



# Welcome

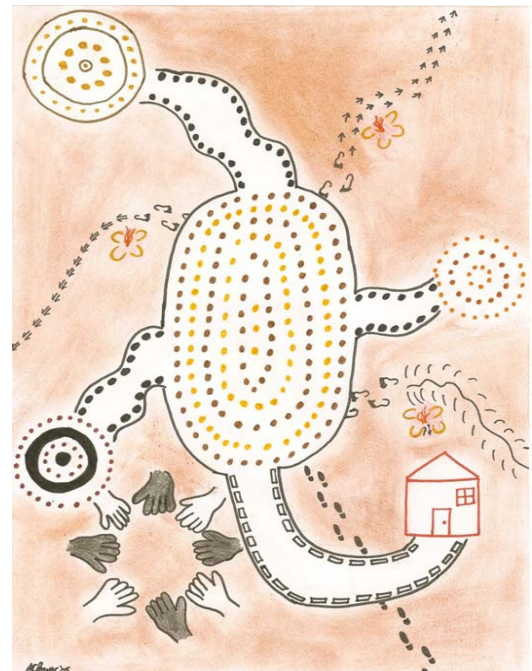
*A newsletter produced by the Australian Education Union for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members*

**Welcome to the first edition of *Our Voices Our Vision* – a newsletter produced by the Australian Education Union Federal Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members across Australia.**

In deciding to produce such a newsletter, the AEU's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Committee (ATSIEC) and TAFE ATSIEC wanted it to be a mechanism used to connect our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members from across the country. Your feedback on the newsletter and your written and photographic contributions to the newsletter would be greatly appreciated. We encourage you to make this newsletter yours!

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*Art work by Amanda Power of the Pangarang People and member of the, Queensland Teachers' Union*

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Membership**

The AEU currently has 165,000 members working in public schools, early childhood education centres and TAFE colleges across Australia.

Of these, 928 people identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander members.

We believe we have the largest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members in any organisation in Australia, an achievement we are proud to celebrate.

We hope that you are proud of this too and will assist us in reaching the 1000 member target by the end of 2006.

## Arthur Hamilton Award for Reconciliation in Education

*Vicki Nicholson, an Aboriginal Educator from Tasmania was the winner of the 2005 Arthur Hamilton Award. Fred Joseph from Queensland writes of Vicky's outstanding success.*

The winner of the 2005 Arthur Hamilton Award for Reconciliation in Education is Vicky Nicholson from Neika in Tasmania. Vicky is a Senior Curriculum Officer at the Aboriginal Education Unit in Hobart.



*Fred Joseph, Chairperson of the TAFE ATSIEC presents Vicky with her award.*

The committee judging the Arthur Hamilton award felt that Vicky's work across a number of projects with Indigenous students and teachers in public schools made her a worthy winner of the award.

The initial project Vicky implemented was the Improving Numeracy for Indigenous Secondary School Students (INISS) program. Vicky worked with Arthur Hamilton, for whom the award is now named and says that the project was a direct result of Arthur Hamilton's advocacy to improve Indigenous students' low numeracy results in Tasmania.

This then led to *Changing Places: Building Better Schools*, which was a program targeting the literacy and numeracy outcomes of primary school students through promoting culturally

inclusive classrooms. From that grew a program which specifically targets middle school students called *Changing places: Making Links* which is better known as the *Think Tank Workshops*.

As a result of Vicky's efforts, approximately 200 teachers in 60 schools have introduced culturally inclusive teaching practices into their classrooms, effectively reaching 30,000 Tasmanian children and their families. Her continued success is based around maintaining the inclusive focus of the programs and her exceptional relationship with Aboriginal people in the Tasmanian community.

Vicky's success has stemmed from a philosophy which values parents and caregivers as the principal educators of their children along with the continuous involvement of Aboriginal education workers, teacher assistants and tutors. Many parents developed a positive outlook on education from the recognition that their involvement in the projects provided.

