



CAPE YORK
GIRL ACADEMY

Newsletter

2020

SEMESTER 2



CAPE YORK GIRL ACADEMY

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Acknowledgement of country

The Cape York Girl Academy acknowledges the Yirrijandji (pronounced irrikandji) people, past and present, as the traditional owners and first custodians of this ancient land upon which we move, live, work and dream at Wangetti.

We also understand that with such an acknowledgement comes a responsibility to the spirit place of its ancestors. Thus each of us understands that we are never off Country.

No matter where our birth country may be, the way we enter space, use space and the energy we leave behind affects the ongoing wellbeing of the land, the sea and our community.

We also acknowledge that we are on First Nations People' Country and that Country holds the knowledge and strength of the ancestors which guides our teaching at CYGA and still resides within, growing its people strong. We recognise that the Ancestors are still here - in the trees, in the wind, in the earth, in the sea breeze and its waters and in the hearts of the traditional custodians, and they will always be here, as will be the oldest living culture on earth, as the heritage of all Australians.

START DATES 2021

Staff Return	27th January
Student Travel Date	28th January
Classes Commence	29th January

See Clearly



Sit Strongly

Listen Deeply

See Clearly



Listen Deeply

Letter from the Principal

I would like to extend my greetings and thank the Girl Academy Community for working so hard and with such faith in the education we are attempting to offer our students, during a year that has challenged all of us due to the changes and disruptions and at times the anxiety that has been caused by COVID-19. It has meant that we have all had to navigate changes throughout the year in the ways that we have been teaching and learning, communicating with each other, supporting one another, saying goodbye to some staff and welcoming new staff. Throughout all of this, we have had students and families who have remained strong and focussed about continuing and for some, completing their education and supporting the work we do at The Girl Academy. For this we thank you very much.

This year we will see 5 Year 12 Graduates. They are Esther Brim, Aretha Bani, Anastasia Newry, Tanya Paddy and Raheena Manmurulu. They are to be congratulated for achieving the successful completion of their schooling. They are also to be commended for the strength, resilience and determination they have shown for not only completing year 12, but completing it in an extraordinary year of so much change and challenge. I hope they remember these qualities they have shown this year as these are the qualities that will help them navigate change and challenge once they leave school and begin the rest of their life's journey. We are enormously proud of each of our graduates. They will always be fondly remembered after they leave us and we can't thank them enough for their presence at the school.

We have had to say goodbye to some of our staff at the school this year. We thank them each for the contribution they have made to the Girl Academy in their various roles – each of which have helped to re-engage our students with their education. The staff who have left us this year include : our two teachers, Karen Charlton and Di Austrai-Ombiga; our Head of Boarding, Kathy Hamilton; our Boarding Supervisor, Gary Hamilton; our Childcare Coordinator, Lana Assman; our Boarding Assistant/ Supervisor, Clare'dell Filewood.

We have also welcomed a new team of staff to take on these roles. They have already demonstrated such skill and care in how they look after, guide and support our students. Their presence in the school will help to grow and strengthen the education and opportunities offered to our students, moving forward. Our new Childcare Coordinator is Rachael Wynberg; Head of Boarding is Mandy Jeffries; Boarding Supervisor is

Tammy Holland; Boarding Assistants are Rachel Fraser, Cindy Kelly, Waisie Newman; We have a Kitchen Coordinator, Gemma Dore and are in the process of interviewing 2 teachers.

I would like to make special mention and give thanks to Laurie Barrett and Kirsten Anderson who have been with us in term 4. They replaced Karen Charlton and taught the subjects that she had been allocated. Considering that they came to us so late in the year, they did outstanding work with the students and helped our year 12 students complete their courses, enabling them to graduate. We are lucky that Laurie will continue with us in 2021, but we have had to say goodbye to Kirsten who is taking up a position at another school.

Our Year 11 and Junior students who have remained with us this year, continue to work well and have become stronger in their determination to participate in the programs we offer. Many of these programs will be showcased in this newsletter. We seek, at the Girl Academy, to create a space wherein students, staff and families feel part of a collective, where their voices are heard and where support is readily available to help enable our students to continue to participate and engage in their education. If they achieve this, then there is greater possibility that they will feel that have choices in their lives and will begin to live a life they can value.

We must not forget that an important part of our Girl Academy family are the 3 toddlers that provide us with such joy as we see them learning and growing. They are Elyciah, Deledio and Tristan. With Rachael, our new Childcare Coordinator, they have been experiencing many activities and outings that have allowed them to explore, play and have lots of fun. We adore having them as part of our everyday life at the Girl Academy.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter – the first for this very different kind of year. Enjoy seeing and reading about the students, staff and toddlers at work and at play. We trust that we have provided for your children an environment wherein they feel safe, nurtured and where they can see clearly their potential to do good things with their lives. They are very much valued at The Girl Academy and we look forward to seeing them next year.

We wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas and summer break. Thank you for your continued support.

Shoba Kalos

Culture Circle

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Program by Karen, Jodi and Chasley

A lot of learning and healing is taking place right now in our outside classes. There has been a positive energy holding the girls in the cultural circle space this semester. There is so much progress happening as the Culture Circle class evolves.

