



# Hand prints ...



## Helping others achieve

Jamie Atkinson loves his job. "The best thing about my job is working with kids and helping them achieve...seeing them exceed!"

He began work as the Koori Educator at Wanganui Park Secondary College last year and his job is to support Indigenous students with their education and aspirations. "I work with 30 Indigenous students from Years 7-12," Jamie said.

The hardest part of his job is "when the kids don't achieve and you know they can...it's heart breaking". But his desire to see the students reach their goals keeps him motivated.

As an emerging young Indigenous leader Jamie is a great influence on the students. He is passionate about his job and wants to help youth achieve.

Ganbina proudly supports Jamie in his career aspirations. He is a Jobs4U2 Employment Program participant and Ganbina was linked to his transition from education to employment when he graduated Year 12 in 2006.



**Jamie Atkinson with Wanganui Park Secondary College students Adam Winmar and Khlara Harrison**

Jamie is also one of our success stories from the Ganbina Koori Driver Skills gaining his Probationary Drivers' Licence in January last year.

He is an enthusiastic and committed sportsperson and has been playing football with the Rumbalara Football Netball Club since he was a junior.

He plans to go to university next year to embark on a career as a school teacher and will continue his involvement as a young leader in Shepparton.

"He is a fantastic role model for our young people," Ganbina Projects' Manager Kellie Marsters said.

"It's brilliant we can support Jamie. He has a great story...a former Ganbina education client who has moved into employment and now works with our current Ganbina education kids. So he is a client working with us to support students in education and while we support him...how good is that!"

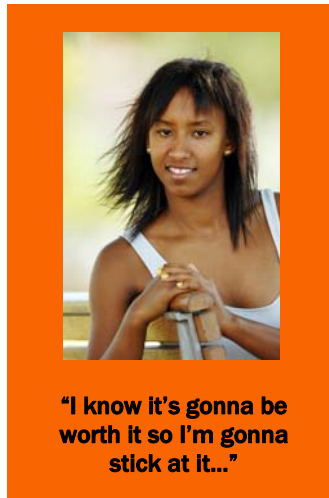
## Sarai embark on career dream . . .

Sarai Atkinson's dream of becoming a physiotherapist is one step closer. Sarai ventured off to the big city earlier this year to study at the University of Melbourne.

The Notre Dame College Year 12 graduate is one of Shepparton's Indigenous role models and is a high achiever in school, sport and in life.

She plans to complete the first year of a Bachelor of Science this year and then apply to study physiotherapy.

"University is far different from high school," Sarai laughed when we spoke with her this week. "I haven't been home for three weeks and I'm really feeling it."



**"I know it's gonna be worth it so I'm gonna stick at it..."**

She agreed it was a huge adjustment moving to Melbourne from Shepparton and that she missed her family and home.

"It is a challenge (being at university) but I know it's gonna be worth it so I'm gonna stick at it."

Sarai was the 2007 Ganbina Youth of the Year and her spirits were boosted earlier this month when she was awarded a Rotary Tertiary Scholarship to support her during her university studies.

Sarai will continue to travel back to Shepparton throughout the year and plans to keep her commitment to her netball passion and will play with the Rumbalara Football Netball Club for the 2008-2009 season.



# New horizons for Koori students . . .

Congratulations to two Ganbina participants who have taken the challenge to attend boarding school this year.

Mooroopna's Allen Roberts stepped into a whole new world this year when he accepted a scholarship to attend Trinity Grammar School in Kew, east Melbourne, and 14-year-old Kira-ann Winmar-Briggs is studying at Geelong Grammar School. Kira-ann completed Year 7 at Wanganui Park Secondary College last year and is a state representative in basketball.

During Term 1 she made heaps of new friends and said she loves studying at Geelong Grammar. "There's more support with tutors, I play tennis...I like everything about it," she said.

Math, science, English, French, health and physical education, history and technology are on Kira-ann's study

***"There's more support with tutors, I play tennis ... I like everything about it."***  
**Kira-ann Winmar-Briggs**

schedule and when she's not studying she hangs out with friends and plays sport.

