



Weenthunga Health Network Annual Report 2018 - 2019



President's Report

It has been a year of evolution and growth for Weenthunga Health Network, and it has been a privilege to continue in the role of President alongside our committed, skilled and connected Committee of Management. Our unique Aboriginal-led networking model, valuing two-way collaboration and underpinned by relationships, respect, reciprocity and responsibility, has continued to show its' value and achieve success. We were fortunate to be able to build on the strengths of our work in Bendigo to establish our young women's program in Geelong and Melbourne, welcoming new staff members to our team and many more young women, families, health and education professionals and organisations to our network from those communities – we thank them and acknowledge their enthusiastic involvement, alongside the long-standing commitment of those involved in our Bendigo network.

We transitioned our operational leadership with Aunty Steff Armstrong heading off to Broome for a new adventure and Lin Oke getting in the back-seat, continuing as Executive Advisor. They supported the new leadership of Sam Paxton and Erin McKinnon as they carry forward the two-way working that Aunty Steff and Lin modelled over many years. On behalf of the Committee and staff I acknowledge the immeasurable contribution of Lin Oke as co-founder and inaugural Executive Officer of Weenthunga, and Aunty Steff Armstrong as the former Manager Programs and guiding light of Weenthunga, and thank them both for the commitment and love they have and continue to give to the network.

The Committee and staff gathered together from across the State for a retreat at the end of 2018, strengthening our relationships and connections with one another and cementing our vision and focus. We look forward to further advancing this vision in the coming year, and hope the Victorian Government will see the value of investing in our work towards First Nations health and wellbeing in Victoria. I'd like to acknowledge VACCHO, whose support for Weenthunga as an Associate Member is greatly valued, and the national Indigenous health associations IAHA, CATSINaM, AIDA and NATSIWA for past and continuing solidarity. I'd also like to thank our financial supporters for investing in this work, they are acknowledged on page 9.

Finally, I acknowledge and thank our members for your support and involvement - now over 423 of you. It was encouraging that 62% of new members over the past year were Full Members. To our Full Members – we see the value you bring to the health space. We hope to nourish and nurture your journey working in health and create space for your voices to be heard. And to our Associate Members – we thank you for having the courageous conversations and hope to support you to challenge white privilege and institutional racism in mainstream health spaces. Together we can create the change that's needed to improve experiences, care and outcomes for First Nations people in Victoria.

Brenda McDermott
President



Weenthunga Committee of Management

Following last year's AGM, Brenda McDermott, Colleen Kelly and Carol Mioduchowski were re-elected, and two new Committee members Kerrie Thomsen and Meg Irwin also joined the Committee of Management. The Office Bearers were elected: Brenda McDermott, President; Jacqueline Watkins, Vice President; and Kerrie Thomsen, Treasurer. Liz Cameron did not re-stand for the Committee, and we thank her for her contributions during their her on the Committee. David Menzies was appointed by the Committee on 2 February 2019.



Brenda McDermott
President
Dispute Resolution Officer,
Dispute Settlement Centre of
Victoria, Gippsland
First Nations: Palawa



Jacqui Watkins
Vice President
Manager, Aboriginal Health
Policy and Planning,
Western Health
First Nations: Jingili/
Mudburra



Kerrie Thomsen
Treasurer
Occupational Therapist/
Art Therapist
First Nations: Butchulla
(Badjtala)/Gubbi Gubbi



Colleen Kelly
Committee Member
Nurse, Lecturer in the
Gukwonderuk Indigenous
Unit, Monash University
First Nations: Wilunyu/
Yamaji



Meg Irwin
Committee Member
Speech Pathologist, Bendigo
Health
Australian



Melissa Deacon-Crouch
Committee Member
Head of Nursing and
Midwifery La Trobe
University, Rural Health
School Bendigo
Australian



David Menzies
Committee Member
Chronic Disease Programs
Manager and Team Lead,
Health Care Homes, South
Eastern Melbourne Primary
Health Network
Australian



Carol Mioduchowski
Committee Member
Podiatrist/Manager,
Community and
Rehabilitation Services
(North Area) Barwon Health
Australian

Governance and Operational Model

Weenthunga is Aboriginal-led and values collaboration between First Nations people and other Australians. The Committee of Management comprises a majority of First Nations people, and the position of President can only be held by a First Nations person. Only Full members of Weenthunga - First Nations people - are able to vote. The model underpins Weenthunga's operations, as we acknowledge the value and power of First Nations people and other Australians working together.

Durrong Ngulu's Report

I feel very grateful to have continued my journey with Weenthunga in a new way this year. My first interaction with Weenthunga was in 2015, as a guest speaker at Weenthunga's Melbourne-based Women's Talk Health Day. In 2017, I joined Weenthunga's Committee of Management. Now, in 2018-19, I have had the opportunity to be more "hands on" as a member of our deadly team; first, as the Melbourne Program Leader and now as Durrong Ngulu with fifth generation Australian woman, Erin McKinnon.

