



2020 YEARBOOK

Transformational leadership across the Northern Mallee



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Northern Mallee Leaders 2020



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Our Mission

Developing people in active business and community leadership roles

NML Inc. Committee of Management

Justin Nicholas – Chair
Mike Mooney – Deputy Chair
Jay Smith (LMCLP 2013) – Treasurer
Mark Jenkins – Secretary
Eliza Allomes (NMLP 2019)
Cristiane Dean
Stuart Mensch
Graeme Thornton
Jennifer Zappia (NMLP 2019)

Our Vision

Transformational leadership across the Northern Mallee.

NML Inc. Staff – 2020

Nardia Sheriff (NMLP 2009)
Carrie Dichiera (NMLP 2008)
Jodi Reynolds

Photography

NMLP 2020 Participants
Nardia Sheriff
Kaitlyn Fasso-Opie (NMLP 2014)
Rod Robinson

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CHAIR'S REPORT



Participants in the 2020 Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP) have experienced challenges unlike any previous year and I'd like to applaud them for maintaining their resolve through difficult times. It is a great pleasure to congratulate them and recognise their tremendous achievement in finally graduating from the program.

Leadership is not a single step, but a commitment to a journey and our 2020 graduates have learnt skills and had exposure to the various intricacies of life in the Northern Mallee. As they continue their respective leadership journeys many opportunities will appear on each graduate's unique path and the NML family are excited to see what the future holds for them.

The strength of the program is dependent on our commitment to each other. Graduates have benefited from their involvement and it's important they employ the skills and confidence they've acquired to support the program into the future - and improve liveability across our region. With more than 200 graduates since the NMLP was established in 2008, we have a powerful network capable of achieving great things for our community.

The influence of COVID-19 meant the 2020 NMLP participants missed some of the activities and travel experiences of past programs. We must temper this disappointment and consider the experiential learning outcomes - it is as real a leadership challenge as any program has faced. Every crisis creates opportunity, and the 2020 program was fortunate to have had virtual access to some truly amazing presenters, many of which would usually be outside the reach of our program.

The support 2020 participants have given each other during the past 14 months is commendable. However, completion of the program requires substantial support from all aspects of a participant's life. I pass on a special thanks to all families, friends and employers for their contribution to our participants' success.

On top of the emotional support that helps participants through the program, it is the financial support which is crucial to the delivery of an engaging and positive program. I'd like to thank Southern Cross Farms, Euston Club Resort, Lower Murray Water, Mildura Health Fund, MASP, Mulcahy & Co, Ouyen Inc., Mildura Deakin Rotary and the 2019 NMLP Graduates for their wonderful contributions which have supported 20 NML participants through the 2020 program.

Further to the sponsorship of individual participants, the financial support of program sponsors is invaluable. Program fees are a small percentage of the actual costs to deliver the program and we are privileged to have the support of the Mildura Rural City Council and MADEC Mildura.

Our program would not exist without generous funding from the Victorian State Government. Support for community leadership programs across the state is a huge investment in the future of our regions and I'm pleased the outcomes are recognised by all political parties and government departments.

Katrina Baddeley, Regional Leadership Australia CEO, is a tireless supporter of our program and she has been instrumental in moulding the regional leadership programs into an effective and valuable community asset.

Our Committee of Management (CoM) experienced many changes in 2020 and I'd like to thank outgoing members Ian Ballantyne (past Chair), Racheal Fyfe (past Chair), Jenny Garone (past Treasurer) and Louise Williams for their contributions. I'm looking forward to working with our current CoM - Mike Mooney, Mark Jenkins, Stuart Mensch, Cristiane Deane, Jay Smith (LMCLP 2013), Jennifer Zappia (NMLP 2019), Graeme Thornton and Eliza Allomes (NMLP 2019) during the year ahead.

A special thanks is reserved for our tireless staff and their extraordinary contribution. With limited resources and all manner of challenges, they continue to deliver an outstanding program. Nardia Sheriff juggled an extraordinary load in 2020 and will be a huge loss to our organisation. Carrie Dichiera's dedication has been remarkable and Kaitlyn Fasso-Opie has quickly made a great impression since commencing as our 2021 Program Leader in January. We are fortunate to have such great people driving NML Inc forward.

It is rewarding for us all to see the NMLP thrive and witness the impact it has on the lives of our participants and those they will lead and inspire into the future. Thank you to everybody who is part of our story.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Nicholas', written over a light blue background.

Justin Nicholas
Chair
Northern Mallee Leaders Inc.

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT



The greatest lessons in leadership, and in life, can be learnt in the face of adversity. Our graduating cohort certainly encountered all manner of adversity during their participation in the 2020 Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP) and the team at Northern Mallee Leaders Inc. (NML Inc.) are incredibly proud of what they have been able to overcome and still achieve despite the challenges that stood in their way. Well done to the class of 2020!

What began as a year full of excitement and anticipation, an NMLP year much like any other, quickly turned into something vastly different where breaking news and press conferences became a daily occurrence and we all paid attention. The world stopped and so too the 2020 NMLP. When the dust settled and it became clear that sacrifices would need to be made, the 2020 NMLP and its participants entered uncharted territory. The use of Zoom quickly became second nature to all and the challenge of being 'ok' with not knowing what lay ahead was felt by everyone.

For more than six months, the 2020 program was delivered virtually but many concepts remained the same regardless of the format; to be challenged, to become comfortable with being uncomfortable, to accept what you cannot change and the courage to change what you can. Our graduates may have had their ups and downs throughout this process but so do all participants of the NMLP no matter the year. It is a testament to this graduating group that, upon commencing in-person program days in October, their bonds and support for one another were still abundant, no one gave up. This encompasses true leadership which is not about position or title but about actions and leading by example. The fact that each 2020 participant was willing to see their NMLP journey through to the end, despite adversity, and support each other along the way, demonstrates the strength of leadership within this group.

The success of our 2020 cohort also demonstrates another aspect of leadership; inspiring others to do better and be better, none of which would have been possible for our graduates without the unwavering contribution of their Program Manager and former NML Inc. Executive Officer Nardia Sheriff (NMLP 2009). Nardia set out every day to inspire and empower this group, giving everything she had and then some to the participants and the program. Nardia left everything out on the field and as the 2020 program concludes it provides the opportunity to reflect on the impact that she has had, not only on this year's graduates, but the 44 graduates from previous program years as well. Thank you for making a difference to the people within our community Nardia, your presence will be sorely missed at NML Inc. but at least we still get to keep you as a member of our graduate network!

Acknowledgement and thanks must also go to our NML Inc. Committee of Management (CoM) who have dedicated an unprecedented amount of their time to NML Inc. over the past year. Our members volunteer their services to ensure the success of our organisation. The impacts of the pandemic, combined with the challenges in securing long-term funding has seen an additional load being carried by the CoM, none more so than our Chair Justin Nicholas. Thank you, Justin and all our members, Mike, Jay, Mark, Eliza, Cris, Stuart, Graeme and Jen and our outgoing members Ian, Jenny, Racheal and Louise, for your unwavering support and dedication to NML Inc. and the program, our future successes will be in no small part to the time and effort that you have contributed in 2020.

To our sponsors big and small, thank you! All contributions to NML Inc. and the NMLP be it financial, or in-kind; Every. Bit. Counts. and it is the relationships that we have with you that are integral to our future sustainability. We thank you for your continued support and belief in our program and look forward to working with you throughout 2021 and beyond.

And finally, to our 2020 NMLP Graduates, congratulations! You did it! I'm sure at times it didn't feel like you would, but your NMLP journey is a testament to overcoming adversity and I hope that you know you are better leaders because of it, Northern Mallee Leaders certainly believes you are. You are now part of a graduate network that is more than 200 people strong. An asset to our region that continues to be a positive contribution to leadership in the northern Mallee. Having participated in the NMLP in 2008, I can assure you that your leadership journey does not end here, it merely begins.

Carrie Dichiera
Operations Manager
Northern Mallee Leaders Inc.
NMLP 2008

PROGRAM MANAGER'S REPORT



Resilience. Flexibility. Adaptability. These are words that we have heard a lot to describe the year that was 2020. In fact, they are words that I uttered frequently, if not to the participants directly, then certainly to myself as we pivoted and altered nearly every aspect of our 2020 Program due to COVID-19.

Although 2020 began with the familiar mix of excitement and anticipation as the newest participants commenced their leadership journey, the year was anything but familiar. With an Opening Retreat and two program days under their belt, participants were soon thrust into a world of constant evolution, endless Zoom meetings and significant change with no real return to normal in sight. Change can be challenging and 2020 was undeniably challenging for participants as they were forced to create ways keep the camaraderie alive and maintain the motivation to continue in the face of uncertainty and upheaval. 2020 was also challenging for the NML team as we quickly scrambled to work out how we take a hands-on, experiential program and convert it to an online experience that would create value, foster growth, and replace content that participants were invariably going to miss.

There were moments when participants questioned their commitment to the program and whether the upheaval was worth it in amongst the changes that were occurring in their lives. But although their world had been turned upside down, the participants of the 2020 Program remained steadfast in their commitment. They made a choice to embrace new opportunities presented because of COVID-19 such as the virtual Canberra program day and numerous skills workshops that had never been delivered before. They learned to realign their expectations and appreciate what was possible instead of lamenting what they had lost.

Was it all rainbows and skittles? Absolutely not. I can assure you that it has not been easy and there have been moments of frustration, tears, disappointment, and anger. There was sadness about the things that they were not able to experience and aspects of the program that could not be delivered. There were feelings of being ripped off and disappointment that things they were hoping for were not able to occur. But despite all of this or perhaps because of it, they were able to develop new skills in a real-life experiential environment. After all, if ever there was a way to teach resilience, flexibility, and adaptability, then surely a global pandemic is it.

With the graduation of the 2020 program, our network of graduates grows to over 200. Our community welcomes 20 more individuals who have demonstrated their commitment and who will now continue their leadership journeys beyond the structure of a program.