The girls are losing their shyness and becoming more present in the classroom. They are feeling really safe and held in the space and their participation and confidence has increased enormously.

In the Culture Circle class, the focus has been on building relationships outside of the standard classroom setting. The students have moved towards improving one-on-one relationships and used the group 'yarning circle' mat to find and use their voice confidently. The aim has been to increase an awareness of their body and mind's health and wellbeing.

The 'yarning circle', an Indigenous concept, was introduced in the Culture Circle class in the final school term. It has become a culturally appropriate tool for the girls to listen respectfully to themselves and to each other, and as a way to communicate their ideas openly and honestly. The girls are finding their voices and empowering others as they take on leadership roles in the Academy. The senior students at times have facilitated the class by themselves.

We are seeing more smiles and laughter as the girls become relaxed and comfortable in the outdoor yarning areas. They are becoming curious about the classroom topics and asking questions both inside and outside the culture circle. They are more open to talking about issues and topics that they are really interested in and important to them. The space is starting to feel like 'being at home' with oneself. Whether sitting on the yarning mat or going for a walk in the outdoors, it has taken away the structure of just another class and introduced a more informal way of listening, learning and working together.

The work has created in them that confidence that will hopefully flow on into their personal lives and subject areas.



NAIDOC Celebrations and Activities



Senior Art

Senior students have been busy this term working to complete a number of art projects, some of which they started earlier in the year. Most students completed their own mural designs in various locations on the Girl Academy campus. Through the visual aesthetic, these murals promote a sense of identity, belonging, welcoming, and openness, and strengthen our community identification to place. Also, students were challenged this term to reflect on our disposable society and create a 3D sculpture made of recycled and/or found objects. It took considerable creativity and a degree of technique to work with these materials. The resulting compositions are an eclectic array of artistic expression. With the guidance of a local artisan, students also selected one of their artworks to turn into a commercial product (cards, fridge magnets) that

could be sold at a Market stall. Students developed a basic understanding of entrepreneurial skills which can help them assess the future potential of artworks/products they create. To finish up the year, students were given the opportunity to explore the works of a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists whose art has been influenced by their country, or the country on which they now live. This included the Tjanpi Desert Weavers, Alick Tipoti and Johnny Young. Students spent time reflecting on what country meant to them before producing some powerful responses to the unit. It was pleasing to see our young women experimenting with a number of forms, including digital photography and wire sculpture.

Kirsten Anderson & Laurie Barrett



Aaliyah works with recycled wire



Esther working on her mural



Esther Series of 3



Certificate II Active Volunteering

Trainer: Mrs Kathy Hamilton and Teacher/Workplace Supervisor: Ms Dianne Austrai-Ombiga

Active Volunteering is offered to students in Year 11 and 12 at our school. It is a certificate which has four core units and three elective units. The Registered Training Organisation that is responsible for this course and the award is Volunteering Queensland. The course requires students to complete 20 hours of volunteering in an organisation which were completed at school, due to COVID restrictions. While completing these hours, students participated in maintenance and landscaping tasks and kitchen duties.

At the successful completion of all the units, students will be awarded a Certificate II in Active Volunteering.

This semester four students were enrolled in this course. They are: **Aaliyah Brim** – Year 11 | **Aretha Bani** – Year 12 | **Bon'Naia Hinton** – Year 11 | **Estherlita Forbes** – Year 11



Someone who inspires me... My Cousin Sister

Penning by a Student

Do you have a favourite cousin sister? I definitely do. Fun fact about my cousin sister she actual turns 30 today! My cousin sister inspires me to be a strong independent woman like herself. She has always been there for me and I love her for that.

Late last year my aunty, her mother, was diagnosed with cancer and that was very hard for my sister. Although she was struggling, my sister still managed to wake up every day with a smile on her face and pushed through the year caring for her mum. Recently my aunty passed, and my sister, although hurt, was very strong. I admire the strength my cousin sister had even through something as tough as the loss of her mother.

If it weren't for my sister I wouldn't be at this school. After I was kicked out of my old school I didn't know what school I could go to, but thankful my sister was working here in Sports and Rec and she asked me if I wanted to come along and meet the girls. After a few sessions playing sports with the girls I really liked this school and wanted to continue my schooling here, so my sister got some application forms for me and set up an interview for me and mum. My sister pushes me to do my best and finish school. She wasn't able to complete her schooling as she fell pregnant with my eldest nephew. Ever since I started school here, she constantly reminds me to focus on school and not boys.

My cousin sister is a strong single mother of four beautiful kids, and she is always so calm and patient with my nieces and nephews even when they stress her out. One day in the future when I have children of my own, I want to be as strong a mother as she is.

My sister is always there to support me, and I will always be there to support her. I am so grateful to have a strong, beautiful, resilient woman as my role model and big sister. If you have a cousin sister like mine, you are truly blessed with the best.

Written by Bon'Naia Hinton

Early Learning

We have been busy teaching Rachael all about the wonderful things around us since she arrived in term 3 as well as showing her how much fun we like to have – she thinks we are amazing! It was easy to remember her name because the other Miss Rachel was having fun with us until she arrived.