I'd like to thank Aunty Steff Armstrong (former Manager Programs) and Lin Oke (former Executive Officer, current Executive Advisor) for bringing me on this journey with them; for building Weenthunga to be a strong and proud organisation; and for their ongoing wisdom, support and guidance.

I'd like to recognise Aunty Steff's Eldership within Weenthunga and the work of Elders within the communities that we live and work. Our programs are only possible because of the activism, resistance, healing and leadership of those that have come before us; who have set solid foundations, shared stories, passed down culture and provided the vision of where we need to go next.

With thanks to Wurundjeri Tribe Council, we have always been fortunate to have a Woiwurrung language name for our organisation, Weenthunga, meaning to 'hear/understand'. This year, with thanks to Aunty Gail Smith, we have a Woiwurrung language name for our young women's program, Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie, meaning to 'hear within'. This name reflects the emphasis we place on deep listening and trusting our inner voice. With thanks to Marbeangrook Consulting, Erin and I share a Woiwurrung language name for our job title, Durrong Ngulu, meaning "join voices". This name reflects the two-way, collaborative, working relationship between Erin and myself. We value each other's knowledge and work to each other's strengths.

A key highlight for me this year has been meeting the 50 young women who came along to our Women's Talk Health Days on Wurundjeri Country, Dja Dja Wurrung Country and Wadawurrung Country. The sistahood that's being formed within and across these communities is exciting. The breadth of health careers young women are passionate about and pursuing is exciting. The young women's determination to bring their cultural ways of doing, knowing and being with them into tertiary education and the workforce is exciting.

My hope for this year is that we get the funds we need to continue to back the young women in our program and to continue the conversations we're having. These include conversations about racism, white privilege, decolonising systems and spaces and two-way working.

Thank you to the Weenthunga team (past and present), our Committee of Management, and Members for sharing in our vision for change. I'm looking forward to continuing our relationships together this year and beyond.

Sam Paxton - Waywurru

Durrong Ngulu's Report

It was a privilege to join the Weenthunga team in 2018, and I'm thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to work with this unique organisation alongside smart, skilled, talented, wise and inspiring people. 2018-19 has been exciting and challenging for Weenthunga, with the growth of our programs on Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri country, elevating conversations on white privilege and a focus on telling our stories our way with the creation of videos.

We've also faced ongoing funding constraints and uncertainty, and the frustrations of working with government systems that are siloed rather than inter-connected, that prioritise dollars over relationships, and that problematise First Nations people rather than the racist colonial systems that disadvantage and discriminate against them.

I want to acknowledge the dedication of our staff and their commitment to Weenthunga and our two-way approach, our Geelong team - Gunditjmara, Wotjobaluk and Njarrenderi woman Kylie Clarke, Program Leader, and Collaborator Kylie Fox, Bendigo team - Jaara and Yorta Yorta woman Josie Garner, Program Leader, and Collaborator Sue Bray, Lin Oke, our wise Executive Adviser and Collaborator for Melbourne, Sarah Stoller our Operations Manager, and my co-leader and Melbourne Program Leader, Waywurru woman Sam Paxton – special thanks to Sam for her patience and support as we find our feet in our roles. I also want to acknowledge staff who worked with us in 2017-18 – Aunty Steff Armstrong, Arkeria Armstrong, Luisa Hope, Suze Radford and Phil Huntington – and to Yuin woman Chris Dragisic who took on our finance support role at the beginning of 2019. Thanks to all of you for your contributions and generosity of spirit. A sincere thank-you also to our Committee members who generously give up their time to guide and oversee the work of Weenthunga.

I look forward to working with Sam, the staff and Committee to take the organisation forward in 2019-20, navigating the perils of finding ways to resource our work while staying true to our way of doing it – strengths-based, holistic, long-term, guided by relationships, respect, reciprocity and responsibility, with humility and in collaboration.

Erin McKinnon



Former Executive Officer and Manager Programs Report

We have spent many years “YARNING”, bringing together ideas of co-leadership and how to always add to the space of First Australians and Australians working together. We have tried to understand the complexity and diverse ways of operating in this space and yet have not let it hold us back. We have always sought ways to work together respectfully even though our initial ideas may have looked like they were in opposition. Others may have thought this is too hard to work in a cross-cultural way as it takes time, respect and a true sense of trust. For us, adding zest (Aunty Steff) and ankle biting (Lin) were just a natural way to work. We both had roles and always came to the table as co-leaders and what evolved was a deep friendship and love in the way we built Weenthunga and its vision.

In saying this our vision has always been about the value of First Australians and Australians collaborating, about using our strengths and believing in the knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal people and how to interweave this with commitment and focus to operate effectively with mainstream systems and organisations.