As I wrap up my final report as a former Executive Officer, and Program Manager of NML Inc., I cannot leave without saying thank you. Northern Mallee Leaders has been part of my life for more than 10 years. As a participant of the 2009 program, as a member of the inaugural Graduates committee and as a Program Manager and Executive Officer over the past three years, I have had a front row seat to witness the benefits and impact that this program has brought to individuals, organisations, and our broader community. As I take a step back from the program and organisation that I love, it is important that I leave with some acknowledgements:

To the NML Inc. Committee of Management, I thank you for your continued support and giving me the opportunity to share my vision to position NML as the go-to for all things community leadership and importantly, seeing the 2020 Program through to its conclusion. We create assets for our community so that it may continue to prosper and grow no matter what chaos and change is thrown its way, and I am so proud to have contributed to this.

There are too many things to say and not enough word count to be able to convey my thanks and admiration for Carrie Dichiera. Although you toil away behind the scenes often unnoticed Carrie, I see you. You have been integral to the success and growth of participants over the past three years, and you will be integral to NML Inc. moving forward.

To the staff that have contributed to the NML Program, both past and present – Pauline, Evette, Jane, Cheryl, Rod, Jenny, Paula, and Jodi - how amazing is it that we have had this privileged opportunity to shape and develop over 200 participants from across our region! And as Kaitlyn takes on the mantle and leads the 2021 program through their NMLP journeys, I look forward to seeing our NML graduate base continually grow knowing that we have contributed to the amazing asset that our community now has.

Finally, to the participants of 2018, 2019 and of course, 2020 NML Programs, it has been my absolute privilege and a highlight of my career to have shared the past three years with you, and to have used my knowledge and influence to open your eyes to the potential that I see in you and see for our community.

Nardia Sheriff
2020 Executive Officer & Program Manager
Northern Mallee Leaders Inc.
NMLP 2009

PARTICIPANT'S REPORT



The Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP) is a journey, and something that evolves over time. It is about acquiring skills to help us sustain our different leadership approaches and styles. Here are the key elements of leadership that NMLP has brought to my attention:

- Knowing what skills are needed to succeed – becoming a leader is tough. Continuing to remain one and also doing it successfully is even more challenging.
- Knowing yourself. This is a key part of leadership. Introspection leads to being mindful about yourself, your surroundings and those who you work with.
- Learning from peers. Leaders can learn a lot from each other. When you join a program like Northern Mallee Leaders, you get to connect with others on the same journey, or a similar trajectory. Discussing challenges and concerns leads to discussions which can open your mind and broaden your perspective. Getting input from others can help you realise there are many ways to manage issues that arise and that leadership need not be a lonely journey.
- Learning to become influential. Leadership is about leading people who you may not manage. Ultimately, it is about connections: influencing a wider set of individuals, who could know you personally, or may indirectly know of you. Leadership can mean becoming an influencer, mentor and thought leader.

The focus of the NML Program is about transformational leadership and breaking the traditional ways of leading from the top. Community dynamics have changed and so have talent demographics. I, as a 'leader,' now will step up! Thanks to better understanding these leadership elements, my way of thinking and behaving is not so blinkered. And, with wide eyes, I can see exactly where I want to be. I just needed a teeny, tiny little shove. I am confident I will get there, knowing I have a crew who has my back, and NML Graduates who share this experience.

Nicole Byrnes
2020 NMLP Participant



PROGRAM SUMMARY



The 2020 NMLP begins the same as any other...

The 2020 NMLP (NMLP) was officially launched on Friday, February 7, and, while we were positive it would be a good year, little did we know what would be in store, with a global pandemic in the works!

Luckily, a pre-launch workshop with Craig Biddiscombe from Elite Team Dynamics helped the 2020 cohort set a range of group goals and values to get them through the 'year that was'.

Following the workshop, the launch itself was held at the beautiful Willow and Ivie, at Nichols Point.

There was a strong attendance from past NMLP graduates and community members, with plenty of informative discussion around the importance of community leadership at all levels.

The NMLP really kicks off with the annual Opening Retreat at Lake Cullulleraine, as it is the first time each group of participants are put together for longer than a few hours. This weekend is designed to test participants, take them out of their comfort zones and learn to 'gel' together as a team. It provides a foundation for trust to be earned and built upon over the course of the program. And it sets the tone and expectations for participants as community ambassadors.

The 2020 Opening Retreat was no different, as each participant story in this yearbook attests! There were nerves, there were tears, there were some overwhelmed participants who didn't think the timing was right - if ever - to do the program, and there was 'imposter syndrome'.

But so too, was there joy, fun, a growing sense of optimism and self-awareness. At least one participant has declared they want to take up archery, having tried the activity at the Opening Retreat and enjoyed it. And another participant was proud of their 'archery bruises' which they described as "a badge of honor for 'surviving' an intense weekend!"

Little did the group know there would be just two more in-person program days, before a global pandemic hit.

On Thursday, February 27, the 2020 NML group were given an overview of the region in which they live, work and play.

Understanding the Northern Mallee was the theme of the day, and topics covered included local history, industries like agriculture, vital resources like water, and how those resources are impacted by drought.

The group heard from local historian Bob Walton OAM, Millewa broadacre farmer Ron Hards, SuniTAFE SmartFarm's Warren Lloyd, Lower Murray Water's Gayle Guyomar (NMLP 2019), and Wemen horticulturalist Andrew Young.



*“Don't try to do it yourself,
it's too hard...
but do it on your own terms”*

Jo Farrell (NMLP 2013)



“If it worked in the Millewa it will work anywhere”

Ron Hards



Mildura Rural City Council’s (MRCC) Cheree Jukes also spoke to the group about community statistics. Cheree is the community care services manager. She was previously Northern Mallee Community Partnership executive officer, and backbone lead for Hands Up Mallee.

Community Development and Advocacy was the theme of the next program day on Thursday, March 12.

The 2020 NML group began the day at Red Cliffs, with a session at the Red Cliffs Community Resource Centre. The centre’s executive officer Jo Farrell (NMLP 2013) spoke on ‘Understanding the importance of community hubs and volunteering’.

The group then moved to the Red Cliffs Club, where they had the pleasure of hearing about community development from MRCC staff Mark Jenkins, Anne Ross and Kerren Miles via a panel discussion.

Catherine Thompson from Hands Up Mallee and MRCC’s Fiona Merlin then spoke about ‘Doing community development differently’.

The afternoon culminated with a move into Mildura, for an advocacy panel from Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council, Millewa-Carwarp Landcare Group, Mildura Hospital Conversations and Mildura Pride.

There was certainly a lot of trepidation felt by participants around their own community involvement, but the themes of the afternoon, which included the history of the northern Mallee region, the importance of volunteering, and community advocacy, really struck a chord. It was a great opportunity for participants to learn about aspects of our community that they may not previously have been aware of.





NMLP goes online

By the time of the next scheduled 2020 NMLP day, a global pandemic had been declared, and everyone was working from home.

Given the upset to work, families, and the program itself, the decision was made to offer a virtual workshop on Leadership and Resilience.

Clinical psychologist and coach Jo Mitchell was enlisted to help. Over the course of a morning, Jo talked the group through topics ranging from 'what is happening?' through to 'surviving and thriving' and creating healthy communities.

The group then had an opportunity to have a bit of a debrief with executive officer Nardia Sheriff.

Lost, angry, weary, unsettled, unproductive, nervous and scared were among the words used to describe how the participants were feeling.

While the word 'resilient' wasn't included, as the group reaches the end of its NML journey, that's certainly one they can now add to the list!

As Northern Mallee Leaders moved online, some participant became disengaged... while others admittedly thrived. Online learning suited some personality styles more – though everyone ultimately agreed that nothing beats a hands on, experiential learning activity.

On April 22, the 2020 group took part in a virtual MRCC meeting. For some, this was their first exposure to local politics and the three tiers of government in Australia, while others were old hands. Either way, it was an important first step in the journey towards understanding local governance.



The next step was learning about the media, and communicating effectively. On May 5, the group took part in a virtual session, with journalists and producers from ABC Mildura-Swan Hill.

Veteran Sunraysia Daily journalist, and former editor Allan Murphy shared his insights, and leadership journey with the NML group. The day was capped off with a session with social media expert, strategist and trainer Laurel Papworth.

Halfway through the first lockdown, it became clear that the COVID restrictions were taking their toll, and mental health and wellbeing became of paramount importance. Three virtual sessions and a reflection session took place over two days in early June. Participants re-visited concepts from the Opening Retreat, as well as hearing from Sunraysia Community Health Services chief executive Simone Heald, and acute health manager Nadia Teuma (NMLP 2019).

The 2020 group also had a session with Merryl Whyte (NMLP 2008), suicide prevention officer with Murray Primary Health Network (MPHN).

The annual trip to Melbourne and Victorian Parliament House didn't go ahead due to COVID, but participants still heard from a number of high profile leaders and decision makers. On June 15, Chris Gill from the Victorian Sentencing Advisory Council ran a 'You Be the Judge' session which talked participants through the legal system and the way criminal sentences are calculated and handed out to offenders.



“To me farming is the practical application of STEM... science, maths, technology...”

Stephen Bennett (NMLP 2015),
Merbein Robotics

“Food is a wonderful equaliser,
you sit down over a meal or a cup
of coffee and have a conversation”

Ashleigh Grey,
Ministry Assistant, Salvation Army Mildura.



On June 16, the group heard from Indi Clarke (NMLP 2015), Koorie Youth Council's executive officer, about understanding purpose, vision and leadership within an Indigenous context. Major Brendan Nottle, from Salvation Army Australia, and Former Melbourne Deputy Lord Mayor, Cr Arron Wood AM, then spoke about understanding disadvantage and homelessness. Cr Wood, a renowned environmentalist, grew up in Mildura.

