

Serving users in Central Australia

The staff at the *DESERT PEOPLES CENTRE CAMPUS LIBRARY* provide a range of services to Indigenous Australian people every day. Each team member came to the job via a unique path and they share the story of their growth as library service providers below.

I have the best job in the world. I certainly feel a great connection with, and loyalty to, my workplace, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (Batchelor Institute). My role as Manager of the Desert Peoples Centre Campus Library allows me to combine all my fields of interest and experiences in an ideal way. I first worked for Batchelor Institute on Groote Eylandt 20 years ago. Since then I have received a Masters in Information Studies (Librarianship) and enjoyed working in different capacities in several libraries.

Indigenous matters are at the heart of everything we do at the Batchelor Institute and the philosophy of the library is to promote and support all things Indigenous. And everyone is 'werte' (being 'welcome' in Central Arrernte) at the Batchelor Institute Library.

Batchelor Institute sits uniquely in the Australian educational landscape as the only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dual sector tertiary education provider. The Batchelor Institute has two campuses: one located in the Top End at Batchelor (100 kilometres south of Darwin) and one at the Desert Peoples Centre (DPC) in Central Australia, situated in the Desert Knowledge Precinct eight kilometres south of Mparntwe (Alice Springs). The collection, held at the two library branches, supports students and staff in many areas of study. It also holds unique and rare items specifically relevant to Indigenous languages, history, social issues and politics. The library supports Indigenous students from all over Australia who are studying certificate (VET), undergraduate or postgraduate courses, with hard copy and digital collections to assist students both academically and recreationally. We also work in conjunction with Batchelor Institute's Centre for Australian Languages and Linguistics (CALL) Collection. 🍷

MELISSA RAYMOND AALIA

Manager
Desert Peoples Centre Campus Library
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education



Batchelor Institute Desert Peoples Centre Campus Library staff (from left to right: Amanda Bethel-Donaldson, Library Officer; Melissa Raymond, Manager; and Lynn Day, Library Assistant).

As an ex-academic and government scientist, I love working in a campus library, especially one with such an amazing Indigenous collection. Guiding students to develop their skills for finding information is very rewarding. The Indigenous focus makes my tasks doubly interesting, as we work to present concepts from a perspective that is familiar to the students. This is important at all levels, from understanding what a library is and how it works, to presenting technical skills or academic ideas.

One of the most influential courses at Batchelor Institute is Preparation for Tertiary Success, which helps students make the transition to post-secondary study. Students use library resources for all aspects, from literacy and numeracy, to the basics of science. Of particular significance are materials in our collection that are locally produced – written or collated by Indigenous individuals and groups, often in collaboration with organisations such as the Centre for Remote Health or the CSIRO. For example, one publication on greenhouse gases and climate change incorporates both Western information and Indigenous ways of describing the processes and consequences. Given Aboriginal people's connection to country, other notable units include the certificates I, II, and III in Conservation and Land Management, and our collection includes highly relevant items like DVDs and reports prepared by, and about the work of, local and remote Indigenous Ranger groups. These rangers use both Indigenous approaches and scientific techniques for biological surveys, the care of cultural sites, fire management, and weed control.

But we also want our students to relax, especially those attending residential units who don't have access to their usual free-time diversions. Our non-fiction books include many on Indigenous art, history and Country, and we also hold movies, music and fiction. 🍷

LYNN DAY

Library Assistant
Desert Peoples Centre Campus Library
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education



Batchelor Library, Desert Peoples Centre Campus (Central Australia), recently received a donation of over 10,000 hard copy items from the ABC Reference Library (photo attached of Preparation for Tertiary Success (PTS) students Tiarne de Beer and Allen Minniecon with books donated by the ABC).

I came into the library and information service sector fairly recently, with a passion for books, reading, learning and sharing knowledge. My computer skills were basic, but I like any challenge that results in a greater knowledge and understanding. My position as a Library Officer has helped me get back on the learning journey that I have always enjoyed. I have had a lot of experience with being a library user in my life but being behind the desk has opened up a whole new world of knowledge and excitement. Batchelor Institute Library has been behind me from day one in my ambition to become a trained and skilled library professional. I have been encouraged to study in the library and information science sector and have recently completed studying for a Certificate II in Cultural and Information Services. This course was not offered by our institute, so my manager assisted me with looking elsewhere for a relevant course.

Identifying as an Australian Aboriginal person, I am excited about 2019 being UNESCO's International Year of Indigenous Languages. We have many dual language Indigenous students and I have started to research library display set-ups. We are now prominently displaying biographies and autobiographies of our Australian Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, and Indigenous people, in both written and oral formats. My plan is to introduce common words used in the language groups from Central Australian country and interweave them throughout all displays and events that are held in 2019 at the Batchelor Institute Library.

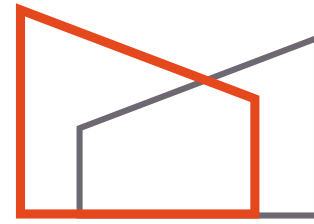
My personal learning plan for the next 12 months is to continue on the study path for professional development and to always be reading to keep my personal learning and growth on track. 🌟

AMANDA BETHEL-DONALDSON

Library Officer

Desert Peoples Centre Campus Library

Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education



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