It is gratifying to see Weenthunga’s capacity steadily grow, with more First Australians working with Australian collaborators in key roles, bridging gaps in the education and health systems.

Lin Oke and Aunty Steff Armstrong



Weenthunga’s Members

Weenthunga’s membership has grown steadily to 423 - 29% of whom are Full Members - First Nations people, and 71% Associate Members - other Australians, all working in health. Weenthunga’s members work in diverse health roles, including: Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officers; Audiology; Chiropractic; Counselling; Dentistry; Dietetics; Exercise Physiology; Health Education; Health Promotion; Medicine; Mental Health; Midwifery; Nursing; Nutrition; Occupational Therapy; Optometry; Osteopathy; Pharmacy; Physiotherapy; Podiatry; Public Health; Psychiatry; Psychology; Social Work and Speech Pathology. Our members work in a variety of sectors including Aboriginal Health Services, public and private hospitals, community health centres and universities.

Weenthunga’s Aims and Objectives

Weenthunga Health Network aims to improve the health and wellbeing of First Nations people in Victoria. To achieve this aim, Weenthunga’s primary focus is to:

- Back Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young women into health careers; and
- Improve the understanding and practice of the mainstream health workforce working with First Nations people; and
- Address institutional racism in mainstream health services and systems.

Weenthunga Staff

Weenthunga’s part-time staff work flexibly and make the most of their very small hours of employment. The Weenthunga staffing team (average EFTs shown) in July 2018 to June 2019 comprised:

- Steff Armstrong, Manager Programs (0.6) (resigned April 2019)
- Arkeria Armstrong, Program Leader, Bendigo Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Program (0.4) (resigned June 2019)
- Sue Bray, Collaborator, Bendigo Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Program (0.4)
- Kylie Clarke, Program Leader, Geelong Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Program (0.4)
- Kylie Fox, Collaborator, Geelong Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Program (0.4)
- Josie Garner, Program Leader, Bendigo Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Program (0.4)
- Luisa Hope, Communications Manager (0.2) (resigned April 2019)
- Phil Huntington, Finance Manager (0.2) (resigned February 2019)
- Erin McKinnon, Executive Officer/Durrong Ngulu (0.6)
- Lin Oke, Executive Officer (until November 2018)/Executive Advisor (0.6)
- Samantha Paxton, Manager Programs/Durrong Ngulu (0.6)
- Suze Radford, Program Leader, Bendigo Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Program (0.4) (resigned November 2018)
- Sarah Stoller, Operations Manager (0.2)

Continuing to Strengthen Weenthunga’s Capacity and Effectiveness in 2019-2020

In 2019-2020 Weenthunga aims to increase its effectiveness through:

- Continuing to build and strengthen Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Programs in Bendigo, Geelong and Melbourne
- Working with Government to secure funding for Weenthunga
- Pursuing strategies to develop a fee-for-service model
- Developing and promoting the Victorian Aboriginal Health Education Network online [VAHENonline]
- Seeking opportunities to engage mainstream health professionals and organisations in discussions on white privilege and institutional racism
- Growing our membership
- Growing and building on our key partnerships, including VACCHO.

2018-2019 Highlights



October: Geelong Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program is established



30 November: Aunty Steff receives the Commitment to Indigenous Health Award at the 2018 IAHA Conference



29 March: Melbourne Women's Talk Health Day



28 May: Geelong host a night-time gathering and dinner



26 June: We launch our About Us video



16 July: Geelong program host inaugural Sport Science and Allied Health Day (SSAHD)

11-12 July: Aunty Steff and Lin attend *Because of Her We Can* Conference with Bendigo Alumni Georgia Radford and Shania Charvat



7 November: Kyralee Murphy-Edwards commences her internship with Weenthunga



22 November: We host a panel on Decolonising Solidarity and White Privilege



15 March: Bendigo Women's Talk Health Day



2 April: Geelong Women's Talk Health Day



31 May: Our Bendigo program is a finalist for HART Awards Community Organisation category



28 June: Bendigo host a celebration evening and dinner



Decolonising Solidarity and White Privilege Panel Discussion

On 22 November 2018, Weenthunga held a panel discussion 'Decolonising Solidarity and White Privilege'. The three panellists Steff Armstrong, Clare Land and John Bonnice discussed how Australians can best support First Nations people, and how we can all acknowledge and challenge white privilege in our organisations.

Steff Armstrong, a proud Gamilaraay woman, much respected and accomplished leader and Weenthunga's Manager Programs, spoke about her observations on and experiences of racism and its impacts in a powerful and moving address. Clare Land, an active supporter of Aboriginal struggles since 1998 and author of the book *Decolonising Solidarity: Dilemmas and Directions for Supporters of Indigenous Struggles*, spoke about understanding white privilege, white fragility and how Australians can learn about and respond to racism. John Bonnice, co-chair of the Bendigo Reconciliation Committee, spoke about his work with mainstream organisations exploring the issue of organisational white privilege, drawing on the Bendigo Reconciliation Committee's document *Identifying and Addressing Organisational White Privilege* as the basis for discussion.

