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## Networking

Need some help? Let us know and we will put your request out to members. Sometimes it is amazing the results that come back from the collective knowledge of our membership.

## News From The Executive

### New Members

We welcome our newest members:

Prof. Andrew Vann, the contact of James Cook University.

Their work is profiled in this issue.

Janet Skewes, the contact for APY Lands (Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara).

Sue Ross, newly appointed CEO for Workers Education of Australia, SA.

Vanessa Little, Director and contact for ACT Library and Service.

We like to highlight all our new members and we will endeavour to have profiles of other new members in the next issue of Ripples.

### Conference 2008

The Conference report should be available soon and will be placed on the website.

### Executive Outcomes

At the last meeting on Dec. 4, the Executive elected the following to positions of:

**Chair:** Jan Simmons.

**Deputy Chair:** Steve Fawcett

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Brett Gleeson

**Honorary CEO:** Jim Saleeba

The Executive has decided as the next step in its organisational growth to handle its own banking arrangements. Up to date, our financial matters were handled by Albury Wodonga Community College - as in kind assistance. We thank them sincerely for such great support as it enabled this fledging voluntary organisation to develop a sound financial basis. Bendigo Bank was nominated as our bank due to its national community orientation.

It has also meant a change in our postal address and it is now:

PO Box 664 Albury 2640.

We are also trialling a computer conference system as a means of cutting costs.

The strategic plan is almost finished and will be emailed to you once complete.

The Executive is endeavouring to form State networks and we are hopeful that networks will be formed in South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland. The contacts are: Sue Ross (S.A); Brett Gleeson (NSW); Kath McLachlan (QLD).

### Advocacy

The Executive have made a submission to the Commonwealth Department of Education for seeding grants to assist local governments to establish as a learning community. For a reading of the submission, go to our website [www.lcc.edu.au](http://www.lcc.edu.au) To support this submission, we will be speaking to an adviser to the Hon Julia Gillard, Minister for Education towards the end of March.

## From Building to Learning The Role of the State in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Excerpts from an address given on  
8 March 2006 by the Hon. Lindsay Tanner

The size of government is no longer the big issue. What governments actually do is changing. The emphasis is shifting from building to learning, from regulating to persuading, and from alleviating producer risks to moderating family income changes.....

The most important change has been the gradual shift in emphasis from building to learning. When many people lived in houses without gas, sewerage, electricity and sealed roads, government's primary task was building things. When many jobs didn't even require literacy, its role in fostering learning was very limited. Since the 1950s, public expenditure on infrastructure relative to the total economy has fallen sharply. Greater efficiency, more private sector involvement, and a reduced need for new networks have all contributed to this.....

The rapid acceleration in the need for learning over the past fifty years has pushed education to the centre of government activity. When most people did not finish school and few attended university, the burden on government was limited. The need for more skilled workers has grown rapidly since then, and changed the role of government in its wake.....

More resources are being directed to early childhood learning. Demand for learning has soared right across our community.....

A more educated, skilled workforce is crucial to Australia's future. Governments invest large sums in providing education and training services.

How much effort do they put into increasing the commitment to learning? Hardly any.

Their investment is all supply side and no demand side. The first step to a more educated population is people wanting to learn. The commitment to learning displayed by parents and children is a key factor in education outcomes, yet we do little to strengthen that commitment amongst those who don't value education.....

The role of government is shifting to less tangible, more complex interventions, and away from building, owning and running things. The state's role in promoting and enabling learning is becoming paramount. Its role in enabling individuals and families to manage the ups and downs of the lifecycle is increasingly prominent. Its role in the economy involves less reliance on ownership, less intervention to favour particular producers, and less focus on building things. The use of soft power to change behaviour by exhortation is beginning to emerge.....

Learning will be at the heart of the new state's mission. Building the capabilities of its people is now central to a government's task. Our commitment to learning, as individual families, companies and governments, will determine our future as a nation.

### LEARNING COMMUNITIES PROJECTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH TAFE SA

Learning Communities projects funded by the South Australian government are building partnerships between community organisations and TAFE to support adults in local communities to make transitions from non-formal to formal learning.

The *South Australia Works: Adult Community Education Program's Learning Communities* fund has so far invested \$460,000 to generate an additional \$354,000 of in-kind support and helped build better pathways for those experiencing barriers to participating in Vocational Education and Training.

