

Case study and activities



Evangeline is strengthening Aboriginal culture, while making a living for herself – and creating opportunities for her community.

Featured in Project Compassion during 2016, Evangeline went from seeking employment to being a Senior Artswoker and an inspirational leader for youth. Her work at the non-profit Aboriginal organisation, Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, has supported the organisation's growth from a multi-media project to a multi-level contemporary arts and culture centre. An example of excellence in Indigenous tourism, it's now a key employer for young people in the remote Northern Territory community of Beswick (Wugularr).

A just future for Evangeline and her community continues...

Evangeline is a young Ramingining woman who lives in Beswick (Wugularr), 100 kilometres east of Katherine in the Northern Territory.

Her community of around 450 people faces a range of challenges, stemming from the violent experience of colonisation, including few employment opportunities, crowded housing, a lack of access to services, alcohol and health problems and financial hardship.

Limited political influence continues to disempower Australia's First Peoples. Lack of opportunity draws young people away from their country and culture into towns and cities where they are most vulnerable.

Evangeline left high school in Year 11, although like many young people her age, she didn't have a clear career path in mind. She tried a few different jobs but soon became discouraged.

"I got caught up in drinking for a while," Evangeline says, "but by the time I was 22, I really started to think about doing something positive with my life."

Evangeline was then employed at the Caritas supported Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation in Beswick, and quickly rose

to the role of Senior Artswoker. Through the work of Evangeline and the team of Artswokers, the enterprise has gone from strength to strength, now supporting eight Artswokers - with casual employment and training opportunities for up to 95 others.

It all started with a multi-media project, which brought Elders and young people together by providing technology and training to share traditional skills and knowledge – through art, storytelling, dance and song. Djilpin Arts exhibits and sells locally-produced artwork. Evangeline and her team manage a cultural centre with a museum and a gallery, as well as award-winning cultural tourism pavilions. The centre also hosts the community's Walking with Spirits Festival.

Since 2016 the enterprise has continued to grow.

"Now we have a new gallery up. And we have our new kitchens, we look after these and we now maintain this to make sure it's running okay and in good condition. We're also trying to open up another tour for tourists to go around the waterfall, we're just planning that now."

Evangeline's career has also flourished along with the growth of Djilpin Arts.

She was the youngest Artswoker ever to be accepted into the Association of Northern, Kimberley and Arnhem Aboriginal Artists (ANKAAA) Artswokers Extension Program. Evangeline travelled to Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra to visit art galleries to learn about collections and conservation. She has also given talks about Djilpin Arts and mentored undergraduates.

"This opportunity has helped me turn my life into something more positive. It makes me more confident and more independent," Evangeline says.

This year, in 2018, Evangeline is busy guiding tourists, coordinating cultural activities and helping community members

to practice and market their arts, such as weaving and jewellery-making.

"We're going to take our Aunties to collect more pandanus because they ran out and they need some more sugar bags as well. Also, our Uncles, they got didgeridoos at home so they want to come in and sell them."

First Australians Program Coordinator, Carl O'Sullivan, says Djilpin Arts is a key employer in Beswick (Wugularr). The training and opportunities are currently supporting six young women to take on leadership roles.

"Evangeline is a leader and a go-to person and she's very much a problem-solver. She encourages other younger girls to get involved in the projects of Djilpin Arts - and she mentors them. Evangeline and the team of Artswokers are doing really important work, promoting their cultural knowledge and inviting guests to take some time and learn. She's an amazing young woman, with strength and confidence that has flourished with the opportunities from participating in the program."

“It's good for them to learn and to keep their culture strong.”
- Evangeline

Evangeline says that Caritas Australia's support for Djilpin Arts, through Project Compassion, is vital for all Wugularr's young people. Although their families do their best to pass on knowledge, Elders are dying and she is keen to spearhead the preservation of culture and lore for future generations.

"It's good for them to learn and to keep their culture strong," Evangeline says.

"Because to me, I look at the kids and they just run amok. So we need to come up with things for them and involve the school kids to come down here and do things. And start teaching them, girls and boys, cultural ways – and to teach the kids that they can have a strong culture and try to keep their lore strong as well."

