

# AGTECH Connections

## The newsletter of the Australian Technology & Agricultural College

*'Connecting the College with the Community'*

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**Independent Senior Secondary College for Years 10 to 12**

4808 Mt Lindesay Highway, North Maclean Q 4280.

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**College  
Founder/CEO**

*Dr Narendra Nand*



#### Principal's Message

As the first term ended on 29<sup>th</sup> March, most students had completed their term one assessments. The academic challenges and the need for work to earn are a dilemma for young minds. As teenagers, preparation for the rapidly changing dynamics of the current labor market, ATAC is focused on building personal skills and positivity towards the demands of a workplace. After year 10 completion last year, some students entered workforce or moved to other localities with their parents. Only one year 10 continued and all three year 11 students decided to continue their journey with apprenticeships or TAFE courses blended with their QCE requirements. The three year 12 students this year will complete their certificate courses at TAFE or at ATAC to complete their Certificate II in Work for Skills & Vocational Pathways (FSK20119) and Certificate II in Workplace Skills (BSB20120).

We had a parents evening on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024, and we plan to hold another meeting at the college in the second week for term II. We would like the parents to be assured that the flexibility in our programs allows students to follow the alternative pathways and become successful like our previous cohorts. We will continue to build on the vocational pathways and support our

students, parents and the community who support us.

Students are continually being prepared to meet their Job-ready and transferable skills, and then recommended by staff to employers with the support of parents and/or guardians. An early career trade pathway gives students and parents a very pleasant feeling. ATAC fully supports all the paperwork to meet the legal obligations of all parties in the process of work or apprenticeship arrangements.

#### **Infrastructure Development**

Work is now underway to complete the finishing plumbing and commercial works for approval. ATAC wishes to provide the facility for seminars, workshops, conferences, and events. The amenities and the kitchen are almost ready and will be available for use by students and the public upon receiving the completion certificate. An indoor sports and physical fitness center are complete and is being used by the students and staff. We invite our community members to utilize the facilities and help in building a healthy community by supporting their physical and mental health.

The multipurpose shed will also provide bigger open learning spaces, and the possibility of providing hospitality and beekeeping training opportunities. Bee All Natural has engaged with ATAC to provide training to local young people via KRANK program sponsored by Logan City Council. The directors, Natasha and Jason Roebig have conducted past KRANK Beekeeping programs and hope to continue training their members onsite with LCC funding. ATAC is working closely with Bee All-Natural to provide workshops and potentially a Cert. III in Beekeeping by early 2025. The Bee school has secured a grant from LCC to purchase

equipment to set up onsite Bee hives and training. Beekeeping training has become a major focus by many councils across Australia since the bees play a major role in crops and honey production and in the improvement of the biodiversity of our flora and fauna species. We all are trying to combat climate change in various ways, but beekeeping is very important in retaining our natural environment. ATAC is working closely with all stakeholders to provide the facilities for the education and training to beekeeping enthusiasts, especially the younger generation.

### **Community Engagement**

As for the beekeeping programs, there is a growing nationwide interest in Community Garden programs. The North Maclean Community Garden members have been cultivating some garden space for their vegetable crops. They are harvesting chilies, pumpkins, rosella, and eggplant for a side income. Nationally, local governments are supporting "Grow Your Own Vegetables" (GYOV) community gardens programs as social capital projects that assist in making people live an active and healthy lives. ATAC has been in the forefront for the last few years supporting its community and provides free tank water supply via an irrigation system to water the vegetable gardens. As soon as our greenhouse is ready, we will provide opportunities for the locals to join the North Maclean Community Garden (NMCG) members and grow their organic vegetables at ATAC. We do envisage some additional education and training workshops to build horticultural skills, knowledge in the use of organic herbicides and fertilizers and to grow organic fruits and vegetable crops. We would also prefer to use some native species.

ATAC sends its monthly newsletters to all members, parents, well-wishers and uploads it on the website for the public. New members are always welcome, and volunteers are welcome to join the ATAC committee at any time.

### **Student Engagement**

Parent evenings are planned during each school term, and we encourage all parents and interested people to attend. Our "TRIPOD" model provides an opportunity for close partnerships between parents/ guardians, students, and the staff. The key to the progress and success of our students is the goodwill between parents/ guardians and ATAC. Tolerance, resilience, and understanding among students, staff and parents is crucial to individual progress and career pathways of our young people. Building respect, self-confidence and self-esteem grows gradually in our students as they become more resilient, honest, hardworking, responsible and independent learners.

The influence of social media causes challenges in their full engagement, however, with more personal attention and closely working with them enables them to positive attitude, respect, and tolerance. Such emphasis enables young people to work towards their future goals. With our focus on project-based and hands-on learning experiences, some students become better engaged and responsible for their own learning and success. They work harder to attend trade courses and to find jobs facilitated by ATAC.

Our 2024 academic program is unique, and it enables students to follow various pathways to successful completion of QCE and trades for an earlier job.

### **Acknowledgement**

Special thanks to all volunteers and ATAC board members who have tirelessly supported the mission and vision of ATAC.

We greatly appreciate the grants provided by RSL Greenbank, Logan City Council and the government to support ATAC and its local community. Thank you to all parents and guardians who have always played a significant role in the success of their child.

## Staffing

Two new teachers were recruited at the beginning of the year who have worked hard to build the teaching and learning resources. Both teachers have been familiar with our college and shared our mission and vision and voluntarily supported the college before deciding to join ATAC. We wholeheartedly welcome you to share the teaching load and your passion to support students who need special attention to fulfill their dream careers. Your interest in hands-on outdoor activities, bushfoods, native plants, and student wellbeing will greatly assist our student cohorts to develop multiple life skills and prepare them for the challenging world around us.

