

Student Spotlight

*A SHOWCASE
OF STORIES*

*Year 8 Student Named Young
Author of the Year*

*WRITE FOR
RIGHTS*
*A Student-led Advocacy
Movement*

Student Of The Year

**ANAIIS
HENRY-MARTIN**

A LOCAL LEGEND

**BRILLIANT
MINDS**

*Meet the NT Team for the
Tournament of Minds*

FOREWORD



Hamish Samuels
Deputy Editor-in-Chief
Student Spotlight Magazine

The NTSS has had an eventful year- from the founding in early 2024 to the release of our 6th issue this month. Over the course of our six publications, we have seen the organisation grow beyond what we expected, now having access to a plethora of student stories, both academic and creative, allowing us to express our mission to let student voices be heard across the Territory.

While many young people in the Northern Territory are receiving national or global awards, their achievements and their impact are often overlooked. We, as an organisation, seek to change that by providing a platform for these young achievers to springboard into the spotlight.

While it is important to acknowledge these events, it is also important to recognise the achievements of students in schools, and the publication of the opinions of young people on more serious issues. Slowly, over the course of our publications, we get closer to achieving our goal of bringing these talented students into the media spotlight.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Youth Community

3-4	A Showcase of Stories: Year 8 Student Named Young Author of the Year By Pak Chan
5-6	Anais Henry-Martin: Student of the Year By Nova Sobby and Melanie Palihawadana
7-10	A Call for Hope: Youth Voices on the Youth Mental Health Crisis By Ash Huynh
11-12	Forget Me Not: Dementia is also Affecting the Youth According to Experts By Pak Chan
13-14	Turning the Page: 15-year-old named Young Historian of the Year By Pak Chan
15-16	Write for Rights: A Student-led Advocacy Movement By Kasfiha Tahsin
17-18	A Young Fighter for Justice: Nicole Ting By Pak Chan
19-20	A Flight to Victory: Meet the Most Brilliant Young Minds in the Territory By Yeehung Yeo
21-22	Fate at Finals: Year 12 Exams Concluded as Holidays Approach By Kasfiha Tahsin and Pak Chan

Future Careers

23-24	Future Pathways: Students at Work Experience By Zafeera Jahana
-------	---

Sports and Wellbeing

25-26	Men's Minds Matter: International Mens Day at Darwin By Pak Chan
-------	---

Opinions and Analysis

27-28	Are We Blocking the Brainrot? Social Media Ban Casts Uncertainties By Pak Chan
29-30	Ask for Yourself: Discussions on Youth Issues with Joel Benesha In partnership with Joel Benesha

Creative Writing

31-32	Me By Kasfiha Tahsin
33-34	Friend or Foe (Part III) By Rachel Mathews



A SHOWCASE OF STORIES

YEAR 8 STUDENT NAMED YOUNG AUTHOR OF THE YEAR



Darwin Middle School student Amy Devlin-Aylott was crowned Young Author of the Year at the Territory Young Author Awards on November 4th.

Amy's story, *Casting Out*, is about a young girl in Darwin who befriends a fisherman and learns life lessons about how to connect with her sister. She said that her connection with the local community and her family inspired her writing.

"I wanted to do something a bit more Darwin-themed, but also about family connections," said Amy.

The young author is currently in Year 8 at Darwin Middle School. As a young person who always enjoyed writing and literature, Amy said she aspires to pass on her knowledge to children in the future.

"I always wanted to be a teacher, but always have writing on the side."

For young people who are looking to join the competition next year, or are interested in reading and writing, Amy advised young writers to never give up and continue to write more stories.

***"Keep writing,
keep them
going, and
keep reading,"
said Amy.***



The competition attracted over 140 entries from young writers across the Territory (Student Spotlight: Pak Chan)

With young people from all over the NT participating in the competition from East Arnhem to Darwin, and over 140 submissions in total, the competition was considered one of the largest literature awards in the Northern Territory.

Awards were given out to young writers across different age groups and regions in the Northern Territory who have bravely shared the stories they wrote with a judging panel made up of accomplished writers and community leaders in the Northern Territory.

Lisa Burnett, a member of the judging panel said that she was amazed by the quality and diversity of entries.

“It was really amazing to read the quality of the work that was entered,” said Ms Burnett

“There was a really good mix of things that felt quite true to life, as well as things that fit into [the] fiction world.”

Lindy McLinden, one of the organising staff, said that the event was aimed at promoting talented young people and shedding light on the young literature enthusiasts in the NT.

“[We are] encouraging more children to write their own books for next year, and encourage the love of reading and the love of writing,” said Ms McLinden.

LOCAL LEGEND

Anais Henry-Martin

As the final days of high school concluded for the Year 12s, many top students are choosing to leave Darwin for better opportunities. Darwin's Young Citizen of 2020, Anais Henry-Martin, however, is choosing to stay in the Top End despite receiving early offers from universities down south.

Anais' involvement in the community started when she was just 12 years old. She discovered a volunteering opportunity at St. John Ambulance through their involvement in community events. Regardless of her rocky start when she first entered, she persevered and is now next year's vice manager for St. John's youth competitions.

Also a member of the City of Darwin Youth Advisory Committee, Anais' interest in volunteering stems from her passion for helping other people when they need it, and her extensive dedication from an early age has significantly contributed to making youth-focused organisations more inclusive spaces.

In 2021 at the mere age of 13, Anais was named Young Citizen of the Year for being an 'active member of the community'. She then went on to play leadership roles in the programs she participated in.



Anais has been a vocal advocate for youth issues in Darwin (Student Spotlight: Arkana Triwidodo)

However, her road to accomplishment did not present itself free from obstructions. Anais shares that one of her major accomplishments was overcoming her reluctance to stand up for herself during times of crisis.

She said her journey to success would be impossible without the support she received from her mother, who is a ‘great, dependable role model’ and has supported Anais throughout her life, constantly encouraging new opportunities while reminding her of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Anais encourages other students to explore as many opportunities as possible, expressing how she wishes she could have started many of her extracurriculars sooner.

“It opens your eyes to how diverse the community around you is”, she said.

Even after completing her high school education, Anais intends to remain in Darwin where she was born and raised. She said that the NT has granted her countless opportunities to pursue her goals and has proved itself to be a welcoming, tight knit community of supporters.

“I can find my feet in the world within a community that I know,” said Anais.



Anais had been volunteering for St Johns Ambulance since she was 12 (Supplied: St John Ambulance NT)

Looking ahead, Anais says she intends to continue pursuing her passion for performing arts by receiving a Certificate 4 in Music at Charles Darwin University and a Bachelor of Screen and Media Art.