The year 2020 was difficult on many fronts... but in July, the 2020 NML group got a firsthand taste of how leaders respond in times of crisis. The group heard from State Independent Member for Mildura, Ali Cupper, State Leader of the National Party, and former Water Minister, Peter Walsh, also spoke to NML.

Having heard about leadership in crisis from both a rural and a state perspective, the group then heard from someone doing important work closer to home: Dr Alison Walker. Dr Walker is the director of intensive care and anaesthetics, and Mildura Base Hospital's COVID-19 Response Co-ordinator.

MRCC's municipal recovery team, consisting of Martin Hawson, and Mark Jenkins, then spoke about their work, which was followed by a session about leadership in law enforcement with Dareton Police Sergeant, Andy Bond.

Federal Member for Mallee Dr Anne Webster spoke to the group as part of a virtual program day on August 19. Before entering

politics, Dr Webster was a social worker and non-profit executive, with a special focus on working with vulnerable families.

A session with NML Graduates was held in early September, participants heard from Jo Rodda (NMLP 2013) and Belinda Fitzgerald (NMLP 2014), and a number of other graduates throughout the day.

The group also took part in a Victorian Community Leadership Program Network 'Virtual Federal Parliament' day. The aim of the day was to broaden understanding of Australian Parliament's structures and processes, and facilitate conversations with political leaders. Participants had the opportunity to book into sessions with Members of Parliament from all sides of politics.

There were also sessions with motivational speaker Craig Harper and local artist Mark Haynes during September.

“Every meeting is an opportunity.
Build your networks...
(and) believe in yourself”

Tim Millington, Kiamal Solar Farm





The best of both worlds

The combined virtual and face-to-face program days included sessions where participant duty teams were required to facilitate a session of their own choosing. The duty team sessions were highlights for many participants throughout the second half of the program, and showcased the experiential learning of the participants. They were delivered across September, October, November and December.

Learning to speak with confidence... in public... was the aim of the game on October 6 when the group had an online session with Peter Dhu. Peter Dhu has been speaking professionally full time for nine years and specialises in helping people overcome their fear and find their voice.

On October 15, the participants had a 'Boards and Committees 101' class with former Australian Olympian, Jenny Holliday AM, the director of Non-Profit Training.

Following the two online sessions with Jenny, the group moved to The Office Wine Bar & Lounge, where a panel of community representatives addressed the question 'Why sit on a board?'

The group came together again in person for its next session on an important topic... climate change and embracing the potential of natural resources.

A virtual Q&A took place with filmmaker Damon Gameau – the group had already watched his inspiring film 2040. Regenerative practitioner Rachel Kendrigan then ran a workshop, and Nardia asked the group to think about what 2040 would look like for them?

During November there was an arts and culture treasure hunt and an enjoyable lunch at Gol Gol Pub, along with an inspiring Women in Business session and a 'Having Difficult Conversations' workshop.

In December, the group held their final program day for the year at Fossey's. Sessions with Brett Millington, CEO Mildura Regional Development, Cheree Jukes MRCC, and Steve Timmis



addressed innovation in the region and what our community looks like post COVID. The day was made complete by the ever popular gin mixing sessions. Closing off the year, NML Inc. held our first inaugural NML Christmas Party with current participants, NML Graduates, staff, committee members and stakeholders in attendance. The event was really well received and it was so lovely for everyone to see each other again. This will become a staple on the NML events calendar.

On February 5 2021, the 2020 NMLP participants had a day 'Out and About' in the northern Mallee, followed by a three-day 'Tour of the Region' from February 21 to 23. The group visited Dareton, Euston, Robinvale, Wemen, Ouyen and Red Cliffs. A highlight was the visit to Lamattina Carrots and to the Select Harvests almond harvesting plant at Wemen. Participants also came away incredibly inspired by the resilience and community spirit of Ouyen Inc. and the Ouyen community as a whole.

The Closing Retreat took place back out at Lake Cullulleraine on March 13 and 14. The weekend was an invaluable experience for the group to celebrate together as their NMLP journeys came to a close. Phew! What a year. It was so lovely to come full circle and have the 2020 program continue, despite a global pandemic and all the challenges that this came with.

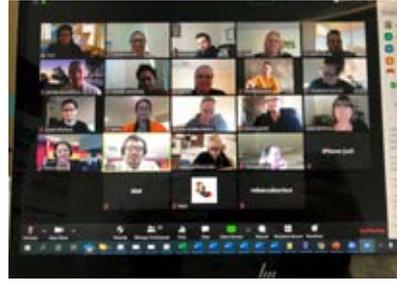
“The development won't stop.
The only thing that will stop it is water.
We run out of water
and we're all gone..”

Glenn Collihole,
Wakefields/Seaway, Merbein



Northern Mallee Leaders 2020 Yearbook

PARTICIPANTS' STORIES





VASHTI ARATANGI

Originally from the outer city suburbs of Melbourne, I made the move to Red Cliffs in 2008. I had my son Rodolfo in 2009, two years later I became a single mum. This was a very difficult time in my life as I had no support network in a new town, and I felt very alone.



This is a photo of my son at five-years-old years old and we were picking limes at a local orchard. During this time, I was volunteering with the Salvation Army and the Red Cliffs Community Resource Centre. Volunteering played a pivotal role in creating job opportunities and building friendships and networks for me along the way. In 2016 I started a new role as a volunteer co-coordinator at the Red Cliffs Community Resource Centre and as a hula dance facilitator at the Salvation Army.

In 2019 I attended the launch of the Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP), in support of a work colleague who has now graduated. I remembered how excited I was. I wanted to take part but was unsure about taking the time off work and being away from my son.

At the end of 2019 I was thrilled to receive confirmation my application for the 2020 NMLP had been accepted.

The opening retreat was a three-day event, packed with lots of bonding and teamwork activities.

The outdoor activities were a fun and interactive way for the group to engage and build relationships.

I enjoyed the outdoor canoeing and building a canoe activity because it challenged my team building and leadership skills. The lessons I took from the retreat were understanding different personalities, and the importance of self-awareness. After months of online program delivery, it was refreshing to finally get some face-to-face contact with the group.



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Scholarship Recipient



This photo was taken during a program session on Innovation in the Mallee, where I had fun making a classic gin and tonic with fresh lime and mint.

I've also chosen a photo of the inaugural Northern Mallee Leaders Christmas party on December 17 to show how great it was to catch up in-person.



COVID-19 restrictions certainly impacted a lot on the delivery of the program. Some days were a little challenging, but overall, there was still a lot to take away from each session.

I chose this photo because it showed resilience and adaptability from the group during unprecedented and uncertain times.

It's one of the few group photos we got to take as a group after COVID restrictions eased.

Through Northern Mallee Leaders, I had developed a greater sense of self awareness and a growth mindset. It has been a life changing experience. I have gained a network of amazing individuals and have acquired knowledge and information that has given me so much more confidence in my ability as a leader, friend and mother.





BRAD BAKER

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Going into our first NMLP day, there were plenty of nerves. 'What have I got myself into? Will I know anyone else completing the program? Am I out of my depth with the commitment I have made?'

Thankfully, walking into the pre-launch workshop, meeting some new friendly faces and getting to meet a childhood hero in Craig Biddiscombe, I knew I had made the right choice.

This led to the Opening Retreat at Lake Cullulleraine where, after taking part in a number of activities as a group, we responsibly enjoyed a few beers at the end of a jam-packed day. This retreat helped build some strong friendships and was the beginning of what would become a crazy, but enjoyable year.



2020 truly was an interesting year to complete the Northern Mallee Leaders program I had heard so much about previous years from NML Graduates. Despite long days, I had heard how exciting it was to meet people from our community, and at a state and a national level. These people all had completely different backgrounds and were willing to share their stories.



For us, as a 2020 cohort, our experience was different, but I feel that we were given a much larger opportunity. We learned to be flexible and to adapt. And we built our resilience. With face-to-face sessions not an option, we began using Zoom. I feel this gave us the opportunity to meet and hear from leaders whom we may not otherwise have been exposed to in a normal program year. And I am also grateful that I have been able to watch my daughter grow, while working and completing the NML program from home.

As we are head towards the end of the program, and are finally able to meet in person for program days, I can say I have got a lot out of Northern Mallee Leaders. The understanding around 'focusing on the issue and not the person' has been great for me. It has also helped me reflect on the type of leader I want to be. I have met a great group of people who I'd enjoy catching up with for a beer and chat about the crazy year we were lucky enough to be a part of. We may not be able to say we have experienced the same program as previous participants, but I believe the opportunity we were given in our year was rewarding and I appreciate being part of it.





JAYDEN BURNS

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I was born and raised in Horsham before heading off to university in Ballarat in 2006. After graduating in 2008, I started my professional career as an accountant with Ballarat firm Mulcahy & Co. I met my wife Sophie through friends, and it just happened she lived in Mildura. After countless trips up and down the Sunraysia Highway, Sophie made the decision to move to Ballarat in 2012. We got married in January 2018 and welcomed our son, George, in February 2019.

In mid-2018, we made the decision to relocate to Mildura to pursue a business opportunity, and be closer to family. Upon settling in Mildura, I realised I didn't really have any connections and, with a young family and running a business, extra-curricular activities proved a bit difficult to pursue.



After hearing of the Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP) through an NML Graduate, I made the conscious decision to apply. I have always enjoyed meeting new people and thought this program would not only benefit me in terms establishing both new professional and personal relationships, but also provide some valuable insight into the region and what makes it tick.

Unfortunately, I missed the 2020 Program Launch, so my first introduction to the group was on the Opening Retreat. From the moment I stepped out of my car at Lake Cullulleraine, I knew I had made the right decision. Looking back, this weekend was definitely a highlight in what proved to be an interesting and difficult 2020. Meeting people from all walks of life, gaining an insight into their lives and finding both common - and uncommon - ground with other participants was a valuable experience. The Opening Retreat certainly gave a positive indication of how the rest of the program might develop, and I looked forward to the next program day.



