Dear NIRAKN Members,

Season’s Greetings! Welcome to our NIRAKN newsletter for 2013, a year which has been truly remarkable in setting the foundations for network business. While NIRAKN only became an official network mid-2013, we have delivered an impressive program of events and research capacity building activities. At the Hub in QUT, NIRAKN’s stellar administrative team have been busy establishing network systems and processes, including organising five face-to-face meetings of Management and Advisory Committees. Highlights from the year include the opportunity to join with NIRAKN members from across the country in celebrating our official NIRAKN launch in July.

If 2014 is anything like 2013 and our programs continue to develop and grow, we will experience an increase in the interest and energy among Indigenous researchers, academics and postgraduates across Australia. Information about past and future NIRAKN events will be available on our new website, and I encourage network members and Indigenous postgraduates to connect with our programs in what will be another exciting and milestone year ahead. From 2014, the Management Committee and NIRAKN staff look forward to bringing you the Network newsletter on a bi-annual basis, and I encourage all of you to distribute copies to your Indigenous and academic communities.

I want to thank all of you who contributed to making 2013 such a successful year and wish you and your families a merry xmas and a safe and happy new year.

Sincerely,

Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson
NIRAKN Director
CAPACITY BUILDING

JULY WORKSHOPS

Following the official Network launch, network partner organisation, AIATSIS hosted the first NIRAKN National Capacity Building sessions for 2013, which included workshops around research ethics, copyright, scholarly publishing, research grants, Indigenous methodologies, career development, critical and creative writing. NIRAKN members and postgraduates who attended the 5 day Canberra workshop reported these sessions were invaluable – we look forward to increasing numbers of researchers joining us in 2014!

2014 DATE CLAIMER!

All NIRAKN members and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander postgraduates are reminded that the 2014 NIRAKN Capacity Building Workshops will be held from the 13th – 19th July 2013 at the Hilton, Surfers Paradise QLD. Programming for the 2014 NIRAKN Network meeting will also include Node meetings, increased focus on mid-career academics’ needs, as well as workshops and networking opportunities for postgraduates. Invitations will begin to appear in inboxes and on the NIRAKN website beginning February 2014.

CRITICAL READING GROUP

A national critical reading group was convened and conducted by Professor Moreton-Robinson, Dr Alissa Macoun and Dr David Singh on the 20th of November in Brisbane. The focus of the reading group was the work of Vine Deloria Jr who was a Sioux scholar. He was instrumental in establishing the discipline of American Indian Studies in the United States. His critical intellectual work made significant contributions across disciplines including theology, history, law, politics, philosophy, education, anthropology and archaeology. Indigenous postgraduates and network members from around the country discussed Deloria’s critical legacy and the relevance of his extensive body of work to Indigenous studies in Australia. We’re looking forward to reading and exploring the work of other influential Indigenous intellectuals at future events – please be sure to register early.

ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

NIRAKN Health Node Leader PVC Professor Bronwyn Fredericks and the Central Queensland University Rockhampton hosted the inaugural NIRAKN Symposium ‘Indigenous Research in the 21st Century’ on Thursday 3rd October 2013. The symposium brought together more than 70 Indigenous researchers and academics to engage with the assumptions, motivations and values that inform and underpin Indigenous research practices, methodologies, ethics and protocols including the future of Indigenous research. Keynote speakers were Professor Scott Manning-Stevens (USA), Dr Ta-hu H Kukutai (NZ), Professor Bronwyn Fredericks (CQU), Professor Lester Irabinna-Rigney (Adelaide), Professor Rowena Ball (ANU), Dr Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews (UWS) and A/Prof Kathleen Butler (Newcastle). A special mention and thank you to PVC Fredericks and CQU for hosting the event.

