



Gender Equity at Charles Sturt

Recognising Women in STEMM – Associate Professor Faye McMillan



Associate Professor Faye McMillan is a Wiradjuri yinna (woman) from Trangie, NSW. Faye holds a Doctor of Health Science, a Master of Indigenous Health Studies, a Bachelor of Pharmacy, a Graduate Certificate in Wiradjuri Language Culture and Heritage, as well as Education and a Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Governance. Faye is the 2019 NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year and a Senior Atlantic Fellow (inaugural Atlantic Fellow for Social Equity) and was a founding member of Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) and was chairperson from 2010-2016 and a board member from 2009-2017.

Faye is Australia’s first registered Pharmacist who is Aboriginal and currently works at Charles Sturt University as the Director of the Djirruwang Program – Bachelor of Health Science (Mental Health). Recently, we had the chance to ask Faye a few questions about

her background, her passions, her achievements, and what’s in store for the future.

Faye is one of 5 children, who all had strong women influencing their journeys. She recalls at one stage growing up, having four generations living in the one house, with her great grandmother, grandmother, her mum, and herself and siblings. Reflecting on her background, Faye states that *"life was good; we weren't well off, but we were happy"*.

Faye worked as a dispensary assistant at the pharmacy in Trangie, before having to relocate to Cowra for family reasons, and became a co-owner with her Mum Robyn of a takeaway shop. Her time at the pharmacy sparked an interest in further education and Faye contemplated redoing her HSC as she had not done particularly well nor had she taken chemistry as a step towards applying to university to study Pharmacy in 1998. However, the universe has other plans for her, and in 1997, she began a Bachelor of Pharmacy at Charles Sturt University in the inaugural year it was offered. From this point on, Faye feels that she was guided down the path within academia by the ancestors/universe, including the areas of research that she is involved with, never seeking, but serendipitously finding.

Faye’s research interests are in Nation Building and Indigenous women in leadership roles (the two areas that formed the foundation for her thesis) as well as mental health. Faye’s passion comes from *"helping to provide the opportunity for people to use education to transform their lives; it is a beautiful thing to be a part of"*. Faye’s cites her proudest achievements include being



the first registered pharmacist in Australia who is Aboriginal, being a founding member of Indigenous Allied Health Australia, the first Aboriginal person on the Board of Directors to the Australian Pharmacy Council, an inaugural Atlantic Fellow for Social Equity and being named the 2019 NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year – and of course her family, especially her two sons Kye and Ethan.

When asked about what's next, Faye stated: *"given where the world is currently, 2020 has provided me with some time to truly reflect on what is important to me and I am using this time to adjust my navigation to ensure that when I get where I am going (that is still a mystery) that I will not have any regrets (or none that I can't live with)"*.

Celebrating Men in Nursing



International Nurses Day 2020

Too often when we talk about 'gender equity' our default assumption is that we are talking about equity initiatives involving women. While in many cases the focus on women is necessary and appropriate, as they have historically been on the wrong side of workplace equity, achieving true gender equity is a holistic enterprise. We have to question and challenge barriers and limiting stereotypes wherever they exist. In some important areas this means highlighting and rebuilding structures that have stymied men's choices and their ability to contribute to gender equity for all.

During this year's [International Nurses Day](#), celebrated on 12th May, here at [Charles Sturt](#) and in media across the [Central West](#) there were stories exploring the challenges and successes of men pursuing careers in nursing. Despite efforts to encourage men into nursing by challenging long-held stereotypes that nursing is a female-only profession, the proportion of men in this career remains low at roughly 11% in 2017, and unlike women, men tend to enter nursing at a later stage as a second or third career. [The Australian College of Nursing](#) has been addressing this issue with campaigns like ["it's ok to care"](#), encouraging men to feel comfortable and affirmed in a caring role. They have also highlighted that nursing is a highly skilled profession that offers a variety of opportunities to put to use skills associated with the STEM disciplines – disciplines that are [disproportionately](#) taken up by boys and men over women and girls. The College has also

established a ["Men in Nursing Working Group"](#) to address the specific issues facing men in nursing.