She says she wants to continue volunteering at St. John’s and become a teaching artist at Corrugated Iron Youth Arts. When asked about her key to success, she stresses the importance of exploring different options.

“Take every opportunity you can”, she advises young people who want to follow in her accomplished footsteps,

“Every open door that comes up, go through it.”



A CALL FOR HOPE

YOUTH VOICES ON THE NT YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

When Chloe Tasker first moved to Darwin from Papua New Guinea, she felt isolated by her friends. Troubled by social anxiety, Chloe hesitated to reach out for support.

“At the time, I didn’t know who to reach out to for support and felt isolated,” she said.

This sense of disconnection, Chloe explains, is not unique to her experience but is widespread among many young people, particularly in remote communities where social networks and professional resources are limited.

2023 statistics revealed that anxiety disorders remain one of the highest causes of total burden among young people aged 14-24, which is followed by depressive disorders, eating disorders and bipolar affective disorder, all of which are related to mental health.

The Northern Territory has one of the highest age-standardised rates of suicide deaths with almost double the rate in New South Wales. The high rate has been consistent for almost ten years, with the highest point being 21.8 per 100,000 people in 2014.

Mental health expert and former school counsellor Sacha King said that the distance between remote communities in the Northern Territory had contributed to its high youth suicide rate.



Mental health expert Sacha King said that remoteness is a main contributing factor to the Territory's mental health crisis (Supplied: Canva Images)

"Remoteness often leads to isolation and less access to services and support," she said.

"This also causes a rise in stigma regarding talking and opening up about mental health issues,"

"The more remote you are, the higher the risk you are at, and the NT itself is quite a rural territory."

In the past few years, Chloe has participated in support groups and became the youth ambassador for the mental health support service provider Headspace.

As Chloe got more involved in her community, she became a vocal advocate for youth mental health in the Territory. She said that mental health support services for young people are often scarce in remote areas.

"There [are] very few mental health services available past Katherine, and even when services exist, they're often inaccessible due to the Northern Territory's remoteness," she explains.

Chloe called for more school-based support from counsellors and emphasised that teachers should not be the sole support provider for the mental health of students.

"[Teachers] are already struggling with 50-hour work weeks," said Chloe, "A person cannot help you when they themselves are struggling."

With a change in policy by the Department of Education last year, public school students can now only access counsellors through referrals from teachers, which can reportedly take up to weeks for a meeting. Witnessing the change, Chloe is concerned about its impact on young people.

“It’s not a step in the right direction,” she said. “Instead of having coordinators refer students to external counselling services, schools should have counsellors available on-site at all times.”

When it comes to lowering the high suicide rates in the Northern Territory, Ms King called for more government investments in awareness campaigns and early intervention programs that educate young people on the topic of mental health.

Chloe is concerned that the change in policy will obstruct access to mental health services for young people (Supplied: Facebook)



To lower suicide rates in the Territory, Ms King calls for more government investments into preventative services and education. (Supplied: Sacha King)

“What the government can do is make sure that there is funding for preventative services,” she said, “It is something the government can easily invest in.”

With mental health being a prominent issue among young people, it is not uncommon to encounter someone who is struggling. According to Ms King, the easiest way to help a friend who is having suicidal thoughts is to remain calm and stay with them until help arrives.

“We want to put safety around those thoughts,” said Ms King, “work out would they be more comfortable talking to their GP, a counsellor or one of the helplines... We just don’t want to leave them alone until they’ve talked to a professional.”

Need someone to talk to?

**It's okay
to reach
out for
help! ☺**

IF YOU OR ANYONE YOU KNOW NEEDS HELP, REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT.

Lifeline Australia on 13 11 14
Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636
QLife on 1800 184 527

Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800
ReachOut at au.reachout.com
Headspace on 1800 650

FORGET ME NOT

DEMENTIA IS ALSO AFFECTING YOUNG PEOPLE ACCORDING TO EXPERTS



Emil Almazan (left) and Jennifer Marquez are working together to raise awareness for dementia (Student Spotlight: Pak Chan)

Years ago, Jennifer Marquez's mother was diagnosed with vascular dementia. Having to take care of two kids at home and her mother in the hospital, Ms Marquez found herself in a difficult situation as her young children struggled with the news.

"When I took care of my mother, my children were pretty young," said Ms Marquez, "[At first,] They took care of their grandmother like how they would treat any other family member, but [over time], they realised they didn't understand why their grandma is behaving in certain ways."

*"He was in shock that his grandmother, who he grew up with, couldn't remember him,"
said Ms Marquez*

As the founder and current chair of the Darwin Dementia Alliance, Jennifer Marquez said that dementia has long been a stigmatised condition, which can often lead to frustration and the isolation of dementia patients by their own families and the young people around them.

"A lot of [dementia patients] are feeling isolated. When people around [dementia patients] found out they have dementia... they treat them differently, or they don't talk to them or visit them," said Ms Marquez

Emil Almazan is the Community Development Officer for Dementia Australia, a national organisation that raises awareness of the condition. He says that dementia is not just an issue for the elderly.

"Some people think that dementia is just an old person's disease, which it's not," said Mr Almazan.

According to statistics, almost twenty-nine thousand people in Australia struggle with early-onset dementia, and among them are youths who suffer from dementia caused by repeated trauma in the head.

Mr Almazan said that dementia is a condition that can occur to anyone at any stage of life (Canva Images)

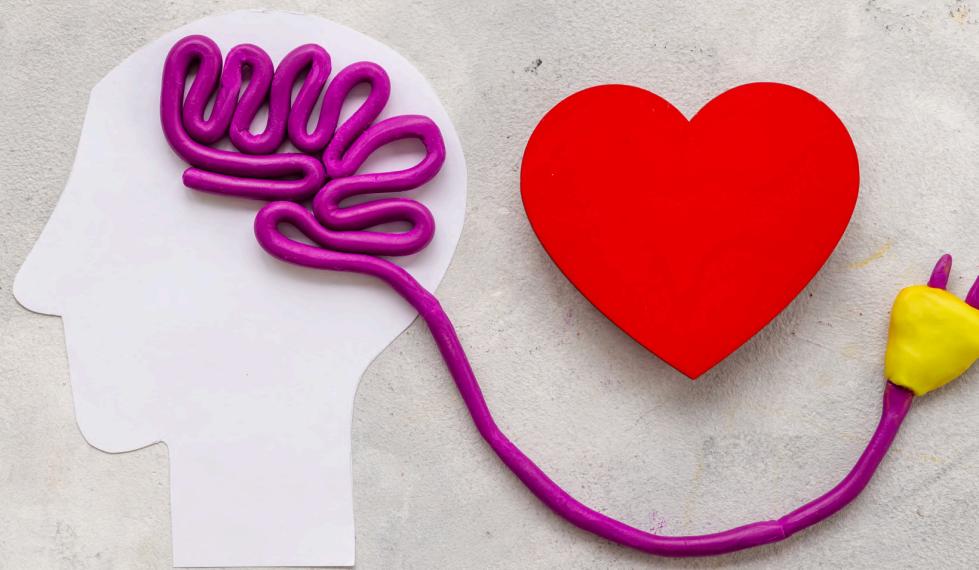
"A type of dementia that has been on the rise is chronic traumatic encephalopathy," said Mr Almazan, "It is a type of dementia that you can get from repeated trauma to your head... This can be due to trauma from contact sports, such as rugby, or through family and domestic violence."