With the knowledge and experience of our new teachers, they will assist ATAC in providing the best academic and vet qualifications and prepare our students for job-readiness training. All parents are encouraged to meet the new staff in week two of the second term. Please feel free to make an appointment after school at your convenience.

### **Ms. Marnie Parker**

Ms. Marnie (Parker) has been very actively involved in life skills, HPE, FSK and Business training at ATAC. As a former teacher, and principal she was involved in the planning and teaching HPE, English and History. Currently involved with a few other schools as a trainer in Hospitality, she had stretched a bit too much and has decided to do only Hospitality. She worked at ATAC every Monday and made an impact on cooking and eating bushfoods. With her knowledge and experience, we were also very excited to have her as a teacher/trainer. However, with her workload, and challenges with her health, she decided to withdraw her teaching role.

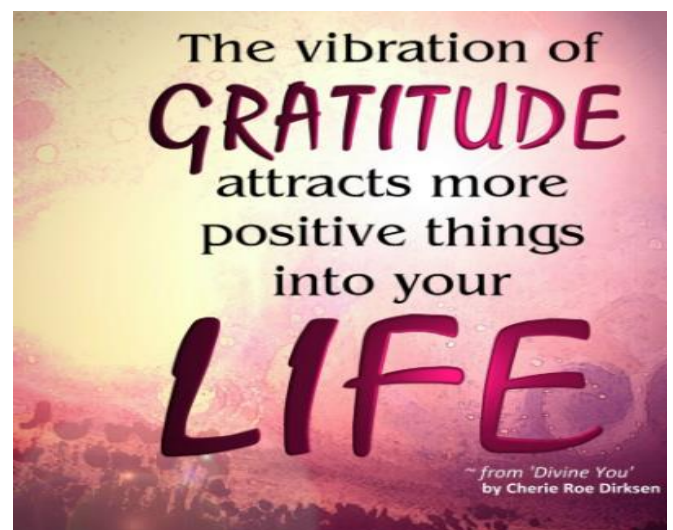
As an avid gardener and passion for cooking with native ingredients, ATAC provided her with an opportunity to bring the world of work to the classroom and 'learning through doing'. We will



welcome her back to deliver VET courses at ATAC in the future.

### **Mrs. Nandani Chandra**

Welcome back to Term 2. I am very much looking forward to meeting you all for our parent/teacher/student meetings that are coming up soon. This term, year 10s will study statistics and data, genetics, and personal fitness routines. Year 11s are looking at data and statistics and careers while the Year 12s are learning about data and statistics and the power of advertising. Our senior agriculture students are focusing on animal husbandry with a focus on chickens. We are busy with maintaining the chooks, the vegetable gardens, and finally harvesting the vegetables. We have also been discussing the power of gratitude and how it is more important than ever to cultivate gratitude for our wellbeing. Several scientific studies have evidenced the positive influence of gratitude in our daily lives. There are some very simple ways we can all cultivate gratitude in our lives. These include talking to your family about one or two things that you are all grateful for every night at the dining table, or even keeping a gratitude journal where you can write five things you are grateful for every day. In class, I had students write someone of their choice a letter of gratitude.





*Mr. Bhagwanji Bhindi*  
*Retired Linguistics Lecturer, Fiji*

### Crux of the matter

Sometimes many things cloud our mind  
Sometimes our mind begins to grind

In the heart's labyrinth, where truth does  
hide  
Lies the crux of the matter, deep inside

Beneath veils of façade and masks we wear  
Lies the essence of all we hold dear

In the tangle of emotions, fear doth lurk  
Yet courage rises to confront and work

For in facing the crux, we find our light  
Guiding us through the darkest of night

With honesty as our compass, we chart our  
course  
Navigating through turmoil, with  
unwavering force

So, let us delve deep, with steadfast resolve  
To unravel the mysteries, our spirits evolve

For in the crux of the matter, we find our  
truth  
And embrace the journey, in age or youth

Things at times are blurry and doubtful  
We need to finetune and remain faithful

The key issues may cause confusion and  
uncertainty

Let us stand back and think again with  
audacity

See if you are missing something asking  
some vital questions  
What else could it be? Are there any other  
options?

One has to reflect at the main issues, the  
real issue  
That one needs to sanguinely and positively  
pursue

Crux of the matter draws our attention  
It ignites our close consideration

When confronted with challenges that  
matter  
It's wise to search what is the crux of the  
matter

It captures the crux point between  
expectation and fact  
This is the crux of the matter in fact

For in the crux of the matter, clarity gleams  
Illuminating paths, fulfilling dreams



Physical and mental health support in the multipurpose shed with a professional trainer, Mr. Phil Morley (Arakan)



Ramesh Rai and Karandeep Singh connecting the water tanks to the shed. Rainwater is collected for use in the toilets and gardens.



KRANK program workshop for Beekeeping enthusiasts Held at ATAC on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024. (L-R) Jason & Natasha Roebig, and their daughter with Dr. Nand



Jaxon (Left) with Lachhlan Joice helping to transfer seedling to the garden beds.



Getting down to some serious work for Agricultural Practices class. (L-R) Tyler, Zeke & Damian.



Ms. Mary Irene Bayldon (Chairperson) with workers filling up the garden beds. Native trees have been planted along side the driveway.

**Well-Wishers supporting ATAC and our students.  
They can be contacted via their websites.**



## **ENROL NOW FOR 2024- 2025**

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BSB50420 Diploma in Leadership and  
Management  
BSB50120 Diploma in Business  
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