Just as in those professions that are male-dominated, like engineering, part of our gender equity work is addressing the industry-specific biases and barriers that prevent men from entering nursing. But we also must keep having community-wide conversations about the limiting nature of rigid gender definitions that see many men discount nursing because it is threatening to social perceptions of masculinity. We know these kinds of rigid definitions disadvantage girls and women in certain industries, it disadvantages men and boys too, causing them to discount natural gifts, talents and curiosities before giving them a real chance to flourish through play, study and training. Gender diversity, and diversity more broadly, results in stronger, innovative and more dynamic organisations. In people focused professions, such as nursing, clients and patients are better served by a diverse workforce.

So, this International Nurses Day, we celebrate and acknowledge the male nurses paving the way for future generations of boys and men to see themselves as successful nurses! And we acknowledge all the professional bodies, educational organisations, communities and families who continue the conversations that challenge gender stereotypes that disadvantage and limit us all.

National Reconciliation Week

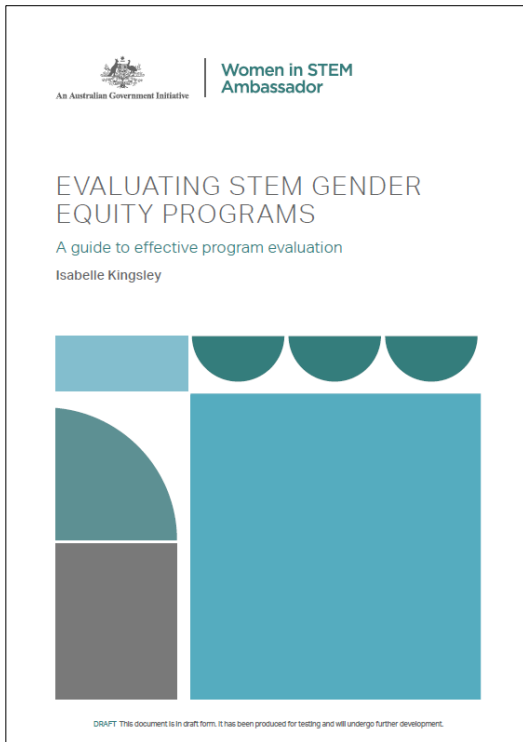
National Reconciliation Week is held on the 27th May to the 3rd June each year. These dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey; the successful 1967 referendum, and the High Court Mabo decision respectively. It is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

The 2020 National Reconciliation Week theme was *In This Together*, encouraging **all** Australians to reflect on the part they play – whether big or small – on our journey towards reconciliation.

2020 also marked 20 years of Reconciliation Australia, as well as the twentieth anniversary of the Reconciliation Walks of 2000 when people came together to walk on bridges and roads across the nation and show their support for a more reconciled Australian.

For more information and resources, please visit the [Reconciliation Australia website](#).

National Evaluation Guidelines Released



The [Office of the Women in STEM Ambassador](#) has developed a new guide to evaluating STEM gender equity programs, titled *Evaluating STEM Gender Equity Programs: A guide to effective program evaluation* (the Guide). The Guide enables program owners to undertake self-evaluation that is consistent and comparable across Australia. Most importantly it will help us build an evidence base of what is working and what is not working the hundreds of programs tackling STEM gender equity issues – most of these programs currently lack any formal evaluation.

The Guide delivers on a key recommendation of the [Women in STEM Decadal Plan](#) and is an integral part of the Australian Government's [Advancing Women in STEM 2020 Action Plan](#). The aim is to embed a culture of evaluation for all projects that support girls' and women's participation in STEM to help us understand what works for the Australian context.

