



## **ACEA Quarterly Newsletter**

### **2019 ACEA Conference**

Theme: Unlock Your Potential

Date: Sunday 13/10/2019 - Wednesday 16/10/2019

Where: RACV City Club in Melbourne, Australia

- Sunday evening 13/10 - Welcome Reception at Old Melbourne Gaol
- Monday 14/10 - Day 1 and Gala Dinner at RACV City Club in Melbourne
- Tuesday 15/10 - Day 2 at RACV City Club in Melbourne
- Wednesday 16/10 - Prison visit (AM only) - various locations

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### **President's Report**

The last year was one of ACEA's most productive in relation to addressing some of the more critical issues facing both correctional education and ACEA as an association. The issues include the need for ACEA to trial new ways of promoting correctional education both within the criminal justice system and externally, with governments and the wider community. The increase in promotion was also required within ACEA, as there was a need to generate a more sustainable and active membership.

There are other issues ACEA and our fellow correctional education associations face, and we have individually experienced varied degrees of success in our efforts to address those, they include; actively supporting local correctional education research that serves to assist us to promote and justify prison-based education programs; expansion of external partnerships and networks of support and communication; the trialling of different ways to provide professional development to our members as part of their membership. Here we are developing a correctional education curriculum, evaluation process, and teaching and learning resources for the educationally-at-risk which can potentially be shared across jurisdictions and provide us with a standardised approach to assessing our work. Additionally, with the assistance of universities and the telecommunication industry, we are increasing access to digital technology for prisoners.

## Promoting Correctional Education: Awards and Recognition

- In 2018 ACEA initiated recognition for individual State/Territory Teacher of the Year. Eligible educators were nominated by their ACEA state/territory representative and jurisdiction. Teachers from Victoria and Western Australia were the first to receive these awards for their jurisdictions. ACEA achieved two Australian correctional education 'firsts' in 2019, one accorded national recognition, and the other international. Both helped promote ACEA and correctional education.

- An Australian Corrections Medal was presented to the Campus Manager from West Kimberley Regional Prison for outstanding correctional service for developing and facilitating education initiatives for Aboriginal prisoners. The Medal recognised two initiatives; one involved Community Radio, and the other Driver Education. Each initiative helped address an area of concern for regional Aboriginal prisoners returning to their communities. The Community Radio initiative provided the technical training for the prisoners to earn their qualifications and acquire workplace experience to be able to secure post release employment with Aboriginal Community Radio stations.

The Driver Education component allowed Aboriginal prisoners to participate in driving lessons, receive their learner's permit and to pay off fines while incarcerated. The Driver Program resulted in 63 Aboriginal prisoners securing their driver's permits. The Program worked in cooperation with the WA Department of Transport, and Aboriginal NGO's and Corporations to ensure appropriate training and support were in place along with the issuing of licenses as the participants were transitioning from prison to the community.

- The second initiative involved the granting of a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship to matriculate to a university in the USA. The scholarship was awarded to an Education, Employment and Transitional Services (EETS) educator at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison for their work in the use of the creative arts and music for prisoner rehabilitation. The initiative resulted in the participants artworks being awarded the Best Overall Award at the Kalgoorlie-Boulder annual Art Prize.

The video component of the work was titled Wama Yukiri Wiya, 'Wasted Dreams', a 20-minute animated film that include 17 Aboriginal and 4 non-Aboriginal prisoners.

The film talks about the damage drugs and alcohol do in the community. It encourages young people to think about drugs and alcohol in a different way.

It is the fourth film in a series of Stop motion animation videos which highlight problematic social issues that exist in local Aboriginal communities. Others:

1. 'Deadly Driving' is used in packages sent out to all high schools in WA as part of the yr.12 driver-training curriculum
2. 'Strong Families' deals with family and domestic violence; and
3. 'Pregnant Families' deals with health and drinking while pregnant

Additionally, a CD of music was produced, entitled 'Wangaka Kujarra-Two Languages'. It involved the efforts of 12 prisoners from the West Australian Western Desert. The CD was mastered and mixed by Jim Moginie from Midnight Oil.