Your support for Project Compassion will provide employment and training for First Australians. The work of Evangeline and Djilpin Arts is creating opportunities for First Peoples to remain on country and keep their culture alive. This work is essential for a just future with opportunities for remote communities to thrive.

The work of Djilpin Arts is tapping into the creativity, resilience and innovation of Aboriginal communities.

Their just future has started with culture.

A just future starts with all of us.

Classroom Activities



FIND THE **STUDENT INTERACTIVE WORKBOOK** AT:
<https://www.thinglink.com/scene/1130001566846156801>
(Click 'Refresh' if the hot spot icons don't display correctly.)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Prayer

Loving God,

We pray that we learn from our First Australian sisters and brothers and respect their cultures. May we use the gifts that you have given us to create a just future for all peoples.

Amen

Or write your own prayer for Evangeline and her community.



Reflect:

"Let unifying love be your measure; abiding love your challenge; self-giving love your mission!"

—Pope Benedict XVI

What do you think Pope Benedict XVI meant by 'unifying', 'abiding' and 'self-giving' love?

Identify three actions you can take this Lent to demonstrate your love for others.



Catholic Social Teaching Principles: Subsidiarity

We believe people should have a say in the decisions that affect them.

1. How do you see subsidiarity reflected in Evangeline's story?
2. What other examples of Catholic Social Teaching can you see reflected in this story?
3. How does your support for Caritas Australia strengthen communities like Evangeline's for the long term?

LEARNING TASKS

INQUIRY TOPIC: A JUST FUTURE STARTS WITH CULTURE



Story Study

English Y7- ACELY1723, Y8- ACELY1734, Y9 ACELY1744, Y10- ACELY1754,

Geography Y7- ACHGK047.

Read Evangeline's story and discuss:

1. How does Evangeline and her community celebrate and pass on their culture?
2. How does Evangeline participate and contribute to her community?
3. How does Caritas Australia, through their partner Djilpin Arts, help?
4. Why is it important for young people like Evangeline to spend time with their community Elders?
5. What role has Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation played in helping Evangeline and other young people in their community have 'A Just Future'?



Watch Evangeline's original story from Project Compassion 2016: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HB3UD13J5t0>



Class Debate-

English Y7 ACELY1804, Y8 ACELT1807 ACELY1808, Y9 ACELY1811, Y10 ACELT1812, ACELY1813, Civics and Citizenship Y9 ACHCS089, ACHCS085, Y10 ACHCS099.

Topic: "A just future starts with culture."



Country Study

Read the country summary at www.caritas.org.au/learn/countries/australia. Using the information provided and your own research find out the following about Australia:

- population,
- First Australian population,
- % population/First Australian population living on less than \$1.90 a day,
- region of the world Australia is located in,
- capital city,
- number of Aboriginal languages,
- main religion,

- number of Aboriginal tribes or countries
- symbolism of both flag designs.

Summarise the historical, environmental, social, political and economic factors that have contributed to poverty and inequality among First Australian populations.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

(not in Interactive student workbooks)

What do you know about First Australians?

Media Arts Y7 and 8: ACAMAR072, Year 9 and 10: ACAMAR079

Part 1:

Tune into students' knowledge by allowing them to share their knowledge and experience about Aboriginal culture and history with each other.

- What is unique about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians?
- What are their strengths and gifts?
- What lessons can we learn from them?
- Are any of your class members or their friends, Indigenous Australians? If not, reflect on why this is.

Go Further: Explore **ABC Message Stick** for 30 min stories episodes where Aboriginal people tell their stories.

Media Arts Y7 and 8: ACAMAR072, Year 9 and 10: ACAMAR079

What do you know about First Australians?

Part 2

History Y9: ACDSEH020, Y10: ACDSEH104

Discuss:

- What do you know about the history of the First Australians?
- How and why were their traditions, and their whole existence, threatened?
- What are some key dates and events in First Australian history?
- Investigate and create a 'Justice History timeline'.

Additional resources to explore:

- [Djilpin Arts website](#)
- [Walk As One - Quiz](#)