The panel discussion was webcast and recorded. It is available on Weenthunga's website at: <http://www.weenthunga.com.au/news/index.cfm?loadref=40>.

HART Award Finalist

Weenthunga's Bendigo Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie [hear within] Program was a finalist for the 2019 Helping Achieve Reconciliation Together (HART) Award. The annual HART Awards are presented by Reconciliation Victoria and Victorian Local Governance Association. The Awards recognise initiatives that contribute to local reconciliation outcomes.

The HART Awards were presented on Friday 31 May at the Korin Gamadji Institute, during National Reconciliation Week. For further information on the HART Award visit: <http://www.reconciliationvic.org.au/hart-awards>.

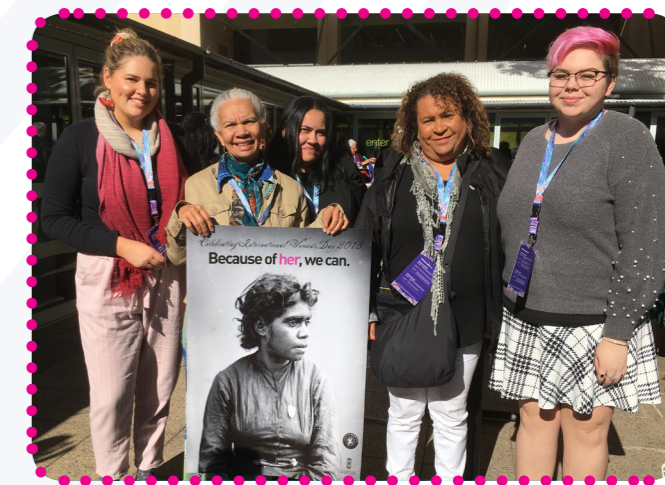
Weenthunga would like to congratulate Whittlesea Reconciliation Group and all the other finalists for their amazing work. It was a privilege to attend the awards ceremony as part of this inspiring group.

Telling Our Stories Our Way

In the last year, Weenthunga has created different ways to tell our stories our way. In June 2019 we launched our first ever "About Us" video, and a series of short video stories with some of our young women participants.

Our videos bring together some of the women who've been instrumental in shaping Weenthunga and our programs, including current students, alumni, staff and supporters. Weenthunga worked with AngryChair Productions to create the videos, and we greatly appreciate their work and the involvement of those who featured in the videos, for capturing Weenthunga's unique way of working and bringing it to life.

In 2019 the Girls Resilience Program became the Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie [Hear within] program (for more information see page 11). We re-branded and created new communications for the program, aimed at better representing how we work as a network and back young women to achieve their ambitions.



Because of Her We Can

On 11 -12 July 2018, Lin Oke and Steff Armstrong attended the National NAIDOC Womens' Conference, 'Because of Her, We Can', in Sydney with Weenthunga students Georgia Radford and Shania Charvat. All four women reflected on the experience of attending the conference, expressing that the conference was an inspiring, exciting and supportive experience.

The following quotes from the attendees encapsulate the mood and purpose of the conference: Georgia Radford program alumni said: *"I feel inspired constantly by the committed work that women are doing to make change happen for our people and for our younger generations, and for those generations to come. I will share the stories and ideas that were created over the two days to our community in Bendigo and Melbourne, stay connected with the women I met and feel inspired by the stories and struggles that so many women have had to face but have always risen above it all to succeed and know that I can do that too."*

Lin Oke, Executive Advisor said: *"I reflected on how lucky the many young women were to hear from and talk with strong, determined, kind and resilient women who are making such a difference in our society. Wonderful role models for us all."*

Shania Charvat, program participant said: *"NAIDOC week 2018 was one of the most inspiring and emotional weeks I have ever experienced, being surrounded by some of the most amazing women has left me exploding with pride and gratitude. Because of her we can, not only did NAIDOC week let us all mourn the loss of those who moved heaven and earth for us as strong Aboriginal women but appreciate and acknowledge all that SHE has done for us and pave the way for US to do the same for the future Aboriginal men and women. The moment you walk into that room full of Elders and future generations you physically feel every cell in the body vibrate with excitement, the energy hits you and the moment those speakers start speaking the emotions start going and not a single person in the room has a dry eye."*

Aunty Steff Armstrong, former Manager Programs said: *"I found that the conference made me feel totally supported. I was overwhelmed at hearing stories of pain and challenges but more importantly the strength of culture and the women's sense of love and support to improve not only their lives but those around them. They work with such courage, reciprocity, respect and love. They were all encouraging about change and the "we can do it" ideology. I can't ever remember attending a conference where we cried openly and laughed with full hearts. The many hugs were warm and constant. I felt totally at ease and not having to explain myself meant I felt energized rather than exhausted after the conference. Taking away such strength to support reflections and actions to move forward the ways to improve the lives of women and girls."*

Girls Resilience Program / Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Report

Weenthunga supports young Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women to pursue careers in health, facilitating a network around the young women to back them on their journeys through school, university and into the workforce as health professionals strong in identity and culture. This program began in Bendigo in 2013 as the Girls Resilience Program enabled through philanthropic funding and has now grown based on its success to be established in Geelong and Melbourne over the past year.