So, what happened? It goes without saying that COVID threw a spanner in the works for our 2020 program.

We managed to get two program days down before the first six-week lock down hit. Though we were only a few weeks in, those two program days had left a mark on me. I was optimistic about the impact this program would have on me both personally and professionally. I thoroughly enjoyed the content, and learning about the northern Mallee region, as well as the group discussions and differing opinions.

When COVID hit, my mindset shifted towards running a business in a pandemic - and Northern Mallee Leaders probably took a backseat. Although I had refocused my energy to other areas in my life, I definitely felt I was missing out, and missing that connection with the group. Even though Zoom became our primary connection resource, it was still good to see and catch up with everyone.



I think the most disappointing aspect of the shift in the program was that we weren't able to go away on the Melbourne study trip and also have a Canberra experience. I feel this would have played a big part in helping consolidate our group. It certainly would have been interesting - as they say: 'you don't really know someone, until you travel with them or live with them'. I might even have got a solid eight hours of sleep a night on those trips!

Although our time as program participants has come and gone, I am extremely thankful for the opportunity I have had. I feel I have grown and become more confident in both a personal and a professional capacity. I believe this program has allowed me to become a more effective leader and communicator within our business.

My initial goal when starting the program was to meet new people and create some new relationships and I have achieved that. It has also led to quite a few business interactions which has been an added bonus.

Finally, as hard as 2020 was across the spectrum, I personally feel very blessed. My wife and I welcomed our beautiful daughter Isabella into the world, so for that, 2020 was a special year.

I wish to thank Mulcahy & Co for supporting my place in the 2020 NMLP. I look forward to stepping up as a business leader in the future and doing my part to support new and emerging leaders within the region. I'd also like to thank my wife and children for being understanding and allowing me to commit to this program.





REBECCA BURTON

Rebecca made the commitment to invest in her own involvement in the 2020 NML Program as a self-funded participant.

My Northern Mallee Leaders journey started long before February 14, 2020. It started when we sold our small business after 10 long, arduous years. I had reached a point where my work was unfulfilling, and I was burnt out.

I had lived in a small business bubble for a long time and it dominated my life. I was selfish and jaded. I had heard of NML, but if I'm being honest; for me it was a meaningless, insignificant acronym – Northern Mallee Leaders – they were just empty words to me. I was the sort of person where the mere mention of the word leadership would induce an eye-roll.

After we sold our business, I decided to take 12 months off to recover and find some fulfillment in my life and my work. I guess it was the start of my journey of self-discovery [eye-roll]. Interestingly, I can look back over the past two years and see that given the space and time – life has in fact organically presented to me a path to learning, meaning and connection [let's face it, also an eye-roll].

It was nearly 12 months since we had sold our all-consuming business and a friend sent me the job advertisement for NML Program Manager, I was interested and applied. I obviously didn't get the job, but I was curious about this mysterious acronym and applied as a participant. Unlike many others, I went in confident and unintimidated (despite the bruised ego from not getting the Program Manager position). I'd done my research and knew that I would be meeting new people, attending interesting presentations and networking. What I was not expecting and continued to be humbled by was:

1. The calibre and diversity of the presenters;
2. The acute self-reflection imbedded into every program day and;
3. The complexity and intensity of the program.

I was ready for learning, but not for the emotional blind-side. It's emotional to be challenged on the way you think and live. It's emotional when you're inspired to be better, contribute more and question your assumptions. It's emotional to be thrown into a group of people you don't know and spend a year deep-diving with them on topics like; environment, politics, racism, law, health, arts, sexuality and other topical issues (you'd try to avoid most of these subjects even with people you do know!) Our group developed an incredible amount of trust, companionship and loyalty very quickly. Our confessions and disclosures will always bind us together in friendship.

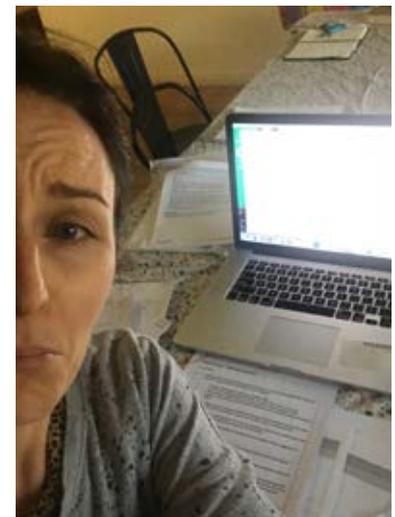


The NML program cannot be sufficiently explained, the understanding comes with the doing. Nevertheless, some of my highlights include:

1. Being moved to tears by Annette Lambert – a hardened woman who made me cry by being so tough and yet so very compassionate at the same time – I'm not sure they make women like her anymore.
2. Hands Up Mallee's interactive presentation that I went home and re-enacted with my kids;
3. When Simone Heald from Sunraysia Community Health Services quoted Steve Jobs: "Why join the Navy when you can be a pirate?" I want to be a pirate!
4. Former Federal Independent Member for Indi, Cathy McGowan AO restored my faith in politics and made me wish I was her best friend;
5. Chris Curran, the local, under-acknowledged, mad scientist who blew my mind. I'd never met a legitimate genius until I met him.

This program benefits everybody in ways you can't yet imagine. If you can afford the time to truly commit, it will be one of the most interesting things you do in your life. It's like volunteering to be in a strange and exciting experiment, and afterwards you're part of that ever-growing NML Graduate network who just 'knows'.

There were many tangible gains for me (like my new job!), but the gains that mean the most are in my head and in the way I now approach life. I've learned the power of me. The power of connection. The power of a conversation. The power of community. The power of an action, and the power of belief. For me, Northern Mallee Leaders is an exploration of myself and of a life that doesn't end with a graduation.





NICOLE BYRNES

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NML Graduates
Scholarship Recipient

I entered this program full of great expectations, noting I was worthy of a position, and having had many friends rave about the personal development opportunities. I intended for my NML journey to help me become more self-aware, identify what was important to me and how I might fit in my community. I was well versed in my employment sector, but oblivious to other vocations and industry groups and had a desire to learn more. I was also at a point in family life where in 2020 I could fit in NMLP.

And then came the Opening Retreat. I'm naturally a judgemental type of person and thought I had made the biggest mistake because this cohort of people were just not my cup of tea (and I don't even drink tea!) We wasted hours on how best to hang out washing and I was suitably unimpressed.

I had two goals that I wanted to be achieved:

1. To be motivated, inspired, and/or more passionate;
2. To reframe how I think about leadership, work, or my strengths.



I gritted my teeth, rolled my eyes more and then tuned in with an open mind. The biggest hurdle was indeed "taking this first step".

While others struggled with Zoom, I thrived. My introverted character meant this was the perfect learning setting for me. The only pitfall was when some hands-on activities were linked to themes, the sessions became a talk-fest rather than participatory.

I expect leadership training programs to address the emotional quotient too. There were still group tears, and of course my forgetting to switch off the camera to yell at the home-schooled kids. I learnt that a leader needs to be a role model and brand ambassador for its



organisation. As I moved through the program, I felt in a position to advocate for the program and our cohort of participants who we were learning a bit more about each session.

So, have I changed? Did this course set out to achieve what I had hoped and heard it was going to do? I think yes, and whilst I may not be practising all that I have learned right here or right now, I feel I have the keys to success for when the time is right. I've become more confident, braver, aware of self and surroundings and... less judgmental. I have clarity of vision, professional growth and those people who weren't my cup of tea are now my friends.





SUZI DALEY

Suzi made the commitment to invest in her own involvement in the 2020 NML Program as a self-funded participant.

In 2019-20 when bushfires raged across our country, I took a trip to Kangaroo Island to deliver donated medical supplies for injured wildlife. It was a trip I will never forget and one that planted a seed - I could do more within my own community.

My own community had answered my call for medical supply donations and I really wanted to 'give back'. I had a few close friends who were NML Graduates and I was encouraged to apply.

I remember when I received my letter of acceptance as a self-funded participant. A work colleague, Belinda Ryan, had also been accepted into the program as the Lower Murray Water sponsored participant and I were both jumping up and down and hugging each other with excitement.

After the opening retreat, I thought to myself 'What have I gotten myself into?'. The weekend was intense. I felt physically and emotionally drained afterwards but I am proud to say, I survived! I came away with some impressive bruises from the archery bow but as the old saying goes, no gain without pain.



And then COVID hit. In the matter of a few hours we were working 'normally' at the office and then a directive was sent out that we were to take our work and laptops home until further notice. Work from home and Zoom meetings were to become the norm.

The NML Program moved online and it was quite a big adjustment. I prefer face-to-face interactions and I found it difficult to adjust to an online platform. I felt a tad 'robbed' and I do admit to thinking and feeling: "this is not what I signed up for".

There was a shift after the program's mid-year review where all participants gave feedback. Our Program Manager admitted that she was also feeling overwhelmed and had a frank and honest discussion with us. I really appreciated that. I respond extremely well in environments that foster open, honest, vulnerable and authentic conversations and that was the turning point for me. After that, it felt like the group just collectively said "OK, we've all had our say, the situation is what it is, we can't change that so now let's get on with it".



When restrictions lifted and we were able to have face-to-face sessions, it was so good to see everyone and to interact normally, albeit with social distancing. This photo was taken after a group presentation during one of the first face-to-face sessions we were able to attend following almost five months online. I chose this photo because our smiles tell the story better than words can.



As the program reaches the end, I feel the key 'take aways' for me have been that effective leaders foster positive relationships with others by being compassionate, authentic and not being afraid to show vulnerability or have difficult conversations.

I have learnt to question my own personal biases and personal privileges. I have accepted that not all people are going to 'get me' or 'like me' and that is OK. I have learnt that self- acceptance and continual reflection is the most important step for personal or professional growth.