The Guide is being piloted in a collaborative project with previous recipients of Women in STEM and Entrepreneurship (WISE) grants. The pilot will allow the Guide to be tested and refined and provide valuable insights into previously funded projects. From 2020-21, the Department will provide all WISE funded projects with the evaluation Guide.

The Guide will be piloted throughout 2020. You can read the guide and get involved [here](#).

Women in Engineering

[International Women in Engineering Day](#) is held on 23rd June every year. Originally an initiative of the UK the day now receives UNESCO patronage, and is aimed at increasing international awareness of women in engineering and highlighting the achievements, experiences and opportunities for women in this field. This is its seventh year running and the theme is 'Shape the World', which is centred on exploring how engineers shape the environments and communities around them.

[Engineers Australia](#) marked the day by sharing stories and wisdom learned from women engineers, especially highlighting the challenges they have faced in the profession. Women in engineering [remain the anomaly](#), making up just 13% of qualified engineers. Highlighting women's achievements, as well as continuing to share the experiences and efforts towards improving gender equity in the profession are essential to growing and retaining more women engineers.

At Charles Sturt we recognise the gender equity challenges engineering is grappling with. We are working to do our part to improve equity outcomes through our [Athena SWAN](#) work which focuses on gender equity across all our STEM fields, and we recently awarded two ['Women in Engineering Scholarships'](#) to women studying engineering at Charles Sturt.

We encourage you to check out some of the stories and gender equity conversations from Engineers Australia's celebration of the day, and if you're interested in getting involved in our Athena SWAN work get in touch with us at genderequity@csu.edu.au.

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, Biphobia and Intersexism (IDAHOBIT)




IDAHOBIT is held annually on 17 May. The date commemorates the World Health Organisation's 1990 decision to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder. We know that this day is important to our LGBTIQ+ community and their allies, in recognising the work done with our ALLY program, and to raise awareness for the work still needed in this space. This year, we celebrated with a CAMP-themed trivia night, run over Zoom. We were honoured to be joined on the night by hosts Miss Betty Confetti and Miss Lola Lypo.



Times Higher Education Impact Ratings

Charles Sturt University ranked 61st overall in the *Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Ratings*. The [rankings](#) assess more than 600 universities across the globe against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and rank them in 17 categories across three areas – research, outreach, and stewardship. Categories include no poverty, quality education, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities and communities, and climate action. The full list of rankings is available on the [THE website](#).

Charles Sturt ranked:

-  10th in terms of Australian Universities
-  37th globally for climate action
-  4th globally in reducing inequalities &
-  6th globally in gender equality

"The University's individual and overall results are a reflection of the University's commitment to creating a world worth living in" – Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Engagement) Professor Heather Cavanagh.



Charles Sturt signs the Preserving Gender Equity as a Higher Education Priority During and After COVID-19 Australian Higher Education Joint Sector Position Statement

Charles Sturt have signed the [Position Statement](#) pledging our commitment to preserve gender equity as a higher education priority during the crisis and recovery period of the COVID-19 pandemic, a further sign of our leadership and commitment to gender equity.

The position statement follows the publication of a report in May by the [Rapid Research Information Forum](#) which found hard-won gains for women's advancement in STEM workforce were at risk of a major setback due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Statement, prepared by the Higher Education Senior Equity Practitioners Advisory Group on Gender and COVID-19, acknowledges the gendered impacts of the pandemic and declares the sector commitment to immediate and ongoing gender equity actions.




These actions include:

1. To actively seek equal representation of women in COVID-19 response planning and decision-making.
2. To formally monitor and report on gender equity impacts (including intersectional factors), and collaborate with other universities and sector partners to address emerging issues.
3. To continue participation in the [SAGE Athena SWAN](#)
4. To maintain gender equity and diversity programs and key performance indicators.
5. To preserve their gender equity progress made to date.

We join a number of universities and high profile sector partners, including the Australian Academy of Science, the National Committee for Women in Engineering, and Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE), that have already signed.

