Community Colleges Australia Achievements in 2020

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During a very challenging year, CCA successfully adapted to the arrival of the Coronavirus pandemic, moving professional development, member engagement, representation and advocacy to online and virtual platforms, underpinned by a new brand and logo. We obtained $2 million from the NSW Government in "COVID-19 Relief Funds" for NSW Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers, expanded both NSW and Commonwealth Government engagement activities, and maintained our strong collaboration with Victorian ACE peak organisations. CCA is positioned to expand and grow in 2021 and beyond.

Recognition and Celebration of Achievements

The NSW Government released the historic **NSW ACE Ministerial Policy Statement**, the first formal acknowledgement of the NSW ACE sector since 2008. CCA celebrated the release of the Statement in a virtual launch in September of its **NSW ACE Policy & Vulnerable Students Report**, with speakers **The Hon Dr Geoff Lee MP**, NSW Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, and **Philip Clark AO**, Chair of NSW Skills Board, attended by almost 120 people including 19 MPs: view a video of the event here.

CCA's fourth annual **Community Education Student of the Year Award** virtual ceremony took place in November, with all eight nominated students participating, including ministerial introductions from NSW Skills Minister, **Dr Geoff Lee**, and the Commonwealth Assistant Skills Minister, **Steve Irons MP**; 120 people participated from more than 20 locations around Australia. view the video of the event.
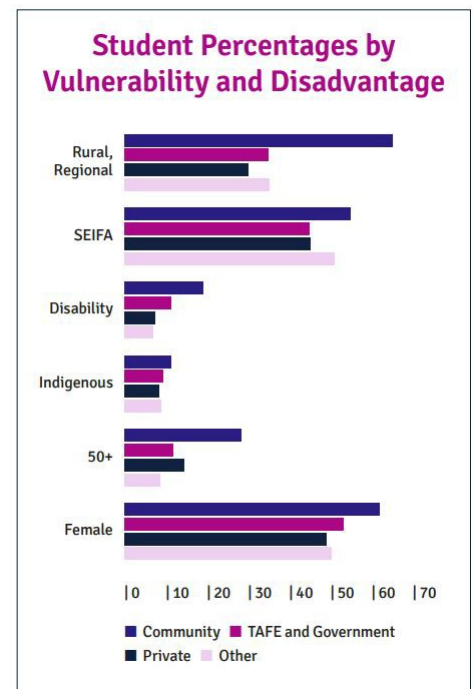
Representation and Advocacy

CCA produced a record number of **reports and submissions** during the year, including:

- *Coronavirus Impacts on NSW Adult and Community Education Providers*, a submission to the NSW Government which resulted in funding.

- *Infrastructure Maintenance Funding for NSW Adult and Community Education Providers*: Submission to the NSW Government, part of our long-term national advocacy for funding ACE provider infrastructure, to build on the NSW 2019/20 $2.3 million infrastructure maintenance program funding success achieved by CCA.

- Submission to Productivity Commission: CCA Response to the Interim Report – National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development, the major new national funding arrangement.

- *Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Students of NSW ACE Providers: Analysis of 2019 Data*, September: link to report.

- *The Role of Adult and Community Education Providers in Sustaining Australian Democracy*, a submission to the Australian Senate's Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee Inquiry into Nationhood, Identity and Democracy.

- A CCA Statement on Sustainability and Climate Change, which positions CCA to undertake more work in this area in 2021.

- *Engaging Indigenous Communities Learner Guide*, prepared for CCA by the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre: link to the *Guide*.

We represented members and our sector through the Commonwealth Department of Education Skills and Employment (DESE) national Vocational Education and Training Stakeholder Committee, the ASQA Provider Reference Group, the NSW Skills Board Provider Reference Group, the Victorian ACE Policy Network and the Reading Writing Hotline Steering Committee. We contributed to an extensive range of other reference groups, subcommittees and reviews, including the NSW Government's VET Sector Review, the USI External Reference Group (USIERG), MySkills, and the VET pricing and Macklin Victorian reviews. CCA also managed the Training Services NSW ACE Reference Group, and supported efforts of national NFP peaks ACOSS and Community Council for Australia that resulted in ensuring NFPs could access JobKeeper funding at a lower rate of income loss.
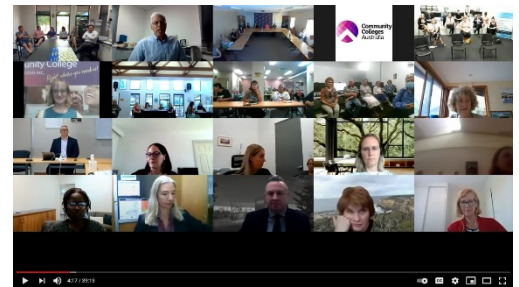