But my key take-away for this year is resilience. I think resilience was a big part of our lives in 2020. Resilience to keep going when everything around us seemed crazy and unstable, resilience to focus inward and not stress or worry too much about the future, resilience to continue on our paths with optimism and positivity.

Although I was a self-funded participant, I would like to thank my employer, Lower Murray Water for allowing me to attend program days without having to take leave. I greatly appreciate the support I have received from them.



LISA DAVIS

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Since starting the Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP), I have learned and confirmed many things about myself, including my work ethic and my leadership style. It also quickly became apparent that I was, for the most part, an organised and goal-oriented person. At the Opening Retreat, I learned how to work more cohesively and recognise the strengths in other personality types different to my own. I also realised my natural talent with a bow and arrow! Something that I definitely wish to pursue in the near future by joining an archery club.



It's no secret that the 2020 Northern Mallee Leaders were thrown a curve ball with the outbreak of a global pandemic. In all honesty, I wasn't sure how the remainder of the year would pan out. Everything seemed like it was up in the air. I had deep concerns about how COVID would impact my employment and my finances, as my partner and I had just bought a new home. I, like everyone, worried for the health of my family.

While balancing everything in my life, I was determined to get the most out of the NMLP and to adapt to its changing scope. Being an organised, goal-focused person, this did not immediately align with my work style. But I successfully altered my work mentality and became a more adaptable, 'go with the flow' person. I found the 2020 leaders hugely supportive throughout this difficult time and we banded together to overcome the complexities that came with feeling disconnected from each other and spending long days in Zoom meetings.

I am thankful to the Northern Mallee Leaders team organising things behind the scenes, and, in particular, to Nardia Sheriff, who finds the positive in every situation. Nardia reminded us that we were in fact, building upon our leadership skills by adapting to a different program. A program with challenges that no previous group of leaders has faced.

I enjoyed meeting many of the presenters and in particular hearing from the former Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Arron Wood AM. Arron is similar to myself, in that he has a real passion to assist the less fortunate in our community by shining a light on the true crisis of homelessness in Australia, and in our own home town of Mildura.



The 2020 NMLP had been extended into 2021 to cover some of the field trips that we missed. Now that the program is ending, I look forward to becoming a Northern Mallee Leaders graduate, and networking with other graduates from previous years. I would like to become more involved in community projects that strike a chord with me.

In 2021, I have applied for and been accepted into the Graduate Certificate in Social and Community Services at Federation University. This will enable me to learn theories and practice frameworks that underpin community service work and further develop my skills to work with the disadvantaged in our local area through my employment at Mallee Accommodation and Support Program (MASP).

I would like to thank MASP for supporting me to undertake the Northern Mallee Leaders Program in 2020. I look forward to bringing my skills and experience back to MASP and becoming a greater asset to the organisation and its clients.

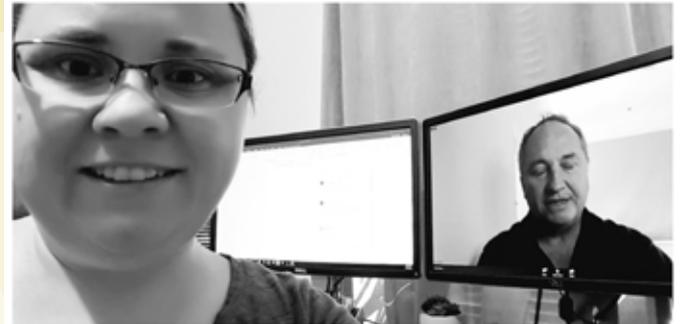




MELISSA FOLLETT

Melissa made the commitment to invest in her own involvement in the 2020 NML Program as a self-funded participant.

I put myself forward to participate in the 2020 Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP) in order to make new connections, learn more about the community I have lived in most of my life, and to build self-confidence in my leadership skills and capabilities to make a difference in my community.



Coming into the program I felt a little nervous, excited and unsure of what to expect. But the activities and discussions throughout our Opening Retreat weekend paved the way for establishing relationships. It also created a bond that put us in good stead for the challenges and opportunities ahead of us as a group.

After two face-to-face program days, COVID-19 hit. Suddenly, I was working from home, supporting my kids with schooling, and navigating the challenges of lock-downs and border closures. The program was now being delivered online which I was able to adapt to quite easily, however maintaining relationships and interacting effectively with the other participants was challenging in this format. I longed for the day when we could come back together.

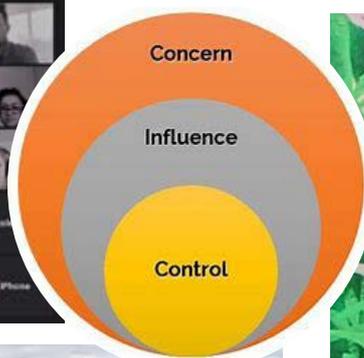
I was a little disappointed that we didn't get to do the trips away or a community project. A positive however, was the leadership lessons and insights we would not have received, had it not been for COVID.

As the program draws to an end, I come away with the mindset, skills, connections and enthusiasm to make positive change both within my workplace and in the community.

The range of information presented, the inspirational speakers and the many different perspectives brought to the table throughout the program has shaped my leadership development over the past year and will continue to into the future.

Each of my fellow program participants has inspired, challenged or supported me in some way and has contributed to my growth and development.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the Northern Mallee Leaders team for providing a high quality program, especially in such trying circumstances. I would also like to thank Mildura Rural City Council for supporting my involvement in this program.





MANDY GOWTY

Mandy made the commitment to invest in her own involvement in the 2020 NML Program as a self-funded participant.

I applied to the Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP) to find a better way to engage with my community, whether through my roles with Nichols Point Inc, or in another capacity. My problem was not knowing if I would 'fit' or have the right qualifications to be accepted. I thought about not showing up to the interview as I was so nervous and unsure of the questions that would be asked, and whether I would answer them 'correctly'. But I made it through. My plan was to come out a better leader. I wanted to be able to articulate what I wanted to say, get my point across to the community, and to be able to 'rally troops' to community causes if needed.

If I knew then what I know about 2020, would I have taken the leap into this program? Maybe, maybe not. But I'm glad I did. On different days I have definitely been pushed out of my comfort zone.



I feel I have started my journey of self awareness and am being kinder to myself, which in turn helps me to progress and become a better me, for my family, work and the volunteer work I do in the community.

This year, I began volunteering with Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council (SMECC), which I was introduced to through a NML Program day. After the visit, I became involved with the Café Conversations group on a Friday morning. This has been very rewarding but also challenging at times.



This past year has taught me that nothing is guaranteed and anything is possible. I have always been afraid to ask for help and I have realised this has hindered my work/life and community balance. This is something I will continue to work on during 2021 and beyond. I feel that among our group there are some amazing leaders already. Our Program Manager, Nardia, has definitely played a starring role, and her words of wisdom at each program day, have inspired me to no end.

The program topics have been insightful and informative and have surpassed expectations as the pandemic brought a halt to the in-person days. Zoom was tricky and sometimes down right annoying. It really brought home to me how much I enjoy good, old-fashioned, face-to-face, social networking, especially as I spend my working days in an office by myself.

My year finished on a high note with the success of the first Nichols Point Inc. Community Christmas Party. With the help of Evette Turlan (NMLP 2008), we pulled it together in 10 days - a big achievement for me! We had a band play, a sausage sizzle run by Nicholas Point Soccer Club, a bar run by the cricket club, and Santa turned up in a fire engine with lolly bags for all the children.

In closing, I can't wait to become a Northern Mallee Leaders Graduate and take up a role within the graduate network. One of my favourite program days was when we had to write on a piece of paper the qualities that we thought each participant had. My attributes are as follows: nurturing, motherly, caring, community minded, passionate and compassionate.





JUDI JOHNSON

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Scholarship Recipient

Growing up in Mildura, and then living away for 43 years made me aware on my return how much the community had changed in many ways. Some good, some bad.

In 2019, a Facebook post introduced me to Northern Mallee Leaders. I felt that being part of the program would help me to become more involved in the community and to make a difference. I was fortunate to be accepted and even more fortunate to receive a scholarship from Mildura Deakin Rotary Club.

Meeting up with other participants for the first day gave me the feeling that this is where I was meant to be. The Opening Retreat was the beginning of a new journey and new friendships.

Program days opened my eyes to a whole different side of our region that many would have no idea even existed. Along with community-based programs and businesses that make the northern Mallee a better and a safer place to live. I was looking forward to joining Rotary and beginning a new path of working in the community.



Then COVID threw its curveball.

The adjustment to virtual sessions had its dramas but overall, I felt grateful we could still continue with the program. The adaptability to change quickly gave me the utmost admiration for our Program Manager and the Northern Mallee Leaders team. Although we had only had a few sessions face-to-face before lockdown and restrictions, we all managed to connect.

Personally, I struggled with lockdowns as I had lost my sense of purpose. Projects were no longer viable which was a part of the program that we all were looking forward to. On reflection, we were still able to create our own ways of giving to the community through fundraising for worthy causes and participating in existing programs within the community, when able. What the whole year has shown me is that there should always be a Plan B. Sometimes even a Plan C.

Post lockdown, there was an opportunity to have some face-to-face sessions before the end of the year. These were more treasured moments as we had had so few.



Coming into a new year to finish the program has shown me that adaptability is the key to successfully navigate life. Nothing will ever be the same, so I feel we all need to be a little more patient and kinder, not just to others, but to ourselves.

A quote by Socrates, "Beware the barrenness of a busy life," resonated with me when it popped up on my Facebook feed recently. Having had a busy life - leaving no time for me - was my purpose in the past. I now realise that making time for me gives me more time for purpose.





