Touching lives today, creating better communities for tomorrow

INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 2012 ANNUAL REPORT
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2012 Community Engagement Report
Institute for Advancing Community Engagement Australian Catholic University
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Disclaimer. The information provided herein is based upon shared stories, knowledge, learnings and research. The learnings are shared to enhance the implementation and development of social justice based community engagement in Australia and overseas. The authors shall not be liable for any loss incurred as a consequence of the use and application directly or indirectly, of any information presented in this work.
Director’s Statement

The Institute for Advancing Community Engagement (IACE) has engaged with people and communities who are inspired by a deep sense of hope for a better world, engagement that has borne fruit in the form of significant impact on the lives of many people in Australia and overseas.

There is much to celebrate: the 700 people who have studied in the Clemente Australia program, the 280 graduates and the qualified East Timorese staff of the Marist Brothers’ Teachers’ College, the more than 2500 young people involved in Future in Youth in Baucau, and the hundreds of young people being supported in homework and learning support programs. The impact of the people and programs has been achieved in part through strategically focusing community engagement upon marginalized people and communities, children and young people, and developing nations.

Australian Catholic University’s (ACU) community engagement capacity has grown through its strategic partnerships with more than 170 organisations, including Catholic and other faith-based community groups and schools, as well as professions and corporations. This capacity is nourished by people’s shared commitment in hope, and enriched through the meeting of different faith traditions. In a materialist society, IACE has chosen to invest heavily in time and personal contact, earning the trust of communities, organizations and individuals involved in the social mission of advancing the dignity of all people and of their right to education, health, wellbeing, and full participation in society.

Respect for each person, appreciation of the sacred in life and commitment to the common good are core values within ACU’s community engagement, which draws upon the capacities and scholarship of staff and students in its collaboration with people and communities here and overseas. At the same time, these people and communities enable ACU’s students and staff to see the world differently, and to approach their study — particularly their study of the Core Curriculum — from new, well-grounded perspectives. Engagement forms their sympathetic imaginations. Deeper understanding of the lives of others makes graduates and staff better able to apply the richness of their learning and scholarship and to meet their civic and professional responsibilities.

Research and scholarship are integral to the University’s community engagement. People and communities have offered new and very important insights through their research with ACU.

“Deeper understanding of the lives of others makes graduates and staff better able to apply the richness of their learning and scholarship and to meet their civic and professional responsibilities.”

Professor Jude Butcher cfC AM

Director, Institute for Advancing Community Engagement

www.acu.edu.au/iace

These insights have shown how communities, together with universities, schools, community organizations and corporates, can make a difference, so that public spaces, programs and policies respect the dignity of all people, foster the common good, and enrich the wellbeing and capacities of individuals and communities.

The ground-breaking Clemente program, the commitment of students, professionals and community members, and the responses of children, youth and adults on the margins of our society have much to say to a world focused on economics and accountability. They show where the true riches of our society are to be found.

Professor Jude Butcher cfC AM

Director, Institute for Advancing Community Engagement

www.acu.edu.au/iace
The mission of Australian Catholic University (ACU) requires us to go beyond educating graduates who are intellectually curious, critical and well versed in the disciplines they study. Community engagement expresses who we are as one of many Catholic universities continuing a long tradition of social teaching that reminds staff and students that all human beings have spiritual, as well as economic and political needs, and obligations to other members of their national, international and local communities. Therefore, ACU works in partnership with Catholic universities internationally.

Community engagement, at the core of ACU’s curriculum, puts that social teaching into practice, bringing staff and students into personal contact with people of all ages and backgrounds, but especially with the disadvantaged and vulnerable members in the communities in which we work. Engagement gives students and staff greater understanding of themselves, of others, and of the settings in which their learning can have a positive effect. It offers concrete examples of their moral and ethical obligations as citizens and human beings, and of the relevance of the Gospel in their lives.

Mutual learning and research, essential to effective community engagement, provides insights that support ACU’s contribution to the national discourse and to community, religious and corporate bodies working with disadvantaged people in Australia and beyond.

The Institute for Advancing Community Engagement is the means by which ACU sustains engagement at the core of its courses, enables its Faculties to reach out to their national, international and local communities, and acts as a beacon in an increasingly materialist society.

Professor Greg Craven
Vice-Chancellor

Statement from Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Students and staff from all Faculties and courses at Australian Catholic University engage with communities and individuals in Australia and our region as part of the University’s core curriculum. Community engagement expresses ACU’s mission to work for the common good of societies in which it operates, and its desire to impart a broad education that fosters students’ ethical vision, informed judgment, and concern for others — an education grounded in the practical realities of our national, local and international communities.

Community engagement brings ACU into partnership with community and religious organizations, corporations, local government, hospitals, schools, and other universities. In collaboration with them, ACU’s students and staff come into personal contact with children, youth and adults in communities affected by disadvantage. Engagement involves students and staff in mutual learning with community members to discern ways of promoting justice, equity, dignity and the common good.

The Institute for Advancing Community Engagement (IACE) assists the University in establishing partnerships with the many agencies collaborating with ACU. It works with faculties, staff and students to facilitate the community engagement projects central to ACU’s curriculum.

IACE helps in sustaining ACU’s relationships with schools, local community groups and partners in Australia and overseas. It collaborates in research with ACU’s faculties and vulnerable communities and assesses the effectiveness of existing engagement projects. Such research enables ACU to contribute significantly to knowledge in the field and to the development of public policy.

Professor Pauline Nugent
Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
For nearly two centuries the Catholic Church has been involved in the transformation of the everyday lives of Australians, in all their diversity and complexity. It has done so through the work of countless ordinary people and of institutions such as schools, hospitals, welfare organizations and religious congregations to advance the common good of people in this country and beyond, and the dignity and wellbeing of the most disadvantaged and marginalized among them. The mission of Australian Catholic University and its founding congregations is the same: to transform the lives of people in Australia and its region through learning, teaching, and conducting research in reciprocal relationship with them.

Through its Institute for Advancing Community Engagement (IACE), the University challenges the validity of social relationships that focus on individual rights and responsibilities, economic transactions, and contracting to provide expert services to clients. In such relationships people who are poor, marginalized or disadvantaged have little bargaining power. Instead, IACE engages in respectful personal relationships, mutual learning and decision-making with homeless and marginalized people, children and youth, and communities in Australia and developing nations, researching and redefining problems in the light of new understanding and forging fresh solutions for them. Such engagement builds upon the willingness of communities, individuals, ACU staff and students and partner organizations to be open to mutual learning that can change their values, opinions and priorities, and to recognize that none of the participants in such engagement can succeed alone.

This kind of community engagement is integral to the core curriculum at ACU, where IACE inducts new staff members into the University’s social justice culture from the beginning of their employment. Students and staff from all faculties and organizational units have many choices for involvement with the University’s local communities and overseas programs. Through direct experience, they can consider and refine their own views of their rights and responsibilities.

Relationships in collaborative community engagement are personal rather than economic, stressing mutual education and capacity building rather than provision of a service, and promoting collective choice and reciprocity in seeking the common good.

The following accounts show how the experience of community engagement builds capacities, improves wellbeing, and produces just and sustainable outcomes. They also show how much ACU students and staff gain from personal, direct engagement in teaching, learning and research in local and overseas communities.
Working together at home and overseas

The Institute for Advancing Community Engagement enables Australian Catholic University’s students and staff to develop relationships with homeless and marginalized citizens, children and youth, and communities in Australia, with the people and communities of developing nations in our region, and with partner organizations. The University sees such engagement as a core element in the education of its students, and draws upon a long tradition of Catholic social teaching to shape its fundamental features.

In any engagement undertaking, partnerships are formed among all stakeholders involved. ACU staff and students and partner organizations need to be open to interweaving relationships, learning and decision-making that can change their values, opinions and priorities, and may even reveal stakeholders whose interests have been overlooked. As engagement grows, continuing research and the experience of all stakeholders enables richer understanding of problems, and sharing information among participants finds solutions for them. “We are part of our own solution,” a comment from a Clemente program student, sums up the importance of community and of participants’ agency in owning and solving problems.

ACU’s engagement is an active process, as Professor Gail Crossley, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences points out: “We need to devise different ways of reaching out to people to make the connections in the first place.

That involves developing ways to going out to where they are. We know that works best. We cannot expect them to turn up and knock on our door. We actually have to go out and engage with them where they are in their circumstances and then to try and encourage them to take small bites before they engage in something larger.”

In some undertakings, an entire city community can be working together, as it does in Ballarat, where the Clemente program offers access to tertiary education for community members who would not normally be able to undertake it. In the words of Frank Hall, Manager of Homelessness Support and Advocacy Services for Centacare, Ballarat, “The Clemente Program is a unique one. The partnership contains local government, the education and not for profit sectors... Each agency participating in the delivery of the Clemente program makes a significant investment in terms of commitment, time and money.”