"There are 16 girls in my dormitory...it's lots of fun but sometimes it's hard to sleep cause of all the talking."

Kira-ann's parents, Daniel and Melanie, are very proud of her and she has got lots of support from other family members.

Allen was featured in The Age newspaper on March 8 with three other Indigenous boys studying at Trinity.

In the report he said "it was tough leaving his family in Mooroopna". But he said he wanted to pursue a science degree at Melbourne University, and was not convinced he could do it staying at his local government school where he had watched too many of his friends and cousins drop out at Year 10.

"By coming down here it gives me a far better opportunity because there are too many distractions in the Shepparton-Mooroopna area. But here, the school assists with tutoring and then you've got prep time at the boarding house every night. So it's got a nurturing environment for education," Allen told The Age.

# Chris steps up from student to support officer

Chris Turner is another great success story emerging from Ganbina.

The fit and energetic sportsman was studying at the Academy of Sport Health and Education (ASHE) since 2005 and this year stepped up to the challenge when he was offered a position on staff.

Born in Shepparton, Chris said he moved around a bit as a young fella to places such as Melbourne, Balranald and back to Shepparton.

"I have been involved with Ganbina for a few years now and they have helped me out a lot especially with getting my drivers' licence, getting prepared for work and also helping me with my enrollment into ASHE."

Chris started ASHE in 2005 studying Certificate III in Sport and after graduating was one of the first students to study a Certificate IV in Sport and Recreation.

"I started this course because I left school at Year 10 and didn't know what I was doing with my life in Melbourne so I decided to move back to Sheppar-



***"If you have any dreams don't be scared to follow them because you can do anything you want when you put your mind to it."***  
**Chris Turner**

**Chris Turner with 2008 ASHE students (left) Dylan Kerr and (right) Jye Warren.**

ton and do something about it."

Chris loves his job as an ASHE Student Support Officer. His role involves helping students with their study, choosing the right courses and with any personal problems they may have.

"I like my job because I feel that I am a leader among the students. I try to help them in any which way I can. It is also a fulfilling job because I am giving back to the community what it gave me when

I was going through ASHE."

Asked what he would say to encourage other Indigenous youth he said "If you have any dreams don't be scared to follow them because you can do anything you want when you put your mind to it".

His aspiration for the future is "to be a part of ASHE for as long as possible and to see it grow into something bigger than what it is today".



# 2008 youth leaders ready to go . . .

Ganbina has four excited Year 11 students keen to get started on their leadership adventure with Ganbina.

The 2008 Ganbina Indigenous Youth Leadership Program participants are Mathew Merlino from Wanganui Park Secondary College, Rianne Hood from Shepparton High School and Mariah Andrews and Ashleigh Atkinson from Mooroopna Secondary College.

The students and their parents attended the induction on March 3 and the students jumped into action on March 15 when they participated in their first leadership training session.

The students will engage with Indigenous leaders, politicians, community leaders, business and corporate executives and international leaders at various program events and will also travel to Melbourne, Sydney, Broome and New Zealand as part of their 10-month adventure.

The first training session on March 16 was a success. All the students learnt a lot about themselves and each other.

Mariah said the key things she took away from the day were learning about team values and how to communicate better.

“(Today) was great. It has made me think that I could be a leader,” she said.

Mathew agreed the highlight was developing the team values and thought our community needed more leaders and “I think I can be one”.

Ashleigh and Rianne also shared aspira-



2008 Ganbina youth leaders (from left) Ashleigh Atkinson, Mathew Merlino, Mariah Andrews and Rianne Hood.

tions to be leaders. They thought teamwork and communication were two aspects of leadership they had learnt from the day.

The youth leaders will travel to Melbourne and Sydney in the second week of the school holidays, Broome in June-July and New Zealand in October. They will also meet with local leaders and completed a community capacity building project as part of their leadership training.

