



**“If there is an opportunity that can change your life, then don’t think twice about it, take it.”**

## Ready set go

**First impressions of Natarsha Bamblett and Lachlan Harlow in their new Melbourne surrounds would never reveal that they have both experienced a major transition earlier this year.**

Spending time with both, it’s easy to see they have enthusiastically adapted to their new environment, conquering uncertainty along the way. Residing in Shepparton all their

lives, they have recently left large family surrounds to follow scholarships that have lead to schooling in Melbourne.

“I was offered a scholarship when competing at the Basketball Nationals last year. Taking it on was a big step, it was like wow,” says Natarsha who made the move from Yr 10 Wanganui Park Secondary College to Yr 11 Maribyrnong College and Sports Academy. “It took me a long time to decide, it was such a big unknown.”

Living with her aunt while travelling by train and bus to school she says, “There are about 1000 kids at the school with 500 in the sports program so it’s pretty competitive. We train 3 mornings with 2 afterschool gym sessions. Then there’s tryouts and games.

“I can really notice a personal improvement since starting here. Everyone is working at a high standard which encourages you to try really hard. The support we get

...continued on page 2



...continued from page 1

from our coach (ex NBL) and the medical program is amazing. Making new friends with similar interests has been great and there's so much to do in Melbourne."

Of the challenges Natarsha says, "I miss not having my family around so I spend time on the phone and return to Shepp. on weekends to see them."

Natarsha notes that making the transition to school in Melbourne has improved her overall approach. "It has shown me the amount of work I need to do and how good structures can help you succeed. I am really happy I took the opportunity. I know now that I would have been disappointed if I didn't. It's a great opportunity to do what I love."

Natarsha and Lachlan, Ganbina participants since Yr 7, have found having a safety net, someone helping with applications and advice has given them comfort and confidence to approach unfamiliar situations.

Commencing boarding at Yr 10 Melbourne Grammar this year, Lachlan (Lockie) says, "I hadn't really considered a general indigenous scholarship until it was suggested. I was one of 3 who were accepted. I'm one of about 100 boarders and it's been great to make new friends with similar interests. Everything is right here on campus but I do miss family quite a bit. I couldn't get home when I was playing cricket but with footy I have time to get back and enjoy home on the weekends."

Proud of his achievements he says, "The higher standard blew me away. It's pushed me to do more, I enjoy the challenge and everyone here works hard towards similar goals."

On leaving school, Lockie hopes to enter accounting while Natarsha sees a future in American basketball. She says, "If there is an opportunity that can change your life, then don't think twice about it, take it." Lockie backs up the sentiment, "Give it a crack, you don't know what could happen."



A look at our participants breaking new ground

## Soaring high

Year 11 student Joel Hudson spends his Friday nights studying with The Australian Air Force Cadets. A student at McGuire College, Joel has always had a keen interest in geography, physics and chemistry, which have complemented his career choice.

"Air Force Cadets are aimed at improving leadership and discipline. It's also a commitment to making yourself a better asset to the community," says Joel. "It does take a bit of getting used to, especially the discipline required."

Hoping it will lead to a career in the military, Joel says, "I think a major challenge will be the move away from Shepparton, but I'm inspired to join. I want to make a difference in the community."

Joel is an active Ganbina participant. "The programs have taught me skills such as structured goal setting, more confidence with public speaking and to just give things a go. Some of my family have done military service and it's been good to hear about Adrian Appo's time in the Airforce. "In the future I hope to be training as a pilot or as part of the elite Australian commandos, although joining and training will be a timely process."

**Joel emphasises that staying in school is important to achieving things later, "Complete Year 12, it will broaden your options."**



## In the news

Prime Minister Julia Gillard recently released the third "Closing the Gap" report. A reflection of the Federal Governments growing understanding of the importance of 'school to work transitions', it recognises "... apprenticeships and traineeships, transitioning students from school to employment or further education.." as a vital part of work readiness.

Employment isn't simply about finding someone a job. It is a far greater achievement to encourage and support youth away from welfare and directly to sustainable employment.

Ganbina's own efforts to close the gap have seen 60 of our youth participants in employment this year. These positions defy stereotypes and run across all industry sectors.

They are non-community based and vary from after-school work through to traineeships and apprenticeships.

**Rebecca Richards became the first indigenous Australian to gain a Rhodes scholarship earlier this year. She will complete her post graduate in philosophy at Oxford.**

Rebecca currently works at the national museum studying and interpreting artefacts from the museum's indigenous collection.

**Congratulations Adrian Appo, our EO who was presented with a Medal of the Order of Australia last week. A worthy recipient for his outstanding contribution to our community.**

## Seeds of change

For those completing high school and entering the workforce, the challenges are many. Ganbina has been proud to be involved in many successful transitions and participants Mariah Andrews and Liam Cross are no exception.

Liam made the decision to complete VCE and pursue a trade after careful consideration of his interests and abilities. "Ganbina supported me throughout school. During this time, I discussed career options and completed a questionnaire with options based on my likes and dislikes."

Intent on becoming an electrician, Liam actively pursued work experience opportunities and believes his part time retail work while at school helped his work ethic. "I think commitment and discipline are key for anyone wanting an apprenticeship. Being responsible and working hard to be a respected team member are the biggest changes moving from school to the workforce.