In 2019 Weenthunga sought a Woiwurrung name for our program - 'Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie' means 'hear within', and sits alongside our organisations' name meaning 'hear and understand'. To us, this means: *We come together in a safe environment to hear and understand other women's stories. We are supported by community and ancestors to listen to our own voice; to reflect. We move forward on our journey into a health career with new information, confidence, cultural knowledge and strength in our identity.*

Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Program Success

This year Weenthunga expanded on the success of our Bendigo program to establish programs in Geelong and Melbourne. In 2018-19 there were 63 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young women involved in the Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program across our three program locations.

The Bendigo Program continued to thrive thanks to the support of the Ian Potter Foundation and R.E. Ross Trust, the work of our staff (Aunty Steff Armstrong, Sue Bray, Suze Radford, Arkeria Armstrong and Josie Garner who all supported the program in 2018-19), the dedication and commitment of our Local Support Network, and the leadership and inspiration of our alumni who are keen to continue their involvement and connect with the younger women.

As shown in the figure below, our program retains students over time, with 18 young women now studying tertiary health courses who continue to be engaged with Weenthunga.

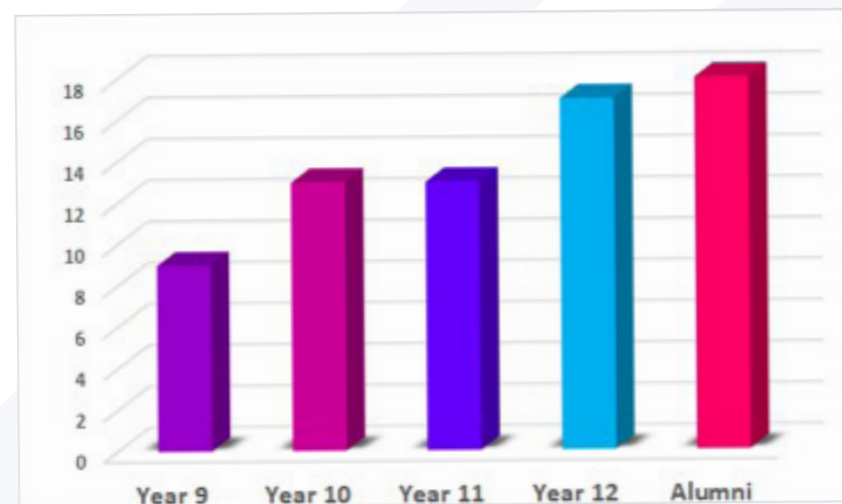


Figure 1: Number of Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program participants by year level (bar)

New Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Programs in Geelong and Melbourne

In July 2018 Weenthunga recruited Sam Paxton, proud Waywuru woman, to lead the newly established Melbourne program, thanks to support from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and VACCHO. Sam studied psychology and has worked in social and emotional wellbeing initiatives at headspace and VACCHO, and was previously a member of Weenthunga's Committee. Sam now co-leads Weenthunga while continuing to lead the Melbourne program.

With support from the Victorian Department of Education and Training, Weenthunga established the Geelong Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program in October 2018. Kylie Clarke, a Gunditjmara, Wotjobaluk and Ngarrindjeri woman, was recruited as Program Leader in late 2018. Kylie is qualified in Education, Sport and Outdoor Recreation and has worked in Aboriginal Education and Youth Mentoring for 18 years across various sectors. Kylie Fox was recruited as Program Collaborator in early 2019. Kylie Fox has a background in project management, education and workforce support. The 'Kylies' have worked together incredibly well to bring their own distinctive approach to meet the needs of the young women involved in the Geelong program.

Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie Events

This year Weenthunga held three very successful Women's Talk Health Days in Bendigo, Geelong and Melbourne. A new Sport Science and Allied Health Day was also held in Geelong, and a scholarship awards dinner in Bendigo. At all three Health Days, the young women heard from women working in health roles each sharing their unique story, which helped them understand the possible paths to becoming health professionals. All students were encouraged to draw on their identity as Aboriginal women to give them strength in navigating their health career journey.