Q & A with the speakers
Following Professor Scott Manning-Stevens (University of Notre Dame) successful October visit for the NIRAKN 2013 Symposium, Law Node leader Dr Mark McMillan hosted a guest seminar by Professor Manning-Stevens at the Melbourne Law School. This Public Seminar looked at the current state of affairs in the Akwesasne Mohawk Nation on the border of the US and Canada. Increased policing and control of the nation’s borders has been blamed on many factors: homeland security, export taxes, human trafficking, etc. Professor Stevens critiqued developments along this short border as a response to both the attacks on 9/11 and responses to movements as contradictory as Reservation law and international trade laws. This event was the third NIRAKN Seminar for the year. Professor George Yancy, a critical race theorist from Duquesne University presented at QUT in Brisbane in June and in May 2013 Dr Mark McMillan hosted Professor Robert Williams Jr, Lumbee scholar and Professor of Law, University of Arizona who presented on his new book entitled Savage Anxieties: The Invention of Western Civilization.

Marcelle Burns and Asmi Wood from the NIRAKN law node attended the 8th National Indigenous Legal Conference on October in Alice Springs. Ms Burns led a session on Indigenous Cultural Competency in the academy, in which Dr Wood co-presented. Asmi Wood also presented a plenary on the ‘Place of Indigenous people in the Academy’. Both Marcelle Burns and Asmi Wood conducted a special session with Indigenous law students addressing issues of well-being and how to thrive at university. This session was conducted in a bush setting where an Aranda elder taught the students how to clean and cook up a kangaroo tail (and which was absolutely sumptuous!!). The sessions were co-badged as NIRAKN events.

Presented at the CQU Noosa campus, Health Node Leader PVC Professor Bronwyn Fredericks and CQU colleague Professor Donna Lee Brian successfully delivered a 2day writing workshop to a large group of Higher Degree Research students August 10th & 11th 2013. Focusing on research output the workshop engaged students to consider turning their HDR thesis in articles and chapters, push the boundaries of their writing and learn to harness creative work to count towards research.

Please Note that the ANU law school has set up an Indigenous visitors programme to enable Indigenous legal scholars to visit the law school for short periods. Please check the ANU law school web site or contact wooda@law.anu.edu.au
A big congratulations are in order with 2 of the 10 ID grants awarded for funding in 2014 going to NIRAKN members. Congratulations to Professor Kim Scott and Professor Len Collard, administering organisation the University of Western Australia and Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson and Professor Maggie Walter, administering organisation, the Queensland University of Technology.

The Indigenous Sociology and Knowledges node had a busy November. Among notable events, Karen Martin delivered the Frank Archibald Memorial lecture, at the Oorala Centre, University of New England on November 28 November - on the role of Aboriginal intellectual traditions in our lives and then in relation to schooling. Nine node members were able to attend a two day meeting in Hobart on the 11th and 12th of November, where they reviewed/redefined the node's research project, developed their book proposal and planned grant submissions for 2014. Then on Tuesday 26 November, Maggie Walter was promoted to Professor of Sociology.

The Yuraki History, Politics and Culture Node of the National Indigenous Research and Knowledge’s Network (NIRAKN), the Wollotuka Institute and AIATSIS proudly presented a history seminar ‘Aboriginal History - where to from here’ featuring eminent Aboriginal historians Jackie Huggins and Michael Williams. The discussion examined the construction of Aboriginal history in the twenty-five years since the 1988 Bicentennial. The seminar also discussed the history wars, gender history and the importance of history in the traditional cultural sense and that back in 1988 the Aboriginal Historians Working Party for the Bicentennial that included Wayne Atkinson, Marcia Langton Michael Williams and Doreen Wanganeen stated that ‘only blackfellas can write Aboriginal history’ Jackie and Michael reflected ‘is that still the same twenty five years on?’ The Seminar was well attended and had a high community presence.

NIRAKN at Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) Annual Conference 2013

NIRAKN Director and NAISA Council member Professor Moreton-Robinson presented at the June 2013 NAISA conference in Saskatoon, Canada to a packed house. Her paper entitled ‘Towards Critical Indigenous Studies: Some Epistemological Matters’, was well received and facilitated fruitful engagement from the audience. In a separate session, Sociology node leader Professor Maggie Walter presented a paper on ‘Constituting Critical Indigenous Studies and its Subject/Object Positions’.

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Interviewed by the NIRAKN team, both of this year’s NIRAKN Research Heroes harness the power of the pen and set the record straight, attributing the path to success to working as a collective with communities, keeping connected to country and driving a national Indigenous led research agenda. We think their efforts are heroic. Here’s what they had to say:

**1.** Where is your traditional country? What do you love most about it?

I am Wiradjuri from Trangie in Central NSW. What I love most about it is 1) Safe; 2) home; 3)Where is feel connected; and 4) It has my memories – including the smell of the peppercorn trees just after it rains.