"My parents were very supportive, helping with applications and Ganbina encouraged me and helped me with clothes and tools for my job. I have recently obtained my drivers license via their Driver Training program.

"I think students should consider their options carefully before leaving school. Finishing school is a great achievement but you need to take the initiative and keep striving for your goals."

Mariah Andrews had carefully considered her career options and followed subjects and part time work suited to becoming a chef. On completing her VCE, Mariah found that there were no positions available. "I hadn't considered being anything apart from a chef, so I was a bit lost," she says.



**“Ganbina gave me confidence to try other options.”**

"Ganbina gave me confidence to try other options. They assisted me to apply for a position within the Department of Justice and I was also able to draw on skills learnt during the interview training I received. Without the support of my grandfather and Ganbina, I would not have succeeded. I applied for the position because I wanted an opportunity, not because I thought I had relevant skills. Now I find my knowledge of the indigenous community and the team building and leadership qualities I gained during Ganbina's Leadership Program are skills I use in my job everyday.

"Dealing with people who are having difficulties in their life can be quite confronting. To help people to better understand their legal obligations and rights is a job to go to that is rewarding and has been the best outcome for me. I hope to have a senior role at the office in the future."

**Ed note: Mariah recently gained a promotion at the Dept of Justice and commenced training last week.**

## A journey of discovery

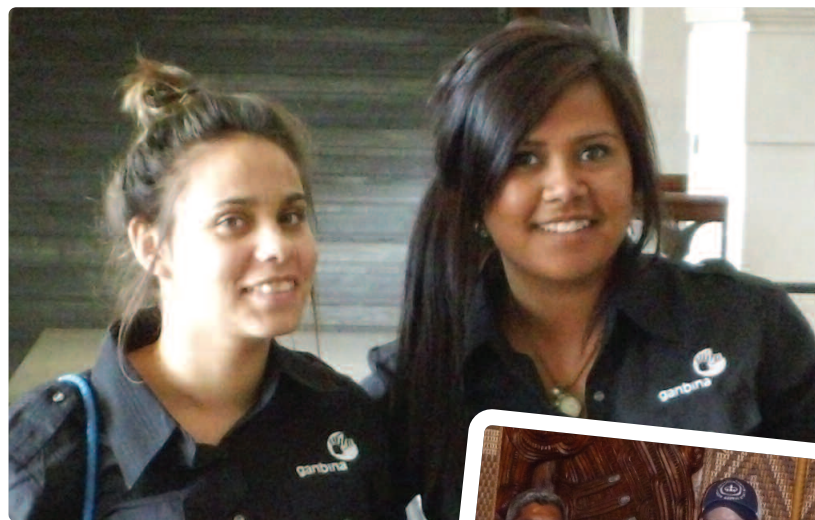
Khiara Harrison and Chanoa Cooper, participants in Ganbina's Youth Leadership program, had been looking forward travelling to New Zealand since commencing the program three years ago. Accompanied by Ganbina's Chris Giblin, they discovered the many faces of New Zealand while gaining a personal insight into a sister culture close to home.

Amidst stunning scenery, the team from Ganbina were welcomed by Maori leaders who generously shared their knowledge and culture. "We were very honoured to be guests at a formal welcome ceremony that included the traditional Hongi (pressing together of noses), which offered a very humbling experience," said Khiara.

They discovered the history and natural diversity of NZ, attending Auckland's Hauraki Gulf Marine Park for a Whale and Dolphin watching cruise followed by trips to the Bay of Islands and Auckland Museum where an entertaining Maori Cultural Performance provided a compact overview of Maori history.

To understand much of the work being done by Maoris to support their indigenous students, the girls spent time at ASB Trust, an independent grant-making organisation supporting the work of not-for-profit groups in Auckland and Northland. "We felt very privileged to meet with Moi Becroft, Project Manager of the Maori and Pacific Education Initiative" says Khiara. "It was interesting to learn about how the program addresses under-achievement of Maori and Pacific children in schools while assisting them to fully engage in NZ society."

The girls joined Maori and Pacific students from the University of Auckland Business School at Piha Beach. The four-day induction camp for students and tutors is run by the school to assist students to achieve



success at university. "We had so much fun meeting everyone and playing games of touch footy, volley ball, tug of war and other team building exercises. It was one the highlights of the trip," said Chanoa.

Travelling to Waitangi, Bay of Islands they visited the birthplace of NZ as a nation. It was here that a treaty between Maori and the British crown was signed in 1840. Khiara said, "Our guide sang a Maori song about her ancestors and those of the Australian Aboriginals coming together as one. It was a very powerful conclusion to an incredible journey for us."

An inspiring opportunity to learn about the Maori culture provided a great insight into a proud nation who take joy in sharing their culture and drawing others into the experience. Both Chanoa and Khiara agreed that they are more determined than ever to succeed in Year 12 studies, intending to gain a better understanding of their own indigenous culture, so that they too, can share their history with everyone they meet in their future endeavours.

### on the radar

**July 4th**  
Year 10 Melbourne & Sydney trip

**July 20th**  
Year 9-12 Careers Expo

**July 31st**  
Training and Education program registrations close

**August**  
Year 7-8 Industry Tour

**September 26th**  
Year 11 Cairns Trip

**November 25th**  
Annual Gala Awards Night