

QUT celebrates Murri-Ailan Way



QUT creative industries student Jack Jarden, QUT business student Alanna Keogh and QUT psychology student Elizabeth Engelbrecht at the Murri-Ailan Way festival.

Poet and activist Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Queensland's first Indigenous magistrate Jacqui Payne and Triple J favourite Thelma Plum were among the Indigenous women celebrated at the 2018 Murri-Ailan Way festival at QUT.

The festival was hosted by QUT's Oodgeroo Unit, which provides support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.

This year, it adopted the NAIDOC theme "Because Of Her, We Can!".

QUT's Oodgeroo Unit is named after Oodgeroo Noonuccal (also known as Kath Walker), who was a descendant of the Noonuccal people of Minjerribah (North Stradbroke Island) and regarded as one of Australia's leading literary figures.

She was the first Indigenous Australian to have a book of poetry published and was a major figure in the 1967 constitutional referendum.

Her great-granddaughter and QUT psychology student, Elizabeth Engelbrecht, visited Murri-Ailan Way to do poetry recitals and dance with Stradbroke Island's Yulu-Burri-Ba dancers.

Oodgeroo Unit Director, Professor Anita Lee Hong said the late Oodgeroo Noonuccal featured heavily throughout the festival.

"Our namesake personifies this year's NAIDOC celebrations and, with our ongoing connection with Oodgeroo's family, it's made it a very special event for our unit and the QUT community," she said.

The festival was also an opportunity to showcase current young writers, including QUT students and graduates who performed original poetry at the Poets' Platform.

They included QUT students Joella Warkill (Bachelor of Creative Industries / Bachelor of Human Services) and Kane Brunjes (Bachelor of Fine Arts – Visual Arts), and Bachelor of Entertainment Industries graduate, Emily Wells.

Ms Wells now works with Digi Youth Arts, which was founded by QUT PhD researcher Alethea Beetson who is the niece of rugby league great, Artie Beetson.

"Murri-Ailan Way was a fantastic opportunity for our young performers and artists," Ms Beetson said. "It showcased a series of events that were as diverse as our cultures and knowledge sharing practices; and in doing so demonstrated the multiplicity of Indigenous cultures to the wider QUT community."

Festival highlights included performances by the Yerongpan and Jaran dance companies, a talk by author Dr Anita Heiss, a lino-cutting workshop with Commonwealth Games medal designer Delvene Cockatoo-Collins and a free concert featuring singer-songwriter Thelma Plum.

Queensland's first Indigenous magistrate, Jacqui Payne, also took part in a panel discussion with fellow QUT law graduates Cassie Lang, Stephanie Parkin and Allison Boland.

People interested in joining more than 800 Indigenous students currently studying at QUT can contact the Oodgeroo Unit for advice on entry pathways. Visit www.qut.edu.au/about/oodgeroo

Get a solid start to your studies

The Oodgeroo Unit at QUT are a team of dedicated professional staff, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students entering, transitioning and succeeding at tertiary studies through to graduation.

Centralised Assessment and Selection Program (CASP) enquiries and applications are now being accepted for 2019 semester 1 admissions.

Contact us today to find out about our assessment process, as well as the various support programs and scholarships that are available.

Assessment centres will be held from late October 2018 through to early February 2019. Discover a 'whole other world'. Contact QUT's Oodgeroo Unit on 1800 645 513 (toll free) or email, casp.oodgeroo@qut.edu.au

