



**MDAS**  
MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

# KOORI NEWS

Spring 2024



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## From The CEO

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**A united community is a strong community. Firstly, I would like to take a moment to say that I am very honoured and privileged to have joined and be a part of the MDAS family.**

With over 17 years of experience in the not-for-profit sector, I have worked with both Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and mainstream services.

Recently, I relocated to the Mildura area from the Pilbara, and I've been enjoying the change of scenery over the past few months.

I am deeply passionate about improving outcomes for our local community, and I'm excited to connect with you and discuss my vision for the future of MDAS.

I look forward to working closely with our Board, supporting their vision, and contributing to our shared goals in Our Vision, Our Purpose, Our Values, and Our LORE.

I've had the privilege of meeting many of you already. For those I haven't yet met, I'd like to remind our community and Members of our upcoming

Annual General Meeting for 2025. Our AGM will take place on Saturday, November 30th, and I look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible.

Since our services are tailored to our community, it's essential that the community's voice shapes our strategic goals and our plans for 2025 and beyond.

Thank you once again for this opportunity.

I look forward to continuing this journey together, creating and sustaining services that truly align with and best serve you, our community.



# FROM THE BOARD

MDAS Board of Directors is pleased and proud to have Perlin Simon welcomed into the role of Chief Executive Officer. Perlin brings with her a wealth of experience working with remote and regional Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and has successfully overseen programmes and projects of direct benefit to many ATSI communities across Australia. Her transition into the role of CEO has been smooth, already having met with staff, stakeholders, community and attended Parliament House with other CEOs across the State to advocate for funding for our services.

Along with Perlin, our Deputy Chair, Aunty Thelma Chilly, met with The Hon. Ms Vicki Ward, Minister for Employment and Minister for Prevention of Family Violence, along with the Executive Director of DFFH, Ms. Teresa Cavallo. After a walk-through of our MDAS facilities in Mildura. The Minister was interested and engaged, asking relevant questions and seeking solutions to assist and help our local community. After a successful Members' meeting in August, where MDAS members were video-linked from each of our locations at Kerang, Swan Hill and Mildura.

The Board is now preparing for the Annual General Meeting that is scheduled to be held on Saturday 30th November in a similar style. It is

the input from members which keeps the Board accountable, informs the strategic direction of the organisation and provides invaluable feedback about what is, and isn't, working for the community. Now is the time to submit your membership, if you haven't already, so you can be part of the solution and work towards creating the change you would like to see for our community.

Finally, many thanks to the grounded, skilled and collaborative staff who have been holding the fort in various acting positions, as the change of senior leadership continues. Marie Griffiths was pivotal in taking on a leadership role for the organisation as Acting CEO. Andrew Arden has been Acting Director of Family and Community Services and Crystal Kirby has been Acting Director of Health and Clinical Services – all true team leaders who have remained focused and committed to our staff and the changes required to bring our services to the highest standard and levels.

As recruitment across the Country enters final stages, the Board has been heartened to receive so many talented, experienced and highly qualified applicants and looks forward to making announcements soon.

Our Board and our Team look forward to continuing to build the strength of MDAS to ensure our community receive the services they need.

## IN THE COMMUNITY



### TRC HONOURABLE MENTION

This year, our Therapeutic Residential Care team were nominated in the 2024 RCLDS Residential Care Awards at ResiROCKS, where they were finalists for the 'First Nations Cultural Engagement Award'.

Although the team did not win the award, they received an honourable mention for their outstanding efforts in the category. We are incredibly thankful for the team's amazing work throughout the year and are proud to have them with us. We wish them the best of luck at next year's awards.

## SWAN HILL MURAL COMPLETE

The Swan Hill Police Station has recently been receiving a makeover from the kids in our youth group. "This painting tells a story of what happened along the river. The children have chosen symbols to describe a journey by adding emu tracks, spears, the sun, and a campfire."

A shoutout to our kids for their hard work in creating this mural, and to our teams such as the Swan Hill Aboriginal Culture and Community Engagement team and the Youth Team for making this happen including, everyone else who helped out along the way. Make sure if you are nearby to visit the station to have a look at our kids hard work.

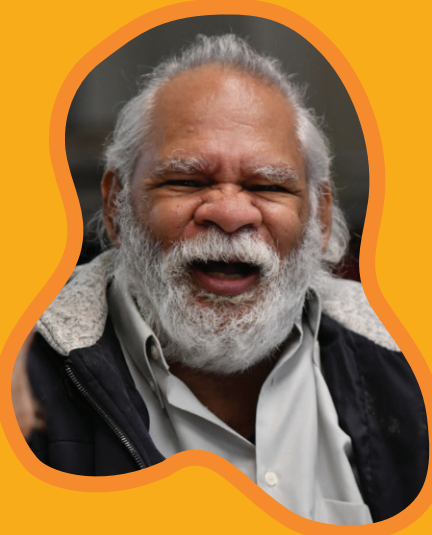


## AGED CARE

Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander aged 50 or older living in the Mildura area? Our Elder Care Support team is here to help you navigate your aged care journey.

We can connect you to the My Aged Care system and ensure you receive all the services you're entitled to. We're here to simplify access and offer full support every step of the way.

For more information or to get in contact, call us on 5018 4100



## Elder Care Support

Community-led  
Pathways to Care

# MILDURA SENIOR

## NAIDOC BALL

A big thank you to you, our community for joining us at our Mildura Senior NAIDOC Ball for 2024. We hope you enjoyed the night as much as we did as well as a big congratulations to our Award recipients on the night.