**2.** This year you received a NAIDOC award. What was the award for?

I was honoured with the National NAIDOC Scholar of the year. The aspect of the award that was most special to me was the recognition of the work that we are doing in Indigenous Nation Building.

**3.** This year you’ve been appointed to Congress. What do you hope to achieve in your term?

I hope that Congress will take the lead in the development of a national building framework and position such nation building in line the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in assisting the nations to self-determine and exercise [each nation] their inherent sovereignty.

**4.** In your capacity as an Indigenous Academic, what is your area/s of expertise?

Constitutional Law, Public Law, Legal Method and Reasoning, Critical Indigenous Studies, Critical Race Studies and my favourite and most active is the Indigenous Human Rights frameworks and Indigenous Peoples sovereignty.

**5.** You are the recipient of two grants recently. What are these research projects/programs around?

One is around looking at ways in which Aboriginal families in Victoria respond to methamphetamine use in their families and communities. The other is a collaboration of Indigenous Nation Building. It brings together 6 Universities and looks at practical Indigenous Nation Building, the emerging theory of Indigenous Nation Building and the positioning of Indigenous governments into the broader public policy discourse in Australia.

**6.** What vision do you have for Indigenous academia? How do you see the future?

A comprehensive framework where we [Indigenous academics] can celebrate their diversity yet harness that diversity in re-challenge existing academic positioning of us [Indigenous peoples] as the other. The future is a bright one. If NIRAKN is the starting point...then I am very excited that such a fantastic start is self-motivating and self-sustaining for the next generations.

**7.** What message would you like to express to the future generations of Indigenous academics?

Be true to your field of study by being a part of something bigger – that is existing with other Indigenous academics...and there are many!

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**Dr Mark McMillan**

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PROFESSOR PAT DUDGEON

1. Where is your traditional country and what do you love most about it?

I am from the Bardi People just north of Broome on the Western Australian coast. Although I live in Perth, I try to get to Broome as much as I can. It is very grounding to catch up with family and go out to my cousin’s eco resort in our country. However I also feel very much a part of the Perth Aboriginal community. I have lived here for many years and know many Aboriginal people. I continue to serve on local organization boards and to be involved in local activities and to advocate for local organizations where I can.

2. In your capacity as an Indigenous Academic, what are your areas of expertise?

My area of expertise is in psychology and Indigenous mental health. This is a very important area and I have been active in this for some twenty five years. I have been part of and witnessed great changes over the decades. I am very proud to see more Indigenous psychologists coming forth but will always advocate for our discipline to do more in increasing the numbers of Indigenous psychologists and to put Indigenous studies in the psychology curriculum.

3. Your research contributes significantly to the health academies across Australia. What are some of your recent highlights?


This Project is to develop Aboriginal understandings for improved social and emotional wellbeing in the Aboriginal communities of Broome and Perth. Concepts of cultural continuity and social and emotional wellbeing will be compared and validated by the Aboriginal communities of Perth and Broome through a series of focus groups and community meetings. Indigenous mental health statistics are of grave concern and different approaches that encompass locally derived Aboriginal knowledges and how these can be actioned are essential. The outcomes of this research will inform programs, services and policy to better meet the mental health needs of Indigenous people. Ongoing.


Project Leader. Community Consultation and Developing an Innovative, Culturally Responsive Leadership, Empowerment and Healing Program for Aboriginal People Living in the Kimberley Region Western Australia.

Initially funded by the commonwealth, this project is now in development and delivery stages and is now funded by the state government through the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Council. Completed with publication of Hear Our Voices [http://aboriginal.childhealthresearch.org.au/centre-for-research-excellence-(cre)/publications/policy-and-research-briefs.aspx] and extended to a national project. The National Empowerment Project: A commonwealth grant to roll out the project nationally has been awarded to UWA. Eight sites will undertake consultations and develop local empowerment, healing and leadership programs. This year, a further grant was made available to continue the Project and include new sites. See: http://nationalempowermentproject.org.au/
Indigenous peoples from around the world share common experiences of colonisation and have been involved in the struggle for self-determination at the global level. Our collective politics have been shaped by our intellectual traditions which inform our work within the academy.