The outcomes, however, go beyond the readily measureable one of access to education. “Of equal value,” says Frank Hall, is a deeply personal one, “the sense of well-being and community connectedness that Clemente students experience.” Kristie Rogers, from The Smith Family, agrees: “The support provided from ACU allows The Smith Family to run a number of unique programs such as Maths Club and Let’s Count in the community.” Pre-service student teachers from ACU also help children to be less anxious about participating, and to “create connections with a mentor or role model.”

“Philosophically we (partners) are all on the same level, We are all trying to help these families and these children and make a difference in their lives.”

Mary Lawrey, Principal of Sacred Heart School, Fitzroy
Partner, Atherton Gardens Homework Support Program

Creating it together – Partners
For the agencies, academic staff, students, volunteer learning partners, adults, children, and for the communities in which they come together in personal relationships and shared decision making, this kind of community engagement offers an opportunity to better understand the lives and the rights of others, and to consider their own responsibilities in promoting the common good.

Professor Gail Crossley underscored this belief at a graduation of ACU students on the Thai-Burma border: “This program is witness to the need for university education for refugees and migrants to be a right, not a privilege. As more refugees stay for longer and longer periods in camps, the need to go beyond school education becomes urgent. We need to educate the community leaders, the teachers, the nurses and the social workers of the future. This benefits not only the refugee community but the host community as such leaders contribute to a peaceful and productive life for everyone... Ideally, there would be no refugees in our world, but as long as there are, they have the same right as the rest of society to a university education.” There are vital personal benefits too, as Fr. John Larsen SM points out. The course gives refugees “hope for the future and says ‘you are important’ — something they have never been told in their lives.”

Closer to home, in ACU’s neighbourhood of Fitzroy, relationships with Community Police, the Vietnamese Mothers’ Group and local schools are founded on a shared desire to foster personal relationships and raise levels of hope and aspiration among young people. “Delivering afterschool weekly programs to over 120 Primary and Secondary aged kids has filled in some of gaps in their lives,” says Chris McGeachan, Youth Resource Officer with Yarra Police. “ACU students bring positive attitudes and consistent messages of hope to kids that suffer instability and false promises. Regular weekly connection with the students builds trust, relationships and consistency to raise aspirations in young people living in a difficult Yarra environment.”

The Homework Support program partnership of the Vietnamese Mothers’ Group, ACU, The Smith Family and Sacred Heart Primary shows the same interweaving relationships and flow-on effects to the general community. “Philosophically we are all on the same level,” says Mary Lawrey, Principal of Sacred Heart School, Fitzroy. “We are all trying to help these families and these children and make a difference in their lives.” The school’s website elaborates: “The partners believe that there are many out of school homework programs, but what makes this one unique is that the partners share a philosophical connection that offers holistic support to the children and their families.

So strong is the partnership that the Homework Support Program has been a springboard for other projects in the community.

For learning partners in the Sydney Clemente program, involvement brings life-changing learning of their own. “It has turned out to be an empowering experience in terms of growth for our young lawyers, their confidence, their communications skills and their self-discernment, and their willingness throughout the rest of their lives to look at participating in community programs” says Howard Harrison, Managing Partner, Carroll & O’Dea. Personal relationships change their perceptions of disadvantage, which becomes “secondary to the fact that these [Clemente students] are real people who are genuinely keen to be learning, and we are privileged to be participating in that,” says Josephine Heesh of Carroll & O’Dea.

Collaboration, empowerment and respect are at the heart of the research project of ACU’s Institute for Child Protection called Reconnect: working with young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. As the researchers explain: “Working collaboratively and developing positive relationships with other services plays an important role in our ability to advocate proactively for our clients. For example, having a positive relationship with school principals and school support staff can assist us to keep a young person who is at risk of disengaging from the education system in mainstream education. Working closely with Centrelink staff can help us to better advocate for young people who are having difficulties with Centrelink payments. Developing strong connections with accommodation services also assists us to have greater options for our young people who are experiencing homelessness.

We believe that young people and their families are experts in their own lives, in that they have their own knowledge, experience and resources to offer, and that they have the right to make decisions that impact on their lives and to have access to support, resources, information and connections to others that enhance their capacity and skills.”
ACU’s approach to community engagement has also led to collaboration with overseas universities, such as Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines. The partnership been awarded an Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) Fellowship, which aims to develop leadership and build partnerships with organizations in developing countries.

As Associate Dean (International) Professor Peter Steane from ACU’s Faculty of Business explains: “Social justice and common good link us together.” Professor Rudy Ang, Dean of the John Gokongwei School of Management at Ateneo, agrees.

“We share so many interests and priorities that there are endless possibilities for collaboration, not just in research, but also in community engagement and outreach. We were grateful to meet ACU staff who have not just engaged in theory-building research, but have been engaged in action research, in community engagement, and in policy-building research. This sort of exchange could not have been possible if we had been doing this with another university that was not mission aligned, and this makes ACU exactly the right partner for us.”
Moving together beyond disadvantage
Clemente Australia 10 Years On

For people experiencing multiple disadvantages, finding enough money to live on, somewhere safe to live, food to eat, treatment for physical or mental illness (or both) and the support of friends, family and community is an ongoing struggle.

Poverty is not just a lack of money. It also involves loss of a sense of belonging, of self-worth, of control over one’s life, of meaningful existence. The unrelenting stress of such loss affects more than a million Australians, to whom the hope of any improvement seems unlikely. As one commented, “I’ve learned not to put expectations on new experiences so that I cannot be disappointed.” Such a view of poverty demands fresh answers to the question: “How can the Australian community find new ways to support its citizens, especially those suffering multiple disadvantage?” Clemente is one of the answers.

In 1995 the program that Shorris developed from Viniece Walker’s insight began at the Roberto Clemente Family Guidance Centre in New York City, and is described in his book Riches for the Poor: The Clemente Course in the Humanities.

The course was taught at first-year university standard by academics paid full salaries to undertake a serious teaching contract, being delivered at no cost to students suffering multiple disadvantage. The students had to be between 18 and 35 years old and able to read a tabloid newspaper. Classes consisted of no more than 15 members, to accommodate the Socratic teaching method using questions and discussion. Students were not graded at the end of the course, but received a certificate for each subject completed.

The Clemente program grew from an encounter in the USA in the 1990s between Earl Shorris (1936-2012), an American journalist and social commentator, and Viniece Walker, a female prisoner working to improve the lot of her fellows in a New York jail. Shorris asked her why she thought people became snared in persistent poverty and how they might escape it. To his surprise, she replied that they should be enabled to question the assumptions of their society through study of the Humanities — literature, philosophy, history and art — not that they should be trained to join the workforce. Her answer recalled Socrates’ statement that for a human being, “the unexamined life is not worth living,” and asserted that the poor could learn to see themselves as agents of change rather than as victims by reflecting on their society and their relationship to it.
By 2002 people associated with the St Vincent de Paul Society in Sydney were aware of Shorris’s work, and in 2003 he visited Sydney to speak to interested parties. As a result, the first full-scale Clemente program began ten years ago, in September 2003, when Dr Graham English of Australian Catholic University (ACU) taught “Ethics: Living an Examined Life,” with funding from Vincentian Village, the Sisters of Charity and the Sydney City Council.

By 2006 seven humanities courses had been offered by staff from ACU, and the Australian version of Clemente had begun to evolve, with twelve-week semester courses, including assessment and student evaluations. Students visited galleries and museums, and bodies like the Bell Shakespeare Company provided special expertise in literature courses. Volunteer Learning Partners recruited from corporations and the general community assisted individual Clemente students, and ACU provided practical training to prepare them. Many Learning Partners have now been involved for several courses, and new ones join Clemente every year. Unlike American Clemente courses, those in Australia include assessment, enabling them to be recognized academically for the award of a Certificate in Liberal Studies by ACU. There is no upper age limit for students.

The Clemente program has spread from East Sydney to other centres: Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Adelaide, Ballarat, Canberra, Surry Hills, Newcastle and Campbelltown, and there are continuing expressions of interest from other locations. Since 2003, partners have included the St Vincent de Paul Society, Mission Australia, The Benjamin Andrew Footpath Library, The Sisters of Charity, The Smith Family, Ballarat City Council, Ballarat Cares, Centacare, Central Highlands Regional Library Co-Op, The Sisters of St Joseph and CatholicCare. Other tertiary institutions have taken up the Clemente program and continue to be involved in its delivery or research: The University of Ballarat, Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Griffith University, Flinders University, and The University of Western Australia.