Bendigo

On 15 March 2019, 15 year 10 to 12 students from 5 schools in the Bendigo region attended the Bendigo Women's Talk Health Day. Led by Aunty Steff Armstrong and her daughter Arkeria, the day started at St John of God Hospital. The students then travelled to Bendigo Hospital and Bendigo & District Aboriginal Cooperative. The students heard about the important services provided by these organisations, and the various professions and health roles they could choose to pursue on completion of their schooling.

The afternoon at La Trobe University included presentations from La Trobe staff panel talking about health courses at the university and student support. The students also heard about TAFE pathways and St. Vincent's Aboriginal Cadetship Program. There was a panel discussion with Weenthunga alumni now at university. Hearing stories from their peers, helped inspire the school students to find their own path and use supports available to them. The day wound up with activities, encouraging the young women to draw strength from their cultural identity and from each other.



A celebration dinner was held on 28 June 2019 at La Trobe University for the young women, their families and members of the local support network. Five students received Weenthunga scholarships sponsored by St. John of God Hospital and La Trobe University to support them in their studies: Tempany Thow, Ruby Norman, Molly Reville, Kaitlyn Rowland, and Jasmine Harrison. We would like to gratefully acknowledge our scholarship sponsors.

Weenthunga acknowledges and thanks the Bendigo Health Day presenters: Stephanie Blyth; Natasha (Tash) Patterson; Morgan Carter; Nettie Shue; Uncle Charlie Knight; Geoff West; Renee Sleight; Fiona Barrington; Melissa Deacon-Crouch; Nerida Hyett; Steve Begg; Cheryl Barker; Tashara Roberts; Ruby Tribe; Stephanie Hayes; Mishel McMahon and alumni panellists: Shania Charvat; Maryanne Thalasinis; Maya Coff; Emily Harper; Armana Parsons and Skye Anderson.

Geelong

On 2 April 2019, 16 year 9 to 12 students from 9 schools in the Geelong region attended the Geelong Women's Talk Health Day. The day began at Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative where the young women met and connected in a gathering circle. Students travelled to University Hospital Geelong Barwon Health where they heard from staff from the Aboriginal Health Unit who then lead the young women on a tour to the Paediatric Ward and Pharmacy where they spoke with an Aboriginal paediatric nurse and Aboriginal Pharmacy Technician. They also participated in hands-on interactive activities with speakers and staff from BMI and Audiology. In the afternoon students travelled to Deakin University, Waurn Ponds (Institute of Koorie Education & Faculty of Medicine) where they heard from health and education professionals including their journey and about university and TAFE pathways and subjects. The young women returned to Wathaurong Health Service where they yarned with inspiring Aunties, women and men and learned about Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation services and programs.

On 16 July 2019, Weenthunga held the inaugural Sport Science and Allied Health Day (SSAHD) at the Geelong Football Club. It was attended by 17 students from 10 schools in the Geelong region. The day allowed the young women to go behind the scenes to see and hear about health careers within the Geelong Football Club and Basketball Geelong. Participants had the opportunity to meet players from both codes and hear about their journey, and to talk to health professionals who work with the athletes and elite teams. The young women also participated in several interactive activities. The SSAHD allowed students to: consider local opportunities and pathways; to understand that professional athletes rely on holistic support which requires a range of staff and therapies and to understand the personal health and wellbeing benefits of these health fields.

Weenthunga acknowledges and thanks the Geelong's Women's Health Talk Day and Sports Science Allied Health Day presenters and supporters:

- Barwon Health: Renee Owen, Libby Lesock, Renee Howell, Naomi Asling, Sam Watts, Mandy Miller, Carol Mioduchowski, Laura Smith, Chloe Reid, Sandra Can Roon, Rachel Hyder, Sean Debooy and Dianne Bortoletto
- Deakin University: Aunty Janis Koolmatrie, Candice McKenzie, Barb Allen, Kelly Menzel, Jennie Briese, Joleen Ryan, Che Cockatoo-Hewitt, Mark Gilmore, Jodie Satour and Kate Crawley
- The Gordon: Gavin Wake and Lynne Beyer
- Wathaurong Health Service: Aunty Athalie Madden, Aunty Lyn McInnes, Shellee Strickland, Claire Galbraith, Melissa Commons, Duane Luki, Todd Fry, Sam Couzens, James Jose, Julia Bryan and Shannon McDonough
- Supporters: Aunty Sue Collins, Vicky Hayman, Ray Hollis, Ashlea Walsh, Local Labour MP Christine Couzens, Loretta Mellington and Ricki O'Shannessy
- Basketball Geelong: June O'Brien, Ebony Ralph & Chelsea Shields-Harris
- Corio Bay Health Group: Bernadette Downey
- Lake Imaging: Louise Place, M Power Service: Mary Jensen
- Geelong Football Club: Jackie Caracella, Monica Kelly, Melissa Hickey, Rachel Brooks, Dr Dom Condo and Sunrise Rehabilitation Staff

Melbourne

On 29 March 2019, 18 year 10 to 12 students from 6 schools in the north-eastern suburbs of Melbourne attended the Melbourne Women's Talk Health Day. The day started at the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service where the young women heard from speakers in a variety of health disciplines including midwifery, nursing, psychology and nutrition. Then at lunchtime the students travelled to the Mercy Hospital. The students heard about Aboriginal Programs at the Mercy and took a tour of the hospital. The students then travelled back to VAHS where they participated in a cultural activity, which was designed to foster connections and strength in their cultural identity.