We have had different themes each weeks including:

- All about me
- Colours
- What we can see in the sky
- Under the Sea
- Our Kanyini
- Nature - in us and around us
- Our 5 Senses
- Let's Make Music
- & Australian Animals

We do painting, craft, sing songs, go on excursions, share stories and do all sorts of activities that relate to the theme for the week.

We have also been busy at school doing gardening, blowing bubbles, threading, sorting, playing shops, dressing up, dancing, and showing Rachael all the amazing things you can do with an empty card board tube. We love playing with playdough and can hide it in places that Rachael never thinks of looking. Because we all love singing and making music we have been doing a lot of that! When we did cooking Miss Gemma said it was delicious! We've got lots of new books so Rachael reads to us a lot but sometimes we read to her because her old eyes get tired.

The nice people at Bunnings Smithfield gave us new sand for our sandpit, a new kiddies pool and some rocking toys – we love them!

We really enjoy going to Ngamu and Kankal Playgroup in Mossman, going to the beach and creek, and visiting playgrounds; we've been to Palm Cove, Mossman, Trinity Beach and Centenary Lakes – we're becoming playground experts! We have also started to get to know all the wonderful animals at Hartley's – they really like seeing us.

It has been really busy with lots of comings and goings, and our Mums have been working really hard – but we've still had time for lots of fun, learning and growing together.

**Elicyah, Deledio, Tristan & Rachael
(with occasional visits from Ari) x**



Growing together





Exploring at Trinity Park Playground



Deledio's totem is the crocodile



Elicyah's Learn to Swim Sessions



Hospitality Practices

Teacher Ms Dianne Austrai-Ombiga
Teacher Aide Ms Annette Assman

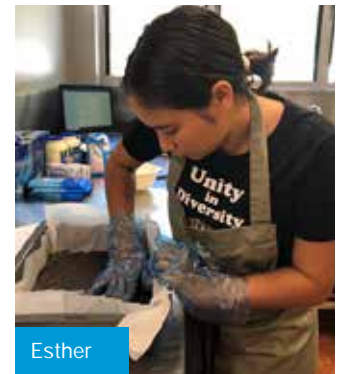
THE UNIT STUDIED IN HOSPITALITY PRACTICES IN TERM 3 AND 4 IS 'CELEBRATIONS'.

This term, students' trialled the production and service of food and beverages for a formal lunch for staff and students to celebrate NAIDOC. The planning process allowed students to work as part of a team to:

- determine the type of formal setting (buffet or plated), using a set menu,
- promote the formal lunch through flyers and/or posters and invitations,
- prepare a timeline for the preparations of the event
- create a workflow for food preparation and production
- calculate number of serves and prepare a shopping list based on recipes on the menu.

Senior students prepare and produce quality edible food products every Friday for the school lunch.

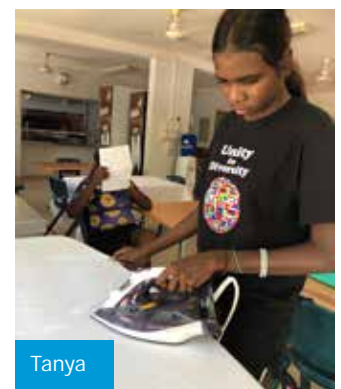
Senior students performed very well and served a three-course lunch to staff and students at school as their final term assessment.



Esther



Bianca



Tanya



Researching in style



Bon' Naia



Bianca



Food prep skills

Fun and Games

Working toward success



Junior Technology

Teacher: Ms Dianne Austrai-Ombiga
Teacher Aide: Ms Annette Assman

Junior Technology is a subject offered to students in Years 8, 9 and 10 at Cape York Girl Academy. This term students learnt about how to recycle our rubbish/waste and other

materials as a way of sustaining our natural environment and to keep it healthy. We also prepare and produce quality edible food products that are usually served at school for morning tea on Fridays.



Junior HASS

Junior students have been immersed in history this term through our study of 'Frontier Wars and Freedom Fighters'. This unit examines First Nations peoples' experience of the Frontier Wars that occurred during the invasion and colonisation of Australia. Students developed historical knowledge and understanding of the impact those conflicts had on the lives and land of Indigenous Australians. Students also described and examined the lives and actions of key

individuals such as Pemulwuy, Bilin Bilin, Doug Nicolls, Charles Perkins and Faith Bandler who fought for their rights and made significant contributions to the advancement of Indigenous freedoms and to Australian society overall. The unit also focused on sequencing events using a timeline, interpreting relevant sources through different perspectives and developing short texts that incorporate paraphrasing and quotations.

Laurie Barrett



Junior English & Junior Art

Junior English and Junior Art have been exploring a combined unit on Picture Books this term, with students producing their own illustrated stories to go into a collection to be given to the children in our ELC. As part of the unit, students have read, analysed and evaluated an assortment of picture books for a range of audiences. During English lessons, students have focused more on the structure and language of the text, whilst Art has explored design and layout.

The girls have really flourished during this unit, producing some incredible artworks to complement the work we have been

doing on language during English. Their magnificent gallery wall has grown over the course of the term and the students should be proud of what they have achieved. Likewise, they have enjoyed experimenting with figurative language and rhyme as they craft their own section of the book. Each of their stories seeks to teach something to the ELC children, whether that's a simple lesson about how to be kind to others or the sharing of a student's culture and language.