By the end of 2012, more than 700 students had participated in the Clemente Australia program. Of these, 122 students have completed the Certificate in Liberal Studies with ACU, and 35 Clemente graduates are continuing study in undergraduate courses at ACU campuses.
Research into the effects of the Clemente program has been a focus of publications since 2003. Refer to www.acu.edu.au/clementeaustralia. A 2009-2011 study of Clemente, “We’re part of our own solution,” funded through an Australian Research Council grant, involved academic partners from Australian Catholic University, Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, and the University of Western Australia, in collaboration with Mission Australia and the National Council of St Vincent de Paul.

Benjamin Andrew Footpath Library

Clemente also engages directly with the community through The Benjamin Andrew Footpath Library, providing a street library every Tuesday in Sydney’s Martin Place to cater for homeless and people affected by disadvantage. Mark Mahony, library technician at ACU’s Strathfield campus, serves at Martin Place. He also supervises volunteers each month, selecting new, high quality books, magazines and journals suited to adult and child readers at over 60 Sydney locations, such as homeless shelters, refuges and prisons. The Library has a particular interest in Indigenous literacy for adults and school children. There is no requirement to return the books, and so readers come to own books, to feel a sense of self-respect, and to recognize that others understand their desire for knowledge.

“Working at Strathfield Campus library, I regularly assist Clemente students, and see first-hand how much they value the opportunity to be part of the University, and to be engaged with learning and personal development,” says Mark. He has worked with IACE to create materials promoting Clemente in homeless facilities, and information packs to encourage case-managers to consider Clemente for their clients. The Footpath Library and Clemente “give the most disadvantaged people dignity and hope and facilitate the full expression of the human person,” says Mark, who shared in the 2012 ACU Staff Award for Outstanding Community Engagement.

Community ownership

“Clemente Ballarat” began in 2008, and provides an excellent example of community ownership of the program and its transformative effects. Delivery is embedded in the community, with local agencies providing the social supports that students require in undertaking tertiary study. Ballarat has been identified as one of the most socially and economically disadvantaged communities in Victoria, with high unemployment, many single-parent families, a high percentage of residents renting accommodation, a growing population of African refugees, and double the state average of Indigenous people. Social and economic disadvantage has reduced levels of educational participation and performance, affected public health, alienated children and their families, and increased levels of poverty and crime — outcomes that sap community vitality and cohesion.
Engaging the Nation

CONTINUED

Such a description fails to recognize the capabilities and potential of the people of Ballarat. Victoria’s third largest city, Ballarat is home to three university campuses and its sense of identity and community has fostered commitment to education among its citizens, built respect and cooperation among community institutions, and mobilized all levels of private and government education in the city to enhance the educational participation and performance of disadvantaged children and of marginalized adults. On March 20, 2012 a Memorandum of Understanding supporting the Clemente program was signed by ACU, the City of Ballarat, The Smith Family, Ballarat Library, United Way, Centacare, and the University of Ballarat in a concerted effort to support the Clemente program and its students. Clemente Ballarat received a Community Education Award from the Australian College of Educators in February 2013. Clemente Ballarat has provided units in Australian History, Indigenous History, Ethics, Sociology and 2D art, and in 2013 will run its first Australian Literature unit. Students are often referred by Centacare and the Smith Family. Centacare provides a student co-ordinator, who also offers healthy lunches for students, learning partners and teaching staff. United Way provides learning partners for students. Ballarat Library offers a learning space and kitchen, and expert help with computing and library skills. ACU and Ballarat University supply teaching staff, and Ballarat City Council hosts functions that support the costs of Clemente. ACU enrolls Clemente students and covers all administrative costs, and its Academic Skills staff provide support in essay writing, referencing and research. Clemente Ballarat students have access to ACU’s Library services and resources and to its counselling and careers services. Dawn Manning, a Ballarat Clemente student, addressed those gathered in 2012 for the signing of the MOU. Part of her address considers Clemente students’ view of themselves:

“As a group, we in the Ballarat Clemente group have perhaps experienced a broad range of life issues that do not rank amongst the genres of ‘advantaged’ or ‘successful.’ Recently the Ballarat TV station presented a well-informed segment on the Clemente Program; the narrator concluded that this program was for ‘disadvantaged’ students. WE do NOT own or accept this label. May I suggest this is the perception of those outside our experience? In fact, I/we/other Clemente groups interstate are courageous people undertaking an opportunity as it is presented. For this reason we applaud the supporters of the Clemente Program who enable us to continue this wonderful experience of university studies. Thank you to the financial supporters, the educators, agencies, mentors and visionaries who enrich our lives.”

Agency and hope

The experience of Clemente in settings around Australia enables people to see beyond seemingly hopeless situations and to look forward to a future: “I can make decisions for my life,” says Mary. “I don’t think I could ever stay stale and not be doing something or learning or growing.”

Michael writes: “I will never have to wonder now whether or not I could have done it. I AM doing it, and I am at least competent, maybe even good at this, and my self-confidence has grown — quietly on the outside, but a roar within me. It’s not about being best in the class … but getting an insight into formal education is enough for me to finally say: ‘Well, it’s up to me now.’”

Viniece Walker’s insistence that Earl Shorris should offer disadvantaged people a humanities course rather than job training grew from her own experience and insight. Clemente students agree that reflection on themselves and their situation through critical discussion of philosophy and literature and history and art enables them to break free from mere reaction to the pressures of life on the margins and to think and plan for themselves.

Enrolling in a Clemente course requires decisions to act and to meet expectations. Continuing the course brings social relationships with fellow students, lecturers and learning partners. Learning at university level supports students in developing new views of themselves and their capacities.

After entering a degree course, Suzanne writes: “I have learnt to trust people a lot more … Young people have reached out to me so much … that my confidence has grown. They don’t see me as different so I feel more part of this world and academic environment…. It’s really exciting to see people respond, some of whom I would have been afraid of six months ago…. Right now I am the most happy I have been in a long time. No one can tell I have a serious mental illness…. I can kiss mental illness goodbye really. I’m swapping it for an Arts Degree. I’m a student first and foremost. It’s like having a job. My family are very happy for me and support me in reading my essays. Relationships with them are better than ever. Nobody judges me. Why would they? I’m at ACU studying for a degree…. Uni gives my life a richness and sense of connectedness and equity that I couldn’t get any other way.”

In 2013 we celebrate 10 years of Clemente in Australia.

For more information: www.acu.edu.au/clementeaustralia
Engaging with Aboriginal Peoples

Many have wished that Europeans who settled in Australia had acknowledged their shared humanity with its Aboriginal people from the beginning, and had included them in the growing community as equal members, valuing and sustaining their culture and offering them full access to education and opportunity.

For twenty-five years, Indigenous Higher Education Units central to ACU’s mission have striven to make that wish a reality: Yalbalinga (NSW), Weemala (QLD) Jim-baa-yer (VIC) and Dhara Daramoolen (ACT). Through respectful personal relationships, the University’s Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, staff and local communities have engaged directly to understand issues facing Indigenous Australians, and to use that understanding to inform ACU’s learning, teaching and research.

Staff and students of Yalbalinga in NSW celebrated its twenty-seven year history by creating a mosaic mural. Using the Aboriginal red, yellow and black, and the green and blue of the Torres Strait Islanders, the mural depicts three pelicans taking flight, symbolizing students’ progress through university and action to transform their own communities.

Dale Forbes, now a Social Work student at Yalbalinga, began doing so even before he entered university. Dale suffered facial burns as a small child and struggled in care until he met Jenny and Jim, who turned his life around and led him into advocacy for kids in care through the Create Foundation. His faith and church community, positive people and good role models help him focus on the needs of others. At sixteen, he began working with the Peter Hughes Burns Foundation in retreats for burns survivors, and now runs his own Sydney Burns Survivors Support Group.

“When I see a need in the community I act,” says Dale. A little girl, run over by a truck in Sydney’s west, is now paralysed from the waist down. Dale organised a BBQ fundraiser for her and is working with Rotary to establish her trust fund. He also works with highly traumatized young people through Impact Youth Services. With a Salvation Army pilot program on the Kokoda Track, Dale took a troubled teenager in care into a third world country. Seeing the reality of life in PNG profoundly changed the teenager’s view of himself — as did attendance at the 75th anniversary Anzac Day service.

“I really believe that we can all make a difference … in creative and responsive ways.”
Naomi Wolfe Jim-baa-yer’s Academic Co-ordinator
In their Shoes: Broken Hill

This year five third-year nursing students from the North Sydney Campus undertook four-week Community Engagement placements in the far west of NSW. The experience gave them the opportunity to engage in an Indigenous rural community setting, and introduced them to concepts of identity, culture, racism and cultural safety from a holistic perspective, with a specific focus on Indigenous Australian peoples.

