



May, 2019

OMEP Australia News

World Organisation for Early Childhood Education
Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire

PRESIDENTS REPORT

SANDIE WONG

Dear OMEP Australia Members,

It is my absolute honour to take up the position of President of OMEP Australia. I follow in the footsteps of amazing women who have advocated for children's rights and the provision of high quality early childhood education for many decades. I hope I am able to make a contribution to this important organisation.

INTRODUCTION TO
NEW
PRESIDENT

NSW SECRETARIAT

President: Sandie Wong
Secretary: Helen Logan
Treasurer: Leanne Gibbs
Membership: Wendy Boyd
Communication: Arian Ploeg

More details on the Secretariat
at omep.org.au

In my role as President my aim is to work collaboratively with Members to develop a clear Strategic Direction for OMEP Australia, based on the Member Survey conducted in late 2018, and to put in place some transparent and workable structures and procedures needed to support the plan be realised.

To this end, Our Strategic Planning Event held in May, drew together members from New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria and Western Australia, to work on our Strategic Plan. I thank those who participated (see photo for details), for their generosity in giving up two days of their time away from their families, and for working so collaboratively and productively together. I also thank Charles Sturt University, Deakin University, Macquarie University, Murdoch University, Southern Cross University and Victoria University for their in-kind and financial support of the event.

The new OMEP Australia website is currently being edited and we hope to have this launched very soon. There's been a lot of 'behind the scenes' work going on with this – so I thank you for your patience! I will let you all now as soon as it is 'live'. (Cont...)

PRESIDENTS REPORT (CONT)

I'm also introducing Working Groups. Whilst all major decision-making occurs at the Board level, and Chapters will continue to work at their local level, these Working Groups will focus on 'actioning' the Strategic Plan. I will provide more details about the Working Groups shortly – but they will be focused on the following areas:

- **Financials** – Chaired by National Treasurer
- **Membership** – Chaired by National Membership Secretary
- **Communication** – Chaired by National Communication Secretary
- **History** – Chaired by National Secretary
- **Research & Conferences** – Chair to be confirmed
- **30th Anniversary of UNCRC Celebration** – Chair to be confirmed
- **Reconciliation Action Plan** – Chair to be confirmed
- **Project Working groups** – Chair to be confirmed

I strongly encourage you to contact me if you would be interested in finding out more about, being part of, or Chairing, one of these Working Groups – or if you would like to propose Chairing an additional group. We see these Working Groups as an opportunity to share the work in progressing the Mission of OMEP Australia - and facilitating cross national collaboration of members on national 'projects'.

In this newsletter, you'll read of the great things that have been happening across the country. The South Australian, Western Australian and Victorian Chapters have continued to work on a range of projects and presentations at their local level. And there's news also of international connections from Ann Farrell. If you have OMEP events you would like to advertise, or stories of OMEP activities you've been engaged in, please let us know and we will include these in the next newsletter.

Kim Browne, recipient of the Rosamonde Combes Travel Scholarship, and I will soon be off to the OMEP World Congress and Conference in Panama City, Panama. We look forward to representing Australia at this important event and bringing you the news from the World body in the next newsletter. If you, or any other Australians you know of, are attending the conference please do let me know.

Finally, I want to say a big THANK YOU to the Members and the OMEP Australia Board - Vivi Germanos - Koutsounadis [NSW], Kim Browne [Vic], Marilyn Webb / Vikki Hopwood [SA], and Dr Dawn Butterworth [WA], for your support, but especially to the Secretariat – Leanne Gibbs (Treasurer), Dr Helen Logan (National Secretary), Arian Ploeg (National Communications Officer) and Dr Wendy Boyd, who have given days of their time to support and progress the work of OMEP. My sincerest gratitude to you all.

I believe that together we - OMEP Australia – have the potential to achieve so much in contributing to making a difference for children's rights. I look forward to working with you all on this important endeavour.

Sandie Wong, President, OMEP Australia

STRATEGIC PLANNING

On 26th and 27th April OMEP Australia members met at Macquarie University, Sydney to develop strategic direction for OMEP Australia. The aim of this meeting was to build upon the solid foundations established by the WA Chapter of OMEP Australia. For these two days the members worked together to determine recommendations for endorsement from members across Australia.