With over eight hundred thousand patients across Australia, dementia is set to be the most common condition among the elderly. When facing potential family members with dementia, Ms Marquez says that young people should always treat them with acceptance.

"[When caring for patients with dementia,] young people should be patient," said Ms Marquez.

Bringing together people who are suffering from dementia, Ms Marquez says that she hopes to destigmatise dementia and raise awareness for the condition to the broader community.

"We are taking away the stigma of having dementia so that they still feel a part of the community," said Ms Marquez, "Let's make dementia a common word."



TURNING THE PAGE

15-YEAR-OLD NAMED NT YOUNG HISTORIAN OF THE YEAR

Darwin High School student Nabeeha Qasim was named the Northern Territory Young Historian of the Year in November for her essay about the Day of Mourning protests. With the exposure she has gained, she said she hopes to change the negative perceptions against First Nations communities.

This year, Nabeeha participated in the National History Challenge, an Australian-wide writing competition that requires participants to write an essay on a given theme. This year's theme was *Crisis and Response*.

Through her research, Nabeeha argued that the Day of Mourning protest in 1938 was a defining moment in the Indigenous Civil Rights Movement and recognised the protests as the “first form of Indigenous activism” against colonial oppression.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are affected by what happened in the past, and even though it seems that there are not many effects nowadays, they are still very much affected,” said Nabeeha.



(Supplied: Darwin High School; Jennifer Montgomery)



Despite not being an Indigenous woman, Nabeeha found herself fascinated by First Nations culture. Currently taking Aboriginal Studies at school, Nabeeha said she enjoys learning the intricate systems within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies.

"In the past, [First Nations People] did not have all this modern technology, but they still [became] one of the most civilised societies," she said.

As a young person who pays attention to issues in Australia, Nabeeha believes that First Nations people should be heard as they face discrimination in society.

"[The treatment of First Nations people] was very unfair, and nobody should be treated like that," said Nabeeha.

***"[First Nations people]
should have a voice, and if
they can't speak up for
themselves, someone else
should."***

With history being one of her best subjects, Nabeeha emphasised the importance of learning history. She says that learning history will allow young people to understand the world better and the roots of global issues and conflicts.

"All young people should learn history," said Nabeeha, "It helps [us] to learn about how the world works and how other people are affected... It gives you empathy for others."



WRITE A LETTER, CHANGE A LIFE WRITE FOR RIGHTS

Every year, Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign brings together people worldwide who are about fighting injustice and advocating for threatened human rights around the world.

Nicole Ting, a Year 11 student at Darwin High School, had organised a letter-writing campaign at Darwin High School. Inspired by what she had seen in the media, Nicole rallied her classmates to write letters for the Write for Rights campaign, and achieved great success.

"It's great to see so many people interested," Nicole said, "It's our first letter writing session, and it's going better than I expected."

"It's a powerful way to stand up for those whose human rights are being violated," she said

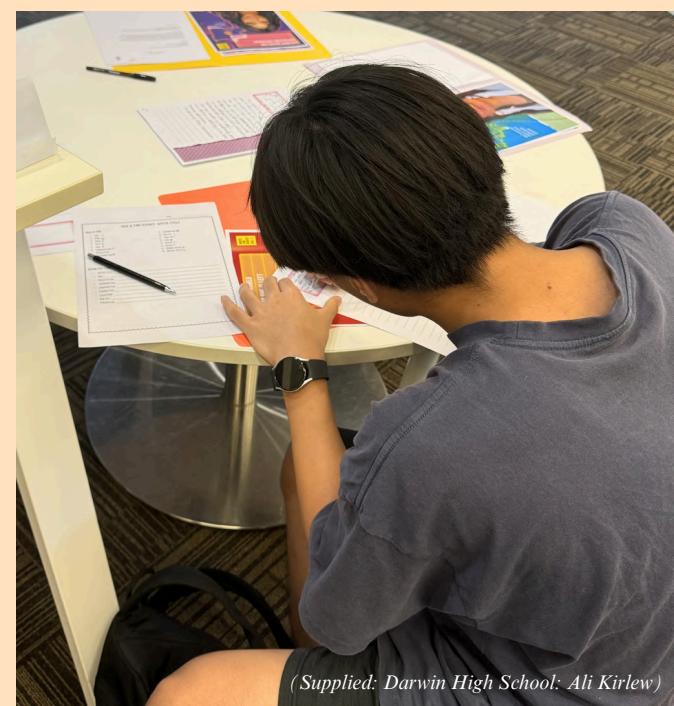
The Write for Rights campaign focuses on urgent cases where individuals are being tortured, held unjustly, or facing execution. By joining in, students can be part of the global movement that has brought hope and freedom to many.



Over the years, Write for Rights has made a real difference. From Zimbabwe to Guatemala to Kyrgyzstan, activists have been freed, and justice has been served.

They have raised awareness and achieved justice for many individuals, and many have publicly stated that letters from supporters saved their lives and gave them hope in their darkest hours. Justice can be demanded by writing letters, signing petitions, sharing stories, and calling decision-makers to do the right thing.

In the future, Nicole hopes to continue this effort each year, believing every written letter makes a difference.



(Supplied: Darwin High School: Ali Kirlew)



THE STORY OF NICOLE TING A YOUNG FIGHTER FOR JUSTICE

Nicole Ting, a Year 11 student at Darwin High School, is about to face one of the biggest moments in her life as she is about to enter Year 12. With two Stage 2 courses that will count towards her ATAR and four other Year 11 courses at the moment, Nicole cannot afford any slip-ups.

Despite her academic pressure, Nicole says she never stopped advocating for her beliefs as she continues to volunteer for the Amnesty International Action Group in Darwin, and use her free time to advocate for the ones who are not free.

“When taking legal studies [at school], I realised that there is so much injustice [in society],” she said.



