



# the QUARTERLY



July 2010

**Welcome to the July edition of our Clontarf Quarterly newsletter.**

**Message from our CEO, Gerard Neesham**

The Foundation's Academies regularly host a range of VIPs from business, government and the community. The Academy Room is always a favourite stop for these visitors who spend time talking with our boys about the program, their engagement in school and their aspirations for the future.

Recently we welcomed the company of the Governor-General Ms Quentin Bryce AC to our East Kimberley Academy in Kununurra, WA and the Hon. Jenny Macklin, Minister for Indigenous Affairs to our Alice Springs programs.

We were also delighted to be acknowledged by the former Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, in his final press conference when he stated the achievements and government funded programs of which he was most proud.

In my travels to our Academies, I am constantly inspired by the work that our Academy staff and the local school teachers perform to assist our boys to engage wholeheartedly in the education program and prepare themselves for their transition into the workplace.

Everyone is committed to supporting and guiding the boys into meaningful employment and positive life outcomes.

Having a diverse local network of advocates, partners and supporters who have a good understanding of what we do and the positive impacts for the community is important to each of our Academies.

During school, these networks can provide interaction for our boys in a range of workplace and social environments; all settings where important life skills and self confidence can be established.

Each year, we have more and more boys completing Year 12 and getting ready for work – this year we have around 200. Particularly during Year 12, the interaction our boys have with potential local employers is an important part of focussing their aspirations into an area of work that interests them.

To all of our local networks, we thank you for your ongoing support and investment in the young men graduating from our Academies. The opportunities you provide are invaluable and ensure a smooth transition into the workplace.

Planning for  
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Australia's Governor-General, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, with Year 10 student Harold Yaluga on a recent visit to Kununurra's East Kimberley Academy

clontarf foundation



# Planning for new Academies

Long term sustainability is an integral factor in the planning for any new Academy. We want to ensure that the relevant needs of the community are understood and that we have taken the time to engage local people with an interest in the establishment of an Academy in their town.

The Foundation conducts extensive scoping in potential locations to obtain the support of the school, indigenous, local and business communities.

The commencement of any new Academy is also dependent on securing on-going funding for the program. It costs around \$6,000 per boy per year to operate our Academies and we seek funding in equal portions from the federal government, state government and private sector.

Once the funding is secured from all parties and we have support from the community at all levels, the Foundation implements a planning phase for the new Academy.

The Government of Western Australia recently announced \$5m in funding for the Clontarf Foundation to expand the network of Academies. This equates to approximately 800 extra places for students in new Academies in the Pilbara, Kimberley and Wheatbelt regions of Western Australia.

This funding is a great affirmation of Clontarf's partnership with the WA Department of Education and Training which supports us to operate Academies in schools across the state.

While the state government contribution for these Academies is secured, the Foundation is now in discussions with the federal government and local businesses to match this funding.

During recent meetings, the Northern Territory government expressed a keen desire to expand the network of Clontarf Academies. We are working with them to identify and scope appropriate locations however as with all Academies, new programs are subject to the availability of funding.

In Victoria, we are continuing our discussions with government about any future expansion of our Academy network which may include programs in both metropolitan and regional locations.

In New South Wales, the Foundation is continuing a preliminary scoping of the potential for Academies in the Western Plains region. Through engagement with government and local community leaders we have started to identify where there is demand for our programs and how they might be established.



*Recess time at the Mparntwe Academy room (Alice Springs, NT)*

## **School partnership**

The Foundation works in partnership with each school via a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that we have an agreed and holistic approach to engaging and supporting Aboriginal boys in the school environment.

## **Facilities**

The Academy room is a place for the boys to get together and interact during school which is comfortable, fun and creates a great sense of pride. An Academy room needs to be identified in each school, and in some cases a new purpose-built room is required.

Each Academy room usually includes a table tennis or pool table, computers, a kitchen, noticeboard, attendance board, individual school timetables, Academy memorabilia and plenty of photos of different activities on all the walls.



*Centralian Academy (Alice Springs, NT)  
staff member Nick van der Plicht*

## **Staff**

Strong role models as staff members are critical to ensure that the boys in the Academy are mentored and supported by someone they look up to and can form a strong bond with.

With any new Academy, finding the right staff is important. The role of our staff members is complex; they are required to work with school staff, local businesses, indigenous families and students.

The skills required are diverse and our staff need to be able to identify, develop and implement programs to meet the needs of the students in the Academy.

The men attracted to working with Clontarf are usually from teaching, football and youth work backgrounds who often have experience dealing with at-risk children.



# Clontarf's Working

The Foundation's Graduate Employment Strategy, Clontarf's Working, has been developed to ensure that each graduate makes a meaningful transition from school to work, training or further study.

The goal is sustainable and meaningful employment for each of our boys and the strategy considers and addresses the barriers that can arise and jeopardise success.

Regionally-based Employment Officers develop relationships with potential employers that help build the support network in these young men's lives.