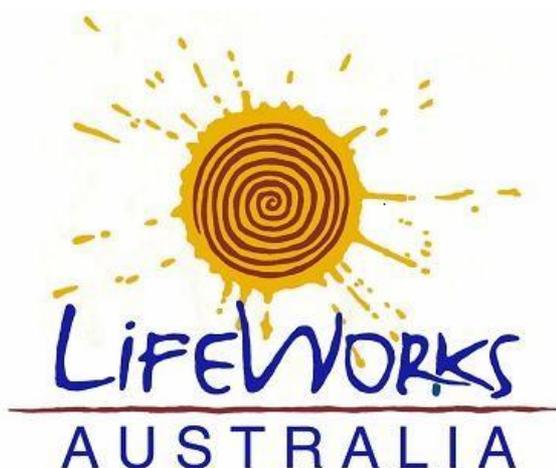
Eleven projects that commenced in early 2008 have so far resulted in more than 300 people gaining qualifications in vocational areas from community services to building and construction. They have provided vocational pathways for community volunteers, and for those wishing to gain employment. Each local project features:

- § Innovative and flexible ways to address the barriers to participation experienced by many adults in communities
- § Transition arrangements from non-accredited to accredited training programs which lead to further education and employment

- § Innovative approaches to the recognition of prior learning for participants in non-accredited learning programs
- § The delivery of accredited vocational education and training (VET) – modules or courses in community settings

These Learning Communities projects aim to establish better partnerships between the adult community education sector and TAFE SA and in the process, support the growth of local learning communities.

## Lifeworks Revisited



The Lifework's Australia program which we previously reported on is an initiative of Community Colleges Australia and would seem to have more relevance now with the recent Bradley Report and the speeches this week by the Deputy Prime Minister, with respect to a national agenda of innovative thinking focused on VET outcomes.

Lifeworks Australia has been a research project undertaken over the past 4 years by one of our members – the Albury Wodonga Community College and it has particular models for indigenous, multicultural and mainstream communities with a proposed platform as a distance education model, importantly with Life Coaches for individual students and anticipated benefits to each student, their immediate family and then the wider immediate community in:

- § health, well being and care
- § employment, business and the economy
- § community safety and socialisation.

Evidence by respected sector researchers like Professor Barry Golding of the University of

Ballarat, show that programs like Lifework's Australia can be created to assist the achievement of Government tertiary education and employment objectives by providing:

- § a strong teaching focus and portable learning environment to meet diverse student needs
- § improved adult foundation level training, using a range of learning contexts to deliver enhanced employability
- § clear accountability, quality outcomes, and a focus on progressive assessment
- § stair-casing possibilities for students into further tertiary education
- § equity of access and opportunity for all and
- § students better equipped to make informed choices, seeking more active citizenship and social inclusion.

The Albury Wodonga Community College may be remembered by some members, as being a key instigator in the City of Wodonga declaring itself as the Australia's first Learning City during the mid 1990's. It seems that the spirit of new learning alternatives is still alive and well in Wodonga with such proposals as Lifework's Australia.

It would be hoped that the commencement of new ideas like Lifework's Australia will help provide a non-failing model of education with a holistic life development education that will engage many people otherwise less confident in other institutional models of learning and education.

For further information about Lifework's, contact can be made with Mr John Shugg, Executive Officer CCA on (02) 9642 5622 or [eo@communitycolleges.edu.nsw.au](mailto:eo@communitycolleges.edu.nsw.au)



## Focus on Learning Nth QLD

By Professor Andrew Vann James  
Cook University

Learning NQ Inc (formerly “Learning Thuringowa”) was established under the sponsorship of Thuringowa City Council in late 2006. The aim of this group was to establish Thuringowa as a learning community, and this was influenced by the experiences of regions such as Hume Council in Victoria. The group brought together senior people from education, industry and community organisations as well as officers of the Council. The group was intended to be an independent body so the initiative could be owned by the community.

The main activities of the group have been networking with other interested organisations, lobbying all levels of government and maintaining and regenerating its own membership as people have left for professional or personal reasons. It is evident that with a change of federal government, and with a renewed focus from Queensland State Government on “partnership” solutions for education, the time is ripe for learning communities’ initiatives.

It is also clear that while there are an enormous number of formal and informal learning opportunities available, service to the community could be improved through a more coordinated approach. The group sees the “Learn Direct Scotland” model as an exemplar in this respect. The group has also learnt an enormous amount from other Australian groups that have gone before.

Having resolved its status as an incorporated organisation, the group has spent 2008 liaising with learning providers, business and the community to establish learning needs and gaps in current provision. This has been carried out through community forums and surveys. The group is currently in the process of revisiting its strategic and business planning and identifying potential partners for further work.

## Innovative Proposals for Wodonga

Many will be familiar with developments by Delfin Lend lease in South Australia, Victoria and Queensland where, in their housing estate

developments, they locate together educational and community facilities.