Both honourees are from WA, work for EETS, and are ACEA members. Both also received internal DOJ recognition, and so helped promote correctional education both internally and externally.

There were also two other examples of increasing promotion for correctional education that while not new initiatives, will have important implications for the future:

- The 'A Future Beyond the Wall' research project by a consortium of well-respected researchers from UNSW, Deakin, ECU, Flinders and James Cook universities. A three-year study with ACEA as a partner and financial contributor, the publication is vital to our strategic long-term goal of providing Australian and regional data and information to government and academics.
- Local and regional research helps us justify and increase support for our educational services to prisoners with state and federal governments, while also providing the material for correctional education professional development for our educators and administrators.
- In 2018 I was invited to deliver a keynote address at the Correctional Education Association (USA based) international conference in San Antonio, Texas; there were over 800 delegates and sponsors in attendance. This invitation continues the long association between ACEA and CEA (going back almost 40 year), as we work to share ideas on how to address common concerns and introduce innovations to help us improve our provision of educational services. The current President of CEA, Susan Lockwood-Roberts, is a friend of ACEA. I invited Susan to present at the ACEA conference in Hobart in 2015 on the Rand Corporation's meta-analysis of prison education, and we and other executive members of CEA remain in contact, so our working partnership with the CEA remains strong going into the future.

## **Growing and maintaining ACEA Memberships**

ACEA frequently receives queries about memberships and what an ACEA member can receive. In an effort to respond to this query and to others related to ACEA issues such as the need for better promotion; the provision of professional development for members and the distribution of up to date correctional information, we introduced ACEA Forums in the 'off years' to the biennial conferences. The Forums invited correctional services experts and researchers to discuss shared topical issues. These speakers had not previously presented in Australia but had authored or were producing work that was considered important to correctional education.

The Forums have proven important in helping us address some of our issues:

- They assist ACEA to promote correctional education, as there are a good number of academics, researchers, criminal justice representatives and post release service providers who attend the Forums when they are scheduled
- The Forums provide ACEA with an opportunity to attract and maintain ACEA members. Prior to their introduction, there was an almost complete void in official ACEA activities before and after the conferences, which are held only every two years.
- The selected Forum guest speakers have proven to be excellent choices, as their work has been recognised throughout the correctional field:
- Jan-Erik Sandie, Deputy Director-General for the Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Service; Beth Drake, Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) and Dr. John Clint Carpenter, Superintendent of the Windham School District in Texas, all made Australian presentations at an ACEA Forum and are currently all individually referenced in articles or reports in 2019:
- "How Norway Is Teaching America To Make Its Prisons More Humane" was published in August 2019 and NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOSCAR) Report (June 2019) and Andrew Leigh's (Shadow Minister for Treasury) Report, "Second Convict Age' (August 2019), both mention the Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) research. The Windham School District which is part of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice is prominently mentioned in both the "Second Convict Age' Report and in Andrew

Bushnell's (Institute of Public Affairs), 'Skewed Priorities: Comparing the growth of prison spending with police' (June 2019)

- The Forums have provided the Executive Committee with an opportunity to meet with specialists from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Unique Student Identifier (USI), Report on Government Services (RoGS), Adult Centre for Education Research (ACER) and Australian Council for Adult Literacy (ACAL). We have also met representatives from USouthern Queensland (USQ), Deakin, Curtin, Edith Cowan and UMelbourne VET and they have provided ACEA with up to date information on the status of education in their sector.

## **Digital technology**

- South Australia Department for Correctional Services (DCS) started its DCS 10by20 initiative, which is an innovative cloud- based computing network and educational software program to help prisoners improve their prospects of successful reintegration to their community. It also worked closely with DCS to design and develop a tailored solution for the unique safety and security needs of a prison environment. The program took into consideration the potential future needs of the DCS in their planning.