Before going to their placements in Indigenous communities in Broken Hill, Bourke, Brewarrina and Walgett, students participated in interactive sessions on cultural awareness, cultural respect, managing and coping in isolation, bush survival and health awareness matters.

At its Victorian campuses, ACU students and staff can deepen mutual understanding at Jim-baa-yer through co-ordinator Naomi Wolfe’s program, the Black, White and Brindle Conversation Hour. Strong Sistahs and Deadly Brothers connects Indigenous students and their community, strengthening cultural identity, and Koorie Study Night offers study space on campus and academic and personal support.

In the wider community, the Jim-baa-yer Reconciliation Prize, open to all secondary students in Victoria, draws responses to the question “What does Aboriginal Reconciliation and Australian History mean to me?” through art, music, writing, design, photography and multimedia.

In 2012 Naomi Wolfe, Jim-baa-yer’s Academic Co-ordinator, shared ACU’s Staff Award for Outstanding Community Engagement. “I’ve been mentored by Aboriginal Elders and non-Indigenous academics who believed in me, even in times when I didn’t believe in myself,” says Naomi. “The programs that we run in Jim-baa-yer are a small way of my giving back to community and those personal mentors. I really believe that we can all make a difference … in creative and responsive ways.”
New Capacities, New Nations: ICFP

Unrest and violence following the referendum supporting the independence of Timor-Leste in 1999 led to the destruction of most educational infrastructure in the nation by pro-Indonesian militias. Independence came in May 2002, and the new nation faced the challenge of rebuilding the education system in a country with two official languages, two working languages, fifteen indigenous languages, 60% of the population below 24 years of age, and minimal opportunity for teacher education.

The National University of Timor-Leste offered secondary teacher education, and some aspiring primary teachers were sent to Indonesia for a Diploma course in teaching, but there was no tertiary institution in Timor-Leste offering primary teacher education. For most prospective primary teachers, the only provision was a senior high school course that included some basic teacher training.

In 1999 the Bishop of Baucau asked the Melbourne province of the Marist Brothers to develop a teacher education program, and in 2002 the Brothers invited ACU to collaborate with them. They used donated resources and rented buildings in Baucau, the country’s second-largest population centre, to establish the Catholic Teachers’ College, which was subsequently renamed Instituto Católico para a Formação de Professores (ICFP). In 2003, ICFP began a Bachelor of Teaching (Primary) course with 53 students selected from 224 applicants. ACU committed itself to the partnership by seconding a full-time lecturer, Margie Beck, and helped to build the capacity of ICFP with course development, establishment of quality assurance processes, and provision of academic oversight for the three-year course. Most of the lecturing staff in the Institute came from outside Timor-Leste; there was no postgraduate program, and no research capacity.

Today, after a decade of commitment, consultation and engagement with the community of Timor-Leste, ICFP has attained institutional independence.

By 2012, 276 teachers had graduated from ICFP with a Bachelor of Teaching in primary education. Seven staff had completed their studies for a Master in Education degree. The Institute has been fully recognized by the National Agency of Academic Assessment and Accreditation. A new building is under construction, and with the exception of the Director, all staff members, academic and administrative, are Timorese. Lecturers are also engaged in training in risk management and quality assurance, and are further developing the research capacity of the Institute.

“Timorisation”

A priority of ICFP has been “Timorisation” — the achievement of independence as a college directed and staffed by Timorese, offering courses developed and taught by Timorese, all of whom have research capacity. ICFP is leading the way in providing teacher education and educational research in Timor Leste to support the continued growth of the Catholic and national school systems.

“ICFP offers great help to young people from Timor-Leste to become good educators in the future.”

Agate Moreira Freitas, Masters of Education student, ICFP
Fun, Fair, Respect: Future in Youth in Baucau

Future in Youth (FIY) is part of ACU’s commitment in Timor-Leste, and especially to the people of Baucau, the country’s second largest city. Dr Ross Smith, Dr Paul Callery, and IACE collaborate with local partners to use the Timorese love of Football in an after-school sport program that builds community and improves health, wellbeing and life-skills of young people. FIY fosters the values of “fun,” “fair” and “respect.” In just three years, it has reached out to more than 2500 young people, 137 coaches and 90 parents in Baucau. Results are promising.

Staff and students from the School of Exercise Science (Team ACU) have conducted the three-week program each year since 2010. Including female students in Team ACU encourages equal opportunity for Timorese girls and young women, challenging gender conventions excluding them from sport, exercise and leadership roles, and showing that females can play as skilfully as males and can hold positions of responsibility.

High drop-out rates from secondary schools and nearly 100% youth unemployment in Baucau affect young people particularly. With over 60% of the population under 24, the risk of anti-social behaviour, crime and gang violence among disaffected youth is high.

In the past, a local coach explains, “Most of the time children do not play against each other because they are afraid.” FIY is working with the Baucau community to change that situation. “The most important thing is that I can learn from ACU people about football skill and later on I can teach same thing to my kids,” says another coach, reflecting coaches’ strong motivation to help the children from their bairro (local area).

Each participant receives a T-shirt (red, yellow or black, from the colour of the national flag), a red cap and a water bottle. The shirts carry the FIY logo and “fun”, “fair,” and “respect” in Tetum. Water bottles reinforce the health benefits of drinking boiled water. This year coaches received distinctive green shirts and caps, and the program extended to two outlying villages and over 500 new players. Coaches show greater confidence in conducting training activities: “The activity is very important to us … so that we can do better in the future.”

There are encouraging indications that the community’s is willing to establish its own sporting infrastructure based on “fun”, “fair,” and “respect.” Participation, rather than competition, is a vital feature of FIY. “Seeing the kids shake hands before and after a game was a highlight for me,” says Ross Smith. “This powerful gesture of unity and respect is now an integral part of the game for these kids. They didn’t shake hands before we came. Only time will tell if this attitude becomes ingrained in the wider East Timorese community – but you’ve got to start somewhere.” Change is happening; as one young participant says: “I felt happy because we got to know our friends from other villages.”

“FIY has been a most wonderful, exciting yet very challenging and demanding social exercise.”
Dr Paul Callery, School of Exercise Science
Another young player agrees: “Setting up this competition brought us together and also we got to know each other better.”

Participation changes ACU students, too. For Samuel Agars, from Exercise Science at Strathfield campus, “My time in Baucau has inspired my future goals. I hadn’t done much work with kids before Future in Youth - and now I plan to do further study in physiotherapy with a focus on paediatrics. Eventually I want to work with children with disabilities.”

Listening to, learning from, and including the Baucau community as equal partners is vital to the success of the program.

Listening to, learning from, and including the Baucau community as equal partners is vital to the success of the program. IACE and Team ACU rely upon the advice and help of the Parish Priest, secondary school principal, District Administrator and local government leaders, leading figures in Football in Timor-Leste and local coaches to make FIY sustainable and effective. Matthew Pink, an ACU researcher in FIY, explains: “When we do this our efforts as ‘change agents’ are not misguided or perceived as the delivery of some kind of aid, instructions or ‘wisdom’ from the western world. When we get this right the engagement comes naturally and reciprocally.” Research into FIY shows that understanding the ways local leaders interpret the project is vital, because they are the gatekeepers of its success or failure. This year FIY includes a strategy to assist local coaches to keep operating after the three-week program has ended. In 2013 Team ACU may also include a member from the Faculty of Nursing to emphasize health and hygiene further.

FIY is the winner of the 2012 Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Outstanding Community Engagement.

Over the past three years, FIY has received significant financial and in-kind support from the following:

- Macquarie Bank (2010)
- Toll Holdings Timor-Leste (2011, 2012)

Building Health Capacity Together in Timor-Leste: Barefoot Nurses

Even after Timor-Leste’s independence, community health provision in Baucau remained minimal, especially for people in villages outside the city. The Barefoot Nurses program began in 2012 with the aim of further developing the skills of local health workers, building on the work of the San Antonio Clinic which was established in 2006, through the efforts of Helen Peters RN and supporters from St Joseph’s College, Sydney to promote healthy communities in the Baucau area. The San Antonio Clinic is adjacent to the San Damian clinic, operated by an Indonesian congregation, the Sisters of the Company of the Imitation of Jesus.

Two health professionals have made San Antonio Clinic an important point of contact for local villagers by making personal contact with them, being sensitive to their needs and culture, learning from them as well as educating them about ways of improving their own health, and co-operating in local health initiatives. Anastasia da Costa, a local nurse at the clinic who trained under Indonesian rule, was joined from February to September 2012 by Benilda Sanches, a Timorese nurse trained and registered in Australia and recruited by IACE. Anastasia has enhanced her skills through working with Benilda, growing significantly in self-confidence, understanding of patient care, and expertise in diagnosing, treating and referring patients. Benilda’s research has resulted in a proposal to the Ministry of Health, Timor-Leste to provide education services to health workers in Baucau and surrounding districts.

