

My Future,
My Culture,
My Way.

NSW Department of Education



Case Study – Leticia Quince

Who am I?

I am a 26 year old Wiradjuri Kenadth Kes woman currently living on Darkinjung Country on the Central Coast. I graduated school in 2014 and there were many reasons why I was motivated to finish. I grew up in foster care from Year 7 and I wanted to prove that I could be more than the stigma associated with children in care. Breaking the cycle of poverty that I grew up in was another motivator as well as being the first person in my direct family to finish school. The challenges I faced in my upbringing gave me the drive to achieve my goals and exceed the limiting expectations of others.

My goal throughout high school was to finish my HSC with an ATAR so that I could study social work at the University of Newcastle.

Some of the challenges I faced...

Because I was in foster care, I moved around a lot, and went to 3 different schools in Year 7. From Years 7 to Year 9 I was in small schools with only a very small number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with no cultural support or connections. I also experienced bullying due to being 'different' and not being local to community. I transitioned into South Dubbo in Year 10 where I started to receive a lot more cultural support and meet other students like me, as Dubbo has one of the largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

populations in NSW. While there were significant benefits going to a larger school, the bullying persisted into my senior years, to the point that I was seriously considering dropping out.

I overcame these challenges...

I overcame these challenges with the support of the Aboriginal Education Officers and the school councillor. They encouraged me to refocus on why I wanted to finish school, which helped me to find the motivation to keep going. I needed to reduce the stress and anxiety I was feeling every day. So, with the help of my counsellor, I decided to reduce the expectations I had on myself from trying to aim for 90% on exams to achieving a more comfortable 75%.

During my senior years at high school I was living in an Aboriginal hostel which provided more cultural support and helped me get involved with some extra curricular activities such as the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program, the Dubbo City Youth Council and being a youth ambassador for AbSec. All these extra curricular activities helped me to find my purpose and something that I was good at, so that I could build the resilience and courage to manage the challenges that I was facing at school.



In partnership with CAPO



New South Wales
Aboriginal Education
Consultative Group Inc.

Aboriginal artwork created by Felicity Adams who is a proud descendant of the Kamilaroi people, currently living and learning on Dharug Country.



Leticia Anne receiving the 7 News Young Achievers Transgrid Indigenous Achievement Award 2021.

How I connected to culture...

There is no doubt that Dubbo South High School helped me meet people in community that I would otherwise have not had access to. Through school I had the opportunity to sit in on AECG meetings, which allow me to feel more connected to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, teachers and community Elders who became a part of help me learn more about my identity. I was someone that was always eager to learn and know more so I took every opportunity to further my cultural knowledge. My curiosity opened me up to participating in the extracurricular activities that the Aboriginal youth hostel offered. School was my only connection to culture because learning about my family and ancestors was not a priority for the foster care system. At 18, I pushed to find out who my mob are, which is when I found out that I am Wiradjuri. I also recently learnt about my Torres Strait Islander identity after reconnecting with my Aunty. My connection to culture is something I deeply value as it has helped me enhance my identity and understand more about myself.

How did you achieve your goals after finishing school?

While I had achieved a lot by finishing school, I unfortunately did not get the ATAR that was necessary to study social work at the University of Newcastle. Initially I was upset about this, but I was quickly able to redirect myself and find another pathway to achieve my dreams.

I ended up studying a one year Diploma of Community Services, which enabled me to enter the workforce at the age of 19 in the Youth Homelessness field. The work was crisis driven and challenging, but my lived experiences were invaluable and there was a lot of trust and need for my perspective in response to the work I was involved with. The most important thing for me was to be able to work on the ground and make a difference, so I was able to reprioritise and see that I didn't need to go to the University of Newcastle to study social work to fulfil that. Having to adjust my initial goal was a very important experience as it taught me that 'You never fail unless you give up' and that there is always more than one path to achieving your dreams.

Where are you now?

I'm currently 26 and the founder of my company Burrallgang Enterprise where I direct two businesses, Leticia Anne Designs and Yirra Miya. Leticia Anne Designs is my space to hold my voice and share my story through First Nations art, independent consultation and public speaking. Yirra Miya is a First Nations Creative Agency focused on First Nations storytelling through branding, design and art. I now have 9 employees and contractors on my team to help provide a range of creative services. I have also welcomed my first gudha 'baby' into the world in December 2022 and have excitedly been nominated as a finalist for two awards at the 7 News Young Achievers awards.

What advice would you give someone who was struggling through the HSC?

The biggest piece of advice that I could give someone to manage the stress of finishing school, is to look at your goals flexibly. The stress comes from feeling as though the only way to succeed is to achieve a specific ATAR to get into that one university we have our sights set on, but there are always different pathways and routes we can take to get to our dreams. I think it is also important to see that our 'failures' aren't failures but that they needed to happen in order for us to learn and grow and achieve something even bigger and better than what we had originally hoped.