[https://www.itnews.com.au/news/sa-corrective-services-head-to-the-cloud-to-reduce-recidivism-524409?utm\\_source=desktop&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=share](https://www.itnews.com.au/news/sa-corrective-services-head-to-the-cloud-to-reduce-recidivism-524409?utm_source=desktop&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=share)

- University of Southern Queensland (USQ). There were approximately 606 prisoners enrolled through USQ nationally in the 2018 academic year. They provided 'bridging' courses to 471 students through their Tertiary Preparation Program (TPP) in 7 of the 8 jurisdictions

Their 'bigger picture' achievements benefited correctional education across Australia:

The Making the Connection Project was an initiative which aimed to address one of the major areas of concern in Australia's correctional education programs, the lack of acceptable access to digital technology by prisoners. The distribution to at first, a few jurisdictions, of specially designed servers uploaded with TPP course materials, and then a later allocation of DELL notebooks, to prisoner students across a wider number of jurisdictions, with no reports of prisoner misuse or security concerns, helped increase access to digital technology for correctional education administrators. Access was improved whether jurisdictions used the USQ Project digital materials or not, due to the awareness departmental administrators gained about the USQ materials by other jurisdictions at their nationally scheduled correctional meetings. As IT access became more

of a topic for discussion, the seeking of support for 'stalled' prisoner IT proposals, or the discussing of totally new initiatives became more viable.

At a time when governments are increasing prisoner numbers but not the educational resources and infrastructure to appropriately service that increase in population, it is refreshing to see USQ consult with ACEA about educational priorities for prisoners, and then, after their federal funding for the Project had lapsed, independently decide to meet their social responsibilities by ensuring that the TPP program could continue for incarcerated students.

## **Partnerships**

### **Nationally:**

It is strategically important for ACEA to form closer partnerships with Adult Basic Education (ABE) organisations in Australia, as the ABE skills prisoners require to navigate through modern life are becoming increasingly complex. As ACAL, ALW and ACER function nationally with branches in each State and Territory, it is strategically important for ACEA to try and work more closely with them and to consider undertaking a more standardised approach to issues impacting teaching and learning in ABE. The master classes at the 2019 conference are a great start to a potential collaborative future.

- ACEA has developed strategic working partnerships with the tertiary sector by working with recognised researchers and academics from some well-respected universities. Our efforts to increase local research studies that can help justify our programs and highlight their importance to governments is vital to our efforts to secure appropriate funding and resources.
- The tertiary sector has a large and influential network of contacts that can, and does, assist ACEA to promote correctional education within the criminal justice and academic systems.

### **Internationally**

- ACEA has made a concerted effort to forge positive working relationships with the two largest correctional education associations- European Prison Education Association (EPEA) and the USA-based CEA. Associations and their members face many of the same challenges internally (within correctional services departments) and economically, socially and politically. We can only benefit from cooperative efforts of pursuing shared aims and objectives (increased IT access, active and open administrative support for our programs from departmental executives and prison managers; recognition of the importance and value of contextual knowledge which correctional educators possess and can provide, the need for a reduced focus on short term cost savings and stronger support for long term vision.

## **Juvenile Justice**

Stavroola Anderson, JJ representative on the ACEA Executive Committee, made a number of visits to different jurisdictions across Australia to discuss the current state of education, training and support for the juvenile justice population across the nation, Stav's visits and communication with JJ staff is important for this group of educators who generally lack a clear representative body to look after their concerns.

ACEA, through Stavroola's efforts, is trying to help provide some of this assistance. One 'win' for JJ this year, is that the Northern Territory is sending a representative to the ACEA conference for the first time in many years.

## **Australian Incarceration Rates**

ACEA Conference Keynote Speaker, Dr. John Clint Carpenter, will discuss how Texas is successfully reducing incarceration and recidivism and the important role education, training and employment support plays in achieving those successful results.