Kirsten Anderson



Brandy



A page from Kynomi's Story



Kynomi

Maths and Science

Teacher: Dianne Austrai-Ombiga
Teacher Aide: Annette Assman

This term, in Maths students learnt about 'geometry' and in Science students learnt about 'forces'. The students worked in two groups to build a kite. After the kites were completed, they took them to Wangetti Beach and tried to fly the kites. It was a fun activity for the students and they enjoyed it, especially when their kites were lifted by the thrust of the wind.



Visitors to the School



Share the Dignity



Visitors from JT Academy



Senior Police Liaison Visit

Making our space shine with Murals



LOOKING AFTER US

Health and Wellbeing

The Wellbeing team sits at the heart of the 'culture program' at CYGA under the Indigenous Welfare Leadership of Karen Reys & Chaseley Walker and the support and encouragement of Kon Kalos. Each semester the team works together to develop holistic care opportunities for the students that involve their physical (diet – dental – heart –brain health); emotional; psychological (developing an ability to observe their thoughts rather than allowing them to master their lives); & spiritual wellbeing (the ability to breathe easily and be at ease in our bodies). Importantly, at CYGA everyone is seen as a 'Teacher'

of our girls from Cleaners, to Administration, to Boarding and Principal... as we are a village that takes responsibility for the education of its young people through our own behaviour and custodianship. We see ourselves as responsible for the cultural safety we nurture as custodians on Yirrijangji Country through the responsibility we carry for the creation of peaceful learning environments that allow our community to grow strong. What follows are some of the programs and activities that Wellbeing ran this past semester:

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY (JCU) DENTAL SCHOOL VISIT (12.10.20)

At the beginning of Term 4 – nine (9) fourth year Dental Students from the JCU School of Dentistry School, along with their teachers, came to the Girl Academy to conduct a series of workshops around oral health.

It is important for our students to understand that their dental health is as important to their development as receiving an academic education. Research has revealed a strong link between good dental health and overall heart health. Consequently, there is a need for an effective oral health promotion program that is easily accessible and culturally appropriate. The JCU Workshops provided such a service in helping the girls understand:

- Children learn their oral self-care habits from seeing what other people do on a daily basis
- Caregivers who regularly partake in oral self-care habits, such as brushing and flossing, are likely to instil such behaviours in the children and in their household.

There are also several prevalent risk factors that may affect the person's oral health including:

- smoking and alcohol
- irregular attendance at public or private dental services
- Snacking on sugary, salty or acidic foods can satisfy the cravings but it is NOT good for your teeth
- Soft drinks – a can of Coke contains no less than 10 teaspoons of sugar.
- Irregular brushing and flossing can lead to gum loss and teeth falling out of their socket.
- Excessive processed food intake such as pies and chips

All these behavioural patterns can lead to bad breath and long-term heart problems.

So, brush and floss – eat well – exercise regularly – sleep well – smile a beautiful smile.

Message = a healthy mind, in a healthy body

JCU Dental Students discussing the effects of Alcohol & Tobacco on teeth and health with Bon'Nai & Rahenna



CHESS AT CYGA FEATURING ARETHA BANI

The Academy has been running a chess club for over 18 months. This is something that began as a game based on improving student concentration and soon developed into a competition with Kon (Wellbeing Team) – & who was going to be the first to beat him. Since we began playing chess – a game of multiple pieces with different movement powers – there have been 10 graduate players from both the junior and senior student cohort that have learnt to play this wonderful game.

It is my pleasure to announce that Aretha Bani is the school CHESS Champion for 2020 as the only student to have checkmated Kon... although he claims he was distracted by other students!

Aretha has displayed levels of deep, slow, quiet concentration that is the hallmark of all strong chess players. These are qualities that align strongly with our daily practice of dadirri at the Academy & which will hopefully give her strength when confronted with the inevitable challenges of the next stage of her education and life.

Congratulations to Aretha for the many recesses and lunchtimes you pinned Kon down to a game you both love.

▼ Aretha the Queen of Chess



EXTENSION ENGLISH 2019-20

Extension English is a course that takes place after school once a week. It combines formal writing lessons with vibrant discussion of First Nations wisdom & civil rights movements and European philosophy. This also includes a critical examination of popular culture.

This year, although our time together was disrupted by the covid19 pandemic, the girls were introduced to the short coming of age story, Mary Ventura and the Ninth Kingdom (1952) by Sylvia Plath; and the spirit place narrative The Tell-Tale Heart (1843) by Edgar Allen Poe.

This also is a class in which we learn to strengthen our brain power through two and three ball juggling and visual puzzles!

It has been a pleasure and privilege to share this time with these young women who I hope one day will become leaders for their people ... as holders of VOICE TREATY TRUTH in a more complete Australian story of who we are and have been as a nation.

Kon Kalos



DANCE-DRAMA

The Dance-Drama program is all about working in space with the body to release spontaneity and connection with ourselves and others in a playful manner. Pauline and Shellie (with special dance workshop guest in Term 1, Jack) from the Miriki Indigenous Dance group have facilitated the program this year which has included Dance, Drama & Sports activities. Much appreciation.