Weenthunga acknowledges and thanks the Melbourne Health Day presenters and supporters: Koorrin Edwards; Mikaela Egan; Jacara Egan; Tya Fry; Storm Henry; Marika Jackomos; Ashley Paxton; Erana Tito; Ruby Tribe and Ruby Warber.

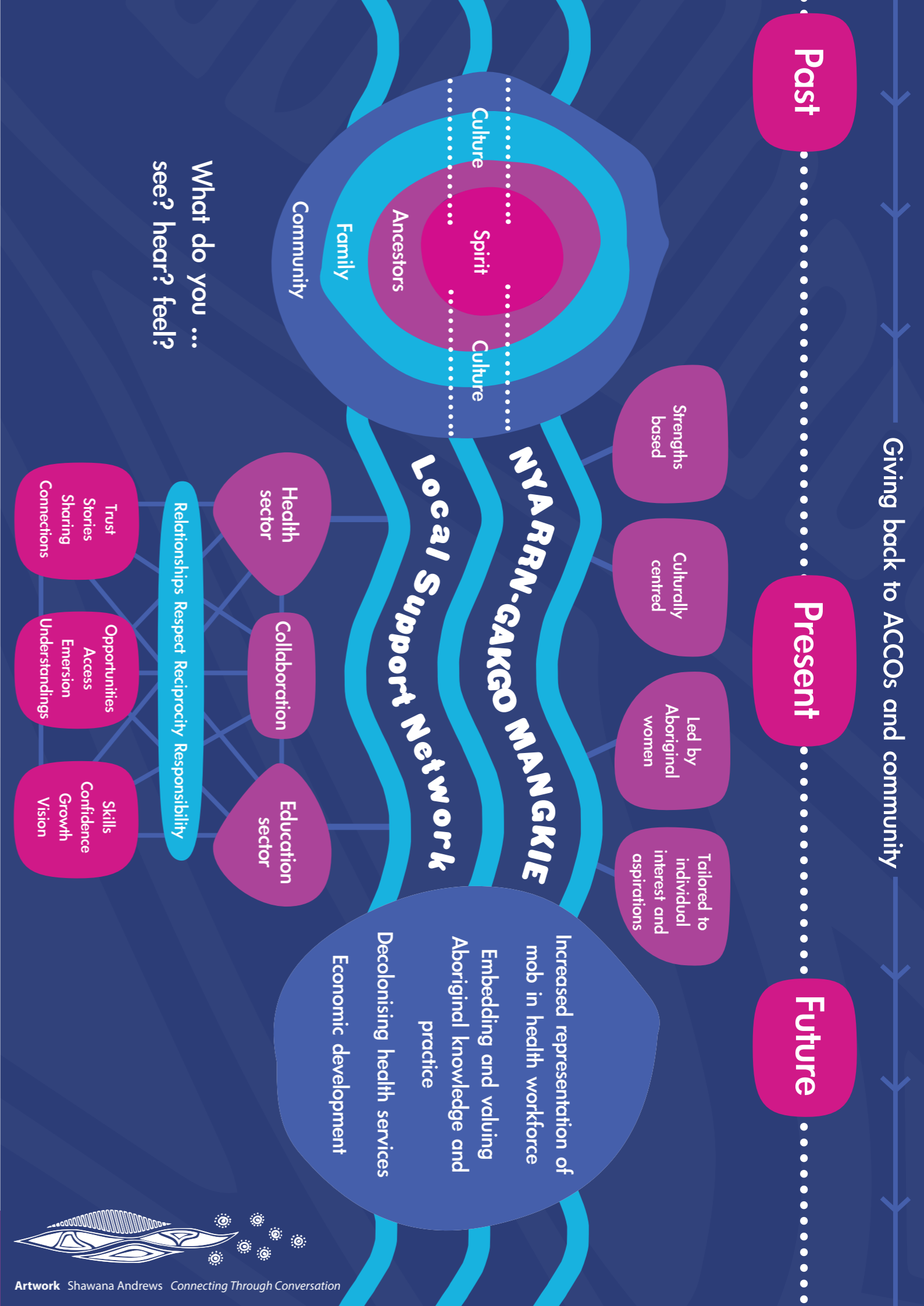


Aurora Internship

In November and December 2018, Kyrilee Murphy-Edwards worked with Weenthunga Health Network for 6 weeks as an intern, supporting the development of our Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program in Melbourne. Kyrilee is a proud Waka Waka, Yorta Yorta, Mutti Mutti, Wemba Wemba woman. At the time, Kyrilee was studying a Bachelor of Public Health at Griffith University on the Gold Coast. The internship was managed by the Aurora Foundation, who provided Kyrilee with a scholarship to undertake this work.