Her workshops emphasised participation as a key and no one was expected to work on their own. The workshops were also stimulating. They adopted a holistic approach which included educationally, culturally and socially inclusive methods. This in turn provided people with the motivation and support to take their new skills back to their classrooms.

Aboriginal students are now supported to recognise and explore their identity by teachers who incorporate Aboriginal perspectives into the curriculum, appreciate the complexity of issues facing Aboriginal students and use inclusive pedagogical practices. More Indigenous parents and caregivers have become involved in their children's education as they have enhanced self belief through a direct result of attending Vicky's programs.

One Tasmanian teacher has done away with boring worksheets and engages students with more challenging tasks because she is now 'more aware of Aboriginal history and its lasting effect on contemporary issues.' The

teacher has enjoyed amazingly powerful experiences from her inclusive teaching approach and has been rewarded by the rejuvenation of her enthusiasm for teaching because of the programs. She describes Vicky as a 'unique educational leader who has the ability to inspire others to follow her vision and belief.'

Congratulations Vicky!

*Fred Joseph is the Chairperson of the AEU's Federal TAFE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Committee and the Committee's observer representative on National TAFE Council Executive. Fred teaches at the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE, which is based in Cairns.*

*This article first appeared in the Autumn 2006 Edition of the Australian TAFE Teacher.*

## **From the Federal President**



*Pat Byrne, AEU Federal President, gave this speech at the AEU's Federal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Seminar held in Brisbane on the 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2006.*

As the title of our seminar suggests, we are here today to explore some possible options re the future of public education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We are doing this against a background of changing federal government funding arrangements, public discussion about models of education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children; calls for greater accountability; changes to the industrial relations framework, etc.

During 2005, the AEU surveyed schools to find out what impact the changes to federal government funding of Indigenous education have had on schools and on students. Principals in schools across Australia overwhelmingly

reported negative responses in terms of the effects on the operations of ASSPA Committees; the reduced capacity of students to access programs; the reduction in the numbers of tutors for Indigenous students, thus denying extra tutoring to hundreds of students; and the need for students to have failed benchmark tests in order to be eligible for certain forms of literacy and numeracy support are just a few of the effects of the changes.

In addition, principals responding to our survey were unable to identify where the money which had been removed from their schools had actually gone. I'm talking about approximately \$2million dollars identified within our survey alone.

So while one group of principals was saying they had lost money there was no corresponding group saying they had gained any.

Because of the changes to the conditions under which ASSPA funding is provided, a significant proportion of schools which previously had functioning ASSPA committees, no longer do. This absence is having a major impact on the issue of parental engagement with schools. We need to think about what to do about this – what can we do in schools and their communities to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents continue to work with educators for the benefit of their children? How will we promote the discussions which are necessary for this to occur? What will be the consequences if we are unsuccessful?

Recently we have heard comments about the best way for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to access quality secondary education provision.

Noel Pearson is one who speaks passionately and clearly on this subject. He says categorically, that he is opposed to attempts to offer secondary education in remote locations because schools in those locations simply cannot offer a competitive education. His focus therefore is to ensure that children by the end of

primary school are properly equipped to take up the best secondary education elsewhere.

Now while no-one would reasonably argue with the statistics that create the entirely justifiable frustration being expressed by Noel Pearson; we can – and should – question the solution being put forward.

The Cape York Institute has entered into partnership with the Macquarie Bank Foundation to provide scholarships for Cape York students and which sees the Foundation contributing approximately \$1million towards boarding and tuition fees, private tutors, uniform and textbook allowances and staff to liaise between parents, students and the school.

Seventeen scholarships will be offered this year. Now, while we might wish those individual students well, we have to ask ourselves some serious questions.

What are the implications of this for public education? Is it really true that it is not possible to offer competitive education in rural and remote locations? What are the consequences of conceding this? What has been the response from the Queensland state government to this particular proposal? Or any other state government, for that matter?

Kevin O' Keefe said in this forum last year that we have an amazing capacity to keep on doing what we have always done even when we know that it isn't working. There is no question in my mind that we must change what we are doing; it is demonstrably not closing the gap between the educational outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children.

