



Down the Track

Year Book

2025



Front Cover: Photo of Tom and Hazel Le Page from Kulgera Roadhouse on RRED Day beautifully captured by their Mum, Jarla.

Back Cover: Photo of a younger Nick Kerr, "On the Tracks" at Cheeney Stn, credit Melissa Kerr.

Prepared, Edited & Designed by

Moira Lanzarin with assistance from many. Thank you. For the individual photos not identified or credited, our sincere appreciation for the use of them.

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OUR VALUES

We are proud to be making a difference for geographically isolated (GI) families.

We are passionate and motivated to be heard.

We feel fulfilled by being respected and listened to with our strong advocacy.

As members we feel connected, supported and valued. We enjoy a sense of belonging.

Together we empower each other to overcome frustration and challenges within our Communities

Equity for GI families is a fundamental belief

We are financially secure, responsible and accountable.

We respect the historical effort that continues to inspire, create & guide our future.

OUR VISION

AS AN ORGANISATION:

We are relevant and resilient. We are persistent, strong and powerful in the voice and support we give to GI families which is positive and solution based. Our intelligence, professionalism, integrity and knowledge is respected. We are welcoming, compassionate and inclusive.

OUR WORKING ENVIRONMENT

We recognise the importance and value of the work the team does. We celebrate successes and the impact we make. We are supportive, resourceful and driven. We are efficient & effective. And we enjoy ourselves.

OUR MEMBERSHIP:

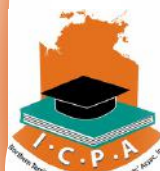
Is actively participating and responding. We are dedicated, inclusive, and caring. Individuals experience opportunities for personal growth and form great friendships. A place for like-minded and passionate individuals, to contribute and give back.

OUR TECHNOLOGY (INFRASTRUCTURE):

Enables us to collaborate in a time smart way. It is fit for purpose and accessible to all.

OUR ENVIRONMENT:

We rely on a healthy natural environment for our businesses & quality of life.



EQUITABLE EDUCATION OUTBACK

The Isolated Children's Parents' Association is a volunteer, apolitical advocacy group that works on ensuring equity in education for rural and remote families with children from early childhood through to tertiary and training.

There are three levels of ICPA in Australia. The grassroots of the ICPA begins at Branch level, with three Branches active in the NT – Alice Springs, Katherine and Territory Wide. The three Branches support and listen to their members. Issues such as distance education, communications, special needs, tertiary and training, early childhood and boarding allowances bring these as motions (and solutions) to the State level of the ICPA in which a hard-working Council of twelve people, then advocate to relevant Government Ministers and heads of departments within the NT. If an issue is a national matter, the Branches present it to the Federal Council, which is made up of a Council of fifteen members from all over Australia.



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ICPA NT State Council 2025

AGM - Tue 4th March 2025, Katherine NT

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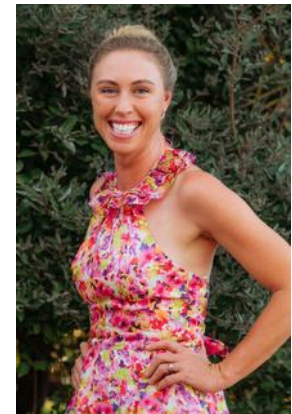
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Vicki O'Halloran AO
PATRON
Darwin



ICPA NT State Conference 2025
Confident Resilient Independent



**43rd
NT State
Conference**

Hosted by
Katherine
Branch

Tue 4th
March 2025

Godinymaya
Centre &
Contour
Hotel
Katherine



Down the Track Edition 96



ICPA NT State Conference



Katherine 2025



Down the Track Edition 96



NT STATE PRESIDENT

Moira Lanyarin - State Conference Report



Country kids count in so many ways. Not only are country kids, our kids and therefore our heart

and soul, but country kids are important and valuable everywhere.

Ask any secondary school who also caters for boarders re, the value of their boarding students from the country. I know this, because I was a boarder, my children are boarders and, Richard from ABSA tells us so. Boarders are the core reliable foundation that can be counted on to participate and excel. Strong values, work ethic, responsibility, independence, resilience and ability to positively interact with individuals from a variety of backgrounds, social classes and age groups are regularly sighted as important differentiating features of country children.

Our Country kids rank highly in diverse leadership and management positions. "Country kids are born CEOs" was the headline of a Financial Review newspaper article back in 2014. Stating that "Country kids are punching well above their weight in the office towers of corporate Australia, with 21 percent of our top chief executives from regional towns."

It is for all these reasons and so much more, why the work of ICPA is so important. Why we strive every day to ensure all children have equitable access to education, regardless of their geographic location. We work so hard to ensure that NO child falls through the cracks, because of where their family lives.

Yes, I am biased, but my heart swells with pride and emotion, seeing my own sons - now young gentlemen preparing to leave home again with confidence and enthusiasm for the 2025 school year. Seeing the social media posts of our other member families as they navigate the new year - into bush home classrooms and Schools of the Air, small schools, first time away to highschool and away from home, seasoned old hands, fresh faced tertiary or trade candidates.

It is not only the polite, hardworking, gifted and pleasant kids that count. It is all of our children. Our challenging ratbags. Those that only a mother could love and all in between. The station owners' kids, the kids at the isolated road house, the fencing contractor and the cleaner's kids. Every child counts. Every child deserves the opportunity to thrive and receive a quality education - regardless of where their family works and lives.

Just as we are all about growing our children and their

education - ICPA provides a personal growth journey for parents and teaching staff. I love seeing the increasing confidence and capacity as new members come through, taking their turn in leadership roles, so ably supported by those who have been before.

ICPA has helped me grow and develop. Not just in my time as State Treasurer and now President but from a much earlier time too. I consider myself a child of ICPA. My school of the air and boarding school days in North Queensland were all the better because of the advocacy and actions of my Mum and others busy working at a Branch, State and Federal level of ICPA.

My task as NT State President is to lead the State Council in our advocacy to relevant stakeholders about state related issues. I also see my task as a conduit and connecting mechanism between all three groups and our stakeholders.

As I complete my third year as your NT President, and if you so choose commence my 4th and final year I take the liberty to reflect on the journey. For those who are unaware, ICPA NT Executive are limited to a maximum of 4 consecutive years in one role. At every AGM, all positions are declared vacant and can be contested. This good governance keeps the organisation fresh and with real lived experience.

The task of ICPA NT President was not one that I actively sought. I was already on the NT State Council as Treasurer and thoroughly enjoying and becoming comfortable with that role. But the President position needed to be filled and nobody was putting up their hand. I was capable, able and felt a sense of responsibility. In truth, I felt that I needed to take it on, like I needed a hole in my head. My father - my mentor, best friend and business partner - had just passed away from Cancer; both my sons - had just left home to start boarding school. Why would I need or want this extra responsibility and workload? In reality, ICPA was exactly what I needed. I didn't hold it up - it held me. It gave me purpose and clear direction on those difficult days where my motivation was low, where I struggled to get out of bed or put one foot in front of the other.

We have had a very stable State Council. They are an amazing and special group whose support and assistance means so much.. I am so proud of you all and thank you does not seem enough. Kiya Gill, Vice-President; Bec Osmotherly - Treasurer; Catherine Atkins - Secretary, Julianne Vlach - Assistant Secretary; Amanda Murphy - Publicity Officer; and Councillors -

Connie Woods, Danyelle Haigh, Mel Kerr, Jacinta McInnery and Kerrie Scott. A huge round of applause please.

After 10 years of voluntary service to ICPA as NT Councillor, including the first 7 of these as Katherine Branch President, Kerrie Scott is standing down. It is with the uttermost respect and admiration that we acknowledge the tremendous contribution that she has made. It is with sadness that we are not able to do say that to her in person. Last minute change of dates and new work commitments meant she was not able to be with us today - we know she will also be in spirit and advocate for our bush kids at any and every opportunity.

Our last conference – Leaping into Learning, Feb 29 – so capably hosted by Alice Springs Branch in Alice Springs - seems like a world ago - and was certainly under much wetter & cooler conditions than this year!

We followed a slightly different process post conference with our motions. The full motion document was formally sent to the Education Dept CE, Karen Weston both privately and at the SEAG (School Education Advisory Group) meetings. The formal response to our motions are found at the beginning of this year's Portfolio reports. With the change of NT Government in August also came a change in the Departments. We welcome Susan Bowden to the role of CE and the creation of the Dept of Education and Training.

Individual meetings and delegations plus extensive follow up to your motions occurred throughout the year. The in-depth portfolio reports in your conference bags and available electronically from our Conference website, will give a comprehensive overview of some of our work to date. Further sessions today will expand on these. The program has been designed so that there is also ample opportunity for networking, questions and sharing information. So please, make good use of that. Do not be shy - make a point of introducing yourself to someone you haven't met before. If something you wish to know hasn't been covered, ask.

The thorough and democratic process of our motions is a key attribute of ICPA. Taking this through to the next step of updating our actual Portfolio Policies is something that had not been occurring with our Policy Document last ratified at Conference in 2002. Constitutional clarity to this procedure has now been achieved and we sought and contracted interstate expertise from ICPA Qld Life Member and past federal Secretary, Kim Hughes to work with us and update these documents. It is with pride that we present these for you today. Each Policy objective is referenced by a carried Conference motion.

Attending Queensland's State Conference in Townsville last June was a huge privilege and a great eye opener for me. This cross-state collaboration, in person or virtually via, messenger,

Zoom and emails is so productive. The annual Joint Councils meeting (Federal and State President and Secretaries) was hosted by ICPA WA in Perth early Feb. Treasurer Bec represented the NT in my stead with Secretary Catherine.



On a cheeky note, a huge shout out to an off-farm small business - Em at Saltbush Stretch - who sponsored an annual subscription to her online exercise tribe at the Federal Conference in Sydney. I was the final winner of the hotly contested auction item and have been thoroughly enjoying the benefits of regular mindfulness, exercise and stretching.

After an eventful bus trip via a very flooded and damaged Stuart Highway last March, we once again flew the ICPA flag at the NT Cattlemen's Annual Conference in Alice Springs, with an information booth. This exposure and interaction creates such an important connection and link between our combined membership base. We look forward to attending again this year and are so pleased to have NTCA President Henry Burke speak today and Executive Officer, Romy Carey here with us too.

I was back in Alice Springs for the third time in 2024, strengthening relationships and speaking at the Local Government of Northern Territory annual conference in November. There and at every opportunity possible, I reinforced that one cannot achieve economic development and advancement of the regions without looking after families. And to look after families, one must consider access to EDUCATION (and medical, communications and roads).

I would like to publicly acknowledge and unreservedly thank our ICPA fathers - our husbands and spouses. They most certainly are involved. But in the majority, their involvement is hidden from the public eye. In many instances, it is simply not possible for both parents to leave home, business and classroom, to attend conferences and the like. This practical sharing of tasks, of covering for each other, of moral support and sounding boards all contributes and enables us to do what we do. So please, on our behalf, thank your spouses, but also let them know that they are welcome with open arms to not only our social events but also, core business.

Please, enjoy the conference - take the time to learn something new from the people in the room - together we can make a difference. Together, we can make: Country Kids Count.

Thank you for entrusting me with the task of NT President. ☺

Maira





TERRITORY WIDE BRANCH

Jacinta McInnerness
Branch Mentor



The Territory Wide Branch is the 'Lones' branch which means it is for those members that do not associate with the main branches of Alice Springs or Katherine or for those members who do not want to be actively involved with branch meetings or committees.

Territory Wide Branch is proud to have a current membership of 28. The branch had three members attend the 2024 State Council Conference in Alice Springs in February with Clair O'Brien and Sue Wilson as delegates.

Sue and Annie Hesse represented the branch as delegates at the 53rd Federal Conference in Sydney in July 2024. Sue commented that it was a pleasure and an honour to represent Territory Wide at the Federal Conference and that having ten (10) Northern Territory representatives from NT State and all three NT Branches was a significant milestone. Jacinta McInnerness from Territory Wide Branch attended as a delegate for NT State Council.

I, Jacinta, have also been fortunate to fly the flag for our

Territory Wide Branch when attending the 2024 Delegation to Darwin in October to meet with NT Government Ministers and other important stakeholders.

Territory Wide Branch is thrilled to have six members here at our 2025 State Council with Clair O'Brien and Sara Barker as delegates. We are honoured to have Clair as our most senior and experienced ICPA member attending today's Conference. Clair has been an ICPA member since 1980, is a Life Member of Far North Queensland Branch and has served on Queensland State Council and Federal Council. New ICPA members are in good hands to be mentored by Clair.

Territory Wide Branch would love to welcome new members, so please feel free to reach out if you are interested in joining our small but very active 'Lones' Branch.

Jacinta

Jacinta McInnerness
ICPA NT Territory Wide Mentor

Territory Wide will host a **networking evening** in Darwin post VIRTUAL Conference as a fundraiser event. Stay tuned for details.