Among the clinic’s first patients were staff and students of ICFP at Baucau, but contact with Anastasia and Benilda has also engaged the local community. Anastasia records and assesses observations of patients and distributes medications and assesses their effectiveness. Benilda has provided professional development programs for local health workers such as training about wound management, hypertension, urinary tract infections, hepatitis B, basic life support, physical assessment and management of patient acuity.
With greater knowledge and understanding, patients are taking greater responsibility for their own health management. Although palliative care is minimal, and often the only treatment for patients with a terminal illness, they can gain a sense of peace and self-worth from the understanding and support of their immediate community.

Barefoot Nurses involves many organisations including the Australian Catholic University, the eMerge Foundation, the Catholic Alliance for International Development (CAID), the Salesian Fathers, Marist Brothers, Red Cross of Timor-Leste, the Order of Malta and the Company of the Imitation of Jesus in furthering the well-being of the Baucau community.

The support of these agencies for SISCa, the Integrated Community Health Care organization of the Ministry of Health in Timor-Leste, is helping to develop mobile clinics and awareness of health needs, to supply medications in remote areas, and to ensure that limited resources are used effectively.

In early November 2012 the Catholic Alliance for International Development, an umbrella organization comprising representatives of ACU, Caritas Australia and Catholic Religious Australia, met at Dare, bringing together several Australian Catholic health providers working in Timor-Leste.

The services offered by these providers range from organizational training and nutrition programs and health services in dioceses to small village-based clinics. All representatives hoped to expand services, build resources, improve capacity and make the Timorese people independent. They recognized the value of the synergy between health and education, in some cases using schools as sites for programs promoting nutrition and health education.

Representatives agreed that success stems from long-term commitment, building relationships, listening to the needs of the people, responding to the wishes of the community and developing capacity among the Timorese. They undertook to invite other health providers to the next meeting in 2013.

New Spaces, New Opportunities: Thai-Burma Border

There are an estimated 140,000 refugees in camps on the Thai-Burma border set up to handle what UNHCR calls “protracted refugee situations,” where refugees are held in camps for longer than five years. Refugees from Burma, many of them Karens fleeing extreme repression, have for some time been studying in a Diploma in Liberal Studies course offered by ACU and its partners. Using on-line and face-to-face tutoring and distance learning materials, ACU, Fairfield University (USA) and York University (Canada) offer units relevant to the needs of Burmese refugees and migrants.

Most students come from Mae La, Umpiem and Mae Ra Moo camps. As one student says, “The camp is like a ‘prison without bars’. I have had many difficulties chasing me along in my life. When I was in my homeland, ever since I was a child, I had to flee many times to the forest for survival. When I arrived in the refugee camp, I was able to finish my high school and now I have an opportunity to study through Australian Catholic University.”

Students travel from camps to a facility near Mae Sot providing on-line access and accommodation.

The second cohort in the Diploma in Liberal Studies course graduated in mid-2012. The newest cohort of forty-nine students, who began the program in September 2012, are studying English Language Communication Skills, Introduction to International Human Rights Law and Practice, Fundamentals of Management, Photography, and Introduction to International Development Studies (ACU), Leadership Theory, Psychology (Fairfield) and Global Environment Change (York). In their evaluations of previous courses, 100% of the 2012 graduates enjoyed learning, and the great majority were satisfied with course content, organization and delivery. Resident tutors were essential: “Without tutors I would have just collapsed!” writes one student.

New Hope from an Ancient Community: Education in Iraq

Sisters Samar Mikha and Azhar Koka of the Daughters of Jesus’ Sacred Heart, a Chaldean Christian congregation, have completed their studies for the degree of Master of Educational Administration at ACU’s Brisbane campus.

Originally from Baghdad, they now work in the relative safety of Ankawa, a suburb of Erbil, capital of Iraqi Kurdistan, where they will help to set up Iraq’s first Catholic university, including a hospital, open to students of all faiths.

Sisters Mikha and Koka have a strong commitment to education as part of community building after ten years of conflict in Iraq. “Education can give people a vision for the future,” says Sr. Mikha. Archbishop Bashar Warda of Erbil sees both projects as “symbols of hope for the Christian presence” in a country in which violence and tension are rife. Being Christian in Iraq is not easy, he says, but initiatives such as these are strong signals of the will of Iraqi Christians to remain in their own country and contribute to its revival.
Three students who gained entry to Australia and the USA have entered universities and gained scholarships, and 2010 and 2012 graduates are at universities in Australia, Germany, the Czech Republic and Thailand. All graduates embody one of ACU’s graduate attributes: they recognize “their responsibility to the common good.” Those who remain in camps are engaged in essential social services such as managing a camp orphanage, training young people in leadership and management, working with organizations documenting human rights abuses in Burma, teaching in camp schools, and working for UNHCR.

On 9 July 2012, the Karen Human Rights Group’s Field Director, Saw Albert, an ACU graduate, addressed the UN Security Council in a presentation framed by the Action Plan signed on June 27 by the Government of Myanmar (Burma) to end the use and recruitment of child soldiers by Tatmadaw, the Burmese military.

Table 4: Student Numbers ACU Refugee Program Thai Burma Border

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>40</td>
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ACU’s involvement in the camps began in 2003. In 2008 the project received the “Best Collaborative International Project” award of the Business and Higher Education Round Table, and in 2010 the ACU Vice-Chancellor’s Award for Outstanding Community Engagement. The comments of a student are testimony to the sense of self-worth and hope that the program brings:

“We are lucky to have this opportunity of learning... It is a wonderful chance for refugees... Even though we are migrants, even though we are illegal persons. The world is so large but in reality there is no space or place for us to stay or to live at the moment... Thank you from my family and my people.”

ACU Burmese migrant student, Ranong, southern Thailand.

Change Begins with Education: Learning Beyond Borders

“I’ve come to fully understand teaching through CE - it is not a performance but a unique opportunity to light a spark in other people...”

Kate Shuttleworth

Catherine Shuttleworth’s Masters Degree in Educational Leadership is helping to transform communities in Cambodia. She is co-founder of SeeBeyondBorders, a small not-for-profit organization that seeks to alleviate poverty through access to education, and co-ordinates a “teach the teacher” program in which Australian primary school teachers provide workshops on teaching mathematics for counterparts in rural Cambodia.

For Catherine, teaching is “a unique opportunity to light a spark in other people and work and learn alongside them as they build their own understanding.”

During the Australian school holidays the teachers hold three two-week workshop sessions in Cambodia, and in 2012 worked with 286 teachers in three districts. Since 2009, the program has built local capacity and sustainability by training 75 teachers, designated as “high quality” by Cambodian principals and educational authorities, as mentors for their colleagues.

Working through interpreters, Australian primary teachers model basic content and pedagogy in a program that accords with Cambodian curriculum and is registered with the government. Cambodian teachers have taken ownership of the program, and work with Cambodian and Australian mentors to develop it. Four Khmer employees have trained to provide several modules independently. The program motto, says Catherine, is “Change begins with education.”

“I have felt a huge sense of achievement seeing both the Cambodian and Australian teachers (and my own students) being so actively involved and enthusiastic, because they are able to take responsibility and credit for their own learning.”

Despite enormous difficulties, Cambodian teachers battle against them and, as Catherine says, “graciously accept help from other people despite their own lack of opportunities.” They and their Australian colleagues ensure that the children of Cambodia will have those opportunities.

Catherine received ACU’s 2012 Student Award for Outstanding Community Engagement.
Learning With the People of Vanuatu

In July 2012 six Education students, chosen from Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary courses at ACU’s Strathfield campus, worked for two weeks in Vanuatu in a program sponsored by ACU, Rotary and the Government of Vanuatu. They worked at a school in Arep, an outlying district. "The island we were on was quite small and remote, and didn’t have running water or electricity," says Jess, one of the students.

They encountered a different culture, unfamiliar languages and living conditions, and classrooms without Smartboards, internet or textbooks. Half the school is taught in English and half is taught in French — both second languages for the children, who all speak the local creole language, Bislama. Teacher education is different too: “Teachers build up their hours of experience in a school and then, when they can afford to, they go to a teachers’ college,” Jess explains.

The ACU students worked within the existing school curriculum, supporting the local teachers, and teaching outside their subject areas if necessary, and participated in extra-curricular sport programs, community activities and celebrations. They made close links with the school and community in the short time that they were there. “Working with the students … was very rewarding,” says Jess. “I found they valued the classroom experience much more because not everyone gets the opportunity to go to school.”

ACU hopes to continue engagement in the Pacific Island community, along with Rotary Australia World Community Service.