RUSTY KEATING

Going into the program last year I was excited, but also very unsure whether I deserved to be there. Putting my hand up, expressing an interest in something new like this was stepping into an unknown place for me. But, very quickly, I settled into the group and have subsequently made what I believe to be many life-long friendships



Living through a global pandemic like COVID-19 was difficult to deal with on many levels: family, professionally and of course with Northern Mallee Leaders. The program and the NML staff had to pivot quickly, to continue to offer the program, albeit virtually. For me, online Zoom meetings brought a stagnant feel to the program. However, the overall challenge of COVID was very well handled and created lots of new opportunities to learn. Our planned visit to Canberra and the halls of Parliament House didn't happen, but we did get to attend a virtual session online, and many politicians from all parties graciously made the time to speak to us.

Work become an issue as program days shortened, and, like many others here in the Sunraysia region, the state, and across the nation, job security had to become my number one priority. I was graciously offered the opportunity to join next year's NML group,



and at first that seemed like a good idea. However, at our next group session, and after discussions with my family, I knew I couldn't leave the class of 2020. The people in the 2020 NML group trusted me, and together we had built a bond of friendship and leadership. It was important for me to see it through with the group, despite the challenges COVID had thrown up.

As we head towards the end of the journey, I can't help but feel a little cheated not to have experienced NMLP in its original, planned format. But what is leadership, if not adaptation and moving forward? I feel confident that NML Inc will continue to receive the funding it deserves and call on local businesses and organisation to get behind this important program. Northern Mallee Leaders is about growing future leaders. I know personally that the class of 2020 will be stronger than most. And, in a post-COVID world, I am in a strong position to help



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NML Graduates
Scholarship Recipient



KAREN MILNER

Karen made the commitment to invest in her own involvement in the 2020 NML Program as a self-funded participant.

Initially, my understanding of what leadership meant to me was defined primarily by my work and experiences in a corporate context. I had little exposure to leadership in a community context. This polarising view of leadership meant that I was excited for the opportunity to learn something new and different, to be challenged in my thinking and exposed to different parts of the municipality. I was particularly excited about the opportunity to see first-hand some of the innovative and interesting ways people are driving change here in the northern Mallee. I was also looking forward to the opportunity to build a network outside my current employment and social circles.

The Opening Retreat was an immersive experience, providing a break from work and everyday life to really focus on personal development and self-reflection. It was also a bit of fun. At this point COVID was not the global pandemic it is now, so the year ahead looked vastly different



The Northern Mallee Leaders journey has been concurrent to my progression in my new role. While challenging, it has given me a depth of perspectives and opportunities to work with a range of people, both in person and virtually. My initial goal was to learn, to gain information and knowledge, but what challenged me the most was the interpersonal. The lessons I will take away are: resilience and adaptability in an unprecedented and ever-changing environment, acceptance of those things we cannot control, and that it is not how we react but how we respond that is important.

What does leadership mean to you?



We entered the program with the promise of site visits, a trip to Melbourne and a trip to Canberra. What actually happened, courtesy of COVID, was that we went into lockdown and were thrown into a virtual environment of Zoom meetings, working from home and home schooling. To the credit of the program, they adapted to the new environment of virtual delivery and we continued via Zoom.

Like anything, you get out what you put in. While the program was not what I expected, I gained knowledge and my thinking was challenged in a way I had not anticipated.

The 'middle' of the program also saw another significant change for me as, after almost 15 years with Mildura Rural City Council, I changed jobs, moving to Lower Murray Water. I was fortunate that both organisations supported my continued involvement in the program.

As the program closes, I have greater knowledge of the northern Mallee area. I now have an appreciation for the opportunities, issues and challenges faced by the region and how I might contribute if I choose to.

The most rewarding part of the program for me was the opportunity to see first-hand these innovative ideas and the knowledge shared. The most challenging part of the year was lockdown. While difficult, it also provided an opportunity to be challenged to adapt to a virtual learning and leading experience.

I would like to thank Mildura Rural City Council and Lower Murray Water for supporting my participation in the program, Nardia and the Northern Mallee Leaders team for continuing to deliver a quality program despite the challenges of COVID, and, lastly, thank you to the NML 2020 cohort.





KADY MOORE

Proudly Supported by



Scholarship Recipient

Some people may not believe, due to the work I do, but placing myself in new and unknown environments isn't the most comfortable space for me and doesn't come naturally. After my initial interview for the Northern Mallee Leaders Program, I thought that I wasn't 'enough' of a leader to be accepted. When I was advised I had been accepted to the program and received a scholarship from the Euston Club, I couldn't believe it.

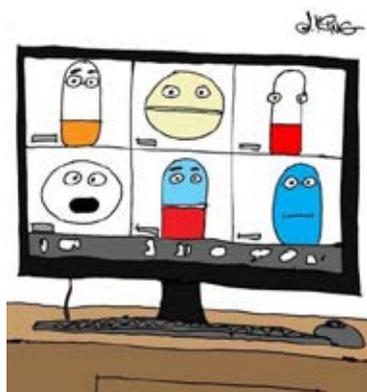
On Day 1, there was humidity, nerves and sweat! By lunchtime, I felt as though our 2020 course was great. I realised we were all on the same path towards bettering ourselves personally and, in turn, our community.

The Opening Retreat allowed us to all let our guard down and get to know each other. Through the completion of strange and wonderful team building exercises, our 2020 group became open to new opinions, discussions and lengthy reflection. I learnt so much about the other participants, but also myself. Like, "how do we even build a darn raft?"



Off to the computer screens, iPads and phones we went. There was no hurdle too big for Northern Mallee Leaders! Not to say it wasn't difficult, there were certainly obstacles we overcame throughout our learning in COVID times. It opened up a new appreciation for being able to see each other in person and interact face-to-face.

Being able to learn about carbon emissions and how we can reduce them globally and locally really hit home with me. The 2040 movie and hearing from director Damien Gameau really was an experience.



Finally seeing the other participants face-to-face was surreal. Finally being able to venture out into our community, and have some experiential learning experiences was amazing. Did you know that worms can eat almost anything and their poop is so good for most things?!

As we near the end of the program, I feel that my mindset had completely changed. I'm more open for difficult discussions, and more open to putting myself in places that make me feel uncomfortable - knowing I'll grow from the experience.

A big thank you to our Program Manager and leadership team. Without their understanding and flexible mindset, the 2020 participants wouldn't have come as far as we have. It exemplified true leadership, especially when things don't go to plan.

I'd like to thank my sponsor, the Euston Club, for giving me this opportunity to participate in this program. Being a local, born and raised in Euston, it was a real privilege to be able to represent you.

I have recently moved from the Mallee to the Grampians area, and will endeavour to use my newly found skills here. I will also endeavour to return to the Sunraysia area to thaw out and to continue to help my community. Even though I'm not physically in the Mallee soaking up the rays of sunshine and the gorgeous Murray River, it's where my heart belongs and just like Arnold says, "I'll be back".





MADDY MORRISH

Proudly Supported by



Scholarship Recipient



When beginning my application for the Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP), I was excited and eager to learn all that potentially lay in front of me. However, once I was accepted into the program, I felt unsure if I had made the right decision and 'imposter syndrome' began to creep in.

I'm from the small, but mighty community of Ouyen, and have always tried to do my bit. But I hoped that the program would help me to ensure I was contributing to my community to the best of my ability and as effectively as possible. I was lucky that both of my employers were willing to support me and were flexible to the program. But I also worried about finding the time to fit everything in, and then we started...



After a couple of, what was back then known as 'normal sessions,' but which we would come to know as 'face-to-face sessions,' we started to get to know each other and explore our region. But, as with everything when COVID hit, our NMLP days became very different.

Given all the challenges thrown at them, Nardia and Carrie (and everyone else at NML) did a great job of delivering interesting and engaging content to us. When we were able to come back together as a group it was great to be able to make up for some of the things we may have missed while communicating through a computer screen. Some favourite memories of this time included the updates of everyone's basil plants after planting them together on a program day which my duty team ran. The session with Damon Gameau also further sparked an already existing passion of mine.



As the program concludes, I know that I made the right decision in applying and can see how it has benefited me. A crucial lesson I will take away from the program is, that as leader, it is important to say 'no' - as we are no good to anyone else if we have nothing left to give. Through the program I have also grown to further appreciate the value of connecting and communicating. I have witnessed firsthand the benefits and networks this can open up. I would like to thank Ouyen Inc. and Mallee Track Health and Community Service for giving me the opportunity to be involved in the 2020 NMLP. I look forward to getting involved in my community and taking forward with me all that I have learned during my time in the program.





NICOLE RAWLINSON-STANBROUGH

Nicole made the commitment to invest in her own involvement in the 2020 NML Program as a self-funded participant.

I went into the program a bit hesitant, but I think everyone was in the same boat. I found the Opening Retreat in February to be an awesome experience. Not only did we get to learn more about each other and ourselves, but we also learnt about interacting with different personalities, and how each person has a different way, or 'style' or doing things. We learnt that there's no 'right' or 'wrong' way to hang clothes on the washing line, but everyone does tend to do it differently!

I love the photo of the sunset from the retreat. It was a special time, pre-COVID, when a small group of us all sat around by the lake, watched the sun go down and spoke about our lives and life in general.

We had the opportunity to meet up a few times for in-person Northern Mallee Leaders Program days, but then unfortunately COVID hit and we had to enter the virtual world and do our meetings online. The program has shown me the impact great networking can have within the community. I think the most challenging aspect of the program for me was having to do all the meetings online. I really missed the face-to-face interactions.



I'm glad I got the opportunity to be part of the Northern Mallee Leaders Program. Although it was tough at times, trying to navigate online learning and everything else, I'm sad to see it end. However, I look forward to seeing what myself and the 2020 NMLP Graduates are going to achieve in the future.





ANITA RICHARDS

My Northern Mallee Leaders journey began in November 2019, when Mildura Health Fund encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone and join this community focused leadership course.

I arrived in Mildura in November 2018, and, being new to the region, and really not knowing many people, it was suggested that this would be a fantastic way to become part of Mildura and immerse myself in the community.

From applying for the program, to being interviewed and accepted, February 2020 rolled around quickly. Unfortunately, due to a family illness, I had to miss the program launch and pre-launch workshop. This was hard as my immediate reaction was that I would be at a disadvantage to the rest of the group.

