

Strength and support in a tailored journey



FOR many students, the journey to university can feel overwhelming, especially for those who may be the first in their family to attend or who come from regional communities.

But for one Flinders University staff member, Nstarzia Osman, supporting these students is more than a job; it's a calling grounded in care, culture and connection.

As an Indigenous Outreach and Pathways Officer within Yungkurinithi, they're part of a team dedicated to walking alongside students, helping them navigate the transition into university and ensuring they feel supported every step of the way.

"I've been at Flinders for four years now," they share. "Before that, I worked in disability care and hospitality. In every role, the common thread has always been helping people, whether through care, service or education."

That passion for helping others is what eventually led them to higher education. "Now, in this role, I get to bring together my love of education, culture and community in a way that feels really meaningful."

Commencing students can often find the first step into university life the most daunting and Nstarzia knows this all too well when she began her degree at Flinders University, but what she didn't know then was that her journey would come full circle. "I know how overwhelming the transition can be and how much it means to have someone walking alongside you during that time."

The work is deeply personal and tailored. "Every student's journey is different. Some need practical support, like help with scholarships or accommodation while others need encouragement or just

someone to listen. Our goal is to make sure students feel culturally safe, confident and supported once they're here."

From one-on-one guidance to large scale engagement programs with Port Power Football Club, the role blends planning, outreach and student support in a way that's both varied and fulfilling.

The work is also far reaching often involving rural school visits from Ceduna to Alice Springs and at times as far as Darwin. Community engagement and on-campus experiences, like *Life in the Uni Lane*, offer an immersive program where students across South Australia spend a day at Flinders, exploring disciplines and imagining their future.

"I really enjoy that variety. Each group of students brings something unique and seeing the way a single interaction can spark confidence or change someone's perspective about their future – that's incredibly rewarding."

You'll often find Nstarzia and the team working closely with student services, academic staff and cultural support networks to ensure a holistic experience for every student.

"We all share the same goal which is to make sure students succeed," they say. "Our team is unique in that we bring cultural knowledge, lived experience and a genuine passion for supporting students. We're not just staff but mentors, role models and advocates."

For the Yungkurinithi team, true community engagement starts with building lasting relationships and when asked what they find most rewarding about working with mob, their answer is clear: "Watching students grow in self-belief. From questioning whether they belong, to becoming proud and thriving in their studies."



Top pic: Yungkurinithi Outreach Team and students, Aboriginal Power Cup.
Below pic: Wayne Bucksin and Nstarzia Osman, Yungkurinithi Open Day stall.



Yungkurinithi student engagement and community network

Indigenous Admission Scheme (IAS)

The Indigenous Admission Scheme (IAS) provides an alternative pathway for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into Flinders University. If you are interested applying, please email IAS@flinders.edu.au

Indigenous Student Support Officers (ISSOs)

ISSO's work directly with students to provide one-on-one support throughout the student lifecycle on a range of matters, from pre-enrolment advice through to post graduate studies and assist with pathways to further study or employment.

Elders on Campus

Across Flinders SA and NT campuses. Elders on Campus can provide cultural mentoring, support, advice, information and referral to support the wellbeing and success of students studying at Flinders.

Accommodation

There are multiple accommodation options depending on your circumstances. Flinders is the only South Australian University with on-campus accommodation.

Scholarships

Flinders has a range of scholarships available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to assist in meeting accommodation, study and living costs.

For further information please contact

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