



NJERNDABORIGINAL CORPORATION | SEPTEMBER 2024 EDITION

# NJERNDANEWS



## Holidays fun ahead

Our Yarka Yakapna Corroboree is set to be the highlight of our school holidays program, giving our kids a great day out!  
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## GILBERT FINDS RENEWED PURPOSE

**Gilbert Wanganeen is a long-term supporter of the First Nations community in northern Victoria and southern New South Wales, having spent many years helping local people navigate the ups and downs of life.**

But after the death of his wife, it was Gilbert who needed support to return to the workforce.

"I'm glad I came to CVGT Employment. There's a lot of job agencies out there, but CVGT seemed to be the one for me at my time," he says.

Gilbert moved to Echuca in the 1980s, raising a family of four with his wife and serving for 13 years as a social and emotional wellbeing worker at the Njernda Aboriginal Corporation. His next role was to act as a carer for his wife – a former Indigenous Liaison Officer at the local hospital, Echuca Regional Health – when her health deteriorated.



"It wasn't easy to let go of my job, but what was important to me at that moment was my wife," he says. Her passing left him with the challenge of starting again, with bills still to pay and a household to run. After being referred by Centrelink, Gilbert connected with the CVGT Employment team in Echuca.

"It was a comfortable place to walk into," he says. "They were supportive... They knew I was in that space where I knew what I had to do, but the timing wasn't right at that time. The empathy was great."

The CVGT Employment Echuca team fully understood Gilbert's situation, offering him support to meet his job search requirements without rushing his return to the workforce

"Recognising Gilbert's status as a respected figure in the Indigenous community, we empowered him to set the pace for finding the right position, understanding that the grieving process can be unpredictable," CVGT Employment Business Development Consultant Rhiannon says.

"Throughout this period, I engaged in numerous conversations with Gilbert, often focusing on his mental health and emotional wellbeing, alongside his job search.

"We emphasised our commitment to working alongside him at a pace that suited his needs, a gesture that he deeply appreciated." Eventually, the right time and, importantly, the right job, presented itself. That role was the position at ERH formerly held by his wife, the vacancy brought to his attention by a family member. With the support of CVGT, contact was made with the hospital, a resume provided and an interview organised. "Following a formal interview, he was offered the position," Rhiannon says.

"Gilbert expressed immense gratitude for the support he received during the application process." For Gilbert, the result was fitting given his belief the right time to reenter the workforce would come if he stayed connected and engaged with the right people. To do so in his wife's former role, supporting First Nations patients and visitors to the hospital, was serendipitous.

"She must have left the footprints there for one day when I was able to wait for that job that turned up, and it was that exact role that she played within the hospital," Gilbert says.

If you would like to learn more about CVGT's Indigenous Employment Support and how it can support you to find meaningful work, call 132 848 or visit [cvgt.com.au/indigenous-employment-support](http://cvgt.com.au/indigenous-employment-support)

## CALLING ALL ARTISTS AS NEW SERVICE BEGINS

**We'd like to introduce Renee Walsh, a proud Wemba Wemba and Ngadon-jii woman, born and raised in Echuca.**

She has started a new role within our Family Services unit as 'Aboriginal Unborn Boori Gana worker'. She will be working and supporting our vulnerable women throughout their pregnancy journey to engage in antenatal and postnatal care, identifying and managing risks, education around pregnancy, and facilitating relationships between our women and mainstream services to ensure First Nations women are culturally safe while attending the local hospital or any other maternity services.

"I am looking forward to working with my clients to give their babies the best start in life and will do this through culture, community, connecting to many services and advocating," she says. "I worked in a similar role at the medical centre from 2018-2022 and excited to be back in the maternity and family space.

"I would love to see this program become successful for our families and community and would love input from community and staff. If anyone is interested in joining a working party for this program, please send me an email and I can start the process. "I am also looking for a local artist who could design some beautiful artwork that will represent connection between mum/dad/baby and connection to their land. "This artwork will need to be culturally safe and represent best outcomes and healthy start to life for our babies. This will be the brand for the program which will be utilised on paperwork and our program correspondence."

A prize of \$2000 is being offered for the winning entry. Submissions close on November 1.

