



NAFEA

National Association of Field
Experience Administrators inc

NAFEA NEWS



Upcoming Events

2018 NAFEA Conference
28 – 30 November 2018
Vibe Savoy Hotel, Melbourne

News from our State Chapters

Victorian/Tasmanian Chapter - The Victorian Chapter met on 21 August 2018, with 25 attendees from 7 Universities. It was great to see some new members attend from Swinburne Uni. After an executive report, we spent the bulk of the time listening to individual institutional reports. The reports were very engaging and lead to a lot of discussion. Apart from identifying areas of common interest, these reports also alert members to issues that may emerge in their own university or provide solutions to issues with which we are currently managing. Our final meeting for the year will be held at the conference, when we break into state chapters.

Queensland Chapter - The QLD Chapter meeting was held on the 11 October. There was representation from across the State and we discussed a number of issues that were occurring at each institution. It was agreed that organisational change was a common theme across many universities. A number of members expressed being affected by budget cuts or freezes, restricting access to professional development opportunities. Other topics discussed included: mandatory documentation as a course requirement and applying sanctions to students for non-compliance; resilience and wellbeing in students; use of placement systems; online assessment. The Chapter suggested break-out sessions at the conference on systems (e.g. InPlace tips and tricks), Risk Profiling, Student Wellbeing and Mental Health/Resilience.

South Australia / Northern Territory Chapter - The inaugural meeting of the SA/NT Chapter was held on 28 September. A small group from University of South Australia and Tabor College met via videoconference. Sandra Walsh from UniSA will be the Chair of the Chapter. Apart from a few introductions, the discussions related to regional and rural placements, particularly the lack of support for rural students to undertake metropolitan placements and the lack of uptake by metropolitan students to undertake a rural placement. The discussion also focused on models of placement, such as split placements where students undertake placements across multiple sites or in block periods separated by periods of study. The Chapter also discussed potential topics for the 2018 NAFEA Conference break-out sessions. The Chapter will meet again at the conference.

A message from the President



The countdown to the conference has now begun. We are looking forward to seeing many of you in Melbourne and being a part of an exciting program that will explore current and future challenges associated with WIL 2020 and Beyond! It's not too late to register. More information is available [here](#).

We are proud to announce that InPlace will be our Gold Sponsor, joining our Silver Sponsor, Bank First. We are also proud to announce a great line-up of speakers, including keynote speaker Sam Eddy, an Executive Coach and Wellbeing Trainer, who helps organisations and individuals manage stress and anxiety, tap into creativity and make positive changes in culture, career, business, well-being and work/life balance. The program will also include the outcomes from the NAFEA Wellness and Wellbeing Project as well as presentations from a wide range of speakers on a wide range of topics related to WIL.

At the conference, we will announce the winner of the NAFEA Outstanding Award. Nominations close 9 November. Let's publicly recognise and celebrate the achievements of our colleagues. So, if you know someone who has made a significant and outstanding contribution to enhancing and improving practices, nominate them NOW!

The NAFEA Strategic Programs Sub-committee have been kept busy recently with the second round of scholarships for 2018. Nineteen scholarships, valued up to \$1500, will be offered to students undertaking a rural placement in Australia. Only students from education providers that are institutional members of NAFEA are able to apply for these scholarships, so if your University is not a member, please encourage them to do so.

We look forward to seeing you on the dancefloor at the conference dinner ... or should I say in front of the live music at the welcome drinks!

Spotlight on NAFEA Student Scholarship Recipient, Benjamin Howes

We asked our recent successful NAFEA Student Scholarship Recipient, Ben Howes (University of Melbourne), to reflect on his rural placement experience and the NAFEA Student Scholarship Program.

I've recently returned from a clinical teaching placement in a remote indigenous community in Yirrkala, Northern Territory. I am extremely grateful to have received a NAFEA Scholarship that provided financial assistance, allowing me to engage in an incredible learning experience without any cost-related anxiety! I wish to extend my sincere thanks to the NAFEA team and hope my experiences encourage prospective applicants.

My teaching placement involved teaching a multi-age class of Year 7-12 students for several weeks at Yirrkala School, Yirrkala. I was mentored and supported by local indigenous (Yolgnu) staff and visiting teaching staff, and was responsible for designing, implementing and evaluating learning experiences for my students within a bilingual context. Partnering with local teachers, I helped aid in the development and delivery of in-school lesson and diverse extra-curricular activities; including creative arts, language, sports and environmental stewardship programs. In addition, we were privileged to visit several thriving Homelands communities in extremely remote areas, learning innovative teaching practices directly from indigenous families and their communities.

Constant adventures each weekend saw us learning to care for country with elders, teachers and their families - and learning how country cares for us! Whether we were exploring coastal rainforest, combing beaches and deltas for beautiful shells, or fishing for delicious seafood, we were constantly immersed in community, and quickly felt part of the extended Yirrkala family. A special highlight included attending the "Galtha," a week-long learning festival designed and delivered by Yirrkala School each year. Galtha is a dynamic learning-on-country experience that celebrates many aspects of indigenous culture and heritage, from creative arts and dance, kinship relationships and political leadership. All lessons are richly informed by intergenerational dialogue and embedded within the context of community participation, as Yirrkala School enables and empowers students of all ages.

I was hugely grateful for the opportunity to observe Yolgnu educators in action, and learn both about and from past, present and emerging indigenous leaders respectively. The learning experience taught me much about bilingual education and indigenous living culture and heritage, refining my TESOL skills and inspiring me to work long-term in a similar indigenous setting in future years. My professional skills developed quickly, as I learnt to work amongst complex, intercultural staff teams, and developed a better understanding of the nuances, challenges and unique opportunities that are presented to graduate teachers seeking to work in rural and remote settings.

The challenges and opportunities afforded to students undertaking placements in rural areas are many and varied. As a graduate teacher, I was humbled by the time invested in me by mentors and teaching staff, the degree to which I was able to immerse myself in the design of bilingual learning experiences, and the integration of school and community – a gap I find challenging to bridge in Melbourne. In what other context can I teach students in class, before caring for country, training for our next AFL game, beachcombing, camping and sharing picnics altogether, within the same week? Such experiences come with their own highly contextual challenges, but I left my teaching placement keen to return as soon as possible to teach remotely. Having networked with a variety of inspiring graduate teachers now teaching in Yirrkala, I am confident that such enthusiasm and commitment can be sustained across many years.

I cannot recommend this experience enough to prospective applicants – take a leap of faith and enjoy experiencing complex challenges and holistic professional growth! I have developed richly as a graduate teacher, young community leader and Australian citizen, and I am incredibly grateful for the NAFEA Team that made it financially possible: this experience has become a catalyst for my future engagement in indigenous and bilingual education and will continue shaping me as an educator for years to come!