Health Buddies: Vanuatu

Third-year nursing students from North Sydney and Canberra campuses undertook a 17-day Community Engagement / Community Nursing placement in Vanuatu in June and July 2012. The students were divided into groups.

One group buddied with local nursing students at Vila Central Hospital, working on the paediatric ward, maternity ward and outpatient clinic, and the second group in its maternal and infant outreach clinic. The third group participated in home stay in Emua, where their mornings were spent at either the local outreach clinic doing infant health checks or visiting local schools doing school health checks. In the afternoons, the students at Emua were involved with activities in the village, such as providing English reading and writing classes for the school children, and teaching basic hygiene, infection control, basic first aid, and wound care to the local adults.

All participating students are required to raise funds for local needs prior to going to Vanuatu. This year their efforts went towards uniforms for the Vila Central Hospital nurses, printing of a locally produced Breastfeeding publication through Won Smol Bag, and a roof on a Catholic primary school in a remote part of the island of Pentecost.

“I found they (the children) valued the classroom experience much more because not everyone gets the opportunity to go to school.”

Jess, ACU Bachelor of Education student
Education for the Whole Community: Ballarat Learning for Life

Community educational initiatives in the City of Ballarat range across the generations from pre-school early childhood education to adult tertiary study. ACU’s faculties are directly involved with local schools, The Smith Family, government organizations, City of Ballarat staff and Playgroup Victoria in education for the whole community.

Early Years Plan

The Ballarat community is developing early learning opportunities for young children and families who may be marginalized and financially disadvantaged by engaging them in literacy and numeracy programs that are innovative, grounded in research and carefully evaluated. In 2011 the City launched the Municipal Early Years Plan, and three ACU staff, Clare Schaper, Karen McLean and Ann Gervasoni, are currently members of a sub-committee working towards a Literacy and Numeracy Early Years Plan with partners including the Smith Family and Centacare.

Activities such as creative play and physical, literacy, and numeracy education help children to link their learning experiences in early years to their educational experience when they start school. The Early Years Plan also seeks to provide an environment in which families can come to understand the importance of early childhood education by actively participating in their children’s play and learning in playgroups.

Eleven second-year Bachelor of Education Early Childhood and Primary students from ACU are working in a pilot program to build the community’s capacity to prepare children for school. They facilitate supported weekly playgroups in five primary schools in Ballarat. Under the guidance of a playgroup coordinator, the students help to establish, develop, resource, and implement these playgroups, gaining valuable experience in the birth to early years setting and engaging with the Victorian government’s Early Years Framework. “I loved working with the parents,” says one student. “It gave you a chance to actually work with the parents in conjunction with the children, and …I now know how much we do and how much we should leave up to the parents.” The professional results of engagement are positive: “I learned how to talk to the parents and build relationships with the parents, not just with kids.” Another student enjoyed “the positive relationship. Because we already knew what the school was like a lot of parents would ask what the school was like and we could tell them about [it].” The schools involved also benefit from stronger connections with the local community and better sharing of information among children, families, early childhood educators, out-of-school-hours carers, and prep teachers.

The Early Years Plan is especially relevant to ACU and Early Years Education as it brings to the classrooms current research on the importance of play-based learning in the…
intellectual, physical, social and creative learning in children. The partnership of ACU, City of Ballarat Best Start Project, Catholic Education Office Ballarat, Playgroup Victoria, primary schools and government organizations aims to extend this project to provide more families with access to playgroups, children’s services and early learning opportunities.

Primary Literacy Education

Tell Tales and Digi Tales run as four-week after-school programs in a range of schools, especially in low SES locations. Tell Tales is an elective unit for 27 ACU pre-service teachers reading and writing stories with Kindergarten and Grade 1 children and their parents. Digi Tales is a core unit for 47 ACU students working with Grade 3 and 4 children creating stories using digital photography, the internet, narration, and music.

Primary Mathematics Education

Individual Learning Plans: In collaboration with The Smith Family, 20 pre-service teachers from ACU’s Ballarat campus came together to assist children from disadvantaged backgrounds learn mathematics successfully. Under the oversight of Dr Ann Gervasoni, the pre-service teachers assessed primary school students using a Mathematics Assessment Interview and developed Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) to promote the children’s learning. The ILPs were then distributed to the students’ parents, classroom teachers and The Smith Family tutors.

Parent Mathematics Workshops: ACU pre-service teachers were also involved in research, planning and implementation of a parent workshop to encourage and assist parents to help their children learn mathematics. Ideas discussed during the workshop focused on basic mathematical concepts such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, time, length, mass and geometry. The pre-service teachers developed brochures providing ideas for the parents to use at home, and parents received a certificate to acknowledge their participation.

Maths Clubs: In partnership with three Ballarat schools and tutors from The Smith Family, pre-service teachers from ACU conducted two after-school Maths Clubs for approximately 40 children and received positive responses from parents, teachers and children. Each ACU pre-service student worked with two or three pupils and developed a specialized curriculum based on games specifically aimed at improving the confidence and knowledge of their young Maths Buddies. They welcomed the opportunity for their work and expertise to be put to direct use in the community, rather than working on hypothetical assignments and learning activities. Their work directly links with ACU’s vision to create graduates who are socially engaged and involved in making positive differences in local communities.

University Education in the Humanities

Clemente Ballarat: Named after its location, the program is Ballarat’s response to the needs of community members. Like programs developed in eight other locations in Australia, Clemente Ballarat delivers university education in the humanities to community members facing multiple disadvantages. Ballarat is home to three university campuses and has a sense of identity and community that has fostered commitment to education among its citizens. Delivery of the course is embedded in the community, and a partnership comprising ACU, the City of Ballarat, The Smith Family, Ballarat Library, United Way, Centacare, and the University of Ballarat provides the social and educational supports that students require in undertaking tertiary study. Clemente Ballarat received a Community Education Award from the Australian College of Educators in February 2013, and features in a separate section on the Clemente program in this report.
A Tale of Three Cities: Learning Support

**Fitzroy, Melbourne**

In 2003 a group of Vietnamese mothers from Atherton Gardens Housing Estate in Fitzroy established a Homework Support Program (HSP) for their children, with 18 children and one tutor. The Vietnamese Mothers’ Association, ACU, The Smith Family and Sacred Heart Primary School are partners in the HSP, which now includes 127 children, mainly from the Horn of Africa, Vietnam and China, and 110 volunteer tutors, most of whom are Third Year B Ed students from ACU, for whom tutoring forms part of their Community Engagement unit. Nursing and Law students also enjoy working in the program.

On Mondays HSP caters for 40 children from African backgrounds and from several schools; on Wednesdays the remainder of the children (all from Sacred Heart Primary School) attend at two sites. All children in the program enjoy the hospitality of a snack organized by the Vietnamese Mothers’ Association at the end of each session. All are provided with extension activities, books and other resources if they complete their homework early, and a small group on Wednesday do reflection through the arts. Two laptop computers and the internet are now available to Year 6 students under careful supervision by tutors. Sacred Heart School has also introduced a fortnightly grid covering all curriculum areas to help children to focus on tasks during their sessions.

Research in 2010 by ACU Master of Psychology students, Lesley-Anne Elbourne and Rebecca Datson, described the program outcomes that helped the HSP win the Victorian category of the Schools First State Impact Award in that year. The HSP is more than an educational program; it develops and sustains a sense of community among children, parents, teachers and tutors.

That research is confirmed by the results of research in 2012. A survey of 111 participants shows an increase in confidence (76%) and new friends (61%), improvement in mathematics (75%) and literacy skills (68%), and agreement that having a tutor helps (90%). Positive attitudes are an outcome too: 81% think that learning is important and that staying at school offers the opportunity to achieve what they want, and 73% consider attending university a possibility. They like HSP (82%) and would like to return in 2103 (87%).

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For children, HSP provides a secure learning space (“I feel safe”), and the opportunity to seek help with academic tasks from tutors but also to give it to peers, to form friendships that offer emotional support (“I like friends because you can speak to them when you’re crying”) and to make connections through games and sport (“it helps you make friends”). Parents report that children are happy and more confident because of HSP (“Homework club is the BEST time of my life!” “I like to be here because it is fun and helpful”). They value the relationships children form with peers from...
different backgrounds and with adults outside the family — connections that they believe contribute to children’s sense of belonging in a varied society, their moral development and their orientation to learning.

Teachers believe that the program reduces racism and prejudice in the wider community, and report closer connections with participants’ parents and families. Participants show improved academic performance, behaviour and peer relationships, promoting a sense of ownership and of belonging to a group. Further, the children’s involvement with ACU encourages them to consider the possibility of a tertiary education.