If you have any questions about the competition, or anything to do with Renee's work, you can contact her at [reneew@njernda.com.au](mailto:reneew@njernda.com.au) or on 0419 442 631.



**CALLING ALL ARTISTS!**

**HELP SHAPE OUR NEW PROGRAM FOR PARENTS AND BABIES!**

**YOUR ARTWORK SHOULD TELL A STORY ABOUT BABIES, FAMILIES AND CONNECTION TO COUNTRY.**

**PRIZE MONEY - \$2000.**  
**CLOSING DATE - FRIDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2024.**

**ENTRIES AND QUESTIONS TO:**  
**RENEE WALSH**  
ABORIGINAL UNBORN BOORI GANA WORKER  
0419 442 631 OR [RENEEW@NJERNDACOM.AU](mailto:RENEEW@NJERNDACOM.AU)



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## GROWING IN CULTURE, CONFIDENCE, RESILIENCE

**The original Njernda netball program started in 2021 when I started picking up community kids in my own time, with a borrowed Njernda vehicle.**

The original program had six kids. The need was there after COVID and isolation to engage our kids in community sports on Country. After COVID there was so much isolation, our kids were on devices and didn't have the opportunity to grow and learn new skills in sport and community. This year the group has grown again to 19 registrations, with 15 girls completing the program.

The program is based around culture, family, and connection. I'm so proud of the kids involved as their spirits are all different to each other, and they all have different challenges and barriers in attending a community sport every Saturday for approximately 20 weeks.

I've watched this group of kids grow, support each other, and help build each other through their fears, worries and lift each other up! This sport allows the kids to feel great pride, in their indigenous culture, and make new connections with other communities as well. The Echuca District Netball Association and the EDNA community have been fantastic making sure our kids feel safe, included, and enjoy themselves.



**Junior stars:** Shaylee, best and fairest runner-up; Shandy, coach's award; and Kunami, best and fairest.

Award  
winners



**Encouragement Award - Harper Handy**  
**Most Consistent - Markayla Walsh**  
**Coach's Award - Shandy Firebrace-Kerr**

**Best & Fairest - Kunami Morgan**  
**B&F R/Up - Shaylee Firebrace-Kerr**

**Net Set Go Award:**  
**Killara Atkinson**  
**Harper Handy**  
**Judith Taimani**

Our girls are a well-known presence at EDNA every Saturday pulling up on our Yinya Mulana bus, ready to take on the cold, rain and occasionally sunny weather. Shaylee Firebrace-Kerr and Shandy Firebrace-Kerr have been part of the Njernda program from the start and have said "they love seeing their cousins every weekend, and love playing sport on a weekend". Another talented netballer, Kunami Morgan, said her biggest challenge was "handling her emotions, like trying not to get angry at people". These are only a couple of what I heard from kids, parents, grandparents and family each week. The older players taking on a leadership role this season, supporting our younger players to get off the bus safely, take them to the court when needed has been amazing to watch. Well, done girls, I'm so proud of you all!

Thank you to all families involved, who get their kids ready and waiting when Auntie Nicole toots that horn Saturday mornings.

We look forward to making the program bigger and better next season in 2025!

**Nicole Cooper**  
Koorie Kids Engagement Officer



## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TEAM!





Health  
Update

## OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

**Breast Cancer Awareness Month (BCAM)** takes place every October and its aim is to shine a light on the devastating impact breast cancer has on thousands of Australians each day.

Over 20,000 Australians will be diagnosed with the disease this year alone. That equates to 57 Australians every day. And over 3200 Australians will lose their lives to breast cancer this year. That's someone's mother, sister, friend or family member whose life has been tragically cut short because of the disease.

Although the five-year survival rate has increased from 76% to 92% (and rising) since 1994 thanks to research, there is still progress to be made to stop deaths from breast cancer. By targeting the remaining 8% who don't live past this survival rate, NBCF's goal is to reach Zero Deaths from breast cancer.



**REMINDER TO BE  
BREAST AWARE**

**CHILDHOOD  
IMMUNISATION**

One more way you keep your little ones safe

Routine childhood immunisation helps protect our kids from serious diseases like measles and whooping cough. It's normal to have questions. Have a yarn to your doctor or health worker about **FREE** routine childhood immunisations today.