(Student Spotlight: Pak Chan)

In October 2024, she initiated the ‘Write for Rights’ movement in Darwin High School and encouraged students to write to government agencies worldwide and demand justice for ones who are fighting for it.

Balancing academic pressure and her work in advocacy was not easy for Nicole, as she reminds students in middle school and high school that life has always been unpredictable, and there is no need to be fixated on a single plan that will create unnecessary pressure.

“Don’t set standards on yourself so early,” said Nicole, “It might be hard at the moment, but you will make it out alive.”

Aspiring to be a lawyer and make a difference in the future, Nicole said that she is up for the challenges and will continue to be a young fighter for justice.

MEET THE NT'S MOST BRILLIANT YOUNG MINDS

A FIGHT TO VICTORY



A Team made up of Dripstone Middle School students had recently represented the NT in the International Tournament of Minds (Supplied: Facebook)

Winning the 2024 Tournament of Minds (ToMs) Competition last September in two categories, Dripstone Middle School's Language Literature and Art Teams represented the Northern Territory early November as they travelled to Sydney for the Tournament International Finals (TIF).

The ToMs is an annual international program focused on creating innovative solutions through teamwork, problem-solving and creative thinking of the youth.

One of the participants Indiana Grimes said that the problem solving component in ToMs has attracted her to join.

“The first time I joined ToMs... was because I always enjoyed problem solving,” she said.

With only six weeks, teams create an original and creative piece to communicate their solution to an open-ended problem, while exploring different endeavours in a variety of fields.

“I chose the Language Literature category... because it is the only category I have ever done for ToMs, and I have always enjoyed it thoroughly”, said Indiana.

While the two teams are made up of the most brilliant young minds in the Territory, they experienced difficulties in preparing and making decisions as everyone had other commitments.

“There wasn't really a way to overcome this, but we managed to work around this and find alternative ways to include everyone in decision-making”, reflected Indiana.

Despite the unseen Spontaneous Challenge, in which teams are expected to demonstrate a solution creatively within a short period, Yeemiao Yeo of the Language Literature team remembered feeling accomplished as the judges announced the winners.

After a difficult competition, The Arts team brought home the Spirit of ToMs award for their positive and creative attitudes.

“I think the thing that helped us achieve this was the amount of effort and time we spent on the challenge which really paid off in the end,” said Yeemiao

Yeemiao encouraged anyone looking to participate to go for it, as ToMs was a fun challenge and educational experience.

“It may be time consuming but if you and your team work hard and make the most of your time, you never know what the outcome could be,” she said.

“I have learnt that you have to be able to deal with any challenge that comes your way, and [to] better manage the time you are given to complete works.”

Ms Airlie White, one of the facilitating teacher of the Dripstone Middle School ToMs Team said that the competition had been a valuable learning experience for students.

“It is such a joy to take the winners to the International Final and watch their excitement unleash as they take on a new challenge and develop their skills even more”, she said, “Don't be put off having another go... and come in stronger next year!”

Accompanied by their teachers, the team attended the competition in Sydney (Supplied: Facebook)



FATE AT FINALS

YEAR 12 STUDENTS RELIEVED AS FINAL EXAMS CONCLUDE

For weeks, Raymond had been hunching over his desk for hours everyday studying for his final exam that will determine his future pathway for the next few years, as the days of high school are about to come to an end for him and the Year 12 cohort.

“Everyday I wake up at 5:45, and from 7 am until 9:30 pm it’s just [studying],” said Raymond, “It’s not too bad, some of friends are taking five examinable subjects, and they’re panicking.”

The final exam period for Year 12 students in the Northern Territory had started on the 4th and ended on the 15th of November. Having his last exam finished on the 14th, Raymond said he is relieved that it is almost the end of high school.



While the final exams do not directly determine whether Year 12s are going to university or not, the exams will make up a large portion of their subject grade, which directly contributes to their Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), and will be used as a critical measure for their university admission.

For Raymond who is planning to study law in universities in down south, a high ATAR score is crucial for his entry.

“If I can get a high enough ATAR, I can get into the Australian National University to study Law,” said Raymond



(Student Spotlight: Arkana Triwidodo)

Darwin High School Year 12 coordinator Ms Erin Jovanovich said that while the exams do not completely dictate the future of students, it does play a large role in their studies and the progress students make towards their career of choice.

“Getting the grades that you need to get into the jobs that you need is important because it won’t hold you back at anytime, it will allow you to get into what you need when you need it,” she said.

With the pressure of an exam that will determine their future for the next two to three years, Ms Jovanovich said that while Year 12 students were feeling nervous about their score, most Year 12s are excited about almost finishing high school.

“[Year 12 students] are stressed, but they’re also excited about the end being so close,” said Ms Jovanovich.

Year 12 students finished their exams on the 15th of November and will receive results on the 16th of December. When asked about advice for Year 11s, Raymond emphasised on the importance of persisting.

“Don’t give up, there’s always light at the end of the tunnel,” said Raymond.

WORK EXPERIENCES

Thoughts From Students



Latifah Koro, 16

For my one-week placement, I went to a rehab centre at Coconut Grove where they take care of people who are recovering from injuries or are trying to lose weight. While I'm not planning to work in a rehab centre in the future, working there has definitely built my communication skills and I am keen to go back and learn more!

Miranda Price, 16

I went to Parap Primary School and worked as an assistant teacher there. As an alumnus, I enjoyed studying there, which is part of why I chose to do my work experience there. While I'm currently keeping my career options open, I'm planning to work there as an assistant teacher during my gap year. I enjoyed the work experience, and I would go back there!



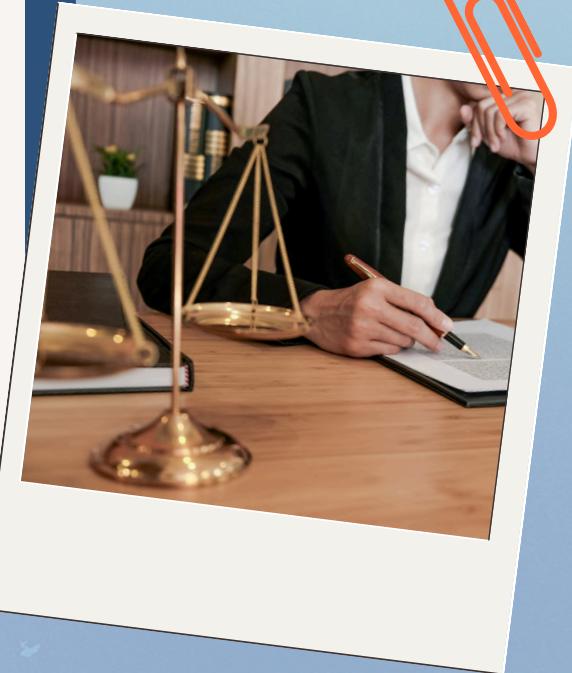


Emily Tjhung, 16

I went to Flinders University at the Charles Darwin University campus and I experienced what it was like to be a medical student. I'm thinking of being a medical specialist in the future and put the skills I learnt at school to good use in society. I would want to do work experience there again, so I can discover more areas in the medical field that may interest me when I decide on a specific area to work on in the medical industry.