Thank you Conference Convening Committee



NT Conference was hosted by Katherine Branch. Thank you to the hard working committee.

Left to Right: Sally Dyer, Meg Watters, Bernadette Burke, Jenna Trevenen, Kelli McLaughlin, Tori Burke, Megan Robinson & Convenor Jess Coronos

First time Conference attendee...

It was an absolute privilege to attend my first NT ICPA Annual Conference as a voting delegate for the Territory Wide branch in Katherine. Walking into the Godinyamayin Yijard Rivers Art & Cultural Centre, I instantly felt the warmth and sense of belonging that defines ICPA – a community of passionate, driven, and dedicated people working for equity in education for rural and remote families.

A huge congratulations to the Katherine Branch for hosting such a seamless and memorable event. From the welcoming atmosphere, the thoughtful program and engaging panel discussions, to the delicious food and beautiful venue – everything was so well put together. The “Country Kids Count” theme truly shone through, not just in the motions debated, but in the spirit of everyone in the room.

As a first-time voting delegate, I felt incredibly supported. The process was clearly explained, and the environment was both empowering and encouraging. With heaps of motions on the floor, it was a big day, but the respectful discussions and well-

informed contributions from members across the NT reminded me of why this work matters so much.

A highlight for me was witnessing the life memberships awarded to Sally Sullivan and Helen Harding – what an emotional and beautiful moment to celebrate two people who have given so much to the ICPA community. Their families beaming with pride said it all.

Moira Lanzarin did a fantastic job chairing the day and keeping things running smoothly, and it was great to see so many familiar and respected faces in the room – from dignitaries and MPs to our national representatives.

The conference also gave me the chance to connect with fellow members – young, new, experienced, and everything in between. As someone who works closely with rural families and young children, I found it heartening to see the next generation being nurtured and encouraged into leadership. It’s that mix of history and future focus that makes ICPA so special.

The Conference Dinner at The Contour was the perfect way to round out the experience, and guest speaker Frauke Bolten-Boshammer shared such a compelling and heartfelt story. It was a reminder of the resilience and power that lies within regional communities.

While Jacinta couldn’t join us this year, it’s encouraging to see the TW branch making use of the IT platform to stay connected between meetings. I look forward to continuing those conversations and supporting others who are stepping into new roles, just like I did this year.

Sara

Sara Barker, ICPA NT Territory Wide Delegate



ICPA NT Home Tutor Award



In collaboration with Katherine School of the Air the ICPA NT Home Tutor award recognises the incredible contributions of home tutors who make distance education possible for families across the NT.

A record number of nominations were received this year, with every nominee receiving a certificate acknowledging the effort and passion each person brings to their role.

We are pleased to have Amanda Murphy - Vice President of the ICPA NT here to acknowledge the efforts of our home tutors and to present the ICPA NT Home Tutor Award

Congratulations to the following nominees:

Alice Nicholas, Jessica Grover, Annabelle McGee, Laurita Dennien, Charlotte Preston, Meg Lenahan, Emily Neighbour, Erin Dahl, Emma Krieg, Sarah Moore, Harriet Mitchell, Tim Moore, Sharna Frakking, Va Mataruru, Shannon Anderson, Alice Suhan

One nominee stood out for her ability to balance the needs of three students at different stages, her outstanding communication, and her enthusiasm for learning. Her nominators said:

“An exceptional Home Tutor who brings energy, creativity, and dedication to her role every single day. She’s organised govie shirts and get-togethers, making sure everyone feels welcome in the KSA community.”

She has been with our family for three years now which definitely demonstrates her dedication to educating my children. She manages the schoolroom independently and always brings great energy and enthusiasm to everything she does.”



The winner of the 2026 ICPA NT Home Tutor Award goes to:

Harriet Mitchell



ICPA NT look forward to the expansion of this award to Alice Springs School of the Air in 2026.

Why Boarding?

Across the Northern Territory, families living in rural, remote and very remote communities face unique challenges when it comes to accessing consistent, high-quality schooling. For many, boarding is not just an option, it is the pathway that enables their children to engage in a stable, supportive and opportunity-rich education. As the Australian Boarding Schools Association, we see every day the extraordinary commitment of boarding schools to walk alongside NT families and ensure their children can thrive far from home.

At their best, boarding schools become an extension of family. Staff work hard to build strong, trusting relationships with parents and carers, maintaining regular communication and making sure families feel connected to their child's daily experience. For students who travel thousands of kilometres to attend school, this sense of belonging is essential. It helps them settle, build confidence, and feel grounded in a community that respects their story and their identity.

Boarding schools also provide an environment where learning is supported well beyond the classroom. Structured study routines, access to tutoring, and close contact with teachers give students from remote areas the academic consistency that distance often makes difficult. Just as importantly, boarding offers rich social, cultural and recreational experiences; opportunities that strengthen resilience, independence and leadership.

The partnership between families, schools and communities is what makes boarding successful. We are proud of the role boarding plays in expanding opportunities for NT children, and we remain committed to ensuring every boarder is safe, supported and able to flourish - no matter how remote their home may be.

Richard Stokes



AUSTRALIAN
BOARDING
SCHOOLS
ASSOCIATION

CREATING THE FUTURE FOR BOARDING SCHOOLS

www.boarding.org.au



Richard Stokes, CEO of Australian Boarding Schools Ass. (ABSA) and his team attend all ICPA conferences. No matter where you are on your boarding school journey, they are a wealth of knowledge and very happy to help. Richard is pictured here with Louise Martin (ICPA Federal Council President) at our NT Conference dinner, held at the Contour Hotel, Katherine March 2025

Letters From Home



With Amanda Ferrari

A PODCAST SERIES

Sharing the real voices and lived experiences of boarding. Through honest conversations with parents, students and experts, we explore the challenges, the triumphs and the everyday realities of life beyond the places we call home.

Including 2 NT stories— NT President, Moira Lanzarin & Yr 9 Boarder, Clem Cochrane!

www.boardingschool.co.com.au/podcast



THE BOARDING
SCHOOL COLLECTIVE

My Years Studying Away from Home

By Steven Craig, Mistake Creek Station

Studying away from home profoundly shapes life, filled with challenges, growth, and memories. This narrative reveals the adventures, struggles, and triumphs of my years away.

Leaving home for the first time feels like stepping into uncharted territory. The excitement was overwhelming, but so was the apprehension. I had spent weeks packing and imagining life in a town over 4000km away from my familiar surroundings.

As soon as I arrived, I was welcomed by the lively hustle and bustle of kids being dropped off, some forgetting their things, amidst a mix of tears and laughter. It was heartwarming to see children from all walks of life, each with their own unique stories to share, coming together in this wonderful place. My first challenge was figuring out the rules; even though the boarding parents were well-organised, it felt a bit overwhelming for a newcomer like me.

Adapting to a new school's academics was challenging. The intense curriculum came with high expectations. I was immersed in exams, assignments, and group projects, tasked with expanding our knowledge and pushing our creative thinking.

Engaging in various activities was a significant highlight for me. I became a member of the football team, participated in NADOC, and had the honour of being elected boarding Captain in Year 12. These experiences greatly contributed to my personal growth.

Living away from home required independence I hadn't experienced. I learned to manage finances, cook meals, and navigate daily life. This experience fostered self-reliance and resilience, along with practical skills.

Forming friendships was one of the most rewarding aspects of being away from home. The bonds I forged with diverse individuals enhanced my understanding of the world. We shared meals, celebrated milestones, and supported each other through highs and lows.

The journey had its obstacles. Homesickness loomed large, particularly in the early months. Conflicts and name-calling arose as I didn't conform to expectations; my shyness made it difficult to forge friendships in those initial years. I experienced moments of doubt and anxiety, but I began to welcome the uncertainty, seeing each challenge as a chance for personal growth. Although I still find it hard to fit in, attending boarding school has helped me build the confidence to learn.

As schooling ended, I reflected on my journey. Studying away from home was transformative, shaping me in unexpected ways. It was a year of academic and personal growth, enhancing my confidence, resilience, and understanding.

The friendships, challenges, and memories I made would last a lifetime. Studying away from home was not just educational; it was a journey of self-discovery and growth, teaching me to embrace change, seek new experiences, and view the world openly.

In conclusion, the years spent studying away from home were a pivotal chapter in my life story. It was a time of exploration, learning, and personal development. The lessons learned and the relationships formed during this period have left an indelible mark, shaping the person I am today and the person I aspire to be.



Charlie Cook

St Joseph's Nudgee College, QLD
Adelaide River NT

Charlie is enjoying all the opportunities of secondary education, especially science class experiments. Charlie is involved in sports Rugby Union, Touch Rugby, Cricket, Cross Country and Rowing at St Joseph's Nudgee College in Brisbane.



Blake Cook

St Joseph's Nudgee College, QLD
Adelaide River NT

Blake spent his first year in boarding at St Joseph's Nudgee College becoming an active student in his classroom. Blake is involved in Cricket, Rugby Union, Cattle Club, Track and Field and Volleyball.



JACK LESLIE

The best thing about boarding for me has been the incredible opportunity to participate in various sporting activities and compete in events that I never had access to during my time homeschooling. Boarding has opened up a whole new world of athletic experiences, allowing me to engage in sports that I'm passionate about. One of the highlights has been competing in the school rugby team, where I've not only been able to develop my skills but also experience the competitive spirit of school tournaments. Beyond that, I've had the chance to play for the Charter Towers Miners, and the school cricket team. These experiences have been valuable in helping me grow both as an athlete and as a person.

ABBY LESLIE

The best thing about boarding for me has definitely been the freedom to go on weekend leave with my friends. It's given me the opportunity to step outside of the school routine, explore new places, and experience things that interest me. It's a chance to break free from the usual schedule, discover new hobbies, or indulge in things that I don't usually get the time for during the week. These moments have made my time at boarding school more enjoyable and have created lasting memories.

CHLOE LESLIE

The best thing about boarding for me is being able to socialize with other students and make new friends. Living in a boarding school means I'm surrounded by so many people from different places, and I get to meet new people all the time. This is something I didn't experience when I was at home, and it's been an exciting part of my time here.

There are always opportunities to talk and hang out with other students, whether it's during meals, free time, or group activities. I've made some great friends who I can rely on for support, share laughs with, and just have fun.

Nutrien Boarding Grant

The Cochrane Family

**Aggie Year 7, Harriet Year 8,
Clementine Year 9**
Stuart Holme,
New Castle Waters Station

2025 was our first year of having all three children away at Boarding School. Clementine and Harriet breezed into Year 9 and 8, with Aggie excited to meet new people and learn the ropes.

The first term is always a period of adjustment and Aggie settled into the social life extremely well and quickly learnt that High School is a little harder than primary school! All girls embraced the extra curricular activities including tennis, netball, rowing, debating and opportunities to participate in science, maths and engineering extension days.

We are extremely proud of the girls' achievements this year. They have each achieved well academically, playing to their strengths. They have formed strong bonds of friendship with their fellow boarders and day students. They have excelled in their sports endeavours and continue to make the most of this educational opportunity, despite finding it tough to be away from the station, home and Mum and Dad.

Thank you to all who have helped us give Clementine, Harriet and Aggie this opportunity. It is priceless.



Ned Osmotherly

My name is Ned Osmotherly, and I go to Downlands College in Toowoomba.

I really enjoy going to boarding school because it gives me many opportunities to try new things, such as different sports and classes. I am from Katherine in the Northern Territory, and in Katherine there are not many opportunities in areas such as sport and academics.



Going to boarding school gives me the chance to do my best in both school and sport. The sports I play are rugby union, Oz Tag, touch football, and golf. Only touch and golf are available in Katherine, but only at a low level, which doesn't provide the opportunity to play competitively.

Another reason boarding school is extremely helpful is that it offers a wide range of electives that I wouldn't be able to do in Katherine. Going to boarding school has also helped me in many ways other than school and sport. It has taught me maturity, important life lessons, and independence and it has given me the opportunity to make a lot of good friends.

Thanks ICPA Katherine Branch for supporting me and my family to give me this opportunity.

ANTON LANZARIN

School: BTC
Age : 16 Years O
Year : 10

THANK YOU

I enjoy playing video games, reading and I really enjoy art. I'm also on a pedal prix team for BTC and compete with my school's cross country running team.

I am boarding at BTC but my home is a cattle station, over 3000km away from school.

Thank you Katherine ICPA for the Nutrien Boarding Grant.



Betty Bethel
Year 8 BTC

I had another good year at boarding school. Playing sport and competing in the high school campdraft was great.

Benji Bethel
Year 7 BTC

My first year at boarding school was busy. Running cross country, playing football and competing and winning the high school campdraft were the highlights for 2025. Playing sport is the best part of boarding school.