Of note to all correctional educators, should be that Texas has approximately 68,000 prisoners incarcerated (a sharp decrease from previous years) and the recidivism rate (24.4%) is the lowest in the USA. These two factors have combined to forge bipartisan political support for prison education.

In Australia, representatives from both major parties have recently released reports on reducing incarceration and saving public funding. Andrew Bushnell, Institute of Public Affairs, published 'Skewed Priorities: Comparing the growth of prison spending with police' (June 2019), and Andrew Leigh, Labor Shadow Minister for Treasury, released the 'Second Convict Age' (August 2019). Both reports mention the Texas model and how it might help address our growth in incarceration rates.

As with Beth Drake from the Washington State Institute of Public Policy (2015), and Jan-Erik Sandie, the Deputy Director-General for the Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Services (2017), Dr. John Clint Carpenter will make his first presentation in Australia at an ACEA event. Our connections with international prison education associations and overseas based correctional researchers demonstrate that ACEA is well informed, with a capacity to source important up to date information.

## **The Future of Correctional Education**

With incarceration rates high and intergenerational crime a fact of life for a growing number of disadvantaged people struggling to make their way, correctional administrators have to review their priorities and the services they are providing.

Generally, prisoners were raised in homes where criminal behaviour, drug abuse and violence were not unusual and education and regular class attendance were not overly valued. A significant number therefore are assessed as educationally-at-risk. The lack of education combined with poor mental and physical health due to substance abuse problems restricts them to mostly menial types of labour. These poor paying jobs or the dole they receive in lieu of wages for those jobs, when they cannot secure one, means they are consistently in debt with little or no security.

These educationally-at-risk prisoners are likely to be repeat offenders with high economic, social and educational needs who are usually serving shorter sentences while in prison. These short terms restrict what can successfully be provided to this cohort group by correctional educators if we use the familiar methods and resources.

Similar to an increasing number of employers, correctional education providers must start developing specific skill sets which meet the needs of their students, family and community rather than trying to use predesigned certificates developed by the VET system for the general population.

Due to the lack of increase in education staff, resources and infrastructure to meet the growth in prisoner numbers and our own need to provide PD for correctional educators, ACEA must consider working towards adopting a correctional education curriculum that is developed for the educationally-at-risk and can be shared across jurisdictions.

WA has commenced developing the units, skill sets and a professional development course in correctional education for staff and these may help provide a foundation for the future.

Being a nationally registered training organisation allows correctional educators to develop and innovate their educational services to meet the changing prisoner populations in our prisons.

The session on Future professional correctional educators on Tuesday October 15th of the Conference will discuss this 'sharing model' and demonstrate units and skill set in one area.

Using the same curriculum across all jurisdictions will allow ACEA to have greater control and clarity when discussing issues related to assessments, enrolments, evaluations of our work and unit and course completions-at a minimum. Government, RoGS and the Productivity Commission all call for greater clarity in correctional education and ACEA can potentially commence providing this.

### **Correctional Education Readings from 2018 Forums**

Beth Drake from Washington State Institute of Public Policy provided the participants in both Perth and Melbourne with a comprehensive review of what programs were being provided and were most effective in helping to rehabilitate prisoners within prisons. From her analysis of the data and her review of the programs, Beth was able to provide us with what we might want to consider when we are assessing what to provide to Australian prisoners.

<https://acea.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Elizabeth-Drake-A-path-towards-criminal-justice-reform.pptx>

In Perth, Margaret Giles from Edith Cowan University delivered a presentation on the ACEA supported three-year Future Beyond the Wall: Improving Post Release Employment Outcomes for people leaving Prison (FBTW) research project. This Project, which involved researchers from universities across Australia, reviewed prison education programs and pre and post release support services provided to exiting and released prisoners.

In Melbourne, Dr. Lesley Hardcastle from Deakin University also provided the participants with a presentation on FBTW but with a comprehensive focus on the qualitative aspects of the programming and services being delivered by the different States and Territories.

