

Indigenous Apprenticeships Program – Shaneiva’s story

Voiceover:

This is the story of an artwork and yet, it’s so much more. It’s about culture, history, respect and opportunities.

And it’s a story about a proud Gamilaroi woman taking those opportunities and creating change in her community and workplace.

It’s her story, the story of her people, the story of many Australians.

This is Shaneiva. She completed the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program at Services Australia.

Shaneiva:

I was over the moon when I found out I got it as university wasn’t for me and I was really seeking out full-time work.

Voiceover:

She found a workplace that was accepting, open and exciting.

Shaneiva:

This journey has been challenging, but most importantly it’s been rewarding, it’s been insightful. I can confidently say I learned more skills in the first week working here than I did in 13 years of schooling.

Voiceover:

But there’s another side to Shaneiva. As a proud Indigenous woman, she says her spirit moves to the demand of something beyond her that pushes her to tell stories through the medium of Aboriginal art.

Shaneiva:

I paint to revive stories of my people; stories that may have been lost. For me, it’s my therapy, it’s my way of connecting to culture and I also see my art as a bridge between 2 worlds that don’t fully understand each other yet.

Voiceover:

Happily, her 2 worlds collided when the agency needed someone very specific for a task that Shaneiva fulfilled perfectly.

Shaneiva:

I was commissioned by Services Australia. They were looking for an ex-apprentice who took part in the Indigenous Apprenticeship Program. And they wanted to create a new art piece that would be used for promotional products.

Voiceover:

Her work is to be a rebranding of the program. The theme is 'What will your story be?' and she saw a wonderful opportunity to tell a specific and a big story at the same time.

Shaneiva:

So, I wanted to illuminate the idea that everyone's story is different. We come from all different walks of life and not one story is the same. We really wanted to intertwine both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in the piece.

Voiceover:

And so, a unique painting was born. A painting encompassing the past, present and future; calling for people to be connected, to respect one another and live and work together.

Shaneiva:

So, here we have the island drum, that represents calling people together and to unite. And here for the Aboriginal symbol, we have a meeting place; so this represents gathering as one.

Voiceover:

Shaneiva says her experiences through the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program is like a fulfilment of those things, showing there are workplaces that will open doors for the First Nations people.

Shaneiva:

The hand represents a sense of belonging and acceptance. I chose to use this as here in the agency the Indigenous voice is acknowledged and our culture is respected.

Voiceover:

She says her love of Aboriginal art came through her father, who's delighted that both she and her brother, completed the program.

Shaneiva's father, Timothy:

Being a dad of 2 wonderful children that's kept on going forward in life, going through the Indigenous Apprenticeship Scheme, it's just, it's everything to me. I'm so proud of them.

Voiceover:

Shaneiva has a strong sense that her voice and her art will bring with it the experience and wisdom of her people's long history, something she hopes to convey in her rebranding of the Indigenous Apprenticeships Program.

Shaneiva:

So for me, I think this is really important because it's growing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and I think that's a very important voice to be heard.

Voiceover:

The Indigenous Apprenticeships Program is creating new stories for many Indigenous people.

Shaneiva is hoping her painting, of connections and gathering places will encourage others to give it a go.

Shaneiva:

The Indigenous Apprenticeship Program was definitely an excellent way to kick-start my career in the APS. It's opened so many doors of opportunity and I couldn't be more grateful.

This artwork was created to represent culture, connection and story.

What will your story be?

<ENDS>