Charlie Murphy
Year 10 BTC

My year was fun playing footy and going to confro playing every minute of every game. I also enjoyed going to the highschool campdraft, representing my school.

Maggie Murphy
Year 10 BTC

My 2025 boarding experience at Blackheath and Thornburgh College was filled with memorable and fun moments. Boarding made my time truly unforgettable and helped everything run smoothly in my school life. It provided transport to sporting events, support with my studies, and helped me set the standards for how my Year 12 experience in 2026 is going to look!



Georgie Murphy
Year 8 BTC

My year at boarding school was enjoyable with many ups and downs. Learning many new things good and bad, and making new friends. The highlight of my year was definitely the high school campdraft as it gave me the opportunity to represent the school in the sport that I love.



A Year Away

By Miki Craig
BTC, Mistake Creek Station

When I first stepped from my home's embrace,
With dreams and doubts, I found my place.
In lands unknown, with skies so wide,

A year away, where worlds collide.
Books and pens, my trusted friends,
In halls of knowledge, the journey sends.
Faces new and cultures bright,

Each day dawns with the light.
Through nights of study, moments brief,
Homesick whispers, hearts in grief.
Yet bonds were formed, and laughter shared,
In foreign lands, my soul was bared.
The lessons learned, beyond the page,
In life's vast book, I found the stage.
From sunrise hues to twilight's gleam,

A year away, like a waking dream.
And now, as days draw to an end,
With memories, my thoughts transcend.
For in my heart, both near and far,
Home's light guides, like a northern star.

A year away, yet bound so tight,
In learning's glow and friendship's light.
With every step and every stride,
Home and world are forever tied.



We are Jack and Nick Kerr and we're students at boarding school in Queensland at The Southport School. We appreciate the Nutrien Boarding Grant we received from ICPA Katherine Branch as it has assisted us with our tuition and boarding fees this year.

Nick is in year 9 and he was in the Year 9 3rd Quad for rowing, the 15A rugby team, was a Dean's List academic recipient both semesters, and was recently awarded Dux for year 9 Thorold House.

Jack is in year 11 and he was in the Year 11 2nd VIII rowing team, the 2nd XV rugby team, was a Dean's List recipient for semester one, and was recently awarded Proxime Accessit for year 11 Thorold House. He has also been named as a prefect and Thorold House Captain for 2026.

Kerr Siblings

Cheeny Station

Thank you to the ICPA Katherine Branch for the Nutrien Tertiary/Vocational Training Grant, as it assisted with my university fees while studying Veterinary Technology at the University of Queensland. I started my course then deferred in May and moved abroad to Canada to work on a ranch with over 100 horses for 6 months. I have recently finished at the ranch and am working at a cattle feedlot near Calgary. This last 6 months has given me more experience with large animals in such a different environment to Australia, which I will be able to draw on when I return home next year to continue my studies.



Tia Craig

My first year at boarding school was a blend of excitement and fear. Leaving home meant trading wide open spaces for lots of people and busy timetables. At night, homesickness arrived, heavy with thoughts of family, familiar paddocks, and the horses left behind. The absence of early mornings in the stables and the freedom of open skies was deeply felt.

Slowly, friendships grew through shared lessons and whispered talks after lights-out. Independence followed, step by step. By year's end, I am stronger and more confident, resilience, new friendships, now I am going home to find those open spaces on the back of my horses.

KATHERINE
BRANCH Nutrien Boarding Grant



Bailey Hoar

My name is Bailey Hoar and I am in year 9 at St Josephs College in Katherine Northern Territory, and I board at Callistemon House.

I have been enjoying it this year, and have started rugby which has been good, and I've also registered to go on the school camp to Tasmania. I've also started my first job, so I have plenty to keep me busy.

All of the help from the Nutrien grant has made all of these things easier, so a huge thankyou to Nutrien and ICPA Katherine branch.



Caleb Lanzarin

Being at Tech NQ in Townsville means that I can work and study at the same time. The Boarding facility is great - the food amazing. Next year, I will be able to take my own ute to school and drive myself to and from my Automotive apprenticeship. Thank you to all who have helped to make this happen.

Katherine Branch 2024/2025 Grant Summary

Boarding & Tertiary Grants – 35 @ \$2500 p/applicant
ICT Grants – 8 \$1000 p/applicant
Extraordinary Opportunity Grant – 3 @ \$1200 p/applicant
PD Grants – 45 @ \$400 p/applicant

The branch is excited to announce that in 2025/2026 our Personal Development Grants will increase to \$500 p / applicant. Eligibility will change to 12-month membership allowing those with early years aged students to apply for the grant for the use of purchasing equipment for the schoolroom. Such as tables, chairs and resources required to set up a schoolroom not covered by the distance ed school. It will also allow Boarding families to use the PD Grant for flights.

Jesse Hoar

My name is Jesse Hoar and I am in year 7 at Blackheath & Thornburgh College in Charters Towers. This is my first year away at boarding school.

So far the best part of boarding school has been all the different sports I can have a go at. I have been training in cross country, joining in cricket and joined the rugby league team. I'm excited about going on the year 7 camp to Magnetic Island and having some fun with my friends. I'm very glad that I started at BTC along with my friends from Katherine School of the Air, Benji Bethel and Tia Craig (see photo - I am in the middle.)

Thankyou to the Katherine Branch ICPA for supporting me on my boarding journey, and a big thankyou to Nutrien for raising funds at the Katherine Show.





Columbia Catholic College Charters Towers

COLT SCOTT

The best part of boarding was that there was always cricket around. It's a lot of fun to train and play tennis court cricket matches with my fellow boarders. Whether it's a proper game with numbers or just a quick net session, someone's always looking to join. The field is a short walk from my boarding house, so I can practice anytime with no wait. That is what I love about boarding.

ISLA SCOTT

Hello, my name is Isla Scott and for the past 5 years, I have been attending boarding school at Columbia Catholic College. Boarding school is a diverse community with people that come from all around and you get to meet people with different views from yourself, One of the best things about boarding school is the opportunity to meet new people and develop friendships that can last a lifetime. These connections not only make the boarding school experience more enjoyable but also help you navigate the wider world with confidence and understanding of others.

ZAHLI SCOTT

Hi, I'm Zahli. Best part of boarding is having my friends around. It is like having a sleep over every night. I also like some of the dormies who make it fun, and we do a lot of crafts on weekends. I also like to play netball, so I get to do that too. Thank you to ICPA Katherine for giving me an ICT grant, as I was able to purchase a Laptop for the school year.

JOE BROWN

St Joseph's College in Sydney.

For me, the best part of boarding school is definitely the sports. Right now, I'm getting into rowing for the summer, and in winter I do rugby union. Being at boarding school has given so many opportunities for me to be part of a team sport for the first time in my life. I've learned a lot about teamwork and what it really means to work together with others. I don't believe I would have had these amazing experiences in sport if I didn't go to boarding school.

SAM BROWN

St Josephs College, Hunters Hill, Sydney. Through going to a boarding school, I believe some of the best opportunities of being away from home in the last 4 years would be the sports and co-curricular activities that are available here at the College as well as the people you meet that are from totally different walks of life. Whilst at Joeys I can spend my days afterschool participating in any sports training that is available, while being able to go to the back ovals in the free time that is available afterschool. With Joeys being a great rugby school, I can train and improve in a way that allows me to keep progressing to get better. This is opportunity is one that would not have been supplied at home due to living remotely.

ELISE BROWN

Frenshaw School, Mittagong NSW.

Being a full time boarder from the start of year 7 has been one of the largest factors in my schooling over the last five years. Over time, I have developed strong relationships with each and every one of the girls in my year and made friendships that will last a lifetime. Through boarding, I have created some of the most amazing memories with friends that I will cherish forever. The opportunities Frensham has been able to offer include a variety of sports, work and social endeavours.



A Little Less Lonely and a Lot More You

Loneliness. You can be surrounded by people at work, in town, even here tonight and still feel completely alone. Around 1 in 3 adults say they regularly feel lonely, and studies show loneliness can have the same health impact as smoking fifteen durries a day. But here's the part we don't talk about enough. So many of us have learned to mask that loneliness with resilience. The 'I'm fine.' The 'She's strong.' The 'He's always got a smile on his face.' We've built our identity around appearing okay. Because somewhere along the way, we were taught that struggling quietly makes us strong. But all that really does is disconnect us not just from others, but from ourselves.

Living rurally is hands down the best lifestyle anyone could live. I mean I might be biased, having grown up on a station where days consisted of driving a clapped out old Toyota on a lick run to tailing out a mob of weaners definitely beats driving around a concrete jungle and hoping like hell your car doesn't get stolen overnight. Moving to the NT in 2019 brought a new found meaning to getting outside the comfort zone. Weirdly the hardest thing has been making new friends. Sometimes, it's like we've forgotten how to communicate. The obvious culprit is the little rectangle device that makes contact anywhere at any time easy but with that has hijacked every bit of our attention. I've been mid-conversation with someone and the second that little ding goes off their searching their bag to see who it is. We're more connected than ever online... and yet more disconnected than ever in real life. We've evolved from handwritten letters to heart-reacts and 0.5-second attention spans. Making new friends as an adult... kinda sucks. You move somewhere new, you're surrounded by faces you don't recognise, and suddenly you're asking yourself, how do I even make friends again?

It's funny. As kids, we could walk up to someone on the playground, ask if they wanted to play, and boom, instant friendship. But as adults? We overthink it. We get in our heads. Studies from the University of Oxford show that loneliness has less to do with how many people are around you and more to do with how connected you feel to them. Meaning, you can be surrounded by people every single day and still feel deeply lonely and that hits especially hard for those of us living rurally.

Let's be real, out here, we rely so much on the internet to stay connected with family and friends. But between long days, dodgy service, and the fast-paced environments we work in, even that gets tough.

But tomorrow turns into a week, then a month... and before you know it, your bestie who's interstate, still waiting to hear about your gap year adventure, is wondering if you've fallen off the face of the earth and here's the kicker, it's not that we don't have time. It's that we've stopped making time. We've made our priorities louder than our people. Loneliness is sneaky like that, it convinces us we're too busy, too awkward, too tired to reach out. But really, it's fear. Fear of rejection. Fear of being seen. It's easier to scroll through Instagram and convince ourselves that everyone else already has their people, than to actually go and find our own. So the question becomes:

If we are lonely, what are we doing about it?



If im not in the schoolroom i'm out in the camp! - Alice Nicholas

It hit me the other day in the most unexpected way.

I was in the schoolroom, and I was looking for a piece of artwork one of my students had done. It had been torn apart a bit, so I started sticky-taping it back together. And as I did, I realised the person in the picture had been completely beheaded.

Like we're talking about a full headless knight on a horse outside his castle. I realised, that's how I feel some days as an adult.

We're living up here, in our heads, overthinking, analysing, worrying about how we look or what people will think, and completely forgetting to live in our bodies. To actually feel, connect, or be present.

Being a govie has honestly been the biggest pillar in keeping play and joy alive in my life. Well, when we're not mid-tantrum or meltdown of course. Some of my greatest lessons or should I say reminders, have come straight from those kids in the schoolroom. They remind me to give less fucks, say what's on my heart, have a meltdown, a cry, a yell if I'm frustrated and then get right back to playing, laughing, and living. Because most kids don't hold grudges. They don't overthink if someone doesn't want to play, they just find something else fun to do. And maybe that's what we all need a little more of, to stop trying to hold it all together and start actually being us again.

We go from being constantly surrounded by people our age at school to feeling like we've got to relearn how to socialise all over again. And when you mix in a bit of isolation, or living rurally where social opportunities are already limited, it makes sense that loneliness creeps in.

"We've built our identity around appearing okay..."

It's not that you're broken for feeling lonely, it's that you're human. But the truth is, our upbringing and conditioning shape how safe we feel connecting with others. When you've been told to "fit in, not stand out," saying hi to someone new can feel terrifying. That's why self-awareness matters: knowing who you are and what you truly value. Because if you don't know what you're looking for, how will you recognise real friendship when it's right in front of you? Too often we rely on others' opinions or a bit of liquid courage instead of trusting ourselves, and that disconnection is what keeps us lonely.

The goal isn't to find the perfect friend, it's to reconnect with yourself, so you can attract people who align with who you really are. "Bloody hell Alice, I thought we were coming for a nice night out, not a free therapy session!" But here's the thing, sometimes the conversations that make you a little uncomfortable are the ones that bring you back to earth.

That's actually why I launched The Conscious Cowgirl Podcast this year to have more of these conversations, out loud, with honesty and humour. Because the more we talk about this stuff, the more we realise we're not alone in it. So let's bring it home with three things I want you to actually remember from all of this. Three things to keep in your back pocket when life feels a bit wobbly, or when you start doubting yourself.

1. No one is going to save you.

It's a bit brutal, I know but it's true. If you're waiting for someone else to reach out, to fix it, to make you feel seen? That person doesn't exist. You've got to be your own damn rescue mission. Because the moment you stop waiting for someone else to choose you and you start choosing yourself, that's when your whole world changes.