Left to Right: Vikki Hopwood, SA; Sandra Hesterman, WA; Vivi Germanos - Koutsounadis, NSW; Sandie Wong, National President; Wendy Boyd, NSW; Jen Jackson, VIC; Kim Browne, VIC; Helen Logan, National Secretary; Andrea Nolan, VIC



NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

WA REPORT

Early Child Care and Education Bursary

On Wednesday, May 15, Mary Vajda (Membership Secretary) and Dr Dawn Butterworth AO (President) visited the School of Education, Curtin University to present our ECCE Bursary Awards. The criteria for the awards were academic excellence,

financial need and demonstrated commitment to young children. In the presence of family and friends, ECE lecturing staff, Head of School and coordinator of ECE (Dr Madeleine Dodson), the winner (Jodie Blyth) was presented with a cheque for \$2000, a certificate and a year's complimentary membership of OMEP. The judges made special mention of Jodie's passion for working with young children: especially those suffering disadvantage. An encouragement award of \$200, a certificate and complimentary membership was awarded to both Sally Ford: a childcare worker at Wansley in the regional SW town of Albany and Xiaoyun Xu: an international student at Curtin whose leadership qualities and willingness to assist other students were also remarked upon by the judges. Pictures of this event have been posted on the OMEP Australia face book page.

Committee Meetings

The Committee held its regular monthly meeting on May 2 and discussed the strategic planning and the next fundraising event. It was also reported that Joseph Aripa is progressing satisfactorily in his final year of teacher training at Madang Teachers' College in PNG while Olivia Bunari expects to finally receive our shipment of goods by the end of this month – exactly 1 year after leaving Fremantle, WA. Our next meeting, June 6, arrangements will be finalised for a Classical Guitar Concert with sumptuous afternoon tea to be held on Sunday June 28 at 2pm. Members are asked to give feedback on the OMEP Australia draft strategic plan, as well as the re-instated website, which is urgently needed.

**Dr Dawn Butterworth AO
- WA Director**

"JODIE BLYTH WAS PRESENTED WITH A CHEQUE FOR \$2000, A CERTIFICATE AND A YEAR'S COMPLIMENTARY MEMBERSHIP OF OMEP."

SA REPORT

OMEP SA have received a comprehensive report from Ally Diamond coordinator of the 'Learn to swim Project' (conducted in Fiji).

"All pre-service teachers learned more about culturally responsive pedagogies. This learning will be explored via data collected from the eleven UniSA undergraduates to produce a research publication about their learning through participation in the visit"

A multilingual book was produced for young children in Fiji entitled 'Keimami Na Dau Qalo Qaqarauni/ Hum Sab Safe Swimmers Hai/We are safe Swimmers'. Water beach care was included in the lessons, aiming to prevent local people dumping rubbish at the beach. Next time the team hopes to take plastic shoes for the

children as there were a number of cuts to feet from rubbish left at the beach.

We are also pleased to report that planning is underway for a South Australian celebration of the Anti-Bullying Project, available on the [www](http://www.anti-bullying.com.au), entitled "co-creating anti-bullying interventions with early childhood educators: supporting early childhood educators to address bullying in junior primary classes for the early childhood sector" by Dr Lesley-Anne Ey and Dr Barbara Spears. The research was funded by OMEP Australia, however the research and all associated work was conducted in South Australia, thus it seems fitting that South Australia celebrates the achievement. Final details of the event will be announced shortly.

Vikki Hopwood. SA Chapter

**"CO-CREATING
ANTI-BULLYING
INTERVENTIONS
WITH EARLY
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SUPPORTING EARLY
CHILDHOOD
EDUCATORS TO
ADDRESS BULLYING
IN JUNIOR PRIMARY
CLASSES FOR THE
EARLY CHILDHOOD
SECTOR."**

VICREPORT

Since February the Victorian Chapter of OMEP Australia has been diligently working to defend and promote the rights of children, their families and early childhood communities. This has been alongside strong and ongoing support from Anne, Shayne and Jen.

Since February, as director, I have met with current and new members and have been invited to visit their organisations. This has been to introduce myself, to promote OMEP values and aims and to invite people to be involved in planning events and shared learning. As a result, our membership has been steadily growing into a viable Chapter of OMEP.