Olivia Shyju, 16

I completed my work experience at Murray Chambers, a barristers' chamber in the city. During my time there I had the opportunity to visit various courts, where I was able to view a range of legal proceedings. I want to pursue a career as a lawyer and then eventually work toward becoming a barrister. Seeing the variety of cases they handle and seeing the relief in their clients' faces when the outcome is really rewarding in my opinion. I'd definitely love to have another work experience placement and I genuinely learnt a lot while enjoying and had fun during my experience.



MEN'S MINDS MATTER

DARWIN'S INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY

Man Walk Darwin is hosting weekly walks every Saturday in the Darwin CBD (Student Spotlight: Pak Chan)

Men around Darwin gathered and walked together to raise awareness for men's mental health on the 16th of November to celebrate International Men's Day.

The walk was organised by Man Walk Darwin; a local community organisation aimed at supporting men's mental health. Man Walk Darwin's organiser and Darwin City councillor Jimmy Bouhoris, said that the event was held to help all men in the community.

"Let's show our support for fathers, brothers, cousins, partners, sons and mates who are doing it tough out there," he said, "Let them know we care and that they are loved,"



Hosting weekly walks every Saturday; Man Walk has gained a wide range of participants from accomplished entrepreneurs to young people who are just starting out. Louis Nicholson, one of the participants who has been on Man Walk for over four years, said that Man Walk has been a positive and enriching experience for him.

"It's good having the routine, coming every Saturday morning and knowing that's on," he said.

"It's just good to know there's people to chat [with], whether [about] good things or bad things."



According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 43% of men aged between 16 and 85 have faced mental health problems, and one in five young men have had suicidal thoughts in their lifetime. Councillor Bouhoris said that mental health issues are often stigmatised among males, making men more reluctant towards reaching out for support.

“Men are very proud,” he said, “they don’t want to talk about their feelings because then they feel like they’re going to be judged.”

“There are people out there that can provide support and show them that there is light at the end of the tunnel.”

As Man Walk comes to its Fifth year, Councillor Bouhoris said that he hopes to leverage support among First Nations Communities in the future and learn from the wisdom of traditional owners, and grow the community connections of the organisation.

“[Aboriginal people] have what they call ‘Men’s Business’, which is about translating a lot of the information around them into stories,” he said, “understanding this will help the youth and the men around us, and to provide better support for people from different backgrounds”

PAK CHAN

ARE WE BLOCKING THE BRAINROT?

SOCIAL MEDIA BAN PROPOSAL CASTS UNCERTAINTIES



After banning phones at school, the Federal Government made up of predominately senior citizens has decided that Australian children will require further intervention for their safety as a social media ban for children under the age of 16 is expected to be imposed by next year, making Australia one of the first countries in the world to ban social media for children.

The ban on social media for children under the age of 16 is expected to be in effect in 2025 as social media platforms including X, Instagram and Snapchat will be given a year to impose age verification on its users, which means the real impact of the act is not likely to be received until 2026.

Why the Ban?

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese cited the support of 'most Australian parents' when delivering his supporting speech for the bill, saying that they are 'worried sick' about the impacts of social media on their children and that the purpose of the bill is to protect children from misinformation and bullying on social media.

The Liberal Party also responded positively with the proposal, with the shadow minister for communications saying that social media companies cannot be trusted when it comes to child protection.

Lack of Checks and Balances

The ban on social media for children under the age of 16 has received bipartisan support, which means that it passed in parliament without any obstructions. Although the Greens voted against the bill and are calling it a ‘knee-jerk policy’ from the Labor Government, their status of being a minor party has made them unable to delay or stop the passing of the bill on the 28th of November.

Should We Be Worried?

While the social media ban might sound like a safety policy on the surface, the consequence of the action is the potential blockage of information for young people. As social media become more popular over the years, young people are more prone to receiving information from social media.

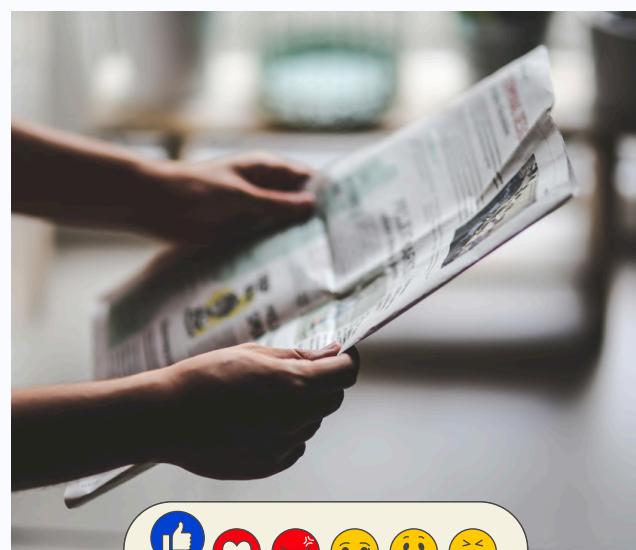
Based on research conducted by Western Sydney University, social media remains the most preferred news source for teenagers. With a ban on social media, teenagers are less likely to be informed about current events independently, leading to dependence on their parents for information.

This will increase the chances of children receiving biased information based on the views of their caretakers, ultimately giving less space for young people to think critically about current affairs.

Transition and Education

The issue around social media and young people is ultimately an educational issue. It is important to understand that misinformation and bullying don’t just happen on the internet, but it is all around young people. To ensure that the bill reaches its purpose of protecting the younger generation, it is apparent that more resources are needed to be invested in the education sector to better inform young people about online safety and misinformation. The traditional media that are often under more scrutiny for misinformation should also be promoted to children more often to provide trustworthy sources of information.

As the year of preparation for the ban will soon arrive for social media platforms, 2025 should also be a year of preparation for government departments to implement adequate education and support for youths to ensure our young people are being well informed.



ASK FOR YOURSELF



YOUTH ISSUES WITH JOEL BENESHA

MEET YOUR EXPERT

Joel Benesha is a 2024 recipient of the NT Young Achiever Awards and is recognised as a well-known figure in the Northern Territory youth community. With his personal life experience, the Student Spotlight Magazine is interviewing him on his advice for young people in goal-setting and achieving success, while shedding light on problems many young people face.