CULTURAL YOGA

Through the sharing of Yoga, I hope to integrate the philosophy of the Girl Academy, to be able to Sit Strongly, Listen Deeply and See Clearly. Developing a conscious awareness of each student's own experiences, sensations, thoughts and emotions, we use stillness and movement, balance, breath and focus to awaken the spirit to the present moment, to heal and to reconnect to our innate knowledge, giving each student space to feel, to be and to grow so that they may continue confidently and strongly on their chosen paths.



SWIM SAFE PROGRAM

The senior girls have become Water Wise! As part of their Cert II in Sport and Rec, the girls worked through a series of theoretical and practical sessions covering a range of topics for both preventative actions and survival techniques when in and around waterways.

The lessons were mainly undertaken in the outdoor classrooms of the CYGA pool and Ellis Beach - which was wonderful in the warmer weather.

They looked at statistics and safety considerations for activities around inland waterways such as dams, rivers, waterfalls and creeks. Entering and exiting the water safely, including trying out a safety jump, were all part of our first session, followed by demonstrations of water survival techniques and some water treading races on the pool noodles to show off their prowess.

Our visit to Ellis Beach included a tour of the Surf Life Saving Club, the Patrol Hut and reviewing the major aspects of a Bronze Medallion Course (Cert II in Aquatic Safety) which is undertaken by the majority of patrolling Surf Life Savers. The girls were introduced to preventative actions they can take at the beach to stay safe, including; attention to, and understanding meaning of signs and flags, non-verbal communication signals, sun safety and understanding wave patterns and behaviours. Some real natural talent was put on show as the girls paddled the surf rescue boards and even performed mock rescues using the tubes. And before a well-deserved ice-cream, the girls practiced resuscitation, DRSABCD and participated in some wading and surf sports games.

The program has been filled with a lot of learning, inquiry and water fun - all in the name of keeping Safe in and around the Water!

Rachael Wynberg, Early Learning Co-Ordinator

Boarding News

It has certainly been a very busy final term in Boarding with many exciting weekend adventures out and about in Cairns. The weekends have been filled with exploring the Centenary Lakes Nature Play Space, touring the Voices of Survival; Rite of Passage display at the Jumbala Art Gallery, racing at the Go Karting track and versing each other in Laser Tag. We have even found time to fit in an amazing trip to Green Island on the Great Barrier Reef in celebration of the Year 12's Graduating. The girls travelled over on a ferry and spent the day snorkelling, fish spotting on a glass bottom boat, beach walking and relaxing with friends.

Next year we aim to foster a strong sense of boarding community that shows a deep understanding of each other, empathy and supports the educational journey. An old mentor once said to me 'respect is earned over time, trust is gained through experience and confidence is built through achievement' and this is what the Girl Academy Boarding program will be built on in 2021.

Have a safe holidays and we look forward to next year as boarding welcomes back the returning students and even some new faces.

Mandy Jeffries, Head of Boarding



GRADUATION

The Graduating Class of 2020

INTRODUCTION

On the evening of Thursday 19th November 2020, all staff, students, friends and family from Cape York Girl Academy gathered at Paradise Palms Resort at 6pm to enjoy their last night together with the 5 graduates.

PREPARATIONS

In the preparations there were three stages, these were planning, shopping and setting up the venue. In the weeks leading up to the event the graduating students were asked to decide on a theme for their formal. The theme chosen was nature. Then the year 11's and 12's sat together to create a list of decorations and after finishing that they then headed to Smithfield to purchase what they needed. On the day of the event, as the year 12's went and got their hair and makeup done, the year 11's and juniors went to the venue to set up the tables, chairs and photo booth and decorated the room.

GETTING READY

At 2:30pm of the day the girls who weren't graduating started getting dressed up for a 5pm departure. Everyone was getting ready with their peers starting with hair and makeup. Once they were happy with their appearance they then started putting on their dresses. The girls who were ready early helped some of the other girls with hair, dresses and even some last minute packing. Once everyone that wasn't graduating left, the graduates then got dressed and awaited their limo.

THE EVENT

The event started with the year 12's emerging from the limo in style and then being introduced by our MC Ms Di. After a few announcements were made, entrée was served which was either a prawn salad or a bruschetta. After a few more announcements and speeches were made dinner was served, either a chicken parmigiana or steak and gravy both served on mashed potato and beans. The evening was then continued by very heart-felt speeches from staff and students and a slideshow created by Ms Kirsten. The fantastic cake and desserts made by our talented Ms Kiah were then served to sum up the night before the last half hour of the event. Everyone then broke out their best moves on the dance floor,