It is aimed that members will be invited and have the opportunity to meet in the coming month in order to work through details for an event at Cranbourne Botanical Gardens.

Meetings and Events

The Victorian chapter has met to plan for upcoming events and joined together at an event in early April. On 2nd April we held a professional learning evening event – ‘Inclusive pedagogies: Connections with Indigenous perspectives’. This event involved the generous time by Dr Catherine Hamm (La

Trobe University), and Dr Jeanne Iorio (Victoria University), presenting their research on places and matters of concern. Kim Browne also presented about connecting with Indigenous perspectives as a descendent of Adnyamathanha and Nukunu people. All ideas were brought together as part of a panel discussion which involved educators and Indigenous community members. It was a successful night with 30-35 people including, new members in attendance, increased memberships and ongoing interest in the aims and values of OMEP.

The three presentations offered a wide range of perspectives to connect as part of learning from Indigenous perspectives, but importantly, with meaning in early childhood practice. Jeanne and Catherine gave voice to seeing how educators can learn from the environment around us as teacher and enabler of Koori perspectives. We were challenged to consider beyond our roles as teaching ‘to and over’ children and on country as part of practice – and this was offered through own perspectives and journey to country by Kim Browne and Tracey Cooper and Maree Olle

(VU) and educators. This connects to our OMEP aims of understanding family and community perspectives and to building accessible and high-quality EC environments for all children.

My sincere thanks to Shayne, Anne and Jen for their time, efforts and help as part of our chapter to make this event possible and successful. In addition, the generous time of our venue and resources – RMIT Children’s Centre and chairs from the ACTU across the road collectively enabled the event to run smoothly for all in attendance.

One of the effective measures which also increased the success of the event was the allowance of Early Childhood Teachers Victoria Facebook page, (which has 15,000 members), to enable OMEP Victoria to promote the event. This meant that participants represented a wide range of positions including government and advocacy groups, early childhood educators from local and regional areas, academics, retired and graduate teachers and students. The Victorian Chapter of OMEP are able to continue to use this site and the efficacy of this mode – social media – used with care, should not be (Cont...)

VICREPORT (CONT)

underestimated to generate interest and voice as part of shared learning.

Wyndham City Council – Early Childhood Matters Conference, (May 17, 2019)

As part of the connections made early this year between the Victorian Chapter of OMEP and early childhood organisations, Wyndham City Council in the Western suburbs of Melbourne asked Kim Browne to give a keynote address about OMEP and children's rights in May, 2019. This conference with local early childhood communities involved 300 delegates. This presentation was alongside a keynote address by Stan Grant. This event was very successful with the Wyndham City Council donating \$300 to the Victorian Chapter of OMEP, agreeing to join OMEP Victoria and allowing Kim to promote OMEP with delegates across the day and through presentations. There has been keen interest in the organisation. From this event Wyndham City Council are interested in ongoing involvement and the values and aims of the organisation. This includes having Kim's involvement as part of Wyndham children's services in the coming months. Early childhood teachers are also keen to share their practices

with other educators across the state. This is a significant move and Wyndham City Council are eager to share and learn with other practitioners. This might be through future forums, including an upcoming event at Cranbourne Botanical Gardens.

Cranbourne Botanical Gardens

Another commitment through OMEP Victoria is to work towards defending and promoting children's access to high quality education across areas in the state. Many events and policies are often city-centric and focus on urban environments. Building connections to rural and regional areas of OMEP Victoria is a strong focus during 2019. Part of this commitment is to host an event at Cranbourne Botanical Gardens – an hour from Melbourne and towards the area of Gippsland where it is hoped new members from regional areas may attend. This event will focus upon connections with land and sustainability as part of Indigenous perspectives, including bush kinder programs and the environment. The City of Casey has been contacted by Kim Browne to work towards this event collaboratively and to plan this event going forward. I am awaiting their response.