As the number of Year 12 Clontarf graduates grows, we are seeing some great success stories. Our boys are applying the skills and capabilities they learnt in the Academy to their new workplaces.

Finishing school with a broad range of qualifications has helped Henry Woods settle in well to his Water Industry Traineeship Certificate III at the Water Corporation in Albany, WA.

As a local Albany boy, Henry started with the Great Southern Football Academy in his second year of high school. Throughout his time in the Academy, Henry put in the effort on and off the field.

In 2009, Henry won the Academy's Excellence Award for his all-round achievements in the Academy as well as the Fairest and Best Award for football.

In his last two years at North Albany Senior High School, Henry participated in the Academy's Lead to Succeed Class and graduated with multiple certificates including Forest Growing and Management; Rural Operations; Horticulture; Manufacturing; Employment Skills; Blue Card; Bronze Medallion; and First Aid.

Henry is really enjoying his traineeship and has become an important part of the Water Corporation team. Henry says that the best thing about the job is the training he is gaining whilst at the Water Corporation and the money, which has enabled him to buy his first car.

Henry's positive attitude, maturity and willingness to work hard to achieve is often used as an example and role model in the classroom for our current Academy boys.

The Denmark-Walpole Football Club on the south coast of WA is also enjoying having Henry on their league team where he is regularly one of the best players. We look forward to keeping in contact with Henry as he continues to succeed in life.



Henry Woods with his supervisor Peter Gray at work in Albany, WA

**78%** of our 2009 Year 12 leavers are already engaged in full time employment or further training.

**Perth Bunnings stores in Maddington, Cannington, Melville, O'Connor, Bibra Lake, Cockburn and Willetton have all pitched in to provide tool kits for Clontarf workers.**



Clontarf currently has 10 WA graduates completing a 12-month carpentry and joinery pre-apprenticeship through Polytechnic West. The boys spend two days per week completing the theoretical component of their course and three days each week participating in 'on the job' training.

The boys are gaining experience in a vast range of tasks associated with the building and construction industry including plumbing, electrical, refrigeration, installing insulation and even store duties.

As part of their studies, each boy is required to have an adequate tool set. In a kind gesture, thanks to Frank Alvaro and some very generous local Bunnings stores, each boy was recently presented with a tool kit valued at \$300.

Wesfarmers is a long term partner of the Clontarf Foundation with a number of the business divisions within Wesfarmers supporting our programs in regional Australia.



## Together at 'The G'

The 'Dreamtime at the G' weekend had long been anticipated by the Clontarf Foundation's newest Academy members from Victoria.

The group from Warrnambool were the first to arrive in Melbourne and visited Essendon Football Club before heading to Camberwell Grammar School where they enjoyed a kick on the oval with some of the CGS students and a very enjoyable meal.



*Locations of Victorian Academies*

Watching the football on the big screen was forgone as basketball in the gym took off and the boys played hard in a practice game while they waited for the Mildura boys to arrive.

Saturday morning was chilly as the boys watched the first half of the CGS game at a nearby oval, before heading to Visy Park to watch Carlton train. By the time training was finished the sun was shining and we headed to the banks of the Yarra for a bit of chill out time.

Bairnsdale and Swan Hill Academies arrived in time for a BBQ lunch and there was plenty of relaxed time for the boys to get to know each other. We wandered as a group along the river and had fun watching the crowds and street art at Southbank for some time before walking across to Federation Square.

The Koori Markets, Archie Roach and some well-known personalities provided plenty of entertainment. The group then took the walk to 'the G' for the game between Richmond and Essendon.

It was a great game but without doubt the highlight of the weekend was the chance for the Clontarf boys from Victoria to get to know each other a little. Stories were shared all the way back to the various Academies on Sunday and the next combined activity is already being eagerly anticipated.

## News from the North

Two new Academies were opened in the Northern Territory at the start of 2010 with another 80 boys participating in our programs.

These Academies already show excellent results. The remote Academies at Gunbalanya and Jabiru have re-engaged a number of young men back into the education system after long absences and in the Dripstone Academy, which opened in 2009, the average school attendance rate of Clontarf members is over 85%.



*Katherine Academy's new multi-purpose facility overlooking the football oval at Katherine High School*

Well equipped and suitably sized Academy rooms ensure good outcomes for Clontarf programs. The Dripstone and Katherine Academies have recently moved into new Academy rooms which means we are now operating out of outstanding facilities in all of our Top End government schools - a result of the strong relationship between the Clontarf Foundation and the Department of Education and Training.

Tiwi Academy students have welcomed their new Director, Daniel McNamee who has been employed to support Shane Tipuamantamerri. Shane has been working in the Academy at Tiwi College since the start of Term Two this year.

Daniel is an experienced manager and comes to the Foundation from another role on the Islands where he has worked since the start of 2010.