For parents, HSP eases the pressures caused by lack of knowledge of how to help their children and by crowded accommodation. In seeking information from tutors they practise their English and learn ways of helping their children; in exchanges with other parents they form supportive friendships across cultures and languages (“Different nations, one community” — “although we speak different languages, we come together”) and gain a sense of belonging to the Australian community.

ACU student tutors benefit from working in a one-to-one relationship with children from different cultural backgrounds and with vulnerable children. They provide a consistent relationship with children, modelling ways of learning and behaving. They also act as role models for parents in helping their children.

Richmond, Melbourne

The Richmond Tutoring Program was formed in 2010 as a partnership of ACU, The Smith Family and the Australian Vietnamese Mothers’ Association to provide after-school tutoring on one afternoon per week for primary school children from the Richmond Housing Estate. The children come from non-English-speaking families and a variety of schools, and most are Vietnamese, but an African family joined in this year. In 2012, 40 children from grades 1 to 6 were enrolled, and ACU and Melbourne Grammar School combined to provide thirty volunteer tutors to work with them. While the focus of tutoring is on literacy and numeracy, tutors also provided mentoring, social role modelling and connection and emotional support for their students over the course of the year.

The program provides children with a hospitable snack and a folder with English and Mathematics material suited to their ages, and also holds regular information sessions for parents to enable them to help their children.

As one mother says of her daughter: “Before, when Rachel came home from school, she came with homework she didn’t understand. When the tutor explains it, she gets it right away. Her teacher told me she has started to be more open and participates more in class discussion now.”

Rachel enjoys attending tutoring: “My favourite tutor is Alison. She is funny. She makes it easy to learn. I like it when I can make new friends from different schools and learn more.” Her mother agrees: “It means Rachel gets the support we can’t provide her. Rachel is a shy girl. The tutor helped her to get more confident.”

Pupils from the Richmond program are already moving on to secondary schooling, and tutors from Year 11 and 12 at Melbourne Grammar have just conducted a successful session on transition from Year 6 to Year 7. Partners in the program may extend the tutoring program to Year 7 students in 2013.

Sydney

Students from ACU’s Strathfield campus are making personal connections with a wide variety of young people in their local communities through learning support across the cultural, linguistic, religious and social mosaic of western Sydney. The students are involved in learning support programs with 190 school pupils at eight sites (five in the inner west, two at Blacktown-Mount Druitt, and one in Campbeltown-Macquarie Fields).

ACU has been providing learning support in the Strathfield area since 2010. A three-way partnership of The Smith Family, Strathfield Council and ACU created the Strathfield Homework Club, particularly for students from a non-English-speaking background, that runs from Strathfield’s main library. Since 2010, 20 students from the School of Education have done their community engagement placements at the Homework Club. In mid-2011 there was a change of roles and partnership members, with Metro Migrant Centre joining the group.

In 2012 the program extended into an after-school program known as the Special Tutoring Assistance Program in the inner western suburbs at Homebush Public School, Homebush West Primary School, Ashfield Primary School and Hampden Park Primary, Lakemba. The program is more strongly linked to the community because while ACU students work with the children, Metro MRC and Strathfield Council work with their parents. Twenty ACU students were involved in these schools from Week 2 of Term 2 and until November 23, and eight ACU students also taught at the Adventist College in Strathfield. All the students benefited greatly from their experience, and built strong relationships with the schools and organizations they worked with.

In 2012 ACU continued its many years of partnership with Loyola Senior High at Mt Druitt and Josephite Community Aid at Seven Hills in the Blacktown-Mount Druitt area, and its three-year involvement with Guise Primary in the Campbeltown-Macquarie Fields area. Twenty-four ACU students contributed to tutoring programs facilitated by the schools.
Brisbane

Learning Support Brisbane

The learning support program in Brisbane has already made good progress in engaging community support and involvement. Twenty ACU students are providing learning support for school students at Nundah and Banyo. At these sites the program attracts students and parents from lower SES backgrounds. At Nundah, community meetings are being held to develop partnerships and to extend support for the program.

Many students are aspirational, and are the first in their families to reach Year 12. In addition to learning support, activities such as art are re-engaging students with schoolwork. At Earnshaw High School, meetings are being held to plan a basketball program to attract disengaged students and to develop their skills. Parents, too, gain socially from the HSP. At Banyo mothers meet in the library for the whole session and have created a support network for themselves. The program is already leading to research: two Fourth Year ACU students are devoting their Action Research unit to investigating the effects of HSP participation on self-esteem and engagement.

Open to New Opportunities: Tongan Community and ACU

During the past twenty years, the Tongan community within Australia has steadily increased in size and visibility. Tongans are well known in sporting arenas, the security industry, transport and trades, but community leader James Motulalo believes that higher education is now a vital avenue to Tongan advancement in the Australian community.

On November 17, 2012 he welcomed more than forty Tongan families and their friends to an Open Day at ACU Strathfield. “In order for us as a group … to progress and have a voice,” said James, “we must embrace this opportunity.” James was attracted by ACU’s openness to engagement with its local communities.

Strathfield campus already has six Tongan students, studying early childhood, primary and secondary education, and three of them described their university experiences. They are pioneering a close relationship with the Tongan community, and ACU has much to learn with them as the relationship develops.

One of the visitors, Stan Afeaki, would like to have the “comfort that I am changing society for the best… I would really like some information on options at ACU regarding teaching.”

James Motulalo thanked ACU staff and Tongan students for “an historical Open Day… I’m quite sure that university will become another option for us … and generations to come. We are fortunate to be at the starting point.”
Art from the Inside Goes Outside

“Art from the Inside” brings to the Brisbane community the enjoyment and benefit of art works by people who may otherwise be isolated. The exhibition celebrates the creativity of women and men in Australian prisons. It provides an opportunity for their families and the public to be inspired by their work, and enables the artists, ACU staff and students to reach mutual goals of building capacity and improving wellbeing. Many artists who have developed artistic and business skills while in custody continue that development upon release. Women from the Helena Jones Correctional Facility catered for the exhibition, using the new skills that assist them in making the transition into the wider society.

In May and June 2012 the Peter W. Sheehan Gallery on ACU’s Brisbane Campus hosted the exhibition of paintings, sculpture, installations and ceramics curated by Norton Russell. The exhibition supported therapy conducted within prisons. The Gallery will host the next Art from the Inside exhibition in May 2013.

Healthy Communities: Learning through a Local Mentoring Program

The future health and wellbeing of every community depends upon the involvement of young people whose energy is positively and constructively directed.

The 2’s Company Mentoring Program began on May 5, 2012 with the aim of supporting young people, many from housing estates in the neighbourhood of ACU’s Fitzroy campus, and helping them to re-engage with the community and to follow pathways into education, training and employment.

Following this successful beginning, a second group of six mentees entered the matching program in October. IACE is monitoring and evaluating the 2’s Company program in 2012 and 2013 in order to provide program partners with research data to inform practice, decision-making, and further development of mentoring programs in the Yarra area.

There will be further opportunities for ACU students to be involved in mentoring future cohorts.

A Mediaeval Fayre, Forsooth — and For Fun

The School of Arts and Sciences (Qld) annual Medieval Fayre was held on 14 May 2012, bringing university and primary school students and the local community together in learning and sharing Music, Drama, and the Visual Arts at the ACU McAuley Campus (Brisbane).

Since 2005, children from Year 3 at Earnshaw College in Brisbane have joined the McAuley Medieval Fayre as part of ACU’s mission to explore ways the community can be part of the University’s teaching and learning. In 2012 children from Year 4 at St Kevin’s School, Geebung took part also. The children make their own costumes, using household materials and pure ingenuity and always arrive at the Fayre looking like true knights, ladies and townsfolk of the medieval times.

Dr Delyse Ryan, Senior Lecturer in Drama, commented on the benefits to the community and university: “The children added a sense of occasion to the event and their enjoyment definitely encouraged our students to perform to the best of their abilities,” she said.
The program brings children, parents and ACU students together when holidays remove the structure of the school week...

Enjoying Fitzroy: ACU’s Holiday Program

Each year ACU students and the IACE Relations Coordinator organize a holiday program as part of the University’s continuous educational involvement with its local community. The program has grown each year since it began in 2009 with 60 children.

On July 11, 2012, 105 children aged between 5 and 12 attended, and so did some of their parents. They come from Sacred Heart and Fitzroy Primary Schools, and most attend the Homework Support Program at Atherton Gardens and the Richmond Tutoring Program, where ACU students regularly work with them.

Many participants are from refugee backgrounds and originate from the Horn of Africa. Some have a history of disrupted education; a few are identified as being at risk of disengaging from school. The program brings children, parents and ACU students together when holidays remove the structure of the school week and offer time for relaxation and enjoyment in the neighbourhood.