Connections for OMEP nationally and internationally

In April, 2019 Professor Andrea Nolan, Dr Jen Jackson and Kim Browne attending the OMEP Australia strategic planning event. This two-day forum offered opportunities to canvass ideas and to learn from each chapter. More details from the event will be shared through the board meeting. Kim Browne was successful in being awarded the Rosamunde Coombes travel award and will be attending the world assembly and conference in Panama, in July 2019. It is truly an honour to receive this award and I look forward to sharing my insights upon my return to benefit early childhood communities across Australia. I wish to sincerely thank the board and all members for the funds which will assist my travel arrangements.

Kim Browne

Director – OMEP Victoria.

WHY DID YOU JOIN OMEP? DR JEN JACKSON (VIC CHAPTER)

I joined OMEP to work with people from different walks of life who want to make a better world for children. As a policy researcher, I worry that too much is said about the economic benefits of early learning, and not enough about children's rights to learn and thrive. I also value OMEP's global reach, because children benefit when we all work together across the world. OMEP even has a voice in the United Nations, which shows how respected it is internationally! On a personal level, I enjoy learning with the amazing people that I've met through the OMEP community.



Dr Jen Jackson

OMEP EUROPE CONFERENCE

Ann Farrell, Queensland, attended the OMEP Europe event in Lisbon on 17th and 18th May 2019. She was the only representative from the Southern Hemisphere. Ann presented at the conference on AUSTRALIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE POLICY CONTESTING FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURES: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ENABLERS AND BARRIERS TO AUSTRALIA'S AMBITIONS FOR SOCIALLY JUST SUSTAINABILITY. She was also invited to the European meeting. During this meeting Ann was asked to report on OMEP Australia. She stressed that Sandie Wong was the President, however was able to advise the meeting that OMEP Australia is 'consolidating and moving forward'.



**71ª ASAMBLEA Y CONFERENCIA
MUNDIAL DE LA OMEP**

IDENTIDADES Y CULTURAS EN LA EDUCACIÓN DE LA PRIMERA INFANCIA
IDENTITIES AND CULTURES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
IDENTITÉS ET CULTURES DANS L'ÉDUCATION DE LA PETITE ENFANCE

PANAMA 2019

Asamblea EXTENDED! 22-23 Julio

Conferencia 24-26 Julio

OMEPE JOURNAL

The World OMEPE Scholarly Journal is the *International Journal of Early Childhood*, published by Springer.

Queensland OMEPE member Donna Berthelsen is the Editor.

To find out more visit www.worldomepe.org

JULY 2019

OMEPE Memberships
Due 2019-2020

OMEPE Conference
Panama City
Assembly 22-23 July
Conference 24-25 July

SEPTEMBER 2019

ECA Conference Hobart
ecaconference.com.au

Board of OMEPE Australia:

Sandie Wong President of OMEPE;

Dawn Butterworth (WA Director);

Kim Browne (VIC Director);

Vikki Hopwood (SA Director);

Vivi Germanos-Koutsounadis (NSW Director)

MEMBERSHIP

Become a member of OMEPE at anytime.
Contact info@omepe.org.au for more
information and application forms.



O.M.E.P. Aust Ltd
World Organisation for
Early Childhood Education

Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar

ACN 060 578 092

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP/ RENEWAL FORM

Membership is due 1st July each year.

Please complete the following details and return with payment. Your payment will be acknowledged and our records updated.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2018/2019

NEW MEMBERSHIP
INDIVIDUAL:

☐

Individual:

RENEWAL

☐

Unwaged:

\$60.00

☐

\$40.00

☐

(Pensioners & self funded retirees)

Student:

\$25.00

☐

ORGANISATION:

\$100.00

☐

Donation to World Travel Fund

☐

amount

OMEP Aust Ltd is tax exempt – GST does not apply to this Invoice

PERSONAL DETAILS

Title:

Name:

*Organisation (*Only complete if organisational member and only one member per organisation)

Address:

Phone (wk)

Mobile

Email:

Signed

Date of Application:

Method of payment

Direct Deposit

☐

Name: OMEP Aust Ltd

Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia

BSB: 06 3210

Ac No. 10093711

Enclose Cheque

☐

Make payable to: OMEP Aust Ltd

If posting please send post this form with remittance to

Membership Secretary,
OMEP Aust Ltd
41 Browning St
Byron Bay, NSW, 2481

Please email copy of Direct Deposit and this form to the secretary wendy.boyd@scu.edu.au