Preparing for the night

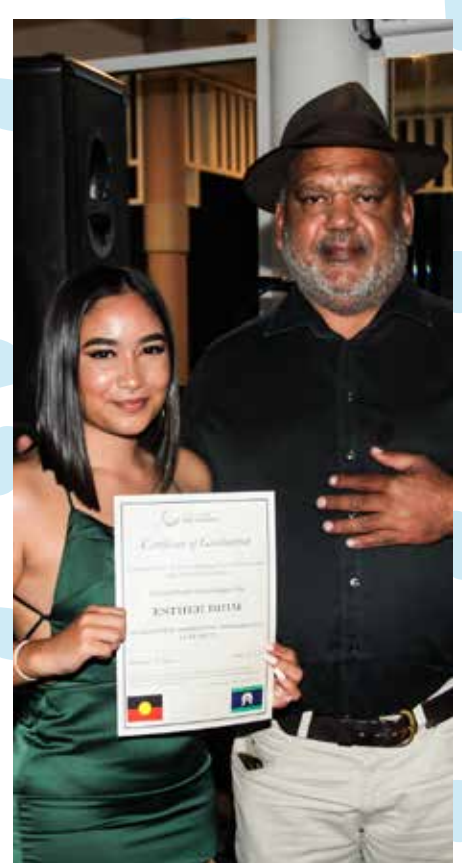
even Rahenna's mother, grandmother and little sister came and showed off their rhythm to the hand-picked playlist from the students.

We were also thankful to have Noel Pearson attend our graduation. He shared in the celebration of our graduates and presented them with their Girl Academy certificates that acknowledges the completion of their schooling. Without Noel's vision, the Girl Academy would not exist, he continues to be an important touchstone for the work that we do.















.....

Graduation Speech by Esther

Good evening family, friends, staff and principal of Cape York Girl Academy.

I remember arriving at the Girl Academy in 2018 like it was yesterday. I was feeling excited and ready to finish off my last few years of school and promised myself I would give it 100% from start to finish.

The last two years has been the most wonderful and stressful years I have had, through it all I have kept the promise I had made to myself in the beginning.

Learning new things, gaining more knowledge, stepping out of my comfort zone and completing certificates, if it wasn't for the Girl Academy I would not of have achieved these things.

Girl Academy has really helped me build my confidence and spirit strong in school and for the next chapter of my life.

Meeting new people and making friends has been a blessing and I will carry the memories of the times we had together forever.

And now I would like to thank all the teachers and staff at the Girl Academy and I would like to say a special thank you to Kon for being the best extension teacher, Jodi for taking me to tafe every week and being there for me when I need someone to talk to and Ms Di and Ms Annette for being there for me and helping me through this tough year.

I would also like to thank my family for being there for me and supporting me from start to finish and for being proud of me for finishing school.

Now as I prepare to say goodbye, I am sad but excited to start my new journey.

.....

Graduation Speech by Raheena

Hi everyone and welcome

Tonight is a very special night for me and the girls who are graduating tonight.

First I would like to say thank you to these special people for supporting and tak-ing good care of us here at CYGA. And that's the teachers, staffs/boarding staff, the principle, miss Bel and the rest of the girls and for the girls thank you for giving us compony, I feel so blessed for having mob all being part of my life and giving me a hand taking good care of my baby Elicyah.

I would also like to say thank you to my mother and grandmother for your sup-port, encouragement and helping me to become who I am today, I have be-come a role model to those who look up to me and I am becoming the best big sister to my youngest and to all the girls here and a mother to my child. thank you so much for teaching me and giving me the advice on how I can be a good big sister and the best mother I can be to provide the best for them to continue their schooling in their future.

I feel so ready to start a new chapter out in the big world once I finish my cert3 Early Learning Goodstart next year in (1 term)

Thank you, god bless you all and may be with you.

.....

.....

Graduation Speech by Tanya

Good evening, teachers, GA staff, friends and family. My name is Tanya Paddy and I'm from Palumpa in the N.T.

Tonight I'm feeling excited but also sad.

I'm sad because I'm leaving school and friends.

I'm excited because I am finally graduating and moving to the next part of my life.

The last 2 years at Girl Academy have been challenging because I was coming back and forth from home and getting up early every morning was hard. But I'm glad I did it and I've finally made it to the end of my school-ing.

I'll always remember the camping, the swimming and the culture circle beside the river.

I'd like to remind the young girls to never give up on school even though they will go through tough times.

And I'd like to thank Gemma for making good meals and being friendly and nice to us. I'd also like to thank the wellbeing staff for taking good care of me, the teaching staff for educating me. And Miss Shoba for ac-cepting me into this school.

I'd like to thank my family for supporting me and never giving up on me.

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Graduation Speech by Anastasia

Good evening parents, staff of Girl Academy and CYP staff and school mates. My name is Anastasia Newry/Campbell & I come from Yarralin in the Northern Territory.

This school been more then a school to me, it has also been like a home to me.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Keira Townsville for helping me get back to school, even though I waited for a whole year.

One of the things that is so special in this school is the amazing incredibly supportive staff that help put a smile on my face Thank you to: Uncle Norm, Boarding staff, Our cook - Ms Gemma, Well-being staff, all the teachers and our Principal Shoba.

I would also like to give a big shout out to Ms Jodi. Thank you for helping me to achieve something that would help with my future job and possibly more studying.

I want to thank all of you for that, last but not least, I want to thank my family and especially my parents for not giving up on me, I love you for that.

A very special thing for me is that all of you at girl academy have become like family to me. You have made me happy. You have made me laugh too and I have been the happiest here, I will never forget the joy's that you'd bring to me.