In the same way that Noel Pearson says we have to confront the hard issues inherent in restoring order into Indigenous communities, surely we have to confront the hard issues around the provision of quality public education to all Australians – Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike.

To do otherwise is to abandon the trust – the public education trust to which we have all committed in one way or another. This reflection needs to consider genuine and proper forms of educational accountability.

We are seeing more and more media comment on this issue reflecting a narrow, one-dimensional view of accountability measured by benchmark testing, the results of which should be used to inform parental choice of schooling. This is the model favoured by the current government.

We need to examine the consequences of such a model for Indigenous students and their teachers – do we want the narrow curriculum focus which will come from this where some schools will be totally preoccupied with passing tests at the expense of a broad and rich exposure to art, music and literature; and also for the teaching profession itself, where we see the role of the teacher reduced to that of a technician. How do we find the balance?



*Children at One Arm Point Remote Community School in Western Australia access computers to assist their learning. Photo reproduced with permission.*

All of these issues are critical to any serious consideration of the future of public education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. There are no easy answers to any of them.

That they are being considered at a time when IR changes and welfare to work changes are

creating levels of uncertainty and anxiety throughout the broader Australian community, merely adds to their significance.

I believe that the AEU, as the predominant education union in Australia, must have a clearly articulated view about where to from here for Indigenous students. We need to talk about alternative strategies and models within the public education system to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are not denied opportunities because of a lack of educational success.

The speakers and workshops today together with your energy, your expertise and your commitment will assist in moving this critical discussion forward.

### Hot Topic

Discuss the issue of the provision of high quality public education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in their home communities.

*What are the implications for public education if we concede that in a rich, first world country like Australia, we cannot provide quality public education for all?*

Let us know what you think!

### Campaign Updates

#### ***Federal Indigenous Education Funding***

ASSPA committees ceased to exist in January 2005 and changes to the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS) were more substantial than the change of the word 'Aboriginal' to 'Indigenous' in the title (the scheme is now known as the ITAS). As members in schools know, impacts of the changes to Commonwealth Indigenous education funding have been far-reaching.

In August 2005, the AEU Federal Office surveyed school principals to determine exactly

what these impacts were. 561 schools responded to the survey. A short summary of issues raised in the responses to the survey follows:

- 430 of the 561 (77%) schools had an ASSPA committee operating in 2004;
- The total amount of ASSPA funding that was lost to these schools was \$1,928,894 (or 76% of 2004 funding);
- There were 204 people employed under the ITAS scheme (a reduction of 447 people from the ATAS scheme, or 31%). 98 of these were Indigenous people (a reduction of 265 people or 73%);
- 1695 Indigenous students accessed the ITAS program (a reduction of 2745 students or 62%).

Overall, schools reported that:

- Changes to the Aboriginal Student Support and Parent Awareness Scheme (ASSPA) have had a significantly negative impact on schools and communities, especially on Indigenous parent participation in schools, including in educational decision-making;
- Changes to Commonwealth Indigenous education funding have resulted in a loss of funding to schools; a reduction of programs designed to meet the needs of Indigenous students; a loss of support for Indigenous students in mainstream school activities; and reduced employment (including Indigenous employment) in schools;
- Application processes for accessing Parent School Partnership Initiative (PSPi) funding are difficult and onerous; it has made the funding inaccessible for many schools and has further contributed to the deterioration of positive relationships between Indigenous parents and schools;
- Changes to the Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS) have had a negative impact on both the number of Indigenous students who can access tutorial support for literacy and numeracy and the amount of tutoring they can access; and
- Timelines for approvals of funding, receipt of funding and inconsistent advice received from the Commonwealth Department of Science, Education and Training have created confusion in schools.

DEST has worked to change some of the most contentious areas of the previous process for PSPI. There is no longer a requirement for schools to submit a concept plan, and there will be two funding rounds in 2006 rather than the 5 in 2005.

The AEU ATSIEC and TAFE ATSIEC are currently continuing to campaign around Federal Indigenous Education Funding. If you have any information on the impacts these changes are having in your schools and communities, please contact us. Visit the AEU web site for further information.