There are opportunities for volunteers, children and parents to relate through activities that focus on developing language skills in ways that are socially inclusive and culturally appropriate. Learning activities oriented towards success build children’s confidence and encourage healthy life choices. Everyone has a fun-filled, action-packed day, understanding that people from ACU, Atherton Gardens and Richmond are neighbours and have much to learn from each other.

The children enjoyed a jungle-themed day, with a safari treasure hunt, Zumba classes, face-painting and even a chance to handle live lizards and other reptiles. “This is my favourite day,” says Aleu, one of the children. It was a happy day for a parent too: “When my children go to ACU it’s a holiday for me too. Thank you.”

Thirty-five ACU students worked on the day, along participants from the National Australia Bank, and 62% of the children from the Homework Support program attended. Outstanding support from partners and corporate donors like Crayola made the day a memorable one for the Fitzroy community.

There are longer-term benefits. Mary Campbell, Relations Co-ordinator for IACE explains: “A day of fun helps to demystify university life for these children. The program raises educational aspirations as children begin to see that tertiary education is a reality well within their reach.”
Connecting Communities CONTINUED

Power of Shared Music: Hearts in Harmony Melbourne

“Hearts in Harmony” is a Melbourne-based program that seeks to promote social inclusion and social justice and to engage the whole community in creative arts. The power of shared music dissolves barriers through performance, participation and enjoyment, and friendships and connections that grow from it continue across time and distance.

IACE helped to establish the venture and find funding for it, and ensured the involvement of ACU students in bringing people of all ages and backgrounds together. In April and November the Hearts in Harmony community music days drew choirs and instrumentalists from all over the city to join in making music at Federation Square and ACU Melbourne.

People aged from four to ninety-four, from many cultural, language and faith backgrounds and all levels of musical ability, attended both days. In some items three generations of singers performed. Hearts in Harmony’s ACU participants came from IACE staff, ACU lecturers, Early Childhood and Primary education students (involved as part of their community engagement), along with people of all kinds drawn together by making music as a community, and looking forward to doing so again in 2013.

Bree Monks, IACE’s Community Engagement assistant, comments: “Most of us are not aware of how it feels to be excluded, to be left out socially, emotionally or otherwise. Hearts in Harmony expresses the very essence of social justice, inclusion, engagement, and the breaking of all social and emotional barriers. Everyone is welcome. Everyone is included. Every form of engagement with the music is appreciated and valued.

“Hearts in Harmony community music” says it all.

Moving into a new life: Future in Youth at Milperra State High School Brisbane

A partnership of ACU and Milperra State High School, Brisbane, Future in Youth began in 2012 under the guidance of ACU researcher Matthew Pink, building on his experience of community engagement though sport in Timor-Leste. Students at Milperra are predominantly from refugee backgrounds and are developing their English language skills before integration into mainstream high schools.

Three ACU Exercise Science undergraduates, Holly Wescombe, Hannah Jeffs, and Virginia Mitchell engaged with Milperra pupils each week during the school term, offering them a chance to enjoy a break from working on language skills while at the same time finding out about Australian sports.

“We learnt how important playing sport and participating as part of a group can be … to build communication, trust and teamwork,” says Holly. “Sport and physical activity … build more than just fitness and technical skills.” Despite a range of languages and limited English among the pupils, they showed a high level of comprehension. “I was constantly reminded how resilient and talented these children are,” Holly adds, “and I have developed a passion for something I thought I might not be interested in.”

One female student was very reluctant to join in activities because of lack of suitable footwear and cultural expectations about dress. The ACU students gently invited her into the space, with little success until the joy of organized movement overcame her hesitation.

To their delight she arrived one day wearing joggers, going on to become one of the most active participants in the engagement. Matthew reflects: “If a shared space is gently negotiated within community engagement, showing respect for the individual and a little encouragement, much can be achieved.” He hopes to extend the program next year.

Community through Cricket: Western Sydney

In the highly urban multicultural mosaic of western Sydney, sport is also a very effective way to promote healthy exercise and build community cohesion, trust and teamwork.

During May and June 2012 five members of the ACU Cricket Club gave over sixty primary school students in the inner west the chance to develop their cricketing skills over six weeks under the supervision of a qualified coach. In partnership with Cricket Australia, Metro MRC and the Lankan Islanders Cricket Club, the students led the youngsters in games and activities that built friendships as well as skills in an international sport that transcends political, cultural and social differences.
Research is an essential element of the work of IACE, because its approach to engagement is based on Catholic social teaching, and on evidence that it always collects and shares with the communities with which it is engaged.

Its multidisciplinary research, aligned with the ACU’s research concentrations and conducted in partnership with other universities and non-government and Church agencies, enhances the University’s research capacity and scholarship and provides opportunities for staff and higher degree students to develop theirs through involvement in community engagement projects.

ACU’s faith- and values-based contributions to public policy discourse, in which the Church’s intellectual tradition is central, are informed through IACE’s engagement with community: for example, the implications for national higher education, social inclusion and research policy embodied in the ARC Linkage Grant Report Social inclusion through community embedded, socially-supported university education, published in October 2012.

In 2012 IACE also collaborated with the Catholic Alliance for International Development in implementing a survey of Catholic organisations and agencies working in Timor-Leste. The survey outcomes include a proposal for a meeting of on-the-ground Catholic health organisations in Timor-Leste to consider the resources the organizations require, how they can work together, and the extent to which they are fulfilling local needs. Further development of this proposal will require consultation with the government of Timor-Leste.

Some kinds of evidence are easier to collect than others. Dollars and hours spent, numbers of people involved and their levels of knowledge can be quantified fairly readily, and so can levels of use of services, participation rates, and volunteering. Less tangible evidence is just as important, perhaps even more so, but harder to collect. IACE has been careful to seek it nonetheless: changes in such matters as self-perception, connectedness to others, meaningful activity, safety and sense of agency are crucial to marginalized and disadvantaged individuals and communities — the people for whom IACE was founded. This kind of evidence, however, can also help in finding quantitative outcomes, such as measures of the economic benefit of the Clemente Australia program to the Australian community, published in the ARC Linkage Grant Report referred to above.

The following section of the Report lists recent research on Moving Together Beyond Disadvantage, Community Engagement, and Capacity Building and International Development.

### Research Projects

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<tr>
<th>Investigators</th>
<th>Grant</th>
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<tr>
<td>Associate Professor Peter Howard</td>
<td>Social inclusion through community embedded, socially supported university education 2009-2012</td>
<td>Australian Research Council Linkage Grant</td>
<td>2009 $54,013, 2010 $78,998, 2011 $31,735, 2012 $18,909, Total $180,655</td>
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<td>Professor Jude Butcher</td>
<td>Clemente Australia Older Australians 2010-2012</td>
<td>Department of Health and Ageing</td>
<td>$230,000</td>
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<td>Associate Professor Peter Howard</td>
<td>Religious Literacy Assessment Project 2011-2012</td>
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<td>2011 $40,000, 2012 $45,000, Total $85,000</td>
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a) Refereed Chapters


b) Refereed Articles


c) Refereed Conference Proceedings


d) Research Project Reports


e) Non-refereed Book and Chapter


f) Non-Refereed Conference Presentations


Recognition and Celebration: Community Engagement Awards

Vice-Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Community Engagement

2012 Award winner: **Future in Youth, Timor-Leste**, a program from the School of Exercise Science, Faculty of Health Sciences. Future in Youth is an innovative community capacity building program that engages children and youth through sport.

Staff Award for Outstanding Community Engagement

The joint winners for the 2012 are:

- **Ms Naomi-Cathryn (Naomi) Wolfe**, Academic Coordinator, Jim-ba-ayer for her work with Indigenous Higher Education programs that provide significant community engagements for the benefit of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

- **Mr Mark Mahony**, Library Support Manager for his work with Benjamin Andrew Street Library which supports library facilities in over sixty locations, including homeless shelters, refuges, prisons. The Library fosters literacy and promotes the dignity of the human person by providing nourishment for the mind and soul.

Student Award for Outstanding Community Engagement

2012 Award winner: **Ms Catherine Shuttleworth**, a Master of Educational Leadership student, co-founder of SeeBeyondBorders, a not-for-profit organisation that improves access to quality education for children in Cambodia.


Community Engagement Prayer

Blessed are you, Lord our God. You call each of us to life in this wondrous world, and invite us to work with you and others to establish justice, to promote the dignity of all people and the well-being of all creation.

We have been graced to hear the Good News of Jesus and desire to respond, through who we are and the work that we do.

Give us hope and strength to be your witnesses in our world. Make us agents of transformation for those we walk with. Give us ‘a grace-filled attentiveness to people, contexts and outcomes’ so that together with all women and men of goodwill we might usher in your Kingdom, on earth as it is in heaven.

Amen