It's been challenging for most of us, with teachers on sick leave's new staff but we made it though it's been a great time great two years of girl academy and one great year of TAFE.

I am going to miss what has been like home to me; thank you and goodbye girl academy.

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Graduation Speech by Aretha

Good evening everyone, firstly I would like to thank my parents for supporting me through eve-rything and always being there for me no matter what. I wouldn't be standing here tonight if it wasn't for yous. I also want to thank my sister and her small family and my siblings for coming tonight and making this night extra special for me. Secondly I would like to say a big thank you to all the Girl Academy Teachers and staffs for supporting me and helping me overcome my bar-riers to get here.

Girl Academy has definitely shaped me into the person I am today. My 3 years at Girl academy wasn't easy at first but I have grown so much and learnt a lot about being a bigger and better person. There was a lot of time I wanted to give up on education and going home but the one thing that made me keep pushing myself was my girls at school. Throughout my 3 years at Girl academy I've seen a lot of girls coming and going and I know what it feel like seeing a close friend leaving. Especially when yous have a really strong connection between each other and a lot of good and bad memories together. So I wanted to be a good role model for the younger girls and show them that even when life gets tough just take it one step at a time and never punch yourself through life.

I am going to miss my sisters so much and I just want to thank yous all for always looking out for me. Thank yous for all the memories we made together, I will never forget them. There's just one more thing I want to say before I finish up and this is for Rahenna. Rahenna I am so proud of you for never giving up. There were so many time since we came to girl academy where I've seen you struggle especially with having a baby but I never seen you giving up and you should be so proud of yourself. I can definitely see how much you've grown all the best for the future with Eliciyah.

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This year's graduation was an amazing night to remember. Everyone enjoyed themselves and didn't want it to end. Next year some improvements could be made with the lighting of the stage and the length of the speeches as there wasn't enough time to dance. However, the night was a huge success and fun for all.

Thoughts from a Graduating Student

Penned by a Student

I never thought I would come this far. There were a lot of times in my high school years where I just felt like giving up on education and going home. My parents had supported me through everything and never gave up on me. I never gave up and I will never give up no matter what life throws at me. All the teachers and staff at Girl Academy have always been there for me, supporting me every day and I thank the Lord every day for having them in my life. I just want to remind everyone and get this message out; even when life gets tough never give up on yourself and always know that you have people there to support you and people there who love you. I am so proud of myself for coming this far and I'm looking forward to achieving my goals in the future.

Written by Aretha Bani

Senior Sport and Recreation

This term the senior girls have completed 3 units of work that were set earlier in the year. A 'Dance Styles' unit required each student to research a dance style they were interested in and create a power point slideshow to present to the class. Each presentation included a short instructional YouTube video clip which the class followed to learn some of the dance steps. Students also completed an 'Eating Well' unit in which they researched the nutritional value of foods and justified their food choices when creating a 3-day meal plan for an AFL sporting event. In addition, a day trip to the Ellis Beach Surf Lifesaving Club allowed students to consolidate their learning of lifesaving and first aid skills. The girls enjoyed the opportunity to practice lifesaving techniques using the Club's equipment and to body surf in the ocean. Finally, senior students enthusiastically participated in our weekly whole school sporting activity (volleyball) which promotes teamwork, boosts self-esteem, develops skills and increases fitness levels.



Tanya and Bon'Naia practice swimming on the rescue boards



Miss Rachael explains how to use the radio in an emergency



Tanya and Aretha practice using the heart defibrillator

Kup-Murri feast



Advice from Aaliyah

Penning by a Student

Question from a parent: Is TIK TOK bad for you?

First of all, Tik Tok is not all bad as it provides some heart aching information from some people on the app who actually tell you things that the news doesn't tell you. Some people tell stories, they even talk about stuff like climate change, corona virus, protests about black people being killed (brutally) in America and other heart-breaking stuff happening in this current moment.

Tik Tok also provides humour for children like your 16-year-old daughter who goes onto this app on a daily basis. The humorous videos can bring out an ugly laugh from your child, something that you probably haven't heard in a while and could be weird and funny at the same time. But I also reckon if they showed you the video, you probably wouldn't get it because you're more into actual jokes that made sense in your century.

Stories, comedy and news are just a few things on the app but Tik Tok is mostly about the dancing, as it was mostly created for showing your skills and talent. Dancing is what catches everyone's attention on the app and it's what builds up people's courage to do what they feel comfortable doing.

However, Tik Tok is filled with disgusting people like paedophiles and so on, so watch out for people like that and don't let younger kids make videos unless they have a private account with only family following them (just let them watch).

So yeah, there are people out there who will criticise you in every way including things that don't matter in any way. Some people will even bully you and make you feel not so good about yourself but that's ok as well, because at the end of the day they're just people who want attention from you. Tik Tok is a place where you can have fun and build up your happiness, courage and humour.

Written by Aaliyah Brim

The new faces of CYGA



Laurie Barrett Teacher

Originally from Canada, I've spent most of my adult life teaching in a variety of forms, from primary students in rural and remote communities in Canada and Australia, to adults in literacy classes and English as a Second Language in a university setting in Cairns.