<http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Atsi/index2.html#INDFUND>

### ***Indigenous Studies in Teacher Education***

In 2005, the AEU commissioned Professor Jeannie Herbert of James Cook University to conduct a survey of teachers about the impacts that Indigenous studies within pre-service or in-service teacher education programs has on teachers' abilities to teach Indigenous students and/or Indigenous studies.

Professor Herbert conducted a survey to answer the question:

*Do practising teachers believe that studying a program of Indigenous Studies either through pre or in-service teacher education makes a difference to their ability to teach Indigenous students?*

516 teachers from across Australia returned the surveys. Professor Herbert states that:

“The outcomes of this survey demonstrate clearly that the majority of respondents to this survey:

- did not undertake Indigenous Studies as a component of their initial teacher education program but consider they would have benefited from the inclusion of such content;
- consider that in-service provision has enabled them to enhance their knowledge and understanding in this

field, thus compensating in some way for the lack of pre-service content;

- do perceive that Indigenous Studies, either as pre-service or in-service training, would have been valuable in enabling them to increase their capacity to effectively teach Indigenous students; and
- support the notion that Indigenous Studies should be a mandatory component of all teacher education programs”

(J. Herbert, (2005) *Indigenous Studies for Teachers - Teacher' perceptions of how pre-service and in-service studies in Indigenous Studies might impact upon their capacity to work more effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students*, soon to be published on [www.aeufederal.org.au](http://www.aeufederal.org.au)).

### ***Your Rights At Work***



You have seen the characters on the ACTU television ads; you have watched thousands of people march in the streets against John Howard's Industrial relations reforms; you have heard people talking about the issue in the local shop; but do you know the implications of the new Work Choices legislation, in particular Australian Workplace Agreements, for your work as an educator?

*Linda Gale the AEU's Federal Industrial Officer Explains...*



### **Education needs teamwork.**

Teachers, support staff, school leadership, parents and students all work together to provide quality education. A cooperative work culture is essential to this process, but this is undermined if staff members feel that they are competing for a share of limited resources, or that they can achieve individual advantage by keeping a good idea to themselves or by claiming the work of a team as their own personal achievement.

### **Education is complex work.**

Measuring productivity is very difficult when the “production line” is a school or TAFE, and the output is not widgets but the educational, cultural, and psychosocial development of students.

The “enterprise” of education is subject to a plethora of external factors at a macro and a micro level. In addition, what works with one student will not work with another, and educators constantly revise and reinvent their work to achieve the best that is possible in the context of constantly shifting circumstances.



*AEU Federal Officers and Staff at the November Your Rights at Work Rally in Melbourne*

This is typical of a highly skilled workforce bringing professional judgement to bear, rather than applying rigid, predetermined procedures. If education were not characterised by considerable variation in technique, it would not be quality education, since each student is a new challenge demanding new approaches. Nevertheless, this means that assessment of staff performance can be highly subjective. Without time to understand the particular factors in each case – those over which the staff member and their colleagues had control and those which were imposed externally – judgements tend to be arbitrary and inaccurate.

### **Collective bargaining is the most efficient choice.**

The administrative burden involved in developing, negotiating, settling, registering, monitoring, applying and renewing terms and

conditions of employment on an individual basis for hundreds of thousands of employees would be immense. Whole new bureaucracies would be required simply to keep the machinery of individual agreements rolling.

If individual negotiations led to variation from the “pattern agreement”, there would need to be monitoring and compliance mechanisms to ensure that each variation was kept track of and adhered to, and tracked from one agreement to the next. Over time the resulting complexity would be horrendous. If employers insured against mushrooming complexity by rigidly adhering to a pattern agreement, the whole edifice of “individual” bargaining would be revealed as a sham. Employers would in fact maintain a collective set of terms and conditions, while depriving employees of the opportunity to negotiate collectively.