2. Listen to your body.

If it's not a f*ck yes, it's a no. Your body will always tell you the truth. The gut feelings, the tension, the exhaustion, the spark. When you ignore it, you drift. When you honour it, you thrive and that doesn't just apply to big life choices, it applies to everything.



Alice sharing this important message at the 2025 Goovies Gala in Katherine, NT

3. Bring more fun and play back into your life.

Because honestly, straightly 180 is hella boring. You are your most magnetic, confident, and authentic self when you're having fun. When you're laughing until you snort, when you're being a little silly, when it feels effortless.

So if you feel your feet start tapping when your favourite song starts playing, don't overthink it. Get up and dance. Let go of what anyone else might think and just send it. Because that's the energy that attracts everything good. Connection, confidence, friendship, and joy. Maybe, it's the moment you meet someone new who reminds you what it feels like to be a little less lonely and a lot more you!



Alice Nicholas
*Founder of Burabidge Legacies
Govie at Morsk Station NT*

NTCA Conference



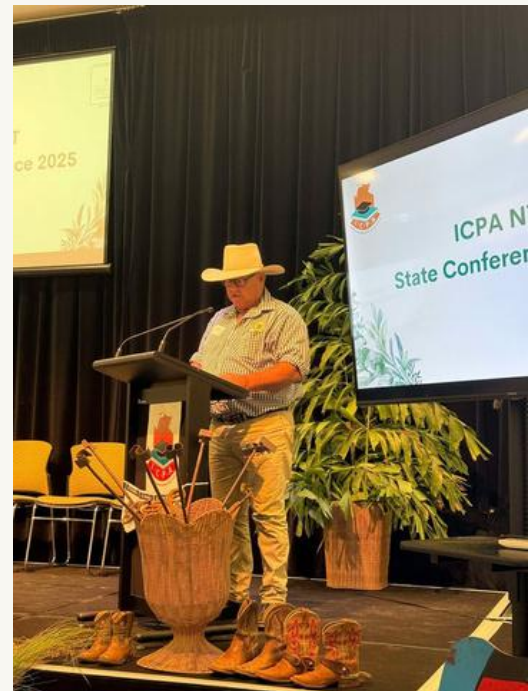
19-21st March 2025, Darwin Convention Centre

The partnership between ICPA and NTCA (NT Cattlemen's Association) is an important one and highly valued by both parties.

2025 once again saw ICPA as a booth holder at the NTCA Conference in Darwin. With approximately 1000 registered attendees, the exposure is quickly simply huge - landholders, cattle managers, supporting industries, politicians and influencers. ICPA's stall was strategically positioned to reach optimum foot traffic,

A highlight of conference was our beautiful and talented Katherine School of the Air students bravely going onto main stage, talking with the host and singing the National Anthem to open conference. If you are reading this in an electronic version, hopefully you will be able to click on the image (next page) and listen to some of this.





NTCA President, Henry Burke, gave a key address at our ICPA NT State Conference in Katherine in March 2025. He reinforced the importance of the work of ICPA and the value of the two organisations working together.

“Our two organisations share a profound connection, rooted in the vast landscapes of rural and remote Australia. The NTCA’s mission to advance and protect cattle producers in the Northern Territory is deeply intertwined with the ICPA’s commitment to ensuring equitable access to education for geographically isolated children.”

During the Gala Dinner an annual fundraising auction is held. Alice Springs Branch were appreciative of the opportunity to participate and thanks to their generous sponsors, bidders and under-bidders raised \$26,000 for their branch in 2025.

ICPA NT will again participate at NTCA Conference 2026 - with both a stall and auction items. Keep tuned for further exciting details!

Thank you NTCA for your ongoing support and assistance.

NT GOVERNMENT – Financial help for isolated students

Financial help for isolated students			
All applicants should check the Student assistance schemes - policy, application and			
	Distance education allowance	Internet subsidy	Remote transit allowance
Application closing date	30 June in the relevant school year		
How to apply	Login or register to GrantsNT		
Who can apply	Parent or guardian		
Key eligibility	Must be an NT Resident		
	Attending one of the 3 distance education schools in the NT		Living more than 5 km from the nearest school or point of access to public transport or a bus pick up point
	Students must be approved for the Distance education allowance under the Australian Government's Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) scheme		Students must be undertaking full-time study in an NT school or comprehensive high school
	Preschool students must only meet the requirements of the AIC except for age		Students must maintain a minimum attendance rate each term
		Students must be approved for the Distance education allowance and using household internet to access distance education in the NT	The nominated vehicle must convey the student and be registered with the NT Vehicle Registry
Payment information	Allowance will be paid at the beginning of Semester 2 as a one-off payment		The allowance will be paid yearly: - first payment at the beginning of Semester 2 - second payment at the end of Semester 2 upon receipt of end of year declaration
Ineligibility	Students in receipt of ABSTUDY are not eligible	Accessing distance education online from an alternative school, college, boarding facility or hostel	Applicants in receipt of financial assistance which includes a travel component are ineligible
Scheme unit values and zones	Refer to the policy document section 11 - Table 1 - scheme unit values and zones		
Contact details			

Student assistance schemes – policy, application and claim procedures

Students in the Northern Territory (NT)				
Claim procedures for all eligibility and conditions prior to making an application or claim				
Allowance	Boarding in the NT	Boarding interstate	Tertiary fares within the NT	Tertiary fares Interstate
Academic year			30 September in the relevant academic year	
<p>For more information, please visit the GrantsNT website. You can then search for Student assistance schemes: https://grantsnt.nt.gov.au/</p>				
			Parent, guardian or independent student	
<p>Students must be living away from home and classed as geographically isolated (unless indicated otherwise)</p>				
Students from the Territory who do not have access to a school	Students must be living away from home at a boarding facility to attend school	Students must be living away from home in order to undertake full-time tertiary studies in an NT tertiary institution		
Students undertaking a course at an NT primary or secondary school	Students must be approved for Basic boarding allowance under the Australian Government's Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) scheme	Students must not be engaged in full-time employment	The course must be considered to be a priority field of study as per the NT Skilled occupation priority list	
Students in a course with a value of 70% or more	The student must be undertaking full-time study in an NT boarding facility to attend school on a daily basis		The course must not be available at the CDU or any other registered training authority within the NT	
Students who are used to driving a car must be provided with a Motor Vehicle Allowance			Where a course is available at CDU however due to limited places, the student was not accepted, the student must provide the CDU outcome with their application	
Students who have been paid twice for a course at the beginning of a semester and at the end of the semester	Allowance will be paid at the beginning of Semester 2 as a one-off payment	A maximum of 3 return trips per academic year may be reimbursed. - Submit through GrantsNT an NT Tertiary fares reimbursement scheme claim form up to 31 March the following year	A maximum of 2 return trips per academic year may be reimbursed. - Submit through GrantsNT an NT Tertiary fares reimbursement scheme claim form up to 31 March the following year	
Students in receipt of any other financial assistance which includes a travel component are not eligible	Students in receipt of the Second home allowance under the AIC scheme are not eligible	Students in receipt of Youth allowance, Austudy and ABSTUDY or receiving any other financial assistance which includes a travel component are not eligible.		
<p>Questions and section 12 - How do I find my zone</p>			Travel costs will be reimbursed on receipt of a claim form and supporting documentation and will be calculated at the most direct and economical form of travel available	
<p>NT Department of Education and Training GPO Box 4821, Darwin NT 0801 StudentAssistance.det@education.nt.gov.au Phone 1800 019 157 (TollFree) or (08)89014960</p>				

Note: The Isolated students' education allowance is paid directly to NT Government boarding facilities to assist with increasing access to well-supervised educational opportunities.



Newest NT State Life Members

Sally Sullivan & Helen Harding

NT State Council: Secretary 2009-2011, President 2012-2014, Ex-Officio 2015, Vice President 2016 - 2018, Councillor 2019

Federal Councillor 2019 -2022

Life Member of Katherine Branch 2021

Sally is affectionately known by many as the "motion Queen". Quick thinking with a good mind for big picture and strategic fit plus an astute and talented word smith, Sally has played a pivotal role in all areas of ICPA - Branch, State and Federal. Continuing to attending Katherine Branch meetings - Sally always makes herself available as mentor to current Councillors as and when needed.

Sally was pivotal in securing funding for boarding inter and intrastate allowances, by being a constant pain in the Departments side, attending delegations, meetings and catch ups with Government officials. When she was presented with Life Membership of the Katherine Branch, Sally mentioned the strain that this would at times put on her family, but said it was worth every cent from the hard fought for allowances as it was ensuring her kids were getting the best chance of a quality education.

NT State Council: Assistant Secretary 2009 – 2010, Vice President 2011, Secretary 2012-2014, Assistant Secretary 2015

Grants Officer: 2012 to current

Life Member of Katherine Branch 2021

Hardworking, generous, quiet achiever. Helen simply gets things done. No fuss, no fanfare, no problems - 100% reliable. You will find Helen behind the scenes, making sure things are working smoothly, ticking off lists and balancing the books. Helen is the type of person that every organisation wishes to have working with them.

Hele continues to work with the ICPA NT and is turned to for advice and assistance to this day. She is solid, passionate and a true ICPA legend.

Sally and Hele (Helen) have worked together closely over the years, continuing to push boundaries and ticking the boxes to keep the ICPA NT flag flying. Still working by being mentors, supporters and advisors for current councillors and branch members alike. I guess we all aspire to be like them and find ourselves always thinking "if we were Sally or Hele, what would we do?"



Above: Sally Sullivan & Helen Harding received their Life Membership during the Pre-Conference Welcome Function at the Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts & Culture Centre, picture with Hon. Jo Hersey - Member for Katherine and NT Education Minister, ICPA NT State President Moira Lanzarin & Department of Education Chief Executive Susan Bowden

*"Mum and Sally really were like **tweedle dum and tweedle dee** in the ICPA forever" says Hele's girls.*

Mataranka Sports Camp

What a brilliant few days, ICPA Katherine Branch sports camp. Over two full days in October approximately 80 children along with their parents and home tutors, all travelled to Mataranka in the Northern Territory where they made new friends, caught up with old friends and joined in on all things sports.

The first day sports camp coincided with RRED day (Rural and remote education day) so we had a sea of red running around! We had Mike Silcock travel all the way from Rockhampton Grammar to run sessions in soccer and dodgeball, which tested everyone's skills! The next day and half the children were all learning new skills in Gymnastics, rugby, boxing, softball and golf with the coaches travelling from Darwin to run sessions. We also had a huge inflatable obstacle course that everyone had fun challenging each other to the end. Not only did the children get to participate in team sports, they learnt about healthy nutrition and exercise and that it is great for mental and physical health.

With it being so warm, a perfect end to one of the days was Des from Little Roper Sttockcamp coming down with the fire truck and setting up the big slip and slide for endless fun! We had the annual disco, where there were glitter tattoos, best dressed and dancing festivities!

Once again, this event is only made possible from all our sponsors, major donator Nutrien Ag solutions, Santos, Plasson, Mataranka roadhouse, Katherine fruit and veg, Rombolo farms and Roper Gulf Council. Another brilliant event to enable geographically isolated children an opportunity to participate in and learn new sports skills, and to foster an interest in sports that distance education and small school students don't get the exposure too.

Lauren Hoar
ICPA Katherine Branch
Sports Camp Co-ordinator





RRED

Rural & Remote Education Day
Wed 8th Oct 2025

#wearRRED



Down the Track Edition 96





Wearing red in support of the Isolated Children's Parents Association, Rural and Remote Education Day (RREd Day).

It is a dedicated awareness day to shine a spotlight on the unique challenges faced by student and families in rural and remote areas of Australia.

Now it's second year, ICPA members, schools and supporters across the NT and all states of Australia proudly wore red.

THANK YOU
to all who helped
"paint the town red"
and raise awareness
of bush education.





KATHERINE BRANCH

Connie Wood

Branch President's Conference Report

"What is the bravest thing you've ever said?" asked the boy. "Help" said the horse.

2024 was a hell of a year for almost everyone it seems, a year of incredible heartbreak and loss, a year that has highlighted more than ever, the trials and tribulations of living remote, not only the physical challenges, but the mental isolation so many feel. 2024 was also a year that has shown me the great strength and love of our community here in the North. I am often so thankful for the advocacy of the ICPA, but overarchingly what I am most thankful for, has been the friendships I have made through this organization and the support networks inherent within the ICPA that span all facets of bush living.

So, on to the good news stories of 2024!!

The Nutrien Auction held at the Katherine Show in July was an absolute roaring success raising over \$200,000. We had a new venue this year which enabled us more room and had the beautiful humans of ICPA Katherine keeping everyone fed. It is always an exciting feeling at this event and again, on behalf of the Katherine Branch I thank all the Katherine and extended territory community for their donations on both sides of the auction.