Listen to the full
interview when it's out!



Abdul*, 17 years old (Palmerston)

Being an immigrant to Australia for a year now, I never felt like I fit in. Experiencing such a cultural shift from India to Australia, there's always a voice inside me telling me that I don't belong here. What kind of mindset should I have to face this change and to make me feel included?

Thank you for your question, Abdul.

I would say that the first thing we need to look at here is how you view yourself. Ask yourself what qualities you can bring to socialise with others instead of focusing on you being different because who you believe you are, is how you appear in the world. Enjoy your differences and find common interests between you and others, then you will realise that the value in who you are lies within your differences with others.

Lisa, 15 years old (Darwin City)

Being a high schooler is a stressful experience. Although my academic results were not that bad in middle school, I find myself struggling to handle the academic stress in High School. Everyone just feels so much smarter than me, and I feel like all the studying just isn't enough, and this makes me unhappy all the time. How do I turn this around and live a positive life?

That's a good question, Liz.

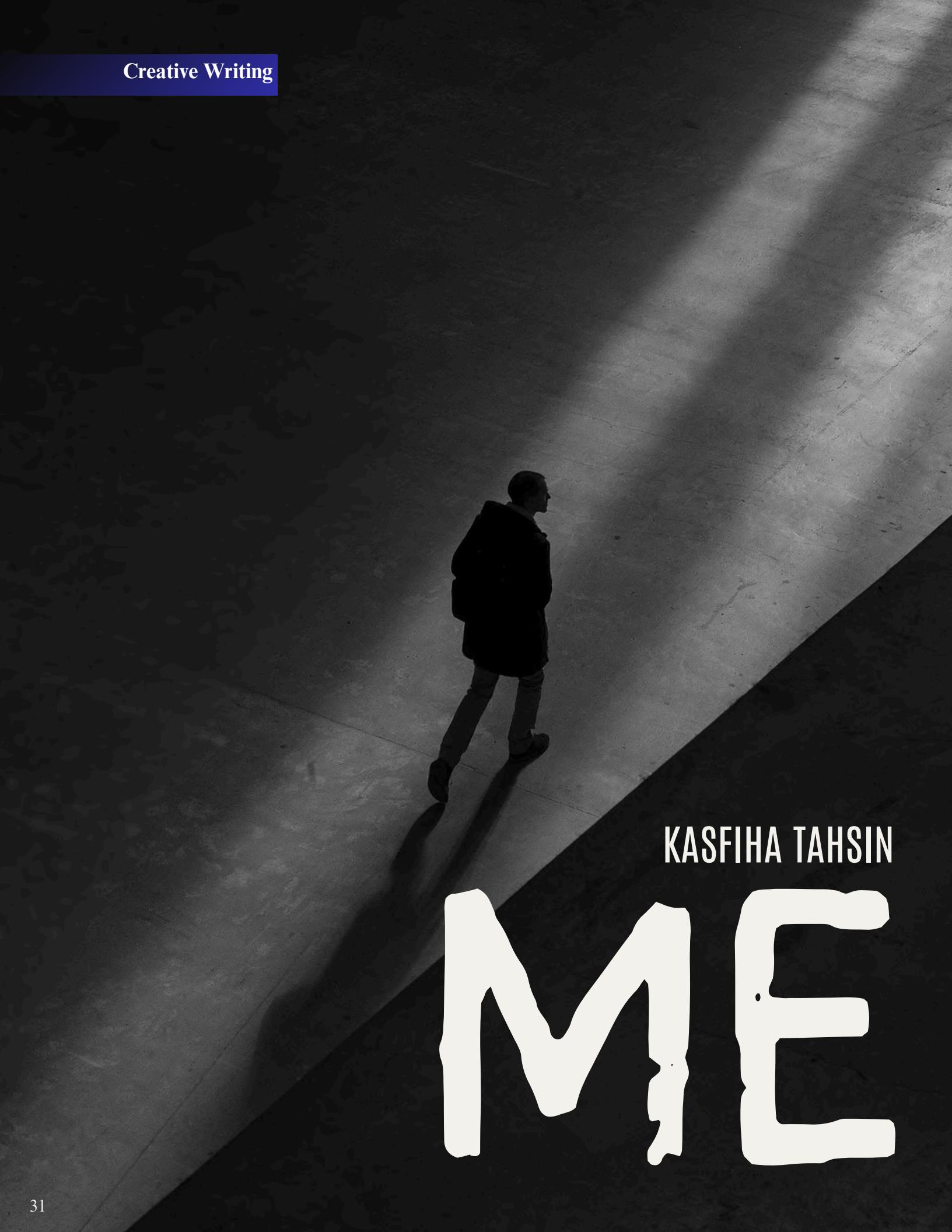
For you to achieve the positive life that you're after, you need to have a positive mindset. Building a positive mindset is all about self-love and self-esteem. Try telling yourself more often that you are loved, and that you deserve to be happy because what your life becomes is dependent on what you think and feel. If you can create a positive mindset, you will be able to live a more stress-free life.

Zoe*, 16 years old (Rapid Creek)

Turning 16 has been a weird experience, especially when I entered high school. My friends are all talking about dating, and going out partying, while I'm just trying to balance my schoolwork with my part-time job and extracurriculars. How do I make sure I have a social life while doing well at school?

Good question, Zoe.

I can tell that you've realized the importance of your commitments, but you are bounded by a lot of peer pressure. The question here is not whether to go partying or focus on school. The question is, what do you want? What quality of life do you want to live? And if the quality of life you want to live isn't what your friends are doing, then find yourself another social group. It is very important to find a balance between your life and your commitments but make sure that you are also following your heart so you can live with fulfillment and satisfaction.



KASFIA TAHSIN

ME

So, then I actually have a ... that my position, the fact that I exist, this is not a thing anymore. It felt like no one like no one would allow me a little space to be in the same room. As a party was happening, no one called me to come. Because everyone said that he is a shopkeeper, what does he need with us? It's a get-together, no one has called me and asked me to come.

No one said. No one thought that I could be kept in the chat. I had these problems. Being ignored by someone is one of the most unbearable pains in the world. Those who have not gone through this condition will not understand how it feels to be ignored. The feeling that you are not needed in the world is very painful.

And people. When you are in trouble, when you are worried, you can count the number of people who will say two good words to you. One, two ... I can't remember anymore. Anyone else said good things to me? Like this. No one speaks well then. When we stumble down the street, everyone will say to you, "*Excuse me, I'm just passing by.*" You will find one or two people who will lift your spirits - "*Get up. Stand up again. You can do it. Try again.*" No one says this.