The burden of administering individual agreements for staff would be smaller in magnitude, but even larger in impact, for smaller education employers, such as disability and early childhood services. In most cases the burden on such employers would be intolerable, leading to job cuts and reductions in services to the community. To find out more, visit:

<http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Industrial/index2.html> or <http://www.rightsatwork.com.au>

## **In the Federal Office**

### ***New Federal Aboriginal Education Officer***

Wayne Costelloe from Queensland has been appointed to the role of Federal Aboriginal Education Officer following Darcel Moyle’s election to the position of Deputy Federal Secretary.



Thanks to Carol Fisher for doing such a great job in the Acting Federal Aboriginal Education Officer’s position while Darcel Moyle was on maternity leave. The AEU’s Annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Seminar was a fantastic success due to Carol’s hard work.

### **Wayne Costelloe tells us a bit about himself**

*Wayne Costelloe is the newly appointed AEU Federal Aboriginal Education Officer.*



I am descended from the Ngugi–Nunukul Clans of North Stradbroke Island, Gungurri Clan of Mitchell and the Waragamay Clan of the Ingham area. I come to the AEU from the Queensland Council of Unions where I served as the Indigenous Employment Support Officer.

I am a qualified primary school teacher and my teaching has included working as an Australian Volunteer Abroad in Thailand at the Phuket Teachers' College teaching English as a foreign language. I am currently completing my Masters of Arts (Indigenous Social Policy) through the University of Technology, Sydney.

I have worked in policy and programme development and project management in the Commonwealth and Queensland Public Services. I worked in several State Government agencies including the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) where I wrote the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Career Development Strategy* and the *Partnership Commitment Strategy*. I also worked in Education Queensland where my major roles entailed working on literacy, VET in Schools and Off-campus student support projects.

I also have extensive Community Development experience serving on Management Committees for Aboriginal community organisations.

### **New Federal Executive Member**

Charline Emzin-Boyd from the New South Wales Teachers' Federation (AEU NSW Branch) has been elected unopposed to the position of Aboriginal member on the AEU

Federal Executive. Charline is the Aboriginal Education coordinator at the Federation and has been a long standing member of the ATSIEC. We look forward to working with Charline during her term of office.

### **Thanks to Haydyn Bromley**

Much thanks to Haydyn Bromley, who has completed two terms as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative on Federal Executive. Haydyn has done a fantastic job representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members at a national level and we look forward to continuing our work with Haydyn as the AEU South Australia Branch representative on the national ATSIEC.

### **Darcel Moyle reflects on her time as Federal Aboriginal Education Officer**



*Darcel Moyle is the former Federal Aboriginal Education Officer and the newly elected Deputy Federal Secretary*

The AEU and its Branches and Associated Bodies have been one of Australia's leading unions on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. At a national level, our representative structures reflect our commitment to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and participation in educational decision-making.

As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the Union, we have some great challenges to face. Working for a high quality public education system, which is responsive to the needs of our students, parents, families and communities should always be our ultimate goal.

All too often, that goal seems to be a mammoth task and to some, it might even be seen as unattainable. Being a natural optimist, I do not believe that we should accept the failings of the system as they relate to the education of our

people, but nor do I believe that we should be caught up in self-admonition for what are essentially systemic problems.

At the risk of sounding cliché the Kelly/Carmody song, 'From Little Things, Big Things Grow' is all too apt in this context, as is the story of Vincent Lingiari and the Wave Hill walk-off (which will incidentally have a 30 year celebration this year). It will be the little things that we do in our schools and communities which will most effect change, especially when these things are linked-up at regional, state and national levels.

We need to publicise and celebrate our successes, support each-other and engage our kids, their parents and our communities in order to work to change the system. For example, we know that the issue of low school attendance rates are complex and have many causal factors which we need to continue to examine in order to effect change. As educators, we understand the value of good pedagogy and its relation to school attendance; we know that building positive relationships between schools and the broader community have incredible and immediate impacts on getting kids into schools; but we also know that what happens in the community has profound consequences for daily attendance rates.