Kyrilee's internship provided her with first-hand exposure into how to build an Aboriginal-led program from the ground up. She was also reminded about how important it is to have an Aboriginal voice in mainstream spaces. Kyrilee was inspired to continue with her studies so that she can work in health in her community. She hopes to continue working with Weenthunga in some capacity so that she can support and mentor the next generation of Aboriginal women pursuing health careers.

Weenthunga was fortunate to benefit from Kyrilee's skills and enthusiasm, especially her contribution to our social media communications, sharing relevant content and perspectives in a fresh and engaging way. Her input saw our social media following increase significantly during her time with us.



Treasurers Report

Weenthunga continued to pursue our purpose and objectives within a tight budget, predominately allocated to expanded staffing due to the growth of our programs.

Weenthunga is very appreciative to the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education and Training for supporting our work this year, for allowing us to continue operating our secretariat and to expand our young women's program into Geelong. Weenthunga would also like to express our appreciation to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet for enabling us to partner with VACCHO in the Pathways to Education and Training Project. This project enabled us to establish our Melbourne Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program. Weenthunga's Bendigo Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program continues to develop from strength to strength, with valued support from the Ian Potter Foundation and the RE Ross Trust. We are enormously thankful for this generous support which has enabled our initial program to not only be sustained but to thrive. Weenthunga would also like to thank the Geelong Community Foundation for providing a grant to support our newly established Geelong Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program.

Weenthunga would like to express our gratitude to our members who have given personal donations to support Weenthunga. Your assistance is vital in supporting us to achieve our vision. We would like to make particular mention for the ongoing support and significant donations made by Meg Irwin, through the Meg Irwin Bursary, which has supported several young women studying tertiary health courses.

The organisation targets our expenditure to most effectively achieve successful outcomes. Weenthunga had retained earnings of \$226,980 for 2018-2019. We continue to work to diversify our revenue streams to ensure Weenthunga continues its role and purpose well into the future. There are no outstanding liabilities for Weenthunga.

I would like to thank Phil Huntington and Chris Dragisic for capably managing our finances and financial reporting, and Lin Oke, Steff Armstrong, Erin McKinnon and Sam Paxton for their oversight of finances and the operations of Weenthunga.

Kerrie Thomsen
Treasurer

Note: a full copy of the audited financial statements, provided at the AGM, are available on request from members.

Prudent financial management strategy of the Weenthunga Health Network

As there is no certainty in the level of funding obtained each year, Weenthunga endeavours to prudently manage its expenditure to ensure there are sufficient funds retained in reserves to meet core operating costs for 12 months ahead.

As can be seen in the comparative figures for this and the last financial year, Weenthunga has been able to increase its staffing whilst maintaining other expenses. The retained earnings partially reflect that some funds were received late in the year.

Finance Report

	June 2019	June 2018
Income	453,990	339,013
Expenditure		
Administration	33,475	25,860
Occupancy	-	2,541
Promotional expenses	6,575	656
Project activities	16,404	15,048
Staff expenses	347,886	206,560
Total expenditure	405,240	251,120
Surplus	48,750	87,893
Retained earnings	226,980	178,230

Weenthunga's Financial Supporters 1 July 2018 - 30 June 2019

Donations for scholarships and bursaries were received from Meg Irwin (a very generous Weenthunga Member and Committee Member), St John God Hospital Bendigo and La Trobe University Bendigo.

Generous contributions amounting to \$104,000 from our supporters in the following Philanthropic organisations: Geelong Community Foundation, The Ian Potter Foundation and RE Ross Trust, and some members has enabled Weenthunga to continue to work towards our key objectives.

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services supported Weenthunga Health Network in its core operations and expansion of the Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program.

The Victorian Department of Education and Training supported Weenthunga Health Network in its expansion of the Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program to Geelong.

The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and VACCHO provided funding through the Pathways to Education and Training Project to support the Nyarrn-gakgo mangkie program in Melbourne.



Weenthunga Health Network Inc.

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Facebook [facebook.com/weenthunga](https://www.facebook.com/weenthunga)
Website www.weenthunga.com.au

Weenthunga Health Network Inc has ATO Income Tax Exemption and DGR status.

Weenthunga artwork by Shawana Andrews 2010: Connecting through Conversation.
*The flames represent the campfire, a focal point for sharing knowledge and listening.
The circles represent communities, which have an abundance of knowledge to share.*