Relatives and neighbours used to come and talk with my parents. My parents are very soft-hearted people. They used to cry. They could not show their faces. But I didn't have a problem showing my face. I would show them my face and say hi. After doing that, they would react in different ways, which made me feel a bit uncomfortable.



Other than that, everything was fine. So, the most painful scene in this world is when you see tears in your parents' eyes, and you are responsible for it. I have gone through that trouble. For me, my mother held me and cried. I will never forget this. These feelings are so painful.

These pains can be so heavy—family struggles and challenges from the outside. There was a time when I thought about stepping away from it all, feeling as if I didn't belong anywhere. What difference does it make if I keep living?

TO BE CONTINUED

A close-up, over-the-shoulder shot of a man with dark skin and short hair, seen from the side and back. He is resting his chin on his hand, looking thoughtfully at a wall covered in numerous framed black-and-white photographs. The wall is light-colored and has a subtle, organic pattern. The photos depict various people and scenes, though they are out of focus.

Rachel Mathews

FRIEND OR FOE

(Part III)

“I can't pick sides Damion; now do you know where he is?” Reyna sighed.

“I heard him say something about working on it in his house when he was running away from your front porch but I don't know if he would be there.” Damion answered

“Then we better hurry we don't have much time left we only have until midnight and its already 9:30 PM.” said Reyna.

Reyna took out her laptop and did a fingerprint scan on the paper that the suspect put on her door step. She found out that the suspect's name was Leon Brown after running his print into the system. She found his address after looking for some time.

Reyna ran to her motorcycle started it and sped off to the Leon's house. She sped off through the night city of Paris. After some time, Reyna came to a stop in front of a house. The lights were all off but Reyna could feel a strange aura to it, not that she was a fortune teller or crystal gazing lady of some sort.

She saw Zane's car and the others approaching. Zane got out of his car and the others did the same. They started gearing up and approached the front door. Zane went forward kicking the door and leading the team into the house. One by one the officers were yelling out clear until one of them yelled out that there was a trapdoor under a mat. Reyna kicked the mat away revealing the rest of the trapdoor.



One of the other officers opened the door showing a staircase that led to a basement. The team headed down the stairs quickly without wasting any time. Then there in the corner of the basement was Leon. He was working at his desk. “Ah, there you are!” Leon exclaimed.

“Put your hands in the air where I can see them. Reyna said coldly.

Leon put his hands in the air. “Don't worry it's not like I'm going anywhere.” he said sarcastically as one of the officers took him to the police car.

An hour later, Reyna was sitting in the waiting room in the police station after the detective came and put Leon inside the court room. Reyna saw him coming out and going to the criminal transport vehicles. Reyna breathed a sigh of relief.

At last, the city of love was safe.

THE END

UP NE XT>>>

FUN THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

FREE!



SWEATMAS - Skate Break Up

08

DEC | SUN | 4.30pm-Sunset
Parap Pool



Get That Job! Cafe Skills

08

JAN | WED | 3.30pm-6.30pm
The Meeting Place by GTNT



GEEKTACULAR

18

JAN | SAT | 2.00pm-6.00pm
Casuarina Library



FREEze Skate

22

JAN | WED | 5.30pm-7.00pm
Darwin Ice Skating



Get That Job! Senior First Aid

21+22

JAN | TUES + WED | 8.45am-5.00pm
Casuarina Library



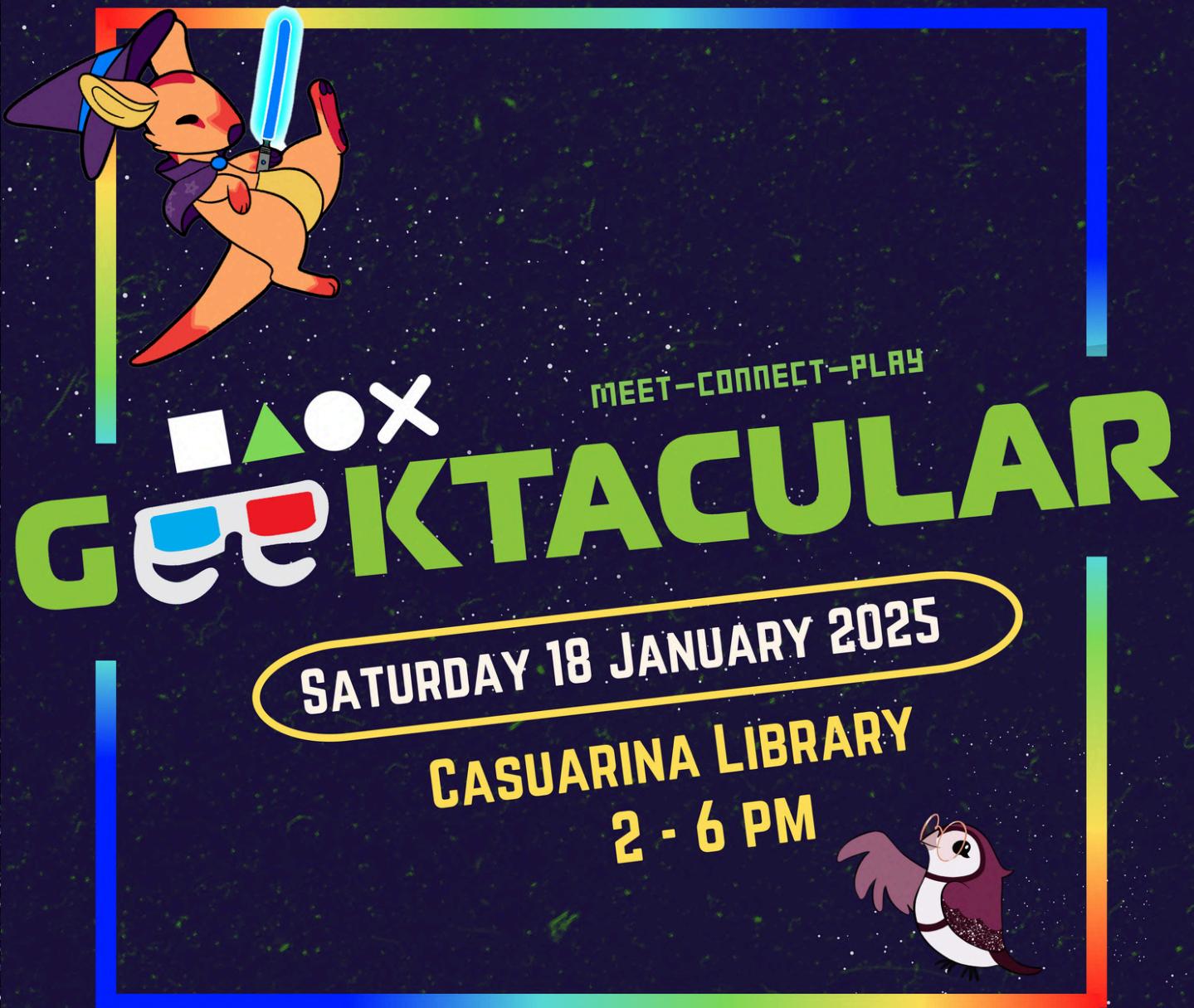
Never
miss a
thing!