A special mention to events coordinators Meg Watters and Liz Cooke, a huge thankyou all the Katherine branch members who helped to facilitate this event, and as always we are grateful and honoured to be the recipients of the proceeds of this Auction – huge heartfelt thankyou to Ben Coutts and the team at Nutrien Ag Katherine for all of their hard work in coordinating this very special event.

With Lauren Hoare at the helm for her second year as sport camp coordinator and assisted greatly by Amanda Murphy 2024 saw another very successful sports camp in Mataranka, with approx. 80 children accompanied by their parents and home tutors. This is not only a wonderful opportunity for the children and their grown-ups to socialise with their peers, but also to engage in team sports and build on those important skill sets such as resilience, hand eye coordination, leadership and at times, compromise! All are valuable life lessons that are facilitated in a fun dynamic environment with their mates!

Sports participated in included soccer, dodgeball, netball, gymnastics ruby, boxing and softball. As always we must give a huge thanks to our volunteers keeping the camp well organised and everyone fed. This very special event would not be possible without the generous support of all our sponsors – but namely Santos, Plasson, Mataranka Roadhouse and Roper Gulf council and of course the funds raised by Nutrien Ag auction. Thank You all for your generous support enabling this opportunity for our bush kids.

Given that the Auction is so successful and the ICPA Katherine Branch are the grateful recipients of such a substantial amount of money, a sub committee was formed from the executive, and we were able to nut out a strategic plan for the Branches expenditure. This strategic plan has been presented to our members via the branch meeting in December 2024 for discussion and comment. The new strategic plan is still awaiting a final review and approval by our members to ensure that this money is distributed in a measurable and accountable way. It is extremely important that this money raised by our community is fairly and effectively distributed to our geographically isolated students,



with the ICPA's policies and mission at the forefront of our intentions.

The Katherine branch is very proud to be able to offer a number of grants tailored to the varying needs of geographically isolated families. In 2024 we were able to pay out a total of \$85,000 in grants over the categories of ICT, Boarding, Personal Development and Extraordinary Opportunities.

The Katherine branch was also able to support a number of organisations and events via the form of donations and sponsorship.

During Term 4 of Katherine School of the Air in-school week, ICPA Katherine Branch were able to take the annual Art Awards to another level. With Sally Dyer as the driving force, students' work was entered, collected and displayed at the Buntine Pavilion in the Katherine showgrounds. We had a wide range of artwork presented with categories ranging from LEGO creations, Painted Pictures, Photography, Welded horseshoe art and silhouette cut outs. Parents, teachers, govies and kids were all able to view and vote on the art as well as the thoroughly entertaining auction run by the SOTA kids, auctioning off art donated by their peers to raise funds for the 2025 school excursion to Canberra. We certainly have some young auctioneers coming through the ranks, giving the old boys a run for their money!!

It was a thoroughly enjoyable night for all and a huge thankyou to everyone involved, an event I hope will become a fixture in the term 4 in-schools for years to come.

Katherine Branch was also able to send delegates to the federal conference in Sydney, giving strength to our federal motions and our families a voice in the lively discussion and debate that is a fundamental part of these gatherings. I was one of the delegates who attended the "Bridging the Divide" Federal conference. It was sobering and inspiring to hear of the many and varied challenges faced by bush families across the nation and the historical issues that the ICPA are still advocating for. It is crucial for those of us living in seriously remote areas to attend these conferences as in the NT many of our members have very unique circumstances that most of Australia could not even dream of. I feel that it is absolutely paramount that our children who live remote in the NT are given a voice, and their stories told to those who make the decisions in our country.

I feel like the general population and dare I say many in government hold some misconception of rural families particularly surrounding our choices (or lack thereof) in sending our children away to boarding school, the lack of

understanding of the challenges faced and costs incurred in simply educating our children, and the vast isolation that many of us face in accessing something as simple as a doctors consult, let alone allied health or mental health services.

Our executive and committee of the ICPA Katherine Branch donate their time and skills to our advocacy. Vice President Bec Moh-Bell, Secretary Sally Dyer, Treasurers Amanda Murphy and Hanna Blockland, Fundraising Coordinator Meg Watters, Sports camp coordinator Lauren Hoare, Publicity officer Jess Carone's and committee members Julie Richter, Annie Craig, Kerry Scott, and Megan Robinson. As Katherine President I also sit on the NT state council with an exceptional group of women led by President Moira Lanzarin. Thankyou Katherine Branch and NT state council for your service in 2024, all of us live very busy lives and still you find the time to put your shoulder to the wheel and lead our branch in its advocacy for our children's access to education.

In closing, I want to highlight and appreciate those strong and resilient families who make up our community here in the territory. Particularly our bush mums, these women not only hold pivotal positions in our businesses, homesteads, stock camps and are the heart of our communities out bush, but further to this you manage to educate the future of the bush, our children. GI mothers undertake an increased workload when our children reach school age. We've all held frustrations around our schoolrooms, financial burdens and many the sorrow of saying goodbye at the boarding school gate.

Our children deserve every opportunity to learn and fulfil their potential and hopefully bring valuable skills back to the bush. Each and every one of our members are the reason for the articulate, loving and unwavering advocacy of the ICPA NT. ☺





From the CE - Susan Bowden

Chief Executive, Department of Education and Training

It is hard to believe we are nearing the end of 2025 and in putting together this piece, I have reflected on all the wonderful work we have been able to accomplish as a department in partnership with the ICPA NT.

ICPA NT Conference Participation

In March, I had the absolute pleasure of joining the 43rd ICPA NT Annual State Conference and AGM, which brought families, educators and advocates from across our remote communities together. It was a privilege to hear first-hand the stories and challenges faced by students and parents in remote communities. The priorities raised in ICPA NT motions were carefully considered by the department which, have been woven into our reviews of the Internet subsidy scheme, Student assistance schemes, and the Back to school payment scheme.

Greater Student Assistance Scheme Access

More students are accessing the Student assistance schemes. Since the introduction of the new schemes in March 2023, we have seen a 34% increase in successful applications. This growth reflects our ongoing commitment to ensuring that every child in the NT has increased access to quality education, including those living in geographically isolated communities.

Following extensive consultation with ICPA NT and families engaged in distance education, I am excited to share some of the changes to the revised Student assistance schemes - policy, application and claim procedures early in the new year, which will provide clearer and more flexible support for families living in remote areas of the NT.

Back to School payments for BOARDERS

In 2025, the department took a close look at the Back to school payment scheme to make sure it continues to support Territory families. We listened to ICPA NT, parents and schools because we know that getting ready for a new school year can add up for families. Starting from Term 1, 2026, the scheme will be expanded to help even more Territory families. Students who live in the NT but attend a school interstate and who have already been approved for the interstate boarding allowance under the Student assistance schemes will now be eligible for the Back to school payment

scheme. This means more families can enjoy the same support to ease the costs of getting ready for school.

To make processes easier for parents, the department has added some family-friendly improvements:

- Families will have until the end of Term 3 to use their funds, giving families time to spread out purchases throughout the school year
- Families that have more than one child enrolled at the same school, can now combine entitlements into one lump sum, making it easier to plan and spend in the way that works best for your family.

If your child boards interstate, you can reach out to us by emailing schoolops@education.nt.gov.au and the department will happily provide you with all the details you need.

National Round Table

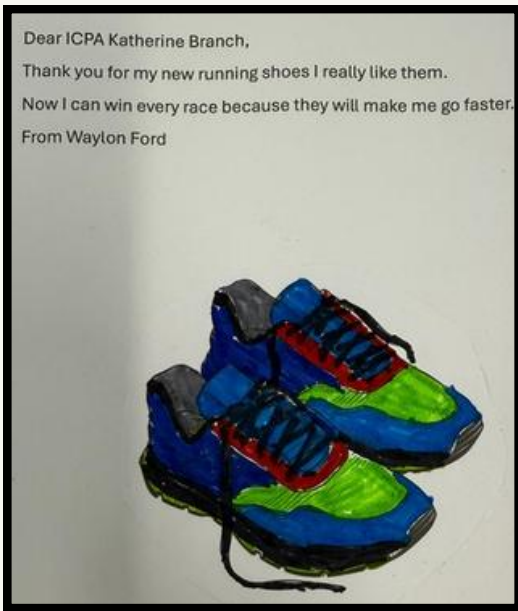
In October, representatives from the department, joined ICPA at the Regional Education Commissioner's round table to talk about something close to many families' hearts - payments for home tutors who are supporting children living in a geographically location and accessing distance education. The department will continue to take part in these national forums working to find practical solutions to the unique challenges of educating students in remote locations of the NT.

Working Together

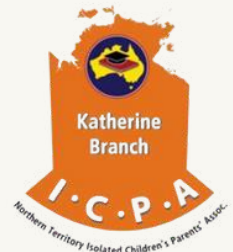
As we step into the new year, I remain committed to working collaboratively to deliver strong outcomes for our students. Together, our focus will be on ensuring that every student has choice and equitable access to education, regardless of distance or isolation.



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**
GOVERNMENT



**KATHERINE
 BRANCH**
PD Grant
ICT Grant



“Sometimes our Wave Hill Schoolroom has to change locations, due to the nature of life on the station, and the iPads purchased through the ICT grant have been invaluable in allowing our children to take their learning out to stockcamp, at campdrafts and even in the Air!! We use our iPads to view curriculum materials not only at the schoolroom desks, but outside and on the floor- having the iPads makes the learning far more interactive and flexible, which is particularly useful in a neurodiverse classroom with young students incorporating varying learning needs. Thankyou ICPA Katherine Branch” Woods family.



Benji Bethel- BTC grade 7

I have used technology so much more than I thought at boarding school. I am getting g better everyday but it has taken a lot of work.



New NT training program aims to attract and keep home tutors at remote stations

By Victoria Ellis, ABC Alice Springs (published Mon 8 Dec 2025)



Tarah More says it is good to have qualifications to show for her work as a home tutor. (ABC Alice Springs: Victoria Ellis)



Indi Harding has been the home tutor at South Australia's Wintinna Station for three years. (ABC Alice Springs: Victoria Ellis)

A course offered for the first time this year has upskilled home tutors working on remote central Australian cattle stations in a bid to ease education workforce shortages in the outback.

The Northern Territory Isolated Children's Parents Association (ICPA) worked with Charles Darwin University to develop the [Gateway for Home Tutors in Isolated Areas](#) vocational training program.

ICPA NT State Councillor Kiya Gill said the course was tailor-made to suit the needs and skills required of home tutors, including first aid, four-wheel-driving and food handling.

"We wanted to develop this program initially so that home tutors were getting more out of their gap year in the bush, so there was an opportunity for them to walk away with some core skills," she said.

"It gives them on-the-ground skills and experience that they can then use to create pathways into different opportunities."

Ms Gill, who also runs Jervois Station about 350 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs, said she hoped the training program would make it easier for remote families like hers to recruit and retain home tutors.

"It's really difficult to employ home tutors because there's just a huge shortage of them across our remote classrooms," she said.

"We have more than 350 students in the Northern Territory that require home tutors — we have more students than home tutors."

Ms Gill said that because the training program took students about 12 months to complete, they were more likely to stick around for the full school year, but the training could also be a pathway for tutors to transition into classroom school teachers.

Tarah More, home tutor at Mount Dennison Station, about three hours north-west of Alice Springs, said the training was valuable for more than the skills it taught.

"The course is helpful, because I've put in this time and now I'll have something to show for it at the end," she said.

Home tutor Indi Harding was pleased the course gave her formal recognition for the skills she had developed over the past three years at Wintinna Station in South Australia.

"It's just helpful if you move on to another job," she said.

The young women are two of eight home tutors in central Australia who have been completing the course, offered for the first time this year.

Ms Gill said she hoped participation would grow across the Northern Territory and wider Australia because home tutors played an important role in supporting rural communities.

Home tutors 'vital' part of rural communities



Home tutors Tarah More and Indi Harding completed a placement as part of their study. (ABC Alice Springs: Xavier Martin)

"They're a vital part of our industry, we cannot do what we do, live and work in the bush without the support of home tutors," she said.

"So it's really important that our agriculture industry is doing more publicity and exposure around these really important roles on stations."

In short:

Eight home tutors from central Australia have been studying the Gateway for Home Tutors in Isolation training program this year.

It is hoped that the new course for remote home tutors will help recruitment and retention of people in the hard-to-fill role.

What's next?

The Northern Territory Isolated Children's Parents Association is hopeful that more home tutors will take up the training in future years.

The 'RICS' Initiative Remuneration for the Isolated Classroom Supervisor



1

DISTANCE EDUCATION IN REMOTE AUSTRALIA

For around 1,000 families living in remote parts of Australia, traditional face-to-face schooling is simply not an option due to geographical isolation.