The Foundation now operates 12 Academies in the Northern Territory with over 800 boys participating.



*Clontarf Foundation students tour the MCG as part of the 'Dreamtime at the G' weekend in Melbourne*



# Your Questions Answered

## Why are values so important?

The development of an appropriate set of values is vital for the achievement of positive life outcomes for our students.

Values are the tools that students use to make good decisions in all aspects of their lives including their employment pathways, adopting a healthy lifestyle and developing as leaders and potential parents.

A strong set of values allow our young men to be analytical about themselves and to set their goals for where they want to be in the future.

Many of the activities that we do are designed to allow the young men to develop the skills, abilities and values that we believe are important and to practice these in a range of situations that provide them with the safety to have a go without the fear of failure.

Exposing the boys to a wide range of experiences, work places, communities, even other cities, is an important part of developing life skills, broadening horizons and raising the boys' own dreams and aspirations for their future.

Activities such as camps, trips, visits, guest speakers, community work and primary school coaching clinics are the strategies we use to engage the students and develop skills across many areas.

Creating an environment where the boys can be confident, feel part of a group and do well, is vital for developing skills and abilities that they can transfer into other areas of their lives. The boys are involved in the planning, preparation, implementation and review of Academy activities.

For example, a well constructed game of football including pre and post game activities or a camping excursion can be the vehicle to develop organisational skills; leadership; self-management of behaviour and anger; teamwork and conflict resolution skills.

Academy activities are planned within the focus areas of education, leadership, employment, healthy lifestyles, life skills and football-all of which are designed to enable the development of a good set of values, raise self-confidence and create resilience to negative influences.

*South East Academy (Esperance, WA)  
members enjoy mountain biking  
on camp in Dwellingup, WA*

## Can I go to another school and still be part of the Academy?

To participate in an Academy, a student must be enrolled at the host school of that Academy. Our program offered to students is about much more than football.

Our programs provide students with wrap-around support for the education program delivered by the school. Students need to be fully immersed in the program where the development of skills and values can be established.

It is important that Academy staff can monitor students' attendance at school and the participation of each student in the educational program.

Our staff do much more than run football training sessions and games. We act as advocates and mentors in many aspects of the lives of the students and often work in partnership with a student's teachers to ensure a holistic approach.

This support can only be provided if the students attend, and are involved in, the whole school program.



## Harvard Business School

In 2008, the Clontarf Foundation was selected as the first case study of its kind for a not-for-profit organisation in Australia. The study looked at all aspects of development, operation, governance and sustainability of the Foundation.

In mid-June, Professor Warren McFarlan from the Harvard Business School, presented the case study in Sydney and Melbourne to nearly 200 people as part of the Goldman Sachs JBWere Nonprofit Leadership Program.

Participants listened to a detailed explanation of the Foundation's programs and were able to review and discuss the work of the Clontarf Foundation with Professor McFarlan and our CEO, Gerard Neesham.

## Thank you

Clontarf would like to acknowledge our new partners and the ongoing contributions from those who have recently renewed their commitment to support the Foundation.



Gerard Neesham with John da Silva at the ceremony

## Neesham Honoured

Clontarf Foundation CEO Gerard Neesham received the 2010 WA Citizen of the Year Sport Award for his remarkable sporting achievements and dedication to Indigenous education.

At a ceremony on May 29, hosted by the Celebrate WA Council, Neesham was announced recipient of the prestigious award in the Sport category.

A humble Neesham thanked all of the Clontarf Foundation staff for their contribution to Indigenous education and a decade of pioneering and expansion with Clontarf.

*Gerard Neesham has had an outstanding career as a player, coach and administrator in Australian Rules Football and Water Polo. He reached the peak of his football career playing AFL for Sydney and coaching the Fremantle Football Club, resulting in him being inducted into the Western Australian Football Commission's Hall of Fame under the dual categories of player and coach.*

*In Water Polo Gerard has represented both his State and Country. His innovation attracted the first commercial sponsorship to the Melville Water Polo Club resulting in the construction of the Bicton pool which is equal to world standard venues.*

*Gerard's creative thinking and dedication to the improvement of educational, employment levels and life skills for adolescent Indigenous males saw him found the very successful Clontarf Foundation.*

*Courtesy of Celebrate WA website*

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[www.clontarf.org.au](http://www.clontarf.org.au)

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### about us

The Clontarf Foundation exists to improve the education, discipline, self esteem, life skills and employment prospects of young Aboriginal men and by doing so, equip them to participate more meaningfully in society.

These outcomes are achieved through the medium of football. Academies are formed in association with selected schools and colleges. Each Academy's football program attracts young Aboriginal men to school and helps to retain them.

As well as coordinating the football program, Academy staff mentor and counsel Academy members on a range of behavioural and lifestyle issues while the school caters for their specific educational needs.

### clontarf snapshot

States	WA, NT, VIC
Schools	36
Participants	2212
Staff	109

(July 2010)