LAUNCHdarwin

CITY OF
DARWIN

LAUNCH



GAMING | BOARD GAMES | ESPORTS
COOKING WORKSHOPS | ART WORKSHOPS
COSPLAY | PERFORMANCES | MINI MARKET
ART EXHIBITION + MUCH MORE

RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 15 - 25

EVENT AND ACTIVITIES 100% FREE

LAUNCHdarwin.com.au



DO YOU KNOW A STUDENT OF THE MONTH?

Fill in the form and nominate now!

<https://forms.gle/EbJzEs5sh7eriGNQ7>



TELL YOUR STORY.

Become a writer for the
Student Spotlight
magazine

Sign up at: <https://forms.gle/V53nDU58DMWRrGpW9>



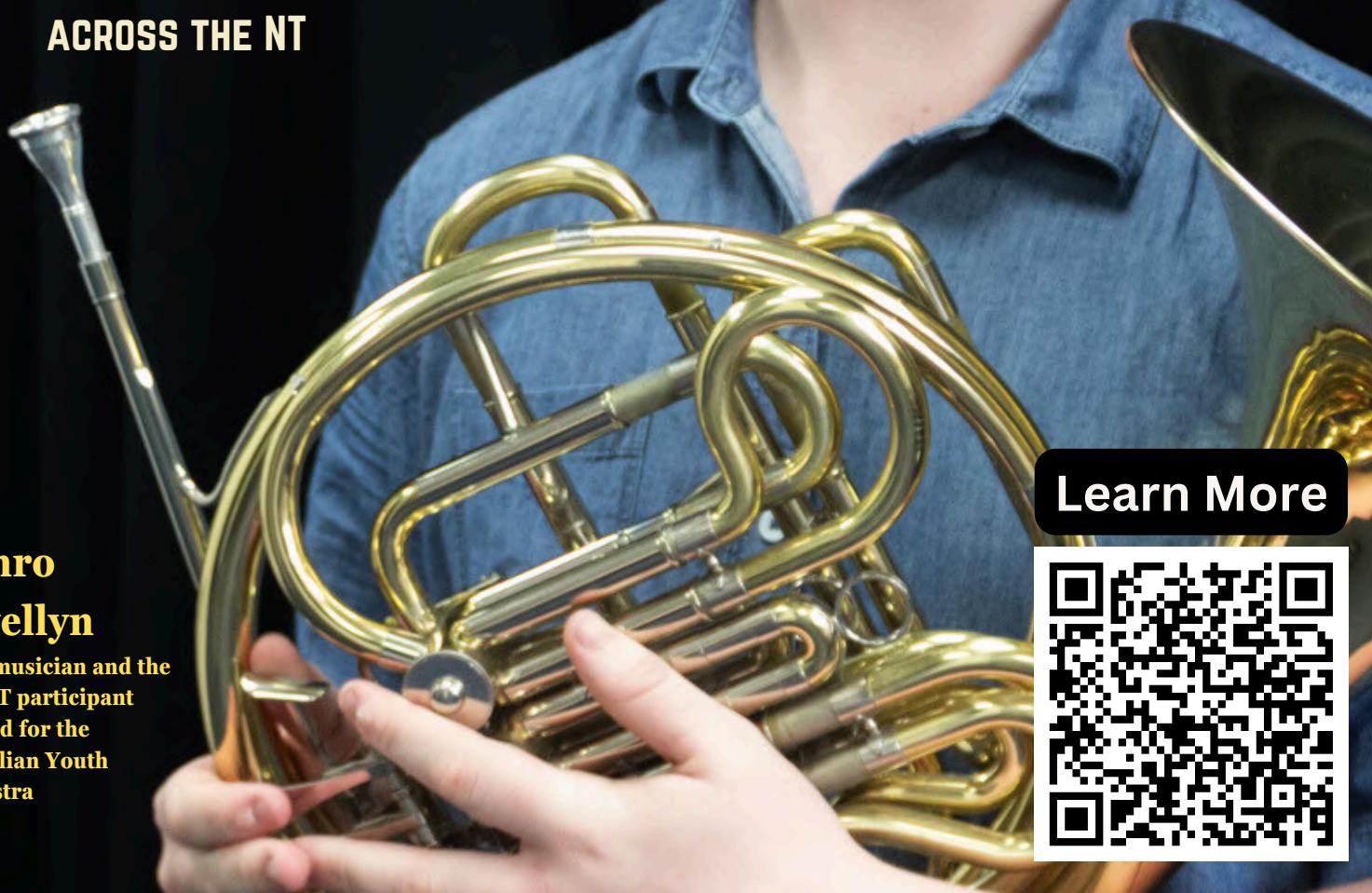
Scan Here!

LINED UP FOR SUCCESS

A Free-for-all Publication Platform

- COMMUNITY SERVICE AND EXCELLENT VOLUNTEERING EXPERIENCE
- ENRICH ONLINE PRESENCE AND BE KNOWN BY UNIVERSITIES AND FUTURE EMPLOYERS
- NETWORK AND CONNECT WITH HIGH- ACHIEVING YOUTHS ACROSS THE NT

Student
Spotlight



[Learn More](#)

Jethro Llwellyn

Local musician and the only NT participant selected for the Australian Youth Orchestra



Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the following people and organisations as the key contributors to this issue of our magazine

Student Writers / Journalists / Editors

Pak Chan	Melanie Palihawadana
Hanna Eastick	Hamish Samuels
Ash Huynh	Nova Sobby
Zafeera Jahana	Kasfiha Tahsin
Rachel Matthews	Yeehung Yeo

Student Photographers / Graphic and Web Design

Maili Ansell	K-la Sky
Ash Huynh	Arkana Triwidodo
Zafeera Jahana	Emily Tjhung
Surekha Ruwanpura	Kieran Whatley

Supporting School Staff

Ms. Erin Shannon
Ms. Jill Hazeldine
Ms. Sally Walker
Mr. Haydn Whitty



WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Fill in the feedback form to help us improve



Disclaimer: Opinions and views expressed in this publication does not represent the stance of the Northern Territory Student Society.