For these children, Distance Education (DE) is not a choice it is a necessity.

2

SUPERVISORS: KEY TO DE SUCCESS

Distance education schools require families to provide a supervisor, who is fundamental to the child's learning, delivering lessons, preparing resources and maintaining communication.

3

RICS: SUPERVISOR REMUNERATION

To address this long-standing inequity, The Isolated Children's Parents' Association (ICPA) has introduced the initiative:

Remuneration for the Isolated Classroom Supervisor (RICS)

4

VALUING DISTANCE EDUCATION SUPERVISORS

This initiative advocates for financial recognition of the essential work DE supervisors undertake, calling on the Government to provide fair and lawful remuneration.

DE supervisors' work is not voluntary.



ALICE SPRINGS BRANCH

Danyelle Haigh *Branch President's Conference Report*

For those that don't know me, I thought I'd start by breaking the ice & telling you a little about myself & my family & how I came about being ICPA Alice Springs Branch President for the 3rd year now.

My husband Anthony & I have 2 children, Heath 10 and Theo 5. We live 190 km north of Alice Springs on the old Territory Grape Farm now known as Athelle Outback Hideaway. We also travel to remote cattle stations drilling & installing water bores. We lived the nomadic life for 10 years travelling & drilling 10 months of the year, working around the clock - all with the 2 kids in tow. 3 years ago we decided to put down stumps here in the NT, give our kids some normality & stability. We now produce fodder crops, have a tourist park & attractions & only go out drilling for about 4 months of the year. Our boys attend school through Alice Springs School of the Air (ASSOA) & are taught by a governess at home & when we are on the road. We have been attending SOA since my eldest started schooling 8 years ago. We live an extremely busy but exciting life & although it took the kids a little to adjust to this, they are now thriving.

ICPA holds a very special place in my heart. When I first heard about ICPA, 6 or so years ago it was my first in-school with ASSOA and my first preschool baby. I was still so naive when it came to education in the bush and the inequity that we will face in our years ahead. I met this lovely group of passionate people who I have since made long lasting friendships with, that all were experiencing the same or something similar to what we were. I soon found myself wanting to be a part of this revolution, this group that were making real changes to bush families.

I took the leap and haven't looked back since. Every time I attend an ICPA event whether it be a branch meeting, state conference, federal conference, a dinner or social event I walk away feeling inspired! Even though there can be some intense debates, conflicts of interest or some real tears it always comes back to each & every one of those people all feeling something, all going through something but all wanting the same outcome for our families - Equity!

As I reflect on 2024 it was such a huge year for our branch. I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved and all with the help of my amazing committee Kiya Gill, Benji Quilliam, Amanda Kimpton, Katy Hayes, Georgie Hamlyn, Amanda Brown, Julianne Vlach & Grainne Martin. We delivered first aid & CPR

training; the ongoing home tutor program; a sports day and colour run; lego fun days, movie night, our in-school meet & greet functions; the strong attendance from our branch members at meetings; and our exciting Christmas party partnered with ASSOA - Alice Springs School of the Air. We have welcomed so many new & old faces to our branch. Our committee brought back the annual Central Desert Christmas party, which was held at our place, Athelle where families travelled hours to enjoy the celebration. Benji Quilliam, our priest organised the Christmas carols, Kiya Gill organised the Christmas crafts, Band-Lee organised Santa, I organised the water activities & the most important thing according to all the kids - the slushy machine. Everyone bought all this yummy Christmas food & we had the biggest feast. It was the most magical day with so many memories made. Even though it was a lot of work it was so worth it, to see all the kids & even the adults smiling faces playing & mingling with each other. Looking forward to celebrating each year with all the locals.

We have tried new things for our families: all having successful feedback & number turnouts. We were able to offer these events because of the amazing amount of support we have received from sponsors, donations and grants. We have continued to support RaisEducation and KICS in 2024 and hope to continue our contribution to them in 2025.

In term 4 of 2024 I was flung back into the school room after 6 years out of it. So much has changed since I first taught the kids through Alice Springs School of the Air. We use Zoom now instead of React, I have 2 kids in the school room now, we have reliable internet & up to date resources/electronics not



like when we first started - we were all paper based and mailed out. It was fantastic to see how much has changed & improved with all the new technology & different ways of teaching and learning. It certainly made it easier on me trying to get my head around it all and transition back into the classroom. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching my 2 boys and how they have thrived with having mum as their teacher. Watching them learn and grasp concepts made my cup fuller every day. I've realised since being thrown back into the school room in term 4 that it is very important for the parent to be actively aware and involved with their child's schooling. I've been so lucky to have had such amazing and fantastic governesses over the past 6 years that I entrusted them with my children's education & that I never bothered learning the new and up to date ropes of the schooling system. I'm so glad I'm all over it



now, not only did I enjoy my time in the school room and watching them learn but the kids loved it too. It was also a good way to make sure the kids are at the level they need to be for their ages and if all the work is being completed etc. As we embark on a new adventure in 2025 we are so excited for what lies ahead with my eldest in his last year of primary school, year 6 and my youngest about to start his journey in primary school, year 1. I have hired a more mature governess, Paula this year to take the reins and educate my eldest as it is his most important year before boarding school and leaving home. Paula has just celebrated her 70th birthday with us and is working out to be the perfect fit for our family. I've already seen an improvement in Health. I've decided to take my youngest under my wing this year so we can concentrate on building the right foundations for him from the beginning! We are all pumped for a successful year!

I'm fortunate enough to sit as President of our branch but also as a councillor on the NT State Council. This in turn has helped guide me through my president's role and kept me informed, up to date and helps link me in so I can report back to my branch with what's happening on a state level. It has been great being part of the bigger picture. I anticipate some great delegations when we attend in Darwin later this year.

Looks like 2025 is panning out to be another big year for our branch and with another amazing team behind me - Amanda Kimpton, Katy Hayes, Kiya Gill, Amanda Brown, Benji Quilliam, Brandi-Lee, Grainne Martin, Sally Muenster and Lara Grocke.



We are incredibly grateful that NTCA (Northern Territory Cattlemen's Association) have once again allowed our branch the opportunity to auction off items at their conference gala dinner in Darwin on the 21st of March. This is our biggest fundraiser for our branch, we are filled with gratitude that NTCA gives us this opportunity. Myself along with my amazing committee member, Kiya Gill have managed to source 6 unreal items, even a 'drive the NT' package showcasing some of the wonderful destinations from Alice to Katherine. We are so blown away by the generosity of our sponsors and how big their hearts are when it comes to supporting our GI families. Thank you to Grundfos, Discovery Parks – Katherine and Alice Springs, Elders Alice Springs, Bordin Bros, McArdles Freight, Athelle Outback Hideaway, Heli-Muster NT, Hastings Deering, Jervois and Senturion Steel.

We will have more first aid training; the newest home tutor course starting this year; a sports day and colour run; more lego masters; pizza & movie nights, more grant offers; and so much more.

Due to the amazing support our branch has received from sponsors and donations we were able to award some well-deserved grants out for 2024. The Junior Personal Development Grant was won by Beau Costello. Beau will be using his grant to attend Scienceworks in Sydney in April this year. The Senior Personal Development grant was won by Hayley Nicolle, who will be using her grant to purchase a new laptop for school. The ASSOA grant was awarded to Ashlee Saint for her future schooling. We also had 2 runners up, for the Junior Personal Development Grant it was Alice Quinn who will be using it towards circus school & for the ASSOA grant it was Aaron Hayes going towards a Macbook laptop for boarding school.

As I embark on my third year as Alice Springs branch President, I am excited for the year that lies ahead and focused on making it another successful year for our branch and our families!

Thank you. ☺

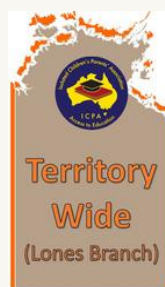
Danyelle

Danyelle Haigh
Alice Springs Branch President



First Time Federal Conference Delegate

Michelle Gibson
Territory Wide Branch Delegate
NT Salvation Army Flying Patrol



I really appreciated the opportunity to be a delegate at the Federal Conference in Adelaide, representing the Territory Wide Branch.

The South Australians looked after us very well, and I was presently surprised by the weather. It wasn't as cold as I imagined it would be!

I had not heard about ICPA before moving to the Territory three and a half years ago, although my sons all went to school in country WA. Since being in the Territory I have seen the struggles that parents in rural and remote places have with schooling their children, as well as keeping their families thriving and healthy.

I have come to appreciate the work that ICPA does, and I often ask families that I meet through my work if they are a part of this great organisation.

At the Federal Conference in Darwin in 2023, I was able to observe a little of what happens with the Motion process. I enjoyed being more involved in that this year. I am now more aware than I was two years ago of what living in remote settings is like, which was helpful when voting.

Some highlights of the conference were meeting new people and getting to know others better; dressing up for the Conference Dinner was nice, and the food was delicious. I was inspired by Megan McLoughlin who hasn't let her blindness hold her back. I learned a lot from Kellie Britnell, Senior Education Advisor from the eSafety Commission whose enthusiasm was contagious, even though the learning was sombre.

It really is a privilege to be part of ICPA. Keep up the good work!



2025 Federal Conference
30th – 31st July 2025
EOS by SkyCity, Adelaide SA



Education for the
heart and the mind

Representation at Every Level

The NT membership may be small in numbers, but it is big in heart.

Every Territorian should rightly feel proud of our representation and quality of input at this year's Federal Conference (and indeed, always).

Two Territorians are members of Federal Council - Melissa Kerr, Federal Treasurer and Amber Driver, Boarding Portfolio Leader. Both successfully presented for the first time at Conference.

NT President, Moira Lanzarin presented her fourth and final speech to acclamation.

Our three Branches were all in attendance, each with two voting delegates. Alice Springs - Katy Hayes & Kiya Gill and Observer Kerrie Russel (Alice Springs School of the Air). Katherine - Sally Dyer & Sam Selmes. Territory Wide - Jacinta McInnery & Michelle Gibson plus observers, Elise Petty (NBN) and Sue Shotton (Federal Life Member).

Alice Springs and Katherine articulately put forward motions. On the occasion of a lost motion, Katherine Branch collaborated, reworked and successfully represented their issue as a floor motion.

Members from all levels actively took to the floor to speak for, against and add context to motions debated over the two days.

And if that wasn't enough, let me ensure you that the NT also embraced the fun and frivolity of the dinner dress up theme of "Frozen Wonderland". Icy glamour in sophisticated gowns and furs, Christmas sequins and the winning trio of Sam, Kiya and Katy in full "Frozen" costume.

By Moira Lanzarin



Down the Track Edition 96





2025 Federal Conference
30th – 31st July 2025
EOS by SkyCity, Adelaide SA



Education for the
heart and the mind





NT Report

Moira Lanzarin - Federal Conference

I proudly stand before you to deliver my fourth and final speech as NT President.

The Conference theme, “Education for the Heart and Mind” is especially relevant for us all and a huge congratulations and thank you to SA convening committee and Federal Council for getting us all together for this. Just as we are all about growing our children and their education – ICPA provides a personal growth journey for parents and teaching staff as well. I love seeing the increasing confidence and capacity as new members come through, taking their turn in leadership roles, so ably supported by those who have been before.

I would like to shout out two stellar examples of this: Katy Hayes and Sally Dyer. Both here today. Both daughters of ICPA. Both School of the Air kids, Boarders, Home tutors, and Bush Mums. Now Secretaries of their respective ICPA NT Branches. Working hand in hand with their Branch President’s and committees, they

keep their members connected and us all on track. Both beautiful and amazing individuals. I don’t think either realise just how special they are and what a stellar job they do. Thank you and well done. Keep on doing and being you.

ICPA has also helped me grow and develop. Not just in my time as NT President but from a much earlier time too. I consider myself a child of ICPA. My school of the air and boarding school days in North Queensland were all the better because of the advocacy and actions of my Mum and others busy working at a Branch, State and Federal level of ICPA.

“I see my task as NT State President is to lead the State Council in our advocacy to relevant stakeholders about state related issues. I also see my task as a conduit and connecting mechanism between Federal Council, our Branches and our stakeholders.”

For those who are unaware, ICPA NT Executive are all limited to a maximum of 4 consecutive years in one role. At every AGM, all positions are declared vacant and can be contested. This good governance keeps the organisation fresh, with real lived experience and helps to elevate potential burnout. The workload is large and to fit it in, other things must give and flex.

The task of ICPA NT President was not one that I actively sought. I was already on the NT State Council as Treasurer and thoroughly enjoying and becoming comfortable with that role. But the President position needed to be filled and nobody was putting up their hand. I was capable, able and felt a sense of responsibility. In truth, I felt that I needed to take it on, like I needed a hole in my head. My father - my mentor, close friend and business partner - had just passed away from Cancer; both my sons - had just left home to start boarding school. Why would I need or want this extra responsibility and workload? But in reality, ICPA was exactly what I needed. I didn’t hold it up - it held me. It gave me purpose and clear direction on those difficult days where my motivation was low, where I struggled to get out of bed or put one foot in front of the other. I have enjoyed every bit of my time but I am also ready to pass the baton on. Jobs like decluttering the shed and Big House at Coodardie and catching up on maintenance and office work need more of my attention and effort than I have given them of late.