# MILDURA YOUTH NAIDOC BALL

It was wonderful to see so many community come out and put on their dancing shoes and join us for the 2024 Mildura Youth NAIDOC Ball.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended and to those who helped make the night possible. Congratulations to our 2024 NAIDOC Youth Award winners!



# ELDERS TRIP TO MUNGO

Our Aboriginal Culture and Community Engagement Team, along with some of our Elders, spent a day at Mungo National Park.

The Elders had the opportunity to reconnect with their history and culture while spending valuable time on Country.

It was a great trip for everyone involved, and our Elders had some truly deadly experiences.



# MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

It was great to see so many of our community attend our Mental Health Week event in October, down at the Langtree Mall.

We'd like to thank you for coming along to share a meal, have a yarn, and enjoy the activities that we and other local organisations offered.

This event was an important step in challenging stigma, supporting others on their recovery journeys, and starting conversations to work toward better services to provide you, our community.



## SWAN HILL YOUTH

Our youth in Swan Hill have been busy over the past couple of months. Our teams have been organising engaging activities to keep them involved and having a deadly time in the community. These activities include swimming days, movie nights, boomerang throwing, and many more.

In addition, our kids have been actively participating in the River Detectives program, hosted by North Central CMA. This program explores how native animals use the Murray River and its surroundings to survive, helping our children develop a stronger connection to both the land and the water.



## COMMUNITY KITCHEN UPGRADE

Earlier this year, we applied for a grant to receive funding for expanding and upgrading our MDAS Mildura Community Café. We are delighted to announce our application was successful.

This funding will help us enhance and expand our existing café area and enable upgrades where necessary. It will also assist in creating additional job and hospitality opportunities for our community.

Work towards this will begin commencement early next year. We look forward to seeing you in our Café very soon.



# MEET A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM

## MEET A MEMBER OF OUR MILDURA TEAM



### **KELLY TALILOA**

Team Leader - Home Base Care

- **Q: How long have you been at MDAS?**

I have been at MDAS for roughly 1 year & 9 months. I have returned to MDAS after being away for roughly 14 months. Prior to that I had been at MDAS in the Early Years section for 7 years.

- **Q: What is your role?**

Team Leader of Home Based Care.

- **Q: What do you enjoy most about your role?**

Being in a position where I can support families, carers, and children/young people in times when their world can seem really tough. I enjoy working with a passionate team that always look for the best outcomes in their service.

- **Q: What is an interesting thing/talent that people might not know about you?**

Something that people may not know about me is I dance in the hallways when no one is watching.

- **Q: What is your favourite thing/hobby to do outside of work?**

I love being with family and being outdoors around nature. It brings me peace.

EMPOWERED BY OUR COMMUNITY  
WORKING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Visit our Seek page for jobs at MDAS



# MEET A MEMBER OF OUR SWAN HILL TEAM



**SAHRA SUMMERFIELD**  
Trainee - Early Years

- **Q: How long have you been at MDAS?**  
I have been at MDAS for two years.
- **Q: What is your role?**  
My role is Early Years Trainee, helping KFFE alongside the Youth group.
- **Q: What do you enjoy most about your role?**  
I enjoy passing along knowledge around culture to the children I work with in youth, as well as in their home. I also enjoy supporting families and watching them grow.
- **Q: What is an interesting thing/talent that people might not know about you?**  
I can make a clove out of my tongue, or many would say I'm able to talk under water.
- **Q: What is your favourite thing/hobby to do outside of work?**  
Playing with the most adorable dog, Rusty.



Book your appointment today.



# WHAT'S ON AT MDAS



## CHRISTMAS HAMPERS 2024

Our **FREE** Christmas Hampers are available for our MDAS Swan Hill/Kerang Community this year.

**Limit of ONE box per two people**

Call reception on (03) 5032 8600 by Monday 2nd December to register. Just confirm your name, address, and phone number. Please let us know who will collect the hamper.

Your Hamper will be delivered on  
**SUNDAY 24TH DECEMBER, 2024**  
from 9am to 12pm

or pick-up can be arranged from MDAS Swan Hill (70 Nyah Road)



## CHRISTMAS HAMPERS FOR MEMBERS

Our **FREE** Christmas hampers are available again for our MDAS Mildura members this year

**Limit of ONE per household**

Call 0409 562 106 by Monday 2nd December to register just confirm your name, address, and phone number. Please let us know who will collect the hamper (ID required)

Pick-up will be at MDAS Mildura Community Hall, 112 Tenth Street on  
**TUESDAY 17TH & WEDNESDAY 18TH DECEMBER, 2024**  
from 10AM to 3PM

## MOVEMBER

**GROW A MO TO SAVE A BRO**

**1ST - 30TH NOVEMBER**

November is an annual event involving the growing of moustaches during the month of November to raise awareness of men's health issues, such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, and men's suicide.

## Mental Health Week 2024

### Art Competition

**1st Place Wins \$500**

Community can submit an image or photo of their entry to [dtaylor@mdas.org.au](mailto:dtaylor@mdas.org.au) including a story about how the artwork reflects the importance of Mental Health and Wellbeing in our community.

**Entries Close Saturday 30th November**

Competition open for our ATSI community

Have something you want us to feature?  
Contact us at:  
[media@mdas.org.au](mailto:media@mdas.org.au)

*"self-determined, healthy, robust and culturally strong Aboriginal communities across the Mallee region."*