Student Percentages by Vulnerability and Disadvantage

The Hon Ben Franklin MLC, with Evelyn Goodwin, CCA at North Coast Community College

Communications

CCA issued 73 [news items](#) and distributed 40 newsletters in 2020, an increase of 20% on 2019. We launched our new logo in July 2020 – the first major change since CCA was established in 2007. We stayed active on social media - Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube – with some posts reaching well more than 1,000 people. CCA's CEO ensured that our "voice" was heard through a series of thought leadership and opinion pieces on post-secondary education and training, published in *The Mandarin*, *Campus Review* and John Menadue's *Pearls & Irritations*. Topics included the [surviving the pandemic](#) – lessons for Australian training, the [digital divide](#), Australian universities in turmoil, [VET marketisation](#), [training needs of Indigenous Australians](#), the ["new normal" of the Coronavirus](#), privatised childcare [lessons for VET](#), detailed commentary on both the [NSW Budget](#) and the [Commonwealth Budget](#), [what a Biden presidency means for Australian post-secondary education](#) and [why investing in ACE provider infrastructure makes economic sense in a pandemic](#).

In addition to speaking at a number of network meetings, CCA staff visited 17 members during the year: 5 in person and 12 through Zoom.

Professional Development and Events

CCA moved all professional development activities to an online/virtual mode from late March, with no interruption in activity, enabling an increase in member participation, access and numbers. We conducted 13 professionally facilitated CEO Zoom virtual discussion meetings, ran a 4-part strategic HR training series, a 2-day project management training, 2 Indigenous engagement sessions run by the CEO of the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre, 3 meetings of our VET Managers network, and commenced a series of "special guest" speakers on ["Communication in a Videoconference World"](#), ["Best Practice Educational Corporate Governance"](#), "Becoming a Social CEO" and ["Reconstructing Australia After COVID-19"](#).

CCA also ran a highly successful executive coaching program for a record 12 member CEOs and Deputy CEOs, with 2 new executive coaches; and conducted a popular members' update with ASQA Chief Commissioner & CEO, Ms Saxon Rice.

CCA CEO Zoom Videoconferencing

Professional Development & Support 2020	
CEO Zoom meetings	13
VET manager meetings	3
CEO coaching participants	12
Total member visits	17

Governance and Finance

For the year ending 30 June 2020, CCA received $647,365 in income and spent $596,554, resulting in a surplus of $50,811, increasing our "retained earnings" to $300,909, and ended the 2019/20 financial year in a healthy "cash" position of $538,814. ([View our accounts on the ACNC website](#).) We received funding from the NSW Government to support our servicing of NSW ACE providers and for the 2020 Community Education Student of the Year Awards.

The CCA Board of Directors met seven times during 2020, twice in person and the rest through Zoom. CCA held its Annual General Meeting in November, during which it welcomed three new Directors: **Kerry Johnson** (ACE Community Colleges), **Kerrie Smith** (WEA Illawarra) and **Jade Vermeer** (Tamworth Community College). They joined new CCA Chair **David MacKay** (TLK Community College), new Deputy Chair **Theresa Collignon** (Macquarie Community College), new Treasurer **Ted Nabung** (Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Community College), **Jennifer Aldred** (Sydney Community College), **Joanne Martin** (Central Coast Community College) and **Ron Maxwell** (VERTO). CCA bid a fond farewell to outgoing Chair **David Fuller** (WEA Illawarra) and Deputy Chair **Michelle Simpson** (Tamworth Community College), both of whom served the Board with distinction for many years. In December, CCA held a dinner that acknowledged the contributions of past Chairs David Fuller and **David Martin** (Western Riverina Community College).

CCA maintained its stable and high-achieving professional staff throughout the year: CEO, **Dr Don Perlgut**; Manager, Policy & Projects, **Evelyn Goodwin**; and Office Manager, **Clare Harris**. Although we worked remotely from our Sydney CBD office for most of 2020, staff all performed consistently at a very high level with no reduction in member servicing, programs, representation or advocacy.

Immediate past CCA Chair David Fuller, WEA Illawarra, with new CCA Chair, David Mackay, TLK Community College

Community Colleges Australia