## 2008 Youth Leadership Team Values

- Respect
- Trust
- Family

# United Knights take it to the streets . . .

2007 Ganbina Indigenous Youth Leadership graduates Danielle Matthews, David Murray and Luke Brown launched their community capacity building project - *United Knights* - on March 28.

Their dream came alive when Ganbina and North Shepparton Community Learning Centre Inc (NSCLC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to help them implement the project this year. “We want to get youth off the streets

and let them have fun in a safe environment and while they are in that environment we want to educate and encourage them to succeed in life,” David said.

Theme orientated nights will be held at NSCLC for youth aged between 13-17 years throughout the year starting in Term 2. The themes include Drugs and Alcohol, Sex Health, Peer Pressure, Racism and Culture, Family Break down and violence, Staying in School and Employment/Careers.

Schools will be notified when the first event will take place and all youth from north Shepparton will be invited to participate.

“We would also like to thank Paul Custance of Logofarm who kindly designed the United Knights logo for us,” Danielle said.



# Youth striving for better futures . . .

It's 2008 and we have hardly had time to reflect on where 2007 went.

Of the 129 youth that engaged in our 2007 programs, 127 (98%) went on to complete their education, training or employment goal (the remaining 2 having moved to another locality).

It is this achievement that we can be most proud of as it is a demonstration of our young peoples desire to strive for a better future. Much must also be said of the great work of the Ganbina staff, some of which owing to increased project activity literally had to hit the ground running.

This year has started with a boom and brings with it its own unique challenges.

As we move towards our target figure of working with 140 youth (our largest number today) we will have to walk the fine line between growth and quality, something that we believe can be achieved.

Over the transition we have undertaken an amount of development on our systems and made adjustments to our programs – just to make them that little bit better.

Some of this will include our youth leaders going to Broome, Western Australia, for the first time and an expansion to the number of scholarships available through our "Clearing House".

We will once again be a part of the My

Moola Financial Literacy Program that has proved beneficial and hope to be part of its further development to meet the needs of our youth in its post pilot phase.

2008 shapes to be an exiting year. The most exiting indication of this has been youth (even prior to the office being officially opened) dropping in and enquiring as to when they could access one or another of the programs.

It has been similarly pleasing to have all of the local secondary schools wanting Ganbina programs operating for their Indigenous students.

*Adrian Appo, Executive Officer*

## Partnership supports families

Ganbina has launched its second year of education scholarships thanks to many generous donations from organisations, foundations, businesses, families and individuals who want to support Indigenous families educate their children.

This year we are proud to announce that we have partnered with The Smith Family to offer Learning for Life scholarships to Indigenous families in Shepparton and Mooroopna.

"This partnership means we can support more families in our community who are trying to give their children the best start in life by providing them with a solid foundation through education," Ganbina chairperson Neville Atkinson said.

Scholarship interviews are being held with families over the next 3-4 weeks and scholarships will rolled out to families soon.

We would like to thank the following sponsors: Ganbina, Puffing Billy, The Melbourne Community Foundation, Portland House Foundation, Linqage International, Adrian and Robyn Appo, N & J Turnbull and The Smith Family.



**Working together to provide more Indigenous families in Shepparton and Mooroopna with education scholarships are (from left)**

**Katrina Mohamed, Janet Green, Kellie Marsters and Bill Boyer.**

**For scholarship information please phone Ganbina or call into our office**

## Calendar

**March 30 – April 4**

Youth Leadership Melb-Sydney Trip

**April - (date to be announced)**

United Knights Project begins

**April 9**

Year 8 Water Industry Tour

**May 7**

Year 9 Careers night

**June 29 – July 5**

Youth Leadership Broome Trip

**6 August**

Year 10-12 Careers night

**27 August**

Year 9 Careers night

**September 21-30**

Youth Leadership New Zealand Trip

**October 24**

Year 7 Emergency Services Tour

**December 5**

Ganbina Youth Achievement Awards



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