

Hi Leslie

Thursday, February 9, 2023 | Today's Paper | Mind Games

All sections

HOME THE NATION WORLD BUSINESS COMMENTARY SPORT ARTS All

Search

HOME / NATION / INDIGENOUS



Evonne Goolagong Cawley's life message: education and dreams time



Tennis legend Evonne Goolagong Cawley talks with Indigenous students attending the National Indigenous Business Summer School on Wednesday. Picture: Tennis Australia / Fiona Hamilton

By **CARLY DOUGLAS**
CADET JOURNALIST

When you follow someone, you'll see their latest stories on your homepage in the 'Following' section. ✕

9:58PM JANUARY 18, 2023 • 47 COMMENTS

Australian tennis legend Evonne Goolagong Cawley had a heartening message for the future Indigenous businessmen and women who gathered at Melbourne's Tennis HQ to hear her speak on Wednesday.

“Whatever you do, have fun with it. Chase your dreams, find your dream ... and follow it,” she told the select group of year 11 and 12 students. “They do come true. I’ve proved it.”

The students, who are participating in the National Indigenous Business Summer School program in Melbourne this week, heard of Goolagong Cawley's passion for education and her drive for success, beginning from the days she spent smacking tennis balls against a brick wall in the wheat town of Barellan in New South Wales.

READ NEXT



BUSINESS

Medibank's legal woes grow with fourth class action

JARED LYNCH, HAYDEN JOHNSON

She told them the local community had rallied behind her, raising the funds to send her to Sydney.

"The first time I went over the Sydney Harbour Bridge I was too scared and too shy," she said, telling students she had never seen a tea bag before when she arrived in Sydney.

Goolagong Cawley said she understood the power of education at an early age, sticking with school despite her early stardom.

"Education was very important for me. It's what got me through my whole career," she said. "My coach held me back. He made me finish high school."

The students have travelled to Melbourne from all corners of the country this week to experience university life and hear from Indigenous mentors, business leaders and academics.

As of 2020, only 1.2 per cent of all management and commerce students were Indigenous, despite Indigenous Australians making up 3.8 per cent of the population.

Between 2008 and 2019, the number of Indigenous university enrolments increased 121.6 per cent, rising from just 9490 students to 21,033, according to Universities Australia, most of whom chose to study education, health or the arts.

But University of Melbourne associate professor Michelle Evans, who specialises in the areas of Indigenous leadership and entrepreneurship, said introducing Indigenous students to business, commerce and entrepreneurship had never been more pressing.

"The fields might be non-traditional for Aboriginal students ... but the growth of the Indigenous economy is creating dozens of jobs for young professionals," she said.

The number of registered Indigenous businesses and corporations grew about 4 per cent per year between 2006 and 2018, she noted. "It gives these students the opportunity to make such a contribution to the Australian economy."

Professor Evans said while only "a trickle" of Indigenous students were headed for the business world at the moment, interest in programs like NIBSS, which has hand-picked more than 150 students since 2018, was growing.

Australian Business Deans Council president Keryn Chalmers said collaborations like this between Australian business schools gave Indigenous kids across the country the opportunity to learn the business fundamentals.

“Growing our Indigenous leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals makes for a prosperous Australia,” Professor Chalmers said.

Australia's new generation of Indigenous students have been a key focus for Goolagong Cawley, who has run her foundation's National Development Camp for Indigenous boys and girls since 2005.

CARLY DOUGLAS, CADET JOURNALIST

Carly Douglas is a cadet journalist based in Melbourne. Carly was previously at The Australian Jewish News. She studied Professional Communications (Journalism) at RMIT University... [Read more](#)



Share this article



READ NEXT



COMPANIES

Amcor boss more bearish on global economic outlook

The world's largest packaging company has pushed through billions of dollars in price hikes to its customers to combat soaring inflation, which helped it grow sales and profit.

ELI GREENBLAT



COMPANIES

Strong insurance growth drives big Suncorp profit

Suncorp has delivered a 44 per cent profit turnaround on the back of price increases across its insurance book and a surge in home loan values.

DAVID ROSS



WORLD

Sunak launches first reshuffle

British PM Rishi Sunak on Tuesday vowed to slash high power bills as he reshuffled his government with a focus on energy, climate net-zero targets and scientific innovation.

AFP



ARTS

Stage tribute recalls courage of gay and lesbian pioneers

Playwright Elias Jamieson Brown has studied the battle tales of Sydney's queer warriors with activist Robyn Kennedy.

MATTHEW WESTWOOD



HIGHER EDUCATION

Unis can bring what's needed to the table

Universities need to play a key role in the \$15bn National Reconstruction Fund to help it succeed in boosting advanced technology.

MARK SCOTT



WORLD

Zelensky in London to meet Charles, PM

Britain's PM Rishi Sunak has ordered the ministry of defence to investigate which fighter jets Britain may be able to send to Ukraine in a significant move that may rattle the Kremlin.

JACQUELIN MAGNAY

SPONSORED CONTENT