It remains to be seen whether the punitive approach of withholding welfare from parents who do not send their kids to school will have anything beyond an immediate impact. I believe that it will not because such a strategy does not enable community participation, provide a sense of ownership or foster the development of a shared vision and direction for dealing with issues that are real and apparent on a day-to-day basis. It further reinforces the 'us' and 'them' paradigm, which belittles the intrinsic value of education as a powerful change agent in people's lives.

We must, as educators work hard to instil the value of public education. It is important, indeed critical that we do so. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education unionists, we must also

consider our role in making connections with communities and highlighting the successes as well as the issues which emanate from these conversations.

The key challenge for all of us is the issue of networking and support. How do we support the one black educator who is struggling to make a career in the big white wilderness of the education system? How do we support our community-based members who are often isolated geographically, professionally and socially? How do we support our non-Indigenous colleagues to work with our students, parents and communities?

This newsletter is one small attempt to establish links across a national network. I hope that it will become a vehicle for you to promote your vision and voice in the public education system. We welcome your contributions, and strongly encourage you to have input.

As this is my last 'hurrah' as the AEU's Federal Aboriginal Education Officer, I must take this opportunity to thank people who I have worked with over the years.

I will begin with the members of the ATSIEC and TAFE ATSIEC, who do such a great job of representing our members at a national level. I am ever inspired by the dedication of our members who spend all day at work and then make time to attend a Union meeting. Their commitment to the national work of the Union made my job very easy!

Secondly, Rob Durbridge the AEU's former Federal Secretary, who has recently left us to work for the Institute of Employment Rights. Rob's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues both personally and professionally has been inspirational. The leadership and support that he has given to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander portfolio area within the AEU will always be remembered.

Finally, Susan Hopgood, Pat Byrne, Angelo Gavrielatos and the professional officers and staff of the AEU continue to provide leadership, advocacy and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs within our Union and I look forward to continuing our work in my new role. In particular I would like to thank Sam Graziano who has done such a wonderful job of looking after me and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Committees over the years.

I would like to welcome Wayne Costelloe to the position of Federal Aboriginal Education Officer and know that our members across Australia will be pleased with the levels of skills, knowledge and expertise that Wayne brings to the position.

## Member Profile

*Michael Parkins, TAFE Representative from NSW tells us about himself...*



*I am from Dubbo (Wiradjuri mob).*

*I grew up in Sydney's South West suburb of Panania.*

*I live now in the inner city of Sydney-Erskineville.*

*At school I wanted to be a Fireman*

*Now I'm an Aboriginal Development Manager for TAFE NSW.*

*I am inspired by our Indigenous leaders and Elders throughout our nation.*

*I am annoyed by the negative media coverage Aboriginal people receive when there are so many positive things happening in our communities.*

*If I could change the world I would wish peace and harmony for all mankind*

*I like to eat most foods and dining @ restaurants*

*I can't stand eating vegetables*

*My favourite place is holidaying and coming home.*

*My favourite thing is making people laugh.*

*The three people I would most like to meet are Roger Federer, Ernie Dingo and Ronaldinho.*

## In the Branches and Associated Bodies...

The South Australia Branch of the AEU has set the *new benchmark for cultural leave* with the signing of their new enterprise agreement. The employer has agreed to a massive 15 days maximum paid cultural leave, which may be approved in any one calendar year. An excerpt from the agreement is below...

*1.30 A maximum of 15 days special leave with pay in any one calendar year may be approved by the relevant Chief Executive or delegate to enable Aboriginal employees to meet cultural responsibilities according to the agreed definitions and criteria (as may be varied from time to time by agreement with the AEU). The agreed definitions and criteria will be included in relevant DECS and DFEEST policy documents.*

*1.31 Such leave will form part of the normal special leave with pay entitlement.*

*1.32 Special leave without pay may also be approved. A maximum of 12 months will normally apply, provided that the relevant Chief Executive, on advice from the Executive*

*Director, Aboriginal Education and Employment Services, or relevant position in DFEEST, may consider applications in excess of 12 months where special circumstances exist.*

From

<http://www.aeusa.asn.au/documents/2468/extrat/index-General-6.html#Heading176>

The Aboriginal members committee of the South Australia Branch of the AEU are currently working on finalising the criteria for the leave.

