The team
Currently there are up to thirty staff working in the Foundation Skills team across both the Batchelor and Alice Springs campuses. The team has delivered numerous programs throughout the year in remote communities such as: the Tiwi Islands, Maningrida, Milingimbi, Nhulunbuy, Wadeye, Daly River and of course at Batchelor and Alice Springs campus. In addition to our recurrent delivery we have also provided a range of fee-for-service programs for a variety of Project partners.

Our programs
- Certificate I Education and Skills Development
- Certificate II Education and Skills Development
- Certificate I Indigenous Language and Knowledge
- Certificate II Indigenous Languages & Knowledge
- Diploma of Translating

National Foundation Skills programs NEW ON SCOPE!
- FSKIOI3 Certificate I Access to Vocational Pathways
- FSKIO2I3 Certificate I Skills to Vocational Pathways
- FSK20II3 Certificate II Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways

Big thanks and congratulations to the FSK writing team: Nicci Godsman, Helen Clark, Margo Smith, Marilyn Willis.

Our services
Our team is also:
- skilled in using the ACSF assessment tools to determine LL&N strengths;
- experienced in embedding Foundational Skill and LL&N units within Vocational programs;
- providing one on one or group PD in these areas;
- developing a resource library of materials for use by interested staff;
- experienced in submission writing and project management of WELL funded programs.

What are Foundation Skills?
Learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy skill development as described in the Australian Core Skills Framework
Employability skills (problem solving, use of technology, organisation and teamwork) as described in the Core Skills for Work

Skills for Employment and Education (SEE)
The SEE training is designed to help job seekers aged 15 to 64 years of age with gaining part-time or full-time employment by providing up to 800 hours of free training to:
- improve numeracy and literacy skills
- boost confidence
- develop work readiness – communication, ethics, expectations, interviews and time management skills

Job seekers are referred to the program by the Department of Human Services or Remote Jobs and Communities Program providers (RJCP).
- Batchelor Institute has won the contract to deliver the SEE program in:
  - Top End: Nhulunbuy, Wadeye, Maningrida, Daly and Darwin.
  - Central Australia: Alice Springs township, Tennant Creek, Alparra, Nyrippi, Papunya and Kintore.

Our central business unit for the SEE program is based at the Alice Springs campus.
If you are delivering VET programs in any of the communities above, the SEE program trainers can provide your VET students with LL&N support in conjunction with, or before they commence your program. They MUST enrol as a SEE student first.

WELL Program
Workplace English Language and Learning (WELL) funding is available to support those in the workforce who wish to strengthen their language, literacy and numeracy (LL&N) skills.

The Foundation Skills unit is currently working closely with John Persons Consulting (JPC) and the Community Services, Children’s Services and Education Support Unit (Top End) in the development of a WELL-funded project to support the LL&N needs of students enrolled in Certificate III Children’s Services and Diploma Children’s Services courses being delivered in the East Arnhem and West Arnhem Shire region and the Roper Gulf and Katherine Municipality region.

As we know, the key barriers to students success is often due to the low English LL&N skills of people in remote communities. The WELL-funded component of this program will help provide the foundations for, and facilitate, future workforce development.

We anticipate delivery of the WELL-funded LL&N support services to commence in January 2014.
Communities for Children—Pre Employment Training Program

Earlier this year Batchelor Institute won the federally-funded contract to deliver this significant program aimed at developing a skilled and sustainable local Aboriginal workforce to support and promote children’s safety and wellbeing.

The Communities for Children - Pre Employment Training (CFC-PET) will be delivered in Ngukurr, Galiwinku, Ntaria, Santa Teresa, Maningrida, Gunbalanya and Wadeye. Community meetings are underway, with an overwhelmingly positive response to the program.

The six Indigenous members of this delivery team—Dawn, Shiralee (Alice Springs), Karen, Chris, John and Deidre (Top End)—are strongly committed to creating and developing a strength base working/training partnership with stakeholders through valuing Indigenous people and their local skills and knowledge. Karen Khan explains the program this way:

‘We will be delivering Certificate II Family & Wellbeing in the first phase of the training to assist individuals to build their life skills prior to taking on work experience within the Family and Children's Services sector. The second phase of the program is to support and mentor individuals through potential employment outcomes within the sector and build capacity in their LLN requirements of the job through an embedded Certificate I Foundation Skills program.’

Soundways Program

The Foundation Skills unit is one of a number of areas within Batchelor Institute which has a working relationship with Angus Knight Learning (AKL). Under an auspicing arrangement, the Top End team supports students from all over Australia who are enrolled in the Certificate II Reading and Writing English – Soundway program.

We are currently exploring delivery of a range of other education programs with the AKL group and look forward to strengthening our partnership.

Defence–Indigenous Pre Employment Program

Congratulations to the Defence Indigenous Development Program (DIDP) students who successfully passed with flying colours after five months training. On 13 September, surrounded by family and friends, these young Indigenous people stood tall and proud as potential leaders who can encourage and influence other young Indigenous people to take charge of their lives and continue their influence into their communities.

The DIDP was run for the first time at Batchelor Institute from the 27 May to 13 September 2013. This program provided Indigenous Australians, from rural and remote communities, with opportunities to acquire vocational and life skills that are transferable back to their respective communities, as well as employment opportunities within the defence force and the private sector.

‘The program provided students with instructions in military skills, (vocational skills) language, literacy and numeracy, personal financial management, nutrition, physical fitness and resilience.’ Chief of Army Directive 02/13

The project was managed through the Foundation Skills Unit (Top End) and this large scale project provided a wonderful opportunity for the Foundation Skills team to work closely with lecturers delivering both Certificate II Conservation & Land Management and Certificate III Community Services.

We all had less than a month to prepare staff and resources for this program and yet found a way to work together to create what was described by Defence as ‘the best program we’ve ever had!’

We look forward to co-creating and co-delivering an even better program next year and take this opportunity to thank everyone involved!
60 Jobs—Pre Employment Program

The Indigenous Employment Project (ie. project) offers services in training, recruitment and employment for Indigenous Australians to access and meet the workforce demands.

The ie. project has secured funding to support Indigenous workers into 60 jobs in the Darwin area over the next year.

The Foundation Skills Unit (Top End) is partnering with the ie. project to develop and deliver training which is designed to match students’ pre-employment needs for those positions. 24 students are currently enrolled in this seven week program and working towards employment in the areas of administration, finance, community services and the trades.

Trevor Mutton and Brian Erickson are delivering this program and are like ‘proud dads’ as they describe the talented and motivated group they are working with.

FIRST Robotics Competition

The Foundation Skills unit (Top End) has secured major sponsorship from:

- Google
- Lego Education
- FIRST Robotics Australia

to allow us to form Australia’s first Indigenous team to participate in the National Robotics competition in June 2014

While the focus of the 6 month program will be to build a robot to compete in Sydney next year, the Foundation Skill learning opportunities available are extensive.

Participating Indigenous students will learn about:

- maths
- science
- digital technology
- employability skills including team work, communication, leadership
- multi media
- marketing, business skills and much more.

Participating students will enrol in the Foundation Skills program or Educational Skill Development units and may be SEE program participants or interested others.

Some lucky students and teachers enjoyed an Introduction to Robotics delivered by Luan Heimlich and Fred Westling from the First Robotics group this month and we thank all our sponsors for the generous donation of equipment valued at over $5,000.

We are currently seeking expressions of interest from participants and adult mentors for the Robotics team. Call us for details.

Skill 21

This innovative and exciting project is a joint partnership with the Down Syndrome Association NT and Youthworx. A vision for hope and learning was created by Rachel Kroes of the Down Syndrome Association NT and a successful funding submission bought this project to life. Young adults with Down Syndrome and other disabilities are now engaged in completion of the Certificate I Education and Skill Development program.

Sharna Crockett, a specialist in the delivery of educational programs for those with a disability, has been engaged by us and is designing and delivering this program which is the first of its kind. The program is being run from the Down Syndrome Office in Darwin and students are learning:

- core subjects – the 3Rs
- learning and innovation skills
- creativity and innovation
- critical thinking and problem solving
- communication
- life and career skills.

Hopefully the first of many more, this program is running over twelve months and its value is being acknowledged by parents, students, project partners and funding bodies.
Interpreter Training and Service

More than 100 Indigenous languages and dialects are spoken in the Territory and many Indigenous Territorians speak English as their third or fourth language. The Aboriginal Interpreter Service (AIS) provides government and non-government agencies a 24 hour, 7 days per week interpreting service in most Indigenous languages and dialects spoken in the Territory. AIS is one of the largest employers of Aboriginal people in Australia.

AIS and Batchelor Institute have a memorandum of understanding and partnership model of cooperative workplace training and assessment. By delivering the Diploma in Translating, Nicoletta from the Top End team and Suanne from the Alice Springs team, bring this professional partnership to fruition. Through their excellent work in delivering the Diploma program, Indigenous men and women gain the skills and experience to become translators and help to alleviate the language barriers faced by many Indigenous people throughout the Northern Territory.

Groote Eylandt-Indigenous Pre-Employment Program

The year commenced with continuation of an exciting project on Groote Eylandt in partnership with the Minerals Council of Australia (MCA), four mining companies and the relevant Territory and Federal Departments. The IPEP was a collaborative, industry-driven, ‘work readiness’ program designed to enable Indigenous people to achieve a standard of job readiness and gain entry into the mining industry. Operating since 2010, the first women’s program was completed in 2012 and the program won the Training Initiative award in 2012.

“This is one of the best structured indigenous training initiatives I have seen in the industry and our trainees have benefited from their involvement.” Rob Atkinson, Chief Executive, Energy Resources of Australia (ERA)

To assist participants understand and prepare for their work readiness, the program was designed around working life at a mine—12 hours a day, 14 days on and 7 days off, dormitory living, alcohol and drug testing, nutrition and health advice. The program this year was a demonstration model for Batchelor’s Wraparound Services Project and concluded well. We look forward to future programs.

Working collaboratively

Working alongside lecturers/trainers from other areas is something we enjoy doing and with the new Foundation Skills programs available there will be many more opportunities for this sort of collaborative work.

Recently, Batchelor Institute’s Conservation and Land Management lecturer Ben Cauvuto and Foundation Skills lecturer Robyn Spandonide, collaborated with various organisations, including the Central Land Council (CLC) and Tjumanpa Women’s Rangers for a unit based on collecting seed.

Included in the unit was a field trip to Olive Pink Botanical Gardens where students were involved in many activities including cutting open and examining seeds under the microscope, and comparing it to labelled drawings of the seed structure.

Special thanks

We take this opportunity to say THANKYOU to Greg O’Hara who has been a member of the Batchelor team for 23 years. Throughout this time Greg has maintained his commitment to his student’s success and retires from service in December. You have left a huge legacy to us all Greg and will be missed—thankyou!

Contact

Please call us for more information on these featured projects or any other questions you may have about the work being done in the Foundation Skills Unit.

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