Something similar is being planned for Wodonga. Plans are being finalised between Wodonga Council, the Department of Education and Early Development and the Developer to allow plans for the White Box Rise Community School to go ahead.

The Children’s hub will incorporate Early Year’s Services and the relocated Wodonga South Primary School under a single roof.

The Building will house the primary school, preschool, maternal and child health and other children’s services.

Last year, the Council decided to relocate two preschools under their control to the children’s Hub on the Development Site to incorporate them both into the Community School.

It is anticipated that tenders for the building will be offered in April with an April 2010 completion date.

About \$450,000 from the Victorian Government will go to the Development Site and will deliver a 24 hour-a-day community facility in partnership with the Wodonga South Primary School.

For more information, contact Community Services Director, Patience Harrington of Wodonga City Council and Principal Anne Klock of Wodonga South Primary School

## Changed Circumstances at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology RMIT

RMIT’s Learning Community Partnership (LCP) group headed by Dr Leone Wheeler, Program Director, is now based at the Bundoora Campus of RMIT University as well as Hamilton.

Our aim is to broker learning and research opportunities at RMIT University’s Hamilton Centre and in Northern Metropolitan Melbourne through learning partnerships.

The LCP team in Bundoora and Hamilton work with a number of community partnerships, including relevant Local Learning and Employment Networks and other partners such

as the Whittlesea Youth Commitment and the Hume Global Learning Village.

The team also manages external projects across the two locations mainly focussed on youth career transition and pathways. For further information visit our web site: [www.rmit.edu.au/lcp](http://www.rmit.edu.au/lcp).

## **Linking the old and the new Learning Works – a radio and internet initiative for learners**

The educational advantages for learners of linking radio broadcasting with the flexibility provided by the internet are currently being explored through a South Australian project.

Supported by the South Australian Government, through the Department of Further Education Employment Science and Technology, Employment Programs, ACE & Community Partnerships Unit, and developed as a lifelong learning radio and internet initiative, the weekly radio program Learning Works aims to achieve the following:

- Showcase - in its many forms - adult learning in action
- Feature the learning journeys of adults who have returned to learning or who have overcome disadvantage of many kinds to achieve their goals
- Develop radio and online audio resources in a variety of areas, including health, media, science, social history, justice and legal issues.

Learning Works is produced at 89.7 PBA FM in Adelaide South Australia, and is first broadcast: 8.30pm Monday evenings, with a repeat broadcast: 9.00am Friday mornings. Since early 2008, selected interviews are sent on CD, free of charge, to up to 20 community radio stations around South Australia.

Recent interviews and commentaries include an exploration of transcultural health and refugees, developing more effective leaders in our schools, what students expect of lecturers, gender issues in education, prevention of elder abuse, the role of workplace trainers, and women in the records. With funding from the Law Foundation of South Australia and from the SA Government Department of Families and Communities, structured initiatives in

some legal issues and a project on problem gambling have also been produced and broadcast, and are now available online.

The Learning Works website is the key to making this media initiative accessible Australia-wide. Following the weekly broadcast in Adelaide many of the Learning Works interviews are then added to the Learning Works website. Since the beginning of this project in early 2005, the Online Resources section of the Learning Works website has grown to include a range of mp3 audio files, along with some Fact Sheets, in Key Learning Areas, including Health Wellbeing and Relationships, Education and Schools, Science and the Environment, Justice and Legal Issues, Social History, and Arts Literature and Music.

While listening to radio continues to be a very important part of our daily routines, this radio project both highlights the importance of lifelong learning and points listeners to the Learning Works website, as a growing learning resource of mp3 audio files and fact sheets. Educators in schools and in adult education, as well as individual listeners with an interest in utilizing mp3 audio and related online files, are invited to visit the Learning Works website, and provide some feedback on this project.

Website: [www.learningworksradio.com](http://www.learningworksradio.com)  
Enquiries Producer/Presenter Tony Ryan  
[learningworks@pbafm.org.au](mailto:learningworks@pbafm.org.au)

## **Learning Communities Catalyst**

Have you seen the new, updated version of our website? This website is yours and we would love you to use it. You can read articles from around the world about learning communities, add events, find out the latest news about learning communities in Australia, and even download back issues of Ripples. Check out the great new website at [www.lcc.edu.au](http://www.lcc.edu.au)

## **Your contributions to Ripples**

Send to: [learning@yarraranges.vic.gov.au](mailto:learning@yarraranges.vic.gov.au)

Deadline for next issue: **June 12**

### **Feedback invited**

The ALCN is committed to helping all practitioners in the field. This newsletter is one form of assistance. Any feedback on its effectiveness and other parts of our efforts would be greatly appreciated.