

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

Welcome to the 2024 academic year. With the rapidly changing dynamics of the current labor market our college is forever aligned towards building skills in young people. We started with a group of new and returning students. After year 10 completion last year, three students have decided to continue their journey with traineeships or apprenticeships and left ATAC. Unfortunately, neither the students nor the parents have responded to our phone calls, messages, or emails to provide any feedback for their new journeys in their careers. We have three year 12 students this year who will be going to TAFE and completing their certificates along with their QCE qualification. Students also complete their Certificate II in Work for Skills & Vocational Pathways (FSK20119) and Certificate II in Workplace Skills (BSB20120).

After a successful awards evening on 22nd November 2023, and an early parents evening on Tuesday 30th January 2024 at the college, we were able to discuss the alternative pathways and the success stories of former students. We will continue to build on the vocational pathways and support our students, parents and the community who support us.

Students are now being prepared to meet their Job-ready skills assessment and then recommended by staff to employers with the support of parents and/or guardians.

It gives parents a very pleasant feeling for their child to be engaged in an early career and trade pathways. ATAC fully supports all the paperwork to meet the legal obligations of all parties.

Infrastructure Development

The final works on our multipurpose shed have been hindered by extreme weather. Work is now underway to complete the finishing works for approval. There is a great opportunity for its use 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. We will provide resources and equipment for indoor sports and physical fitness to be used for use by students, staff, and community members.

With bigger open learning spaces, there is the possibility to provide hospitality training and beekeeping opportunities. Bee All-Natural has engaged with ATAC to provide training to local young people via KRANK program sponsored by Logan City Council. Past KRANK Beekeeping programs have been held at ATAC by the directors Natasha and Jason Roebig. Bees play a major role in fruit crops and honey production and the biodiversity of our flora and fauna species. ATAC is ready to provide the facilities for the education and training to beekeeping enthusiasts especially children and the younger generation.

Community Engagement

The North Maclean Community Garden members are harvesting their vegetable crops despite the weather. With nationwide Community Garden programs, there is greater interest and enthusiasm “Grow Your Own Vegetables” (GYOV). 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. The North Maclean Community Garden (NMCG) members are encouraged to work with us to grow fresh vegetables to supplement their income. We are about to build our tunnel greenhouse to support our students and NMCG members in vegetable growing, horticultural activities and for native plant production training.

New volunteer members are always welcome to join the group or the ATAC committee. Our progress and achievements are published in our monthly newsletter and are made available to all parents/ guardians and our supporters via emails or on our website.

Student Engagement

We had our first parent evening in the 2nd week of this term and parents had been happy with our re-engagement plans. Understanding, tolerance, resilience, and goodwill between parents/ guardians and ATAC is the key to progress and success of our students and the college. Our “TRIPOD” model provides an opportunity for close partnerships between parents/ guardians, students, and the staff. Students are provided with a lot of personal attention to their progress, and support to career pathways. Honesty, hard work, responsibility, resilience, and respect are a priority to build self-confidence and self-esteem as they learn how to become keen learners for their own success.

We are working closely with the students to build their job-ready skills. Despite the influence of social media challenges, our students become

engaged as they realize the need to be focused and self-directed in attaining personal skills to secure job experience or apprenticeship. Personal skills such as positive attitude, respect and tolerance are being emphasized to enable young people to become responsible for their future goals.

We maintain close relationships with businesses, training organizations and parents/ guardians, to assist and empower ATAC students. Focused on project-based and hands-on learning makes our students responsible for their own learning and success. ATAC facilitates work experience, obtaining their White Cards, joining TAFE for trade courses, and finding jobs while still at school.

Acknowledgement

We greatly appreciate the grants from RSL Greenbank, Logan City Council and the government to support our local community. We sincerely acknowledge the contribution of the supportive parents/guardians and businