



NJERNDABORIGINAL CORPORATION | MARCH 2024 EDITION

# NJERNDANEWS

**YARKA YAKAPNA  
CORROBOREE  
EASTER 2024!**

SEE OUR FLYER ON  
PAGE 6

*Welcome back,  
Johnny!*

John Mitchell has hit the ground running since his appointment as Chief Executive Officer here at Njernda.

In this edition of our newsletter, John has written about his own background and his passion for making positive change for our community.

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**Njernda**  
Aboriginal Corporation



## EMMA'S DESIGN CAPTURES OUR STORY



**Emma Bamblett is a proud Aboriginal woman with Wemba Wemba, Gunditjmara, Ndgajon-ji and Taungurung connections.**

Born and raised in Echuca, Emma has a strong connection to community and Njernda Aboriginal Corporation. She is a proud mother of 4 children and Nan to two gorgeous Granddaughters and is also the Granddaughter of respected Elder and Founding Member - Valerie Mitchell.

Emma remembers her Nan Valerie Mitchell along with Aunty Melva Johnson always advocating for our community and our youth to have safe spaces of connection and education in Echuca. Emma remembers being raised by the Aunties at Berrimba and catching up with all her cousins and friends at afterschool care, holiday program and homework classes at the Health House.

She also has fond memories of going to Robinvale for school holidays and sitting watching her Aunty Barb Egan paint.

Emma's love and passion for painting started 18 years ago as a therapeutic way to deal with life stresses.

She has worked with and supported community organisations to share their stories through art and has also done commissioned work across many sectors and departments.

Emma currently works in the Aboriginal Children's Healing space where she can share her passion for art, Identity and Connection. Emma along with her business partner Megan Van Den Berg own and run their successful retail store in Northcote, Melbourne called 'Kinya Lerrk'. Kinya Lerrk is a store that showcases beautiful homewares, gifts and art and promotes and supports other Aboriginal businesses in the Community.

Emma's artist signature is her vibrant and bright colours, and we are very thrilled and excited to have her as our artist for Njernda's 50th Anniversary.

Please see our new logo and artwork by Emma Bamblett and her story of community, connection, culture and belonging.





## INSPIRED BY NJERNDAB'S STORY



**Artwork Title:** Resilience, Strength and Pride

**Artist:** Emma Bamblett

**Mob:** Wemba Wemba, Gunditjmarra, Ngadjonji and Taungurung

**Artwork Description:** Looking at this artwork from a bird's eye view, it encompasses all of the important elements of identity and culture that I remember being enriched in growing up in Echuca on the Murray River which is the stream flowing throughout the artwork.

Within the river in the middle of the artwork is our Elders standing strong and who advocated for our Community to have our places of belonging. They are wearing possum skin cloaks to highlight their connections to language, land and kinship. The coolamon on the left hand side with curved lines connected by circles, represents all the Aunties and Uncles at Berrimba who nurtured, protected and gave us a place of belonging.

The blue area above represents symbols of places that Njernda gave Community, whether it be the Health House, Wellness Centre, Youth Services or Baroona Farm. To the bottom of the artwork is the Long Neck Turtle. The Long Neck Turtle represents and acknowledges the Yorta Yorta Nations on which the Community is living on. Surrounding the Long Neck Turtle are circles of connection which also represent 'Warma' and the opportunities that were provided through sports.

The top right hand corner are symbols of boomerangs, these represent our connection to Culture. For 50 years Njernda has provided Community with Cultural experiences and allows Community to showcase this through dance, art and storytelling while also providing a safe place of belonging.



## MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO JOHN MITCHELL



As many of you would already know, I am a proud Wemba Wemba/Gundtjimara man, and I was born and bred in Echuca. My mother Valerie Mitchell was one of the founding members of Njernda and was an advocate for her people. I believe I share my mother's values of hard work, integrity, social justice and forging pathways for our Community. I am passionate about working for and making positive changes for my local and wider Community. My expansive and innate knowledge of the complex needs of my community for me, highlights the importance of more work opportunities, increased housing, early education, family violence concerns, legal issues, child protection challenges and the need to keep our cultural position strong and vibrant.

It is paramount for Njernda to continue meaningful relationships with funding bodies, NACCHO, VACCHO and other relevant Organisations. I have developed and continue to maintain good rapports with State organisations from my roles as Deputy CEO at Njernda and Chair of VACCHO and RAJAC. During my tenure as Deputy CEO, I was able to secure funding for a lot of programs at Njernda, including funding to redevelop Baroona Healing Service, a program very dear to me. I am committed to the principles of self-determination and working as one to see the best outcomes for our Community. I look forward to seeing many old and new faces around the organisation and in Community as I help lead the organisation into this milestone 50th year of service.

## BEST START FORUM BUILDS COLLABORATION

**On Tuesday the 19th of March, Emma (pictured) and Koralyynn from our Berrimba team attended the VACSAL Best Start forum in Northcote.**

It was fantastic to be a part of the statewide Aboriginal Best Start forum, where there was a focus on collaborative partnerships to "keep the fire burning".

There were several great speakers that were culturally focused and had so much knowledge and great insight to share on the day. We learnt so much and it was great to get out and recognise the critical role that best start plays for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Thanks to VACSAL for providing such a great forum - we really enjoyed getting down to Melbourne and being able to network again.





## CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

**Healthy ears are crucial for children, and some great information about looking after them is available from NACCHO.**

Middle ear infection (Otitis Media) can lead to hearing loss and negatively impact on children's development outcomes, quality of life, family harmony, school readiness, and transmission of cultural and linguistic knowledge.

To ensure our children have a strong start, Care for Kids' Ears offers free information and resources about ear health for parents, carers, teachers, teachers' aides, early childhood workers and health professionals.

Resources explain:

- what ear disease is.
- the symptoms (or lack of symptoms).
- how to prevent ear disease and,
- the importance of getting regular ear checks.

Check out these free resources from NACCHO:  
<https://store.naccho.org.au/pages/care-for-kids-ears>




**care for kids' ears**  
strong hearing strong start

Information and resources about ear health for parents, carers, teachers, teachers' aides, early childhood workers and health professionals.

Care for Kids' Ears resources explain:

- 1 What ear disease is
- 2 The symptoms (or lack of symptoms)
- 3 How to prevent ear disease
- 4 The importance of getting regular ear checks

[store.naccho.org.au/pages/care-for-kids-ears](https://store.naccho.org.au/pages/care-for-kids-ears)




### Pharmacy career support

NACCHO has announced the third year of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Pharmacist Scholarship.

Each recipient will receive up to \$10,000 per annum to contribute to university expenses.

For questions or further information, please contact Harrison Milne on 0481 257 904 or [harrison.milne@naccho.org.au](mailto:harrison.milne@naccho.org.au)



**GIFT CARD**

**Due for a health check?**

If you attend a 20-minute appointment with the Aboriginal Health Worker, followed by a 40-minute appointment with the Doctor, you will receive a \$25 gift card!



**Are you ready for the Easter break?**

**Check your medications and prescriptions, and book an appointment with our medical clinic if you need anything!**

**Have you changed your address or phone number?**

**Let Njernda Medical know so we can update your records!**





## COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD



# YARKA YAKAPNA CORROBOREE

***"Easter Cultural Event"***

**FREE ENTRY**

*Everyone of all ages and walks of life are more than welcome to attend, to experience a fun and informative day full of traditional and cultural events!*

**CATCH A RIDE**

Transport will be provided via Bus, leaving from Youth Services (The Hub)  
1st trip @ 9:30am & 2nd trip @ 10:15am



Need directions?  
Scan the QR code

**11th of April, 2024**

**10:30am to 3:00pm**

**Baroona Farm**

access via Braund Road  
Echuca VIC, 3564

- Learn with Elders
- Bush Tucker
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Amusement Rides
- Traditional Dancing
- Boys 2 the Bush
- Animal Petting Zoo
- Arts & Crafts
- Cultural Walks
- Yabbie Races
- Emu Egg carving
- Wood Carving/Burning
- Traditional Games
- Goody Bags
- Health Promotion
- Marquee Stalls
- Food & Refreshments
- Raffle Prizes



## COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD



**Njernda**  
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**COMMUNITY NOTICE**

NJERNDAMEMBERS AND COMMUNITY ARE INVITED TO JOIN US FOR A PUBLIC MEETING

WEDNESDAY 10 APRIL 2024  
NJERNDAYOUTH SERVICES HUB  
34 ANNESLEY STREET, ECHUCA  
4.30PM – 6.00PM

Welcome our new Chief Executive Officer John Mitchell and be involved in discussion of all things Njernda and plans for the remainder of 2024.

[www.njernda.com.au](http://www.njernda.com.au)

**NJERNDAHOMEWORK CLASSES**

WELCOME BACK!!  
2024

3:30PM WEDNESDAY  
AFTER SCHOOL

VENUE: YOUTH HUB, ANNESLEY STREET, ECHUCA

- Tutoring Provided.
- Bring Homework.
- Afternoon snack provided.
- Transport provided.

Contact: Nicole Cooper.  
Koori Kids Engagement Worker.  
Ph: 0499 820 320



**Winyanboga**  
"Group For Women"

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

This is a call out to all our beautiful, strong Women in the Community. We are seeking Women who can share any of their talents to others. No matter what it is, we would like to provide an opportunity for you to showcase what you can do, in a safe and welcoming environment.

**Some examples of what were looking for:**

- Story Tellers
- Cooking Tips
- Seamstresses
- Crafting/Carving
- Weaving Skills
- Art of every form

Any skill that you have, we would love for you to share it!

Contact: Louise at Family Services - (03) 5481 0620





**A big congratulations to Jessica Smith on obtaining your Graduate Certificate in Client Assessment and Case Management.**

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the family violence sector and the work you do in the community.

## OUR PHONE NUMBERS ARE CHANGING...\*

MEDICAL: **5481 0600**

CORPORATE: **5481 0610**

FAMILY SERVICES: **5481 0620**

YOUTH/WELLBEING: **5481 0630**

BERRIMBA: **5481 0640**

YAKAPNA: **5481 0650**

NYINI GYM: **5481 0669**

**TO MAKE  
IT EASIER  
FOR YOU  
TO GET IN  
TOUCH!**



\*From September 4

## WORK WITH US

A career at Njernda can take you anywhere!  
And we love to support our Mob to step up into real jobs that make a huge difference.

**Check our website and follow our social media channels to keep up with what's available.**

We encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, but unless stated, our jobs are available to all qualified applicants. If you're interested in any of our listed jobs, or want to know more about what it's like to work at Njernda, have a yarn with our HR Team. Get all the details of all our jobs and apply on our website, [njernda.com.au](http://njernda.com.au)



Passionate about early childhood development?

## APPLY NOW

### Aboriginal Best Start Facilitator

Are you someone who can engage and network effectively with Aboriginal and mainstream services?

We are looking for a candidate who facilitates and builds effective working relationships between a range of senior cross government and community sector partners to secure the delivery of identified work priorities.



- Salary packaging available
- Part time role
- Innovative, growing organisation

Applications close TUESDAY 2 APRIL 2024

More info:

W: [njernda.com.au](http://njernda.com.au)  
E: [jobs@njernda.com.au](mailto:jobs@njernda.com.au)  
P: (03)5480 6252

**Njernda**  
Aboriginal Corporation

## CONTACT US:

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