[health.gov.au/childhoodimmunisation](https://health.gov.au/childhoodimmunisation)

**National Immunisation Program**  
An Australian, State and Territory Government Initiative



### 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!



## COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD



### NJERNDAB 50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA BALL

*Tickets ON SALE NOW*



**Njernda Members and Aboriginal Community - \$30**

**Elders - FREE**

**Non community member - \$50**  
Sale starts 12/10

**Corporate and organisations - \$100**  
Sale starts 12/10

Contact - Candace Williams  
CandaceW@njernda.com.au  
0418852683



**How do I purchase tickets:**  
Please follow the link below for access to tickets. Or use the QR code

**Tickets -** <https://events.humanitix.com/njernda-50th-anniversary-gala-ball>

**QR Code:**



**I am an Elder and cant go online. How do I get my ticket?**  
You can pick up your ticket in person from Njernda Corporate Office 51-55 Heygarth St, Echuca. If you can not come into the office please call Candace Williams on 0418 852 683 to arrange your ticket to be delivered to you.

**What if I can not go online?**  
You can come into the corporate office for assistance.  
51-55 Heygarth St, Echuca

**What if tickets sell out?**  
There will be two ticket sale release dates. First release from the **18th September** is to our Echuca Aboriginal community, the second release will be available to the general public on the **12th October**. Once tickets sell out there will be no more tickets on sale. All tickets must be purchased by the **12th November**.

**How many tickets can I purchase?**  
5 per person

**Can I pay my ticket off?**  
Yes you can. There will be an Afterpay and Zip Pay option.

## MOVIE DAY

**FRIDAY 4TH OCTOBER**  
ECHUCA PARAMOUNT

Please Note:

- Movie session times will be posted closer to the date
- Movie Tickets will be handed out by Njernda Youth Team at Youth Hub from 9.00am - 10.00am




**Children 12 & Under Must Be Accompanied By A Parent/Guardian.**

**Contact Information**

Khayla - 0447 873 207      Earl - 0448 707 379  
Vanessa - 0460 034 369      Stewie - 0439 051 494

HOSTED BY  
**Njernda**  
Aboriginal Corporation

## Yarka Yakapna Corroboree

*Transportation available*



*Transport is available*

There will be transport available for those who want to be taken out to the Baroona property.  
There will also be returning transport available from Baroona back to the Family Services building at the end of the day.

**WHERE**  
Pickups will be from the Family Services building  
Drop off will be a return to back to Family Services

**103-107 Hare Street, Echuca**

**For further information regarding transportation, contact:**  
Family Services - 5481 0620

**WHEN**  
*Thursday, 3rd of October 2024*

*Leaving from Family Services*  
**1st Trip departure time:**  
9:30 am

**2nd Trip departure time:**  
10:00 am

*Leaving from Baroona*  
**1st Trip departure time:**  
2:30 pm

**2nd Trip departure time:**  
3:00 pm

*This is an Alcohol & Drug free event*

SCAN ME!





## NJERNDATEAM SKILLS UP FOR SAFETY

### Did you know First Aid training is part of the annual training for Njernda staff?

Last month staff worked with the fabulous John Carey from 000Training. It's learning, but it's fun. And while the certification lasts three years, the CPR component needs to be done every year. This training gives staff the skills to help others if they need to - at work, at home, or even out socialising. What a great skill to have that could potentially save the life of a family member, colleague or mate.



## WORK WITH US!

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 HR Team.

Get all the details of all our jobs and apply on our website, [njernda.com.au](http://njernda.com.au)

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.**



Want to support your community?

### Orange Door Aboriginal Hub Practitioner

We are recruiting for a skilled practitioner to provide culturally safe and responsive support to Aboriginal children, women, and men.

- Ongoing, full time position
- Supportive culture
- Innovative, growing organisation

Applicants must identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Person.

See [njernda.com.au](http://njernda.com.au) to learn more!

**More info:**

W: [njernda.com.au](http://njernda.com.au)  
E: [jobs@njernda.com.au](mailto:jobs@njernda.com.au)  
P: (03) 5481 0610

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Aboriginal Corporation

## CONTACT US:

Njernda Aboriginal Corporation  
51 - 55 Heygarth Street Echuca (Corporate Office)  
Phone: (03) 5481 0610  
[www.njernda.com.au](http://www.njernda.com.au)

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