In the NT we have had a very stable State Council with a lovely balance of fresh insight and solid experience. They are an amazing and special group whose support and assistance means so much. I am so proud of all of them and thank you does not seem enough. Bec Osmotherly - Treasurer; Catherine Atkins - Secretary; Amanda Murphy - Vice President; Juliane Vlach - Assistant Secretary; Kiya Gill - Publicity Officer; Katherine Branch President & Councillor - Connie Woods; Alice Springs Branch President & Councillor - Danyelle Haigh; Territory Wide Mentor & Councillor - Jacinta McInnery; and Councillors Mel Kerr and Amanda Brown.

The thorough and democratic process of our motions is a key attribute of ICPA. Taking this through to the next step of updating our actual Portfolio Policies is something that had not been occurring. Our Policy Document was last ratified at Conference in 2002. Many had attempted its update. In 2024 Constitutional amendments were made to give clarity and efficiency to this process and we then sought and contracted interstate expertise from ICPA Qld Life Member and past federal Secretary, Kim Hughes to work with us and fully update these documents. It was with great satisfaction that these were presented and approved at our 2025 State Conference.

This year's NT State Conference was held in Katherine hosted by the amazing and energetic Katherine Branch, convened by Jess Coronas - ably supported by her mother, ICPA and northern legend, Bernadette Burke and a large committee. Our theme was Country Kids Count. I don't need to explain to anyone here today why this is true but I will anyway! Not only are country kids, our kids and therefore our heart and soul, but country kids are important and valuable everywhere. Strong values, solid work ethic, responsibility, independence, resilience and ability to positively interact with individuals from a variety of backgrounds, social classes and age groups are regularly sighted as important differentiating features of country children. This makes them sought after employees and natural leaders of business and community.

We once again flew the ICPA flag at the NT Cattlemen's Annual Conference in Darwin, with an information booth. This exposure and interaction creates such an important connection and link between our combined membership base and it was great to have NTCA President Henry Burke speak and participate at our State Conference.

November 2024 saw me in Alice Springs, strengthening relationships and speaking at the Local Government of Northern Territory annual conference. There and at every opportunity possible, I reinforce that one cannot achieve economic development and advancement of the regions without looking after families. And to look after families, one must consider access to EDUCATION and healthcare, communications and safe roads. During Delegation and in between, progress is being made on some long standing issues. We have a positive and productive relationship with both the NT Education Minister and the Education Department.

I was unable to attend Joint Council this year in Perth but the NT was most ably represented by our Treasurer and Secretary - thank you to WA for hosting. This cross collaboration and sharing of knowledge is so valuable. I would also like to thank and acknowledge the invaluable work of the Tech Team and the leadership and general support of Federal Council over and above their Federal advocacy roles.

It is for all these reasons and so much more, why the work of ICPA is so important. Why we strive every day to ensure all children have equitable access to education, regardless of their geographic location. Why we work so hard to ensure that NO child falls through the cracks, because of where their family lives.

Please take a moment to reflect and consider why we volunteer? It is not because we are rich and wealthy or have heaps of spare time on our hands. In many cases this is so far from reality it is laughable. We volunteer because we care. We volunteer because some things are just so important that handing the task to a paid employee would not give it the justice it deserves. Our volunteers are priceless and I most sincerely thank each and everyone of you for your contribution.

But volunteering is not a one-way street. By giving, we are also receiving in so many ways. Regional Australia is filled with the most amazing, generous and truly beautiful people. It is an absolute pleasure and a privilege to work and stand beside you all. To my NT members and State Councillors - you are next level. Thank you everyone.

Maira

COLOUR RUN

Sports Day
Friday 23 May
1:30pm Head
Street Oval

BYO
white shirt
& sunglasses





Red Centre Ladies Day



Alice Springs Show

CALLING ALL LEGO MASTERS

Join us for an afternoon of lego challenges & fun.
Suitable for all ages, everyone receives a lego set

Tuesday 20 May
Discovery Park
Entertainment Hall
4:00pm

This event is for ICPA members,
non members can sign up at the
door. Membership is \$75 per
family.




The total amount raised is...

\$55,079.15

FOR ALICE SPRINGS SCHOOL OF THE AIR

This is an incredible amount of money we have raised! We could not have raised this fantastic amount without your support.

THANK YOU !!



NTCA Conference Gala Auction
\$26,000 raised for
Alice Springs ICPA Branch

Kerrie Scott

Life Member Awarded, Katherine Branch

Presented at AGM, December 2025

Kerrie Scott and ICPA two words that go together like peas and corn and chips and gravy – they just roll off your tongue.

Kerrie was Katherine Branch President from 2015 - 2022, bringing with her passion and drive to ensure that children in the NT had the best chance of receiving a quality education in remote Australia. Whilst managing Mountain Valley Station with her husband Andrew, she literally took the buffalo by the horns and dove straight into transforming ICPA Katherine into the successful and forward moving branch that it is today.

Kerrie did not do Distance Education or go to boarding school while receiving her education in NSW, arriving way back in the NT as a fresh faced ringer at Wavehill Station and did not look back.

Kerrie was the brainchild of the Katherine ICPA Sports Camp, pulling together a three-day extravaganza of teams sports for kids from Katherine School of the Air, Mataranka State School, Douglas Daly State School and even Mount Isa School of the Air kids held in the central location of Mataranka.

She organised professional coaches to attend, team leaders, accommodation and general chaos and now, 9 years on, my kids at boarding school are still asking if the Deadly Dingoes or Wedgetail Warriors won the chant at the end of camp.

Kerrie also continued to work closely with Nutrien Katherine for the inaugural Nutrien Auction at the Katherine Show, developing a special relationship with the Nutrien team. Breaking records year after year in total amounts raised, it's a true legacy of what Kerrie achieved as Branch President. With the auction funds she was able to extend grants and opportunities for Katherine Branch members, creating the boarding school and extraordinary opportunity grants.

All the while, Kerrie was also an active State Councillor, attending delegations and conferences, being a mother, wife and holding a demanding job.

Thank you Kerrie, a true leader, a true advocate for rural and remote kids and a true friend. Ladies and Gentleman, please join with me to acknowledge Life Member of the Isolated Children's Parents Association Katherine Branch – Kerrie Scott.

By Amanda Murphy



2022Mataraka Sports Camp



Katherine Luncheon July 2020



Finding Our Feet:

Our First Year of Distance Education

When we started distance education, I thought I had a fair idea of what to expect. I'd worked as a governess before, I'd seen how lessons ran, and on paper it all felt familiar. But stepping into distance education as a parent – especially for the first time and many years after my govvie days – was a whole different experience.

We live on a remote NT station, about 220 kilometres south-east of Katherine, and last year we began distance education with our daughter in preschool. She had done Cubs the year before, but preschool felt like a big step – a shift from learning mostly through play into something that suddenly felt more structured.

One of the biggest surprises was the amount of activities involved, and how much time some of them took. It wasn't that there was too much work – it was just more than I had expected, especially when you factored in preparation. I had imagined we could easily pack school up and take it with us on the road when on holidays. In reality, particularly in the preschool years where learning is still very hands-on and play-based, distance education came with a lot of “extras”: sugar cubes for igloos, icy pole sticks, watercolour paints, specific paper. It meant either planning very carefully ahead of time or sourcing things along the way.

Once I took a week early in the term to really set ourselves up, the schooling side actually ran quite smoothly. What I hadn't fully prepared for, though, was the financial side – particularly the cost of attending things like in-school weeks. These are incredibly important, not just for the children but for parents and govies as well, yet the travel and associated costs can really add up for remote families.

Like many parents, there were moments where I stopped and questioned whether we were doing it “right”. Early on, I was focused on taking photos of the finished product – the completed activity or worksheet. By Term 3, I had a bit of a lightbulb moment. I realised the process mattered just as much, if not more: how she held the scissors, how her writing developed, how she worked her way through an activity. It was a reminder to slow down and trust the learning, even when it didn't look perfect.

There were so many wins too. She genuinely loved learning and especially enjoyed being online with her friends. One small but meaningful change we made was moving her out of the station office and into an old, empty office that we're gradually turning into a dedicated schoolroom. That simple shift helped her see school as her own special space and made a big difference to her engagement.

Support played a huge role in getting us through that first year. Our nanny was an incredible help – stepping in with lessons or activities when I was tied up with station duties or had to do town runs. The school itself, the teachers, and the wider parent community were also invaluable. Connecting with other distance education families gave me the confidence to ask questions and realise that many of the challenges we faced were shared ones. Attending school council meetings, KICS, ICPA gatherings and home tutor conferences all helped build that sense of connection and understanding.

Looking back now, the biggest thing I wish I'd known from the start is not to be afraid to ask questions – and to get involved early. There is so much knowledge and support within the distance education community, and it makes a world of difference when you tap into it.

As we look ahead to Transition, we know another big adjustment is coming. A full week of school, fewer art- and craft-style activities, and more online lessons will bring new routines and new challenges. But after navigating that first year of distance education, we feel better prepared – and more confident – to take the next step.

For any family about to begin their first year of distance education, I'd gently say this: you don't have to have it all figured out straight away. Learning takes time – for the kids and for us as parents – and being involved, asking questions and connecting with others makes the journey feel far less daunting.

By Steph Lewis, Flying Fox Station



ICPA NT Post Secondary Grant

Yerrin Heaslip Co-Winner



I have grown up in geographically isolated locations my whole life, from remote communities to small towns, and even now as an adult I live in a larger regional town called Port Lincoln in South Australia. The closest city is a 7 hour drive away, and Port Lincoln is the largest town for 300km. Although I have access to resources, implements for study and health are harder to come by.

My family have been members with the ICPA NT for 12 years, since I was 8 years old living in Mataranka, and for five years at the annual ICPA Katherine Fundraiser, we donated Heaslip Wine.

I have been enrolled in multiple schools throughout my primary and secondary schooling years, ranging from Indigenous community schools, Mataranka primary school, Katherine School of the Air (KSA), Clare Valley High-school and the Northern Territory School of Distance Education (NTSDE). From Kindergarten to Grade 2, I attended Numbulwar School, before moving to Mataranka and I attended the primary school up until Grade 7, completing Grade 8 with KSA. For Grade 9 and 10, I moved to Clare Valley in South Australia, before making the decision to move back home and complete the last two years of secondary schooling enrolled in both Mataranka School and NTSDE. I was the first person to graduate year 12 at Mataranka School. Now two years after graduating, I have commenced a year long traineeship with CEG, completing a Certificate III in Individual support (disability).

Why I chose the place of study and employment:

After exploring a few job options, I decided to search for something that I could pursue as a fulfilling career for myself. Based on my strengths, it was suggested that I explore working in the disability sector. I started researching the job description and requirements, realising that working in a field that allows me to support people who don't have the access/ability to live a 'normal' life, could be some thing I'd enjoy making a career out of. I ended up sitting down for a few interviews and got a job with Eyre Care. They work under CEG, which is a Career Employment Group that assists with apprenticeships/traineeships and other training opportunities. Completing my traineeship with them is allowing me easy access support for my training, and subsidised course payments.

Grant Request:

If I was to receive the ICPA NT Post-Secondary Grant, I would use it to pay for my Certificate III (Individual Support), for further job

training, and for equipment that I would require to assist me while I study and work full-time in Port Lincoln South Australia.

Thanks to the company I am working under, I am only required to pay a portion of the course cost, but it is still a significant quantity and required in bulk payment. The grant money would remove the impact of expending that money, particularly with the current cost of living, any amount of funds can go a long way, and make a considerable difference in anyone's life.

My workplace offers non-required additional training for employees that wish to further their career as a Community Support Worker. I have already expressed my interest in taking these extra courses and was informed that payment would be required. I would use the grant money to pay for these courses, ensuring that I can be as qualified for my job as possible. When working in a job that directly involves the care of other people, especially vulnerable people, it is important to be educated in every aspect of the job, and the client's life.

I have decided to commence my certificate by studying and working full-time. This involves working at least 40 hours a week and completing study/training with Eyre Care, as well as full-time study outside of work with CEG for the actual certificate. I would put the grant money towards possibly buying a new laptop to allow me to manage my time efficiently and keep track of my study with an efficient, well working device. When completing a traineeship with anyone, the trainee gets paid a considerable amount less than the qualified employees, rightfully so, but the grant money would assist in cutting the difference in pay for a few months. I would also use the money to buy study material, such as books, pens, and folders, basic material that is essential for any student.