<https://acea.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/ACEA-Forum-LHardcastle.pptx>

In addition, Hugh Guthrie from the University of Melbourne, discussed the issue of a lack of contextual knowledge among many of the new policymakers within the Commonwealth education sector, including the VET and higher education area.

[https://melbourne-cshe.unimelb.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/2845777/Final\\_Guthrie-and-Clayton-paper\\_030818.pdf](https://melbourne-cshe.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/2845777/Final_Guthrie-and-Clayton-paper_030818.pdf)

Dave Tout from the Australian Centre for Educational Research (ACER), respectively briefed the ACEA Executive on the current situation in relation to on site practical teaching and learning, contextual knowledge, VET and Adult Basic Education.

<https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/authors/dave-tout>

## **ACEA CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2018-19 FY**

**2018**

**July**

**July 29 and 30<sup>th</sup>:** Invitation to attend and provide a paper at the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples forum in Sydney.

**August 2018:** ACEA filmed an interview with, Dr. Neil Morgan, the WA Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS). The interview will be placed on the ACEA website or soon to be You tube site.

**September 2018:** ACEA Forums, one in Perth on September 7<sup>th</sup> co-hosted with Edith Cowan University, and one in Melbourne on September 11<sup>th</sup> with Deakin University.

Keynote speaker for each Forum was Beth Drake from the Washington State Institute for Public Policy in the USA. Beth presented a cost-benefit analysis on Adult Correctional Programming. While in WA, Beth made prison visits, attended one of the quarterly organized prisoner art exhibitions at the decommissioned Fremantle Prison, met WADOJ executive administrators and participated in a filmed ACEA interview which will be placed on the ACEA website and/or You tube site.

September 11<sup>th</sup> in Melbourne, ACEA convened an Executive Committee meeting to discuss the 2019 ACEA conference; issues related to standardising prisoner ABE assessments nationally; improving working partnerships with external organisations and being advised of the status of education within the Juvenile Justice sector.

September 12 Ray Chavez, President of ACEA, met with Co-Presidents of the Australian Council of Adult Literacy (ACAL) to discuss forging a closer working partnership.

**2019**

**February**

February 11<sup>th</sup> An ACEA Conference Executive meeting (teleconference)

**June**

June 26<sup>th</sup> – Queensland Corrective Services Offender Rehabilitation Management invited Ray Chavez to make a presentation on ACEA and correctional education to QCS education staff in Brisbane. Met with Univ. Southern Queensland on Tertiary Preparation Program, curriculum and digital technology.

## **July (2019-20 FY)**

July 17<sup>th</sup> ACEA Executive Committee Meeting teleconference). Discussed conference; ACEA business, updating policies, constitution and standardising data nationally for RoGS.

## **August**

August 18<sup>th</sup> ACEA received and helped distribute NAIDOC Booklet of Indigenous education and training (Capturing the Voices of our Learners) to National Congress of Australia's First Peoples in Sydney, to ACAL and to correctional education providers.

August 23<sup>rd</sup> ACEA Executive Committee Meeting in Melbourne to discuss progress of conference and ACEA administration.

## **September**

September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Attended 2019 Adult Learners Week launch in Perth. Launch included two presentations on correctional education- one by an ex-prisoner now starting her doctorate and the second by an educator discussing an award winning Community Radio project. Presented ALW President with WA Capturing the Voices of our Learners booklet and organized a visit to Boronia Women's prison.

September 25<sup>th</sup> WA EETS met with USQ, Curtin and ECU to discuss tertiary preparation programs, access to Indigenous Tertiary Assistance Studies (ITAS) and Commonwealth changes to higher education. Discussed a standardized manner of working together.

## **October**

October 9<sup>th</sup> In Perth. An EETS developed, ACEA supported, correctional education professional development training course was delivered to 26 WADOJ prison educators. EETS has developed this one day progressive program, which will be provided to WA regional prison-based education staff the last week in October.

October 13-16 ACEA Conference; AGM; election of new ACEA executive officers and representatives and announcement of 2019 Teacher of the Year.