Having said that, I was excited about what I was going to learn from participating in the program. I could see that not only was I going to be developing my leadership skills and a knowledge of my new community, but I was also going to be learning a lot about myself, namely, self-awareness and self-development.

When February 14 arrived, the first day of the Opening Retreat weekend, to say I was apprehensive was an understatement. I was internally debating whether I had made the correct decision. But this was a commitment I had made, and I was not going to back out now. The Opening Retreat was an experience I will never forget. How 20 people can meet, bond and support each other so quickly astounded me. It was the beginning of self-reflection and the introduction to new connections and lifetime friendships.



I quickly started to feel part of a group of people that together could become an important part of the northern Mallee region.

We managed to get a couple of face-to-face program days in before the world was turned upside down.



With COVID-19 having such a global impact from March 2020 onwards, the Northern Mallee Leaders Program had to adapt, along with every other aspect of our lives.



We were still able to have program days delivered via video conference and soon become proficient in Zoom protocol. "You're still on mute" became a bit of a mantra! Unfortunately, we did lose some of the participants due to work commitments, and found that some of the program content lost its impact. Although we all tried to keep it together, the bonding and the 'glue' holding us together did tend to decline over Zoom.

All in all, the online program days delivered some interesting topics and, at times, some healthy debating and discussions. Although we could not be face-to-face, it still provided knowledge in areas I never had before.

At the end of 2020, as we started to wrap up our year, an easing of Victorian COVID restrictions allowed us to once again begin face-to-face program days – Hallelujah! Getting back together again, being able to chat between sessions, and continue getting to know our fellow participants was definitely a highlight. This was also where the biggest impact for me occurred.

Throughout the year I shared bits and pieces about my life but in November 2020 I delivered my 'About Me,' or a summary of my life to the group. This is where all I had experienced and learnt throughout the year manifested and enabled me to share my story. While many of us have stories of trials and hardships, my story in its entirety had never been told.



The growth I experienced after doing that was huge – it gave me the confidence and the knowledge that I can achieve what I set out to achieve. That is what I am taking away from this amazing experience, along with the lifetime friendships I have formed. I may not at this stage be a trail blazer in making change in the community, but I do have an appreciation for the rich heritage of the northern Mallee and a love for the community and its future.

This experience was only made possible with the support of Mildura Health Fund. I never would have had the opportunity to participate in the NMLP without their commitment to the community and their commitment to supporting local programs like NML. It is an experience I will personally cherish for the rest of my life.





BELINDA RYAN

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I remember my excitement on the 2020 Northern Mallee Leaders Program Launch evening. Listening to and watching past participants interact and speak with ease and confidence in front of the large crowd, I was in awe. "Wow, I can't wait to get to that stage," I thought. I listened to stories of amazing transformations of growth and I couldn't wait. This was the year I was ready for that growth and I was ready to get uncomfortable (or so I thought).

The Opening Retreat was probably the most memorable aspect, and my favourite part of the program. I enjoyed learning more about myself and the unique qualities of the other participants. I loved working together in a team, doing physical activities and working together towards a goal by 'winning challenges.' My competitive nature was in full swing. Coming from a sporting background this is where I am comfortable; it's what energises me and what I love.

By the end of the retreat and after getting to know each other a little more, friendships and trust were developing amongst the group (some over a few lakeside sunset beverages). Little did we know what the future held and that this would be our last major catch up for some time. I went home that weekend exhausted but with my heart full and on an absolute high!



Just as we started to build some momentum and develop our connections and relationships with each other, COVID-19 hit! At the beginning it was easier to deal with, because it was only a short-term problem, right? Wrong!

As the reality of this world pandemic hit and in the midst of my NML journey, life got hard. The combination of working from home, home schooling, no sport or gym (my saviour) and being disconnected from colleagues, family and friends was difficult and emotionally and physically draining at times. We adjusted (not easily at first) and began attending sessions via Zoom.

As a 'green' personality type, I struggled with the lack of face-to-face connection and the first few months of Zoom sessions. Nonetheless, the calibre of speakers we were exposed to and what they are doing in the world was inspiring and the information was of great value.

Looking back on this time in the middle, I now see that due to the extraordinary circumstances we endured, the resilience of our group developed. We took the skill 'multi-tasking' to a whole new level.

What an incredible journey. It has been so incredible in fact, that I don't want it to end. I have met some amazing people on my journey, none more so than our 2020 cohort who I consider to be like family to me now.

There is no doubt that I have grown as a person. Maybe not in all the areas I was anticipating (public speaking for instance), but in other ways. Some of these areas I'm sure will become more obvious over time. I know I've built a strong network and connections I otherwise would not have been exposed to, along with a thirst for more learning. My confidence has grown and feel I have more understanding of local matters and that I have the skills and connections to contribute towards making an impact in my community. The growth this program gives doesn't stop with me, as I pass knowledge on to my children around the importance of leadership and will role model ways to help and get involved in community matters.

This program is life changing, it will challenge the way you think. I am very grateful to Lower Murray Water for sponsoring me and the NML Graduates who shared their experience and encouraged me to apply.





KATRINA UMBACK

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NML Graduates
Scholarship Recipient

My specific goal at the start of the Northern Mallee Leaders Program was establishing a catheterisation lab and angiogram service in our region. I was also hoping the program might help me identify my new path forward in life following the unexpected death of my husband in 2019.

I didn't get off to the best start. I missed the program launch day due to illness. Then came the Opening Retreat. A full weekend with all the participants. I walked into a room of strangers who had already made connections. I felt lonely and isolated. This feeling stayed with me for the remainder of the weekend.

Before Scott died, I considered myself to be an extrovert. Not now. I have found grief to be exhausting, physically and mentally. Being around people requires too much focus and energy. As a result, I struggled to make any real connections that weekend. I remember driving out the gate of Lake Culleraine sobbing and asking myself "what have I done?"

The other thing that stayed with me from this weekend was the question Nardia Sheriff, our Program Manager, asked in our first session together: "What is leadership?" My late husband always said, "Leadership is influence". However, I set a challenge for myself to explore this question across the program. At the end of every program day I would return to this question and reflect. The thing I have come to understand from all my experiences within the program is that leadership is about influence and service.

Angiogram access for her local community is a cause close to Katrina's heart

ABC Mildura-Swan Hill / By Alexandra Treloar
Posted Fri 30 Oct 2020 at 11:16am



I must give a big shout out to two NML Graduates, Michelle Nicholas (NMLP 2018) and Marissa Featherston (NMLP 2019). These two wonderful women are responsible for me staying in this program. Both reached out to me, helped me to understand this is normal and committed to supporting me throughout the year. They encouraged me to push on. I am glad I did and very grateful for Michelle and Marissa.

We had two program days together and then COVID hit. My priority was the health and safety of my two boys and avoiding any further loss. I was prepared to walk away from the program to ensure I could do this. Thankfully, NMLP were incredible at "pivoting" and "adapting" during the "unprecedented" times. They came up with solutions that enabled me to remain in the program and care for my boys. This moment was a perfect example of the following John Maxwell quote: "Plans rarely stay the same and are scrapped or adjusted as needed. Be stubborn about the vision, but flexible with your plan".

This was a defining moment for me and increased my confidence. I was prepared to accept the program would be delivered differently because I believed the vision would stay the same. So, I approached each session with an attitude of "effort equals reward" and asked a lot of questions.



RLA.ORG.AU
Katrina - Mildura - Regional Leadership Australia
In this episode of The Regional Leadership Podcast, Neil c...

My breakthrough came during Merryl Whyte's (NMLP 2008) session discussing Leadership of System Change. Remember one of my aims coming into the program was to help me understand how I can succeed at bringing a catheterisation lab and angiogram service to our region. This powerful session made me realise I needed to just start. Start having chats with people at all levels in the community, in the health field and political world and accept what I am trying to achieve will take time. Merryl helped me to understand it will take building and nurturing connections and relationships. After this day I started, and I am proud to say I am still going! I would like to say a huge thank you to Merryl.

As you can see, I was focused on achieving a specific goal. At the risk of sounding selfish, making friends wasn't an essential requirement of my participation. I am pleased to say it has been an unexpected gift of the program. I have also learnt to use my voice; say yes to opportunities I would normally disregard and to help others to use their voice too. NMLP 2020 helped me surrender to the fact that Scott's death has changed who I am and to make peace with it.

Where to from here? Possibly university. I am considering studying Public Health.

< **Anne Webster - Federal Member for Mallee** 30 October • 🌐

This week in parliament I spoke about Katrina Umback and her dedication and drive. Katrina has devoted herself to promoting heart health and exploring the possibility of establishing a new cardiac service in Mildura. This month Katrina is leading a team of over 30 locals, who are walking or running 42.2kms to raise awareness and funds for the heart foundation. The team, calling 'Show Some Ticker for Scotty', has raised close to \$8000 so far. I am impressed by her resolve and commitment to make sure others do not lose a loved one to this preventable disease.

Donate to Katrina's fundraiser: www.mymarathon.com.au/fundraiser/katrinaumback

Katrina Umback

#mallee
#fightingformallee



MELISSA VAN REYMERSDAEL

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NML Graduates
Scholarship Recipient

Northern Mallee Leaders is something I was interested in participating in a few years earlier, so when the opportunity presented itself again, I jumped at the chance.

In 2019 I had started working towards setting up my own therapy practice, while working at Mildura Rural City Council part-time as a youth case manager. I was working hard to meet new people and network by attending all sorts of panels and committees. I was determined to get out of the welfare bubble and the negative culture I had been working in for 18 years. My aim was to become more connected to the wider community and make friends outside of my industry.

The Opening Retreat started off in tears, as I raced from work and got lost on the way, but it was one of the best weekends I have had in a long time.

I came home from this weekend reflecting on my work, my relationship, my five children and what I really wanted out of life.



