the radius of campus, students certainly have made the most of the College facilities, many have picked up new skills such as sewing, painting, knitting and cooking. Friday and Saturday nights offerings are now games, quizzes and karaoke, and improving balancing with Yoga, a great escape for the more studious. Table tennis has become a highlight, with competitive matches played every evening between students and staff. Dinner is the time we see one another, appreciating the time we have to sit down, eat delicious food and have a yarn about anything but the obvious - *What are you watching right now?*, always being at the forefront of conversation. During this time, students are discovering their inner strength and their ability to make the best of a situation, however dire it may seem, and to use this time as an opportunity for growth, spending time getting to know themselves and one another.

Ayla Pearson, Residential Mentor



Images of students in Melbourne

Reflections from the Dampier Peninsula camp

This term we went for a school camp to Kooljaman at Cape Leveque. We looked at pearl farms, great beaches and awesome sunsets. I saw different places compared to home down in the Pilbara; we also saw sea life, new faces and met new people. We listened to the tour guides, teachers and local people. I heard good advice from our tour guides about the Tourism business and how to be confident speaking in public. We heard great things about the history in Cygnet Bay and the other places we visited. We saw new places, beautiful beaches to swim at and we took a lot of great photos of the Cygnet Bay area and the beaches. I felt happy and homesick, but I felt relief.

It was a really good trip and I learnt a lot.

Shakaya Warrie, Year 12

Last week we went on a camp to the Dampier Peninsula with all the Cert II students and staff, Mary, Mon, Brent, Sophie and Ariel. Bolo Angus, an Indigenous tour guide, welcomed us to his country with spring water, then showed us around the mangroves. He showed us different fruit trees and how to find salt water food: mud-crabs, oysters and fresh water. Memphis and I saw a two-metre salt water crocodile while we were hunting for mud crabs.

At Cygnet Bay Pearl Farm we listened to Terry Hunter, who spoke to us about his experience working there. He also told us about WAITOC (Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council) and the support they offer.

I really enjoyed the salt water country and its weather. I was interested in everything and thought we should have stayed a bit longer. I'm definitely going back sometime these holidays!!

Corry Brooking, Year 12

Last week we went on a camp to the Dampier Peninsula with the Cert II students. I saw the big blue ocean; it was deep and scary. We looked at where the mud crabs hide when the tide goes out. I also saw Mary waving at a whale in a weird way. We listened to the tour guide sharing his stories and experiences. I heard him say "Once you put your mind to it, anything is possible!"

We were enjoying the experience a lot. I felt relaxed and tired at the end of every day.

Lizaria Macale, Year 12

Earlier this term we drove a long way from Yiramalay to Kooljaman, where we set up camp and would stay for the next four days. We spent the week participating in four different tours exploring the north area of the Dampier Peninsula. We looked at landscapes, pearls, sea scapes, the wildlife of each of the areas and how most of the tours work and what they do to keep the business going. I saw lots of the beautiful wildlife at the camp-site and during the tours which include dolphins, whales, crabs, coastal birds, and reef fish. I heard the waves crashing and the coastal birds early in the morning; everyone's stories at the camp fire at night; and the crickets and other insects chirping later in the night when its quiet.

During the day we listened to the tour guides talk about the area such as landscape, animals, and the history of the land. Some shared their own personal experiences working in the tourism industry and their journey to becoming a tour guide. We learnt about the many opportunities and support given to Aboriginal people looking to work in the tourism industry. I felt stress-free and calm when at the camp-site. On the tours I was more interested and attentive but still relaxed.

Hiki-Lee Kinley, Year 11

Gidja and Jaru country camp reflections

The trip to Gidja and Jaru country was a good experience and it was fun getting to know one of my classmate's country. Seaniquah told us lots of stories and welcomed us to country and told us where not to go due to spiritual reasons. At the Bungle Bungles we went on a long hot walks and we all pushed ourselves to finish the walk. We had great bonding times together as a class. We learned about how to look after the habitat and what affects the habitats of animals. In class we made all of this into an assignment about our field trip.

Tanika McHenry, Year 10

Important Dates

Mon 5 Oct
Thu 8 - Sun 11
Mon 12 Oct

Melbourne classes commence
Students pick up
Kimberley classes commence

Fri 27 Nov
Fri 27 Nov
Wed 9 Dec

Year 12 Graduation
End of Term 4 Kimberley
End of Term 4 Melbourne



Shakaya holding a Pinctada maxima shell, the largest pearl oysters in the world



Corry and Lizaria enjoying salt water country



Hiki-Lee at Kooljaman - Cape Leveque



Tanika (left) with friends at Purnululu National Park

**The Yiramalay/Wesley Studio School is committed to keeping children safe.
Trained teachers deliver the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum to all students.**