



# 'Brothers' finding their voice at AFTRS

When Leroy Creed-Jones stepped onto the AFTRS campus in Sydney in February this year, he wasn't just starting a new course – he was stepping into a new chapter of his life. After nearly a decade away from work and study, the Pitta Pitta, Kalkadoon, Gungarri and Quandamooka man from Brisbane found himself surrounded by community, opportunity and optimism for the future.

"I'd become pretty much a homebody, and I knew I wasn't going to get anywhere staying in Brisbane," Leroy said. "With a passion for radio I saw this as a big opportunity for me to make something of myself."

Encouraged by his brother Kerrod Meredith-Creed – an AFTRS graduate who now works in the School's First Nations team – Leroy successfully applied for the Graduate Diploma in Radio and Podcasting (GDRP), thinking he might do it part-time and even online. But at First Nations Orientation Week (held the week before whole-of-School Orientation) he felt so at home he decided to stay. And a big part of that feeling came from meeting "brother" Micah Kickett, a Wilyakali man from Broken Hill, who opted for part-time remote study while working in Canberra.

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While their journeys are different, their connection was instant and their bond with each other – and subsequently with fellow students and lecturers – has helped them to thrive throughout the course.

"Because I've got a full-time job and other things that I do ... sometimes it feels like it gets a bit too much," Micah said. "But then when I speak to Leroy, it kind of gives me that sense of hope to be like, 'Nah, if brother can do it, I can do it too.'"

"Even though I'm an online student and Leroy is on campus, it really helps just knowing that I've got him there. We chat constantly and keep each other informed, and if I'm struggling I'll just call him."

After studying media and law at university, Micah spent eight years practicing as a lawyer. But the "burning desire" for a more creative path was always in the back of his mind. In 2019, he gave stand-up comedy a go – a bold step towards something different – but it still didn't quite scratch the itch. One day while driving to work a strong feeling of "uncertainty" came over him that led to a sequence of events that would change his life's course.

"I didn't go into work that day," Micah recalled. "I took a left turn, then a right turn, and I rolled into the ABC. I'm like, 'Hey I'm Micah Kickett, is there any way I could get some experience?' They gave me a microphone and said, 'Here you go, get some interviews'."

Micah got back in the car and immediately heard a radio announcement calling for trainee radio broadcasters at a community station. So he went straight there, signed up for the training and 10 weeks later was a lawyer by day and community radio volunteer broadcaster by night. This, along with his freelance ABC interviews, led to his current job as the CBAA First Nations Affairs Reporter at Parliament House.

Micah then met Kerrod and GDRP Course Convenor Natalie Pozdeev at a CBAA conference and realised AFTRS would be the perfect career complement to "learn about podcasting and sharpen my skills".

Leroy, who had previously studied screen media at the Bachelor Institute, said the GDRP also sparked a deeper curiosity in podcasting for him, and broadened his understanding of the wider world of audio storytelling and career possibilities.

"When I first came to AFTRS I was just thinking about radio, I wasn't thinking about all the other stuff, like podcasting and voiceover," he said. "It made me realise how big radio is and all the other opportunities out there."

Leroy said along with key skills, the course had taught him a lot about the audio industry, the importance of audience and how to work collaboratively to produce engaging content. One highlight was working on Show Radio, at Sydney's Royal Easter Show, where he got hands-on experience across a range of roles – from presenting to panelling and producing. He said it also helped him connect more deeply with his peers. By dropping his guard and letting his personality shine through, Leroy discovered the power of bringing his authentic self to his work.

"At first, I wasn't really being myself, I'll be honest about that," he said. "But as I started being [at AFTRS] longer, getting along with the other classmates, I started actually being myself and opening up a bit more," he said. "At Show Radio they absolutely loved some of the things that I come out of my mouth ... I was cracking them up, even though I wasn't trying to be intentionally funny; I was just being myself."

Natalie Pozdeev said it was always rewarding to see that kind of growth. She emphasised the space in the industry for everyone – and that leaning into your personality is not just accepted, but encouraged.

"What we find is the radio industry wants you to be the best version of you, so your most authentic self, and to show up exactly as that," she said. "That's what we find works really well."

Micah said while he also thought Show Radio was a highlight, what he loved



Leroy Creed-Jones (L) and Micah Kickett at AFTRS.

most about the course went deeper than the exercises. "All the tasks and the assessments are quite enjoyable, and just learning how to produce stories and do radio announcements are great skills to have, but in all honesty, it's also just the overall AFTRS experience," he said.

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"The lecturers have been very compassionate and very understanding because I know that both Leroy and I have had issues where we've had to request extensions and they genuinely understand – like they understand things about the importance of family and sorry business and you feel very supported from that cultural sense as well."

"And I also feel really supported by the non-indigenous students. I've seen how,

on campus, they've really taken Leroy in and how supportive they are. It's just cool to see."

With Leroy planning to graduate at the end of this year and Micah hopefully the year after, the pair say they are now brothers for life.

"Leroy inspires me so much," Micah said. "He's relocated from his family, left his comfort zone, and is creating something for himself. It really helps to keep me going."

And this inspiration goes well beyond the AFTRS community, according to brother Kerrod.

"Leroy has 11 nieces and nephews and when he goes home to Brisbane they're all asking, 'Uncle Leroy, what are you doing? What are you doing?' And they're showing genuine interest in the radio course," Kerrod said. "I think it's really cool. He's inspiring the next generation of our family to follow their dreams and chase what they want to do."

Micah echoed that sentiment. "We're not just learning for ourselves. We're showing our communities what's possible. We're proving that our voices matter."

Applications are now open for the Graduate Diploma in Radio and Podcasting 2026 Intake, and close 4 November.

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