I feel fortunate to be part of the dynamic, caring, innovative staff at Girl Academy. In my role here I've been working with the lovely Senior students in Sports and Recreation and Art, and with the delightful Juniors, teaching HASS and some English.

I believe what William Butler Yeats said, "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." This quote aptly captures the reason why I teach. I hope that together with the students I can generate new ideas and ignite a spark to fuel the fire within them.



Kirsten Anderson Teacher

Hi, my name's Kirsten and I've had the pleasure and privilege of teaching English and Art to our beautiful young women this term. Originally from the UK, my mam's family are Scottish and my dad's family come from the North East of England. I emigrated to Australia back in 2008.

When I left university, I had no intention of becoming a teacher but fate would have it otherwise! After a short stint teaching English to students in Thailand, I realised that it was my calling and I've never looked back since. Prior to moving to Cairns earlier this year, I've lived and worked in Townsville, Canberra and Toowoomba.

I love seeing the pride young people get when they work something out that has been challenging them, or that spark of curiosity that appears in their eyes when they're excited by an idea and want to find out more. Teaching to me is very much a two-way street and I feel really blessed to have already learnt so much from the girls at the Academy.



Cindy Kelly Boarding Assistant

Hi Everyone! My name is Cindy Kelly and I am really excited to be a part of the Cape York Girl Academy. One of the students guessed my age at 35, so yeah, we'll stick to that for now.

My employment background is eclectic, having worked in the legal profession as a secretary and court reporter, so have seen both sides of the law and criminal justice system. I have spent the last 10 years working at the airport in customer service positions, with recent stints at Qld Health as a medical typist.

I have five grown up children and seven grandchildren (insert heart pump here) and (I know, I know - I still look 35) so you might be able to tell that I love children and big kids too. I love to garden, enjoy reading and travelling the world.

I am excited to get to know everyone and look forward to sharing this term with you all. I feel very honoured to play a role in nurturing these lovely young ladies as they transition into amazing leaders who reach their individual potentials.



Gemma Dore Training Support Officer Kitchen

My full name is Gemma Majella Catherine Elizabeth Dore. I was born in Darlinghurst Sydney, and thankfully reared on a sheep & wheat property in Wiradjuri Country, (Riv-erina NSW) in a large blended family.

My life has been greatly influenced by the Italian community and since a very young age, my general interests have included indigenous culture, people, real history, sur-vival, rights and success. I love books, music, nature, & the great outdoors, particularly trekking in remote areas. I love my job and I'm very proud of where I work. My beautiful dad says, "never stop learning"! I aim to continue to support our students at Girl Academy - our girls who are our future.



Mandy Jeffries Boarding Manager

My husband Josh and I moved to Cairns from Darwin at the start of 2020. We have a little 18-month boy called Logan who loves to be outside and three dogs that spend most of the day run-ning around in circles with Logan.

My background is a Physical and Out-door Education Teacher and my last job was as the Deputy Head of Boarding for Haileybury Rendall School. I have been really lucky that on arrival to the Girl Academy I recognised several last names and even a few faces. My past job gave me the opportunity to work alongside remote communities and families in Northern Territory, Western Australia and Queensland. I place strong value and em-phasis on a shared learning experience. I grew up in Melbourne and have supported Geelong Foot-ball Club since I was a little girl. Unfortunately, I don't watch much Rugby but I am sure the girls in Boarding will change that pretty quickly!



Rachel Fraser Boarding Assistant

Hi everyone, I am Rachel, one of the Boarding Assistants/Supervisor. I feel incredibly privileged to be working at Cape York Girl Academy, helping the girls finish their schooling.

I am a mother of 2 children (21-year-old girl, 13-year-old boy) and am originally from England. I travelled the world working as a nanny and a flight attendant, before I became a teacher. I fell in love with Australia and moved to Perth twenty years ago, before moving to Far North Queensland a year and a half ago.

I am passionate about empowering girls to be able to make their own choices and live the best lives possible and am proud to be part of a school that celebrates indigenous culture and keeps it strong.



Rachael Wynberg Early Learning Co-Ordinator

Whilst I am only new to the Academy, I feel as though this is a place I have always belonged.

I grew up in the wet rainforest and coastal lands of the Mamu people, and I have always, and still do love the water, the ocean, waterfalls and rivers. Now I live on Yirrijandji Country with my amazing husband and 4 fantastic children, and as one of 6 children I have family all over Aus-tralia. I have been a Director of Sales in Tourism, a copy writer (which I still do) and a stay at home, homeschooling Mum; until I was brought here to the Girl Academy. I am part of the Life Saving Community and enjoy not only the beach lifestyle, but also the wonderful oppor-tunity it offers to work with different groups of people. Now I am also lucky enough to help care for the wonderful 'babies' of the Academy and their incredible mothers. Every day I learn, and everyday I am inspired to be a better version of myself.



CAPE YORK
GIRL ACADEMY

"We are all visitors to this time, this place. We are just passing through. Our purpose here is to observe, to learn, to grow, to love ... and then we return home."

- Australian Aboriginal Proverb



It is our hope that you all enjoy a wonderful end of year break, and we congratulate you for the perseverance, determination and commitment you have shown in 2020. Thank you for the memories; we look forward to making many more in 2021.

Your Cape York Girl Academy Family