Being the recipient of the ICPA NT Post-Secondary Grant would greatly benefit me in completing my year long Traineeship for a Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability).



ICPA NT Post Secondary Grant

Co-Winner *Joshua Atkins*

Dear ICPA NT,

I am so grateful to have been a recipient of the 2025 post secondary grant.

Thank you.

My name is Joshua Atkins, and I am 22 years old. I was born in Kununurra and lived on Argyle Downs Station for the first 4 years of my life.

My schooling began with Katherine School of the Air when my parents were managing Newry Station which is close to the NT/WA border. I did transition and grade 1 and 2 with KSA and then we moved to the very remote town of Wyndham where I went to school until year 8. Wyndham District High school went from Kindy to year 12 and had around 110 students at the time.

My parents made the tough decision to send me to boarding school in Brisbane from year 9 to year 12. At this time, my parents were also working remotely fencing and yard building on stations. Going to St Joseph's Nudgee College was an amazing opportunity and was very tough at first living so far away from my family but once I had settled in, I made some wonderful lifelong friends and had so many amazing opportunities.

By the end of year 12, I had decided that I wanted to go to university to become a nurse. Within 6 months of leaving school, I changed my mind and decided to take on a Carpenters apprenticeship. At the time, the bright city lights kept me in Brisbane but before my first year out of school had finished, I realized that the bush was calling me home. I had the opportunity to continue my apprenticeship with a Darwin based company who work remotely in the Northern Territory.

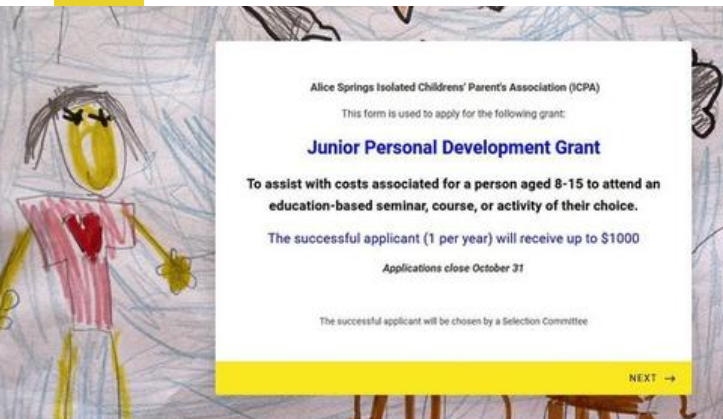
While I live just outside Katherine on my days off, all our work is in Geographically isolated areas such as Uluru and on cattle stations. I soon realized that this was where I was always meant to be. Since winning the grant, I have just completed my trade and am now a qualified Carpenter. I have come to realize the importance of having tradesman and women in the Northern Territory. I work with builders who fly in and out of other states around Australia because there are not enough Carpenters living in NT.

We need to have more people who are willing to live and work in NT, especially in remote areas. And why wouldn't you want to! When I am not at work, I am often back out bush fishing. It is very tough the first couple of years being on apprentice wages, but 4 years have flown , and I can't believe I am now qualified.

With my grant money, I have invested in a new welder and helmet. I was lucky to learn how to weld at a young age working with my parents on my school holidays fencing and yard building and this has paid off greatly when it comes to building. I am lucky to work on projects that involve both timber and steel and having the welding skills has been very handy. Having my own welder is great! The advocacy work ICPA does for the equality of education for isolated kids is so important and ensures that they are not forgotten.

Thank you ICPA NT for the generous post-secondary grant. You can be sure that the welder will be used in geographically isolated areas for many years to come!





Alice Springs GRANTS

by Amanda Brown

Tyler Morphette from Erldunda Station won the junior grant development grant with his excellent slide show application, thorough and well thought out, Tyler explained that he would like to use the grant money to participate in a motorbike riding course to improve his riding skills, he was very passionate and excited about the opportunity.

The 2 runner ups were Kolby Easy and Tom Le Page, both had excellent entries and the committee found it very difficult to decide, we were all very happy to provide them both with a runner up prize of \$500 each.



JUNIOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT RECIPIENT - Tyler Morphett



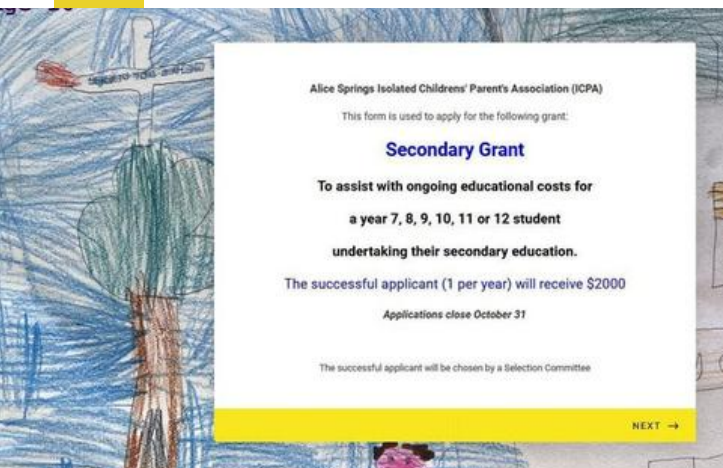
RUNNER'S UP Tom Le Page and Koby Easy



ASSOA GRANT RECIPIENT

Clementine Muenster

Clementine Muenster from Yambah Station is going to be attending Fairholme College in 2026, she is looking to participate in the horse program that they offer. The horse program is an excellent way to help bush kids feel connected to the important aspects of their life at home, connection with animals and like minded girls is invaluable. This grant will help with the ongoing costs of the program and ensure that her horse is well cared for. Clementine is a very worthy recipient and she put great effort into her application and explained in detail how these funds will benefit her transition into boarding school in 2026.



SECONDARY GRANT RECIPIENT

Spencer Hardy

Spencer Hardy from Athelle Outback Hideaway submitted a video application, where he displayed his impressive guitar playing skills and explained that the money from this grant will help to fund his music lessons so he can grow his guitar playing capabilities.

Spencer has moved interstate with his family and we are happy that we can still support him in his learning goals and remain connected to him and his family.

ST PHILLIP'S COLLEGE BOARDING GRANT

Not awarded as no applicants this year



A shout out and CONGRATULATIONS to Aaron, Alice Springs Branch member, past Alice Springs School of the Air student and first year boarder in Adelaide.

To borrow the words of his mother, Katy Hayes, "for a kid who put minimal effort into maths and somehow 'forgot' to do any maths homework at all for half a term, he goes alright at maths when there's a shiny medal at stake."



Prince Alfred College

December 27, 2025 at 5:00 PM · 🌐

On Tuesday 2 December, we hosted the inaugural 'Interschool Mathematics Battle' between Prince Alfred College and Adelaide Botanic High School. A concept developed by the PAC Mathematics faculty, this fast-paced competition required our best Year 8 Standard Mathematics students to complete rounds of quick-fire questions and more complex problems to solve and present in front of a live audience. Our team consisted of Reuben, Tom, Will, Aaron, Hardy, Wilbur, Archie and Harry.

After a hard fought and close battle with students from both schools demonstrating outstanding mathematical, public speaking and presentation skills, the students from PAC were victorious 70.5 points to 69 points. Congratulation to all the students who participated!

#PAC #Mathematics #Mathsbattle



So proud of you



The NT News

November 26, 2025 · 🌐

Remote businesswoman Danyelle Haigh has been named the Community Leader category winner at the 2025 NT News Territory Leader of the Year Awards.

SEE THE LIST OF WINNERS 👉

<https://bit.ly/3KirQHR>

Sponsored by Sunday Territorian.

In Loving Memory, Appreciation and Respect



A State Memorial will be held in Alice Springs, 17th February 2026.

In lieu of flowers, the Family has named ICPA NT as a beneficiary. Thank you.

Donations can be made online at <https://gofund.me/52d13abd4>

1932 TO 2025

TED EGAN AO



ICPA NT Zoetis Grant

Ava Osmotherly

This grant will go towards me getting my HR license. Getting my HR license will give me the ability to help my parents in their water welling drilling and cattle business and be a skills asset. My family runs cattle on agistment, south of Katherine near Mataranka.

Having my HR license will give me the opportunity to help my parents out where I can, by driving trucks for them. Working remotely makes it hard for them to find people with the licenses and skills necessary.

My future studies will be based around agriculture. I have many different courses in mind like a dual degree in Business and Agriculture, Agricultural Science or Animal Science. I have been accepted into the University of New England, Armidale and hope to study there next year. After studying I will use my degree to put back into the industry by focusing on a career in agriculture. In the future I hope to be a part of the ICPA committee and give back to the community by supporting those disadvantaged by isolation.

Thank you for considering me for the ICPA Pastoral Industry Student Grant.

ICPA NT GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Zoetis Grant \$1500

15- 25 years old
Assist in pastoral-related study
(short courses included)

Post Secondary Grant \$1500

Assist in post school study
Any subject matter
Via a Registered Training Provider
or Learning Institution

WATCH FOR MORE INFO

Closes mid Feb
NTtreasurer@icpa.com.au
NTfso@icpa.com.au

DTT is now accepting PAID ADVERTISING

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HONOR ROLL



Life Members

NT State Council	Katherine Branch	Alice Springs Branch
Mrs Jan Heaslip OAM	Mrs Ros Andrews	Mrs Denise Broad
Mrs Patricia Elliott AM	Mrs Jackie Harvey	Mrs Bev Seidel
Mrs Chrissie Holt (dec.)	Mrs Roylene Hill	Mrs Liz Bird
Mrs Deneise Edwards	Mrs Merriel Lawrie	
Mrs Kate Schubert	Mrs Janelle Pugh	
Mrs Del Harlan	Mr Blue Pugh	
Mrs Liz Bird	Mrs Martha Swart	
Mrs Sally Sullivan	Mrs Patricia Elliott AM	
Mrs Helen Harding	Mrs Sally Sullivan	
	Mrs Helen Harding	
	Mrs Kerrie Scott	

CERTIFICATE of MERIT

	Federal Council	Barkly Branch
Mrs Liz Bird		
Mrs Pauline Rayner		
Mrs Martha Swart		
Mrs Ruth Worle	Mrs Patricia Elliott AM	Mrs Wendy Olsen
Mrs Sally Sullivan	Mrs Sue Shotton	Mrs Robyn Peatling
Mrs Helen Harding		Mrs Carmel Wagstaff

Certificate of Appreciation

Hon Austin Ashe AC QC

Patrons

Hon Austin Ashe AC QC 1996 - 2010

Mrs Jan Heaslip OAM 2011 - 2020

Hon Vicki O'Halloran AO 2020 -

Full list of year and positions held by all previous State Councillors is available

ICPA Branch Committees in the NT



Alice Springs Branch AGM, Dec 2025

Membership fee \$50 | secretaryasicpa@gmail.com
www.icpa.com.au/nt/branches/alice-springs

President - Katy Hayes

Secretary - Lil Bryant

Treasurer - Kiya Gill

Vice President - Danyelle Haigh

Grant Secretary - Amanda Brown

Public Officer - Kiya Gill

Publicity Officer - Sally Muenster

Committee Members - Helen Kunze, Lara Groecke, Grainne Martin, Benj Quilliam, Eleanor Ryan, Frankie Fennell



Katherine Branch AGM, Dec 2025

Membership fee \$50 | katherine@icpa.com.au
www.icpa.com.au/nt/branches/katherine

President - Constance (Connie) Woods

Secretary - Sally Dyer

Treasurer - Emily Corbett

Assistant Treasurer - Hanna Blokland

Vice President - Bec Mohr Bell

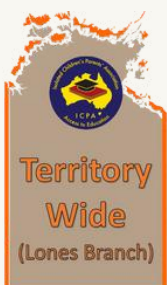
Grant Officer - Sally Dyer

Public Officer - Amanda Murphy

Publicity / Media Officer - Sam Selmes

Fundraising Co-ordinator - Megan Watters

Committee Members - Megan Robinson, Jessica Corones, Alex Laurisson, Annie Craig, Kimberly Harries, Kelli McLaughlin, Ainslie French, Sarah Beaument, Steph Lewis, Steph Mackenzie



Territory Wide

Membership fee \$50 | territorywide@icpa.com.au
www.icpa.com.au/nt/branches/territory-wide

Mentor - Jacinta McInnerney (NT State Councillor)



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**JOIN US BY GOING TO THE ICPA WEBSITE
TO PAY YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND
CREATE AN ACCOUNT**

Go to icpa.com.au/nt/membership



Your contact details

Help us stay in touch with you by keeping your contact details up-to-date.

[Add Or Edit](#)

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Once logged in,
find 'Your contact details' and click 'Add or Edit'

NEED TO UPDATE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?

Once logged in,
find 'Change your email or password' and click
'Edit Account'

Change your email or password

If you need to change your email address or password, please edit your user account.

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“Equity in Education Outback”



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