The International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies offers a virtual intellectual space for the dissemination of international scholarship from scholars across disciplines that include the Humanities, Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Law and Education in the field of Indigenous Studies. As Indigenous studies are a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary field we are seeking articles, review essays and book reviews from a variety of disciplines. As a refereed journal with distinguished members across a range of disciplines on the editorial board, the quality of accepted submissions will be of the highest standard. The journal brings together emergent and groundbreaking research in the field of Indigenous studies within the global community offering scope for critical international engagement and debate.

Whether you are an established scholar, early career researcher or postgraduate student, if you have an interest in critical Indigenous Studies and you have an abstract or proposed article, we would love to hear from you. For more information please contact us on nirakn@qut.edu.au or d.singh@qut.edu.au
MEET THE COMMITTEES

Our NIRAKN Management Committee consists of some of the leading Indigenous academics from across Australia, fearlessly working to lead their nodes and Indigenous Post Graduates into some of the most pressing areas of needed research.

Let’s meet the team:

NIRAKN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Health Node Leaders
- PVC Professor Bronwyn Fredericks, Central Queensland University
- Professor Cathleen Daphne, University of Wollongong
- Professor Pat Dudgeon, University of Western Australia

Law Node Leaders
- Professor Larissa Behrendt
- Dr. Jami Wood, Australian National University
- Dr. Mark McMullen, University of Melbourne

Social Sciences and Indigenous Knowledges Node Leaders
- PVC Professor Steve Larkin, Charles Darwin University
- Professor Maggie Walter, University of Tasmania

History Culture and Politics Node Leaders
- Professor John Maynard, University of Newcastle
- Associate Professor Jaki Troy, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

NIRAKN ADVISORY BOARD

- A/Prof Terry
- Yvette Roe
- Aunty Valda Coolwell
- Henrietta Fourmile
- Aunty Joy Murphy-Wandin
- Russell Taylor
- Prof Peter Buckskin
- Sam Faulkner
- Angela Leitch

PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

United Nations University
NINTI ONE
Healing Foundation
Finally the public face of NIRAKN is up and running! In early 2014 members will be able to log on and gain access to meeting papers, node research projects, participate in discussion boards, join NIRAKN programming & events and keep well informed of everything NIRAKN.

Did you know that NIRAKN is alive and well on Twitter, Facebook and Flickr? Simply search the following links to join the conversation:

National-Indigenous-Research-and-Knowledges-Network-Nirakn
The_NIRAKN

UPCOMING RESEARCH GRANT FUNDING ROUNDS

ARC Discovery Indigenous Closing 26th March 2014
All Australian Research Council (ARC) Full Calendar of Grants
Click here

NHMRC Project Grants Closing 5th March 2014

NHMRC Program Grants Closing 4th June 2014

NHMRC Development Grants Closing 9th July 2014

NHMRC Partnership Projects Closing 24th June 2014

All NHMRC Funding Calendar click here

STAY CONNECTED WITH NIRAKN

You can check it all out here
www.nirakn.edu.au

2014 SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

Fellowship Opportunities:
NHMRC Early Career Fellowship closing 16 April 2014
ARC Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) Closing 2 April 2014
ARC Australian Laureate Fellowships Closing 31 January 2014
OLT National Teaching Fellowships Closing 3rd February 2014

Post Graduate Opportunities & Scholarships:

NHMRC Post Graduate Scholarship Closing 25th June 2014

BECOME A NETWORK AFFILIATE OF NIRAKN

If you missed the chance to become a member of NIRAKN, you may be interested in becoming an Affiliate Member! Affiliate membership of the network is now open to Indigenous academics across Australia. For an application form and more information on how to apply, please contact nirakn@qut.edu.au

If you’re an Indigenous Postgraduate student, contact us now to ensure you’re receiving information about access to our events and programs through our Indigenous Postgraduates email list. Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members are also welcome to keep up with our news through our ‘Friends of NIRAKN’ email list.

Email nirakn@qut.edu.au for more information.