Hot Topic: Institutional Indigenous Cultural Competency Program (ICCP)

This online program is available to all Charles Sturt staff, responding to a series of strategic priorities at Charles Sturt where we aim to improve the education and lives for Indigenous Australians. The entire CCP has three components:

-  **Stage 1:** The [Individual Online Cultural Competency Program](#) aims to increase cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. This should be completed before progressing to Stage 2.
-  **Stage 2:** A team-based discussion with a new resource *Cassie's Story 2: MINGAAN MIGAY YALBLINYA* which can be used as a tool to engage staff in further discussions with others. Guidelines and support materials for Stage 2 are available on the [ICCP website](#)
-  **Stage 3:** The creation of a Community of Practice to share achievements and challenges and build institutional capacity.

We encourage everyone to take some time out to undertake this free online program, to assist in improving access, participation, retention and success rates of Indigenous students and staff, and contributing to an organisational culture that is welcoming of all cultures.



Update: Workplace Gender Equity Strategy 2018-2022

A recent submission to the Equity & Diversity Committee meeting with the ordered list of the action items from the Workplace Gender Equity Strategy shows that we are progressing relatively well and are on track with timeframes.

One action item within the Strategy is to *ensure gender representation for CSU Management, Academic, Governance and other University Committees* with the measure of success being *Gender composition for University committees to be balanced with a 20% variance*. This will be reviewed annually.

It was found that of the 67 committees assessed, 30 have achieved balanced gender composition, and 37 have not. The Manager, Equity & Diversity will write to the Presiding Officers regarding the gender composition and suggest strategies to achieve balance.

In addition, the annual report to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency is in the process of being submitted. Once submitted, the report will be made publically available to all staff.

Unconscious Bias & Inclusivity training

A third round of training, consisting of five sessions was delivered to staff in March 2020. During the third round, 88 staff members completed the training, bringing the total to 343. Overall, the training was well received by staff with favourable results shown in the data.

Western NSW Health

On 4th March 2020, Kim & Nic delivered Unconscious Bias & Inclusivity training to the Western NSW HARP service in Dubbo. The data from this session shows it is on par with the results from those delivered internally to Charles Sturt. NSW Health is very keen to have the training delivered to other leadership groups in the Local Health District.


This is part of the University's efforts to create an inclusive community, with NSW Health being the second external stakeholder that we have delivered this training to, after Wagga Wagga City Council in 2019.

Want to know more about gender equity?

Gender equity and equity more broadly encompasses a wide range of issues, stories and challenges both here at Charles Sturt and across our communities. The following articles and resources give an insight into some of these issues and stories.

 [Can Female Doctors Cure the Gender STEM Gap?](#)

'You can't be what you can't see', is an oft-repeated phrase in the gender equity space, exhorting the sector to increase the visibility and accessibility of women role models. This article explores the connection between young girls being exposed to female GPs and their likelihood of pursuing a STEM career.

 [The Impact of Covid-19 on Women in the STEM Workforce](#)

The Australian Academy of Science's 'Rapid Research Forum' recently released a report exploring the effects of the pandemic on women across the national STEM workforce.

 [Gender Equity Insights 2020: Delivering the Business Outcomes](#)

Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre (BCEC) and the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) recently launched the 2020 Gender Equity Insights report.

Key Dates

There are lots of events and activities planned to support and promote gender equity at Charles Sturt. In addition to those activities listed below, keep an eye out for announcements in What's New and check for updates on the Gender Equity [webpage](#).

28th August

[Wear It Purple](#)

31st August – 4th September

[Bluestocking Week](#)

7th – 11th September

[Women's Health Week](#)

October

[Mental Health Month](#)

8th – 15th November
(postponed from 5th – 12th July)

[National NAIDOC Week](#)

For more information or to get involved please contact the team at: genderequity@csu.edu.au