NML mixed with a global pandemic changed not only my perspective of the world and my community. But also, the way I view my family and my priorities. I thought some of what I was working towards was all for my family and financial security, and I forgot to enjoy the world. I will run around like a headless chook for my family and for my kids, but I won't do it for work anymore. My priority now is working to live, not living to work. I'd like to thank the program managers, Nardia Sheriff and Jodi Reynolds. They are two of those most inspirational women I have ever met, and I have learnt so much from them.



During the first lockdown I closed my therapy practice, was sent home from council and the kids were sent home from school. We reshuffled our small house and made little workstations for the kids and my new office was in the kitchen (which seemed fitting, considering I had to make 500 snacks a day). There were days I enjoyed being able to throw a load of washing on during the break but the convenience of being home wore off quickly.

Zoom made me realise a lot about how my self-image/confidence affects my leadership skills. I hated being on screen, I hated the sound of my voice on camera, and I became quiet and withdrawn. The sessions at times felt like they weren't worth it: it wasn't worth telling my kids to be quiet again and leaving everything up to my partner. But by the end of every session, I had learnt something.

The group rallied together, and it was pure joy just being able to see each other's faces (even if on screen). We spoke a lot about innovation in crisis and how this was a time more than ever to show leadership. I believe every one of us will, in the future, give more back to our community or be more connected because of the program.





DANIEL WHITFORD

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NML Graduates
Scholarship Recipient

My leadership journey began in a pre-pandemic busy Tullamarine Airport. I was returning from an all-day conference and was overtired from lack of sleep.

Positioning myself with the departure screen in sight, and, armed with my laptop and a bourbon on ice, I began to work on my Northern Mallee Leaders Program (NMLP) application. It was due the next day and needed a lot of work. I felt that the wording of my application was flat, and it didn't read well.

Mentally, I also had a lot going on. I was feeling lost professionally, the state of politics was (and still is) disappointing and I had other issues playing on my mind. I wanted to do something, bring positive change to the world around me, but I didn't know how or where to start. In short, I was mad as hell and I didn't want to take it anymore.

I thought to myself, "Surely this leadership program will give me the tools I need to get things done".

Fuelled by frustration, I pushed through completing my application, sent it, and regretted it the next day. I was worried how my submission would portray me. But, if you are reading this, then you know I was accepted into the program.

As I entered this program, I had an idea in my head that the northern Mallee region was controlled by 'levers,' and that if one were to affect change, they needed to know where the levers were and how to pull them. Through the program I hoped to develop my networks and to learn how to use these levers to advance the causes I believed in with respect to connectivity and community.



I decided from the onset of the program that I wasn't going to wait, if a leadership opportunity came up during the program, then I would take it. On one of our early (and it turned out few) in-person program days, we visited Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council (SMECC). I had my eye on the organisation for some time and was very keen to know more.

During the presentation there was a fleeting mention that the board of management had vacancies. I subsequently introduced myself at the end of the session, enquiring about the board position. I was nominated at SMECC's next board meeting and accepted onto the board at a following meeting. This was a great opportunity that I would have never known about, if it wasn't for the session at SMECC, and the team building lessons afforded to me through this leadership program.

Northern Mallee Leaders graduates would frequently tell us: "You have no idea what you are in for". As it turned out, 2020 proved that the world was going to have to adjust to a 'new normal' and COVID-19 forced our program days online. No, we didn't know what we were in for!

But despite all the inconveniences of the pandemic, our group rallied, and we persevered. 'New normal' be damned. We pushed on and made the best out of a bad situation. The array of speakers and diversity of topics on offer was impressive.

The months passed and eventually restrictions were eased enough to allow face-to-face sessions. It was here that another opportunity presented itself. In the days after that session, when photos were shared on social media, a NML Graduate requested my contact details. As it turns out, this person was a known acquaintance, and was a Committee of Management member at Sunraysia Cancer Resources (SCR). Recognising me, and seeking diversity on the committee, I was invited to join. At the next SCR committee meeting, I was accepted onto the committee. This is another opportunity that would not have presented itself if I wasn't in the leadership program.

The lessons in leadership and community, specifically in how to deal with people, have helped me immensely, and benefited me both professionally and personally. Northern Mallee Leaders has also exposed me to unique and fulfilling opportunities that I could only have experienced in the program. For that, I am grateful to the NML team.

At the start of the program, I wanted to know where the levers of our community were and how to pull them. Through the program I was shown this and now the question has become: 'which one to pull first?'

Once I graduate from the NMLP, I will continue to serve in my leadership roles. At the time of writing, I serve as secretary on the board of management at SMECC and as deputy committee chairperson at SCR. The NML Program has empowered me to confidently work in these roles and appreciate the unique challenges they present.



THANK YOU

Northern Mallee Leaders Inc. congratulates the graduates of the 2020 Northern Mallee Leaders Program and would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the employers, sponsors, and most importantly the families, friends and mentors that provided them with support throughout the year!

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of all our financial partners this year, as well as those organisations that provided us with in-kind support in various ways. Your commitment to the development and strengthening of leadership capacity within our community is greatly appreciated and is a vital contribution to the future sustainability of the NMLP.



NML GRADUATES

2008

Carrie Belej
Naomi Burke
Karlie Conner
Alex Cross
Jennifer Douglas
Kelly Fyfe
Nadine Harley
Helen Healy
Jennifer Heaslip
Selfet Kuzu
Camille Mansell
Debbie McKinnon
Leanne Mitchell
Carmel Pethick
Julie Prenc
Lynda Robertson
Dafydd Scholes
Nicole Shaw
Evette Turlan
Merryl Whyte
Louise Williams
David Zacher

2009

Kaare Andersen
Dale Antonysen
Michelle Arnold
Louise Barnes
Kevin Chaplin
Samantha Cooke
Amy Nicol
Martin Hill
Brett Kempton
Sharon Morrison
Darryl Pearl
Leanne Perry
Nardia Sheriff
William Snell
Mark Turlan
Rebecca Wells

2013

Melissa Amos
Cheryl Benson
Connie Chirchiglia
Jo Clutterbuck
Karen Costa
Jo Farrell
Stephanie Ferdelja
Racheal Fyfe
Erin Hoye
Roslyn Hudson
Robert Libchard
David McNabb
Ronni O'Donnell
Louise Searle
Sharon Trewin
Kim Trigg
Tracee Vassallo
Gemma Walker
Alexander Wilson
Viona Woodroffe

2014

Yvonne Allford
Rachel Broad
Andy Charles
Luke Englefield
Kaitlyn Fasso-Opie
Belinda Fitzgerald
Mark Hayden
Toby Heil
Dianne Johnstone
Mel Lever
Danielle Mazza
Dan Menzies
Rohan Morris
Sue Rudd
Claudia Tassone
Kerry Thompson
Narelle Tomlinson
Michelle Wall
Rachel White

2015

Stephen Bennett
Heleana Burrige
Phyllis Chirchiglia
Indi Clarke
Matthew Cook
Jackie Heaysman
Michelle Loblely
Ryan Maddox
Ealasaïd Manson
Elvira Mazza
Catherine McNabb
Reece McNally
Amy Mulcahy
Kate Roberts
Amy Nash
Kylie Sergi
Andrea Soebardi
Anna Sullivan
Ross Taylor
Eric Tomlinson
Susan Watson
Tegan Watson
Tara Williams

2016

Scott Barnes
Kellie Coff
Joe Barber
Danny Barnes
Emma Clarke
Andrea Dalton
Aleesha Davis
Ethan Fox
Cat Hall
Cindy Hinterholz
Louise Hodgetts
Steve Howden
Apollinaire Irumva
Ben Israel
Jade Millard
Tania Pearce
Ada Peterson
Min Poole
Sharon Smith
Katie Walsh
Emily Wright

2017

Redgina Balchin
Giovanni Barbera
Dan Bertoli
Tim Coff
Sophie Cook
Tatjana Dale
Laura Duff
Guy Fielding
Jack Freeman
Jennifer Gadsden
Vanessa Hall
Jacob Hunt
Wayne Keyte
Shiva Neiker
Traci Pevy
Trudy Scott
Lachlan Skinner
Evelien Spelten
Matt Spencer
Bianca Spooner
Melissa Worthington

2018

Dearne Amos
Ben Beasy
Karen Chynoweth
Jessica Curnow
Qiwen (Maggie) Deng
Chris Harvey
Chinenye (Irene) Imo
Christian Larsen
Bronwyn Lockwood
Cathryn Milne
Kelsey Newton
Michelle Nicholas
Kevin O'Neill
Ashleigh Phillips
Peter Shadwick
Krystal Sharp
Randall Stephens
Glenn Wallace
Kim Wilson
Phoebe Wilson
Jenna Yetman

2019

Louise Ackland
Gail Ahearn
Eliza Allomes
Linda Bennett
Paula Bond
Kim Brown
Melissa Castleman
Ben Ezeabia
Marissa Featherston
Parthee Gana
David Gardner
Gayle Guyomar
Angela Harvey
Jamuna Jackson
James Jarvis
Jay Jeyakanthan
Brenton Lewin
Cathy Monteleone
Paul O'Neill
Kimberley Parker
Lucy Parr
Nadia Teuma
Sam White
Jennifer Zappia

"As a graduate of the inaugural NML Program in 2008, the value of the NMLP since that time has been enormous. Apart from the skills development and knowledge growth, I am a part of a very large network and brains trust if I need it. Invaluable!"

Jenny Heaslip, NMLP 2008



"I may have graduated in 2015 but the benefits and networks are much longer lasting. The ripple effect continues..."

Sue Watson, NMLP 2015



"I would rate the whole NML journey as a highlight of my life, as there was heaps of new things to learn and every program day contained indispensable and intriguing information"

Jay Jeyakanthan, NMLP 2019



"I wouldn't have the amazing job I have today without the skills, confidence and networks I developed through the NMLP in 2015"

Kate Roberts, NMLP 2015



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