Congratulations AEU SA!

## **World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education**

The AEU sponsored two members to attend the 2005 WIPCOE, held in Hamilton Aotearoa. *Michelle Purdy*, TAFE ATSIEC Delegate from Tasmania reports:

WIPCoE was held at Te Wananga o Aotearoa (University of Waikato) in Hamilton New Zealand. This is a Maori university with this being just one of the campuses where approximately 50,000 students are enrolled with the majority of these being Maori. There are few if any university fees, which makes tertiary education accessible for nearly everyone.

The WIPCoE village was the central place for the conference with everything but the presentations and the workshops occurring in this relatively small site. Each day commenced with a keynote address followed by 4 sessions (choice of presentations or workshops). The afternoon there were 2 keynote addresses, 2 more sessions and finished with an inspirational speaker.

These speakers and many more at the presentation were both inspirational and thought provoking. There are many issues that affect the ability of Indigenous peoples around the world to access and/or make the most of any educational opportunities available. An integral

theme was that Indigenous communities are more robust and have a greater strength of purpose if learning is combined with language and cultural practices endemic to each community. We must remember where we have come from to know where we are going.

I was most impressed with the Maori people and their keen focus on continuing education for all whether Maori or non-Maori. Throughout the conference we were saturated with language, song, dance and other activities by a wide range of Indigenous peoples. WIPCoE is a time and place to be revitalised, energised, uplifted and emotionally challenged. It is a place to become reinvigorated for the fight to continue to improve the educational opportunities and outcomes for our own Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I would most sincerely like to thank the Australian Education Union and the ATSIEC for making it possible for my attendance at this international event and would encourage others to attend the 2008 WIPCoE in Melbourne if at all possible. If you are feeling tired from the struggle to be a strong educator and activist this conference is one way to inspire and encourage you to continue on.

## **Congratulations to VAEAI on Winning WIPCOE 2008!**

The AEU would like to congratulate the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) for winning the bid to host WIPCOE in Melbourne 2008.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Committees

Your representatives in the States and Territories are:

### *New South Wales*

- Charline Emzin-Boyd, New South Wales Teachers' Federation
- Michael Parkins, TAFE NSW

### *ACT*

- Beth Craddy, Secondary school teacher
- TAFE – Vacancy

### *NT*

- Cassandra Brown, Primary school teacher
- TAFE – Vacancy

### *Queensland*

- Carol Fisher, Primary School Teacher
- Fred Joseph, TAFE Teacher

### *Western Australia*

- Paul Bridge, Principal
- TAFE – Vacancy

### *Tasmania*

- Linda Woods, Aboriginal Education Worker
- Michelle Purdy, Aboriginal VET Officer

### *Victoria*

- General Division – Vacancy
- TAFE – Vacancy

### *South Australia*

- Haydyn Bromley – AEU South Australian Branch
- Cyril Kartinyeri, TAFE SA

## Vacancies

There are a number of vacancies that currently exist on our National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Committees. Please contact the AEU's Federal Aboriginal Education Officer on 03 9693 1800 to find out about getting involved.

Most State and Territory Branches and Associated Bodies also have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Committee, to find out about getting involved, contact your AEU Branch or Associated Body:

- AEU ACT Branch	02 6272 7900
- NSWTF	02 9217 2100
- AEU NT Branch	08 8948 5399
- QTU	07 3512 9000
- AEU SA Branch	08 8272 1399
- AEU TAS Branch	03 6234 9500
- AEU VIC Branch	03 9417 2822
- SSTUWA	08 9325 5311

## Feedback

What do you think about our newsletter? Please help us to make it yours by sending your articles, photos and ideas to:

[wcostelloe@aeufederal.org.au](mailto:wcostelloe@aeufederal.org.au)

## Subscription

This newsletter will be produced twice a year. If you would like to receive further issues, please email Sam Graziano at:

[sgraziano@aeufederal.org.au](mailto:sgraziano@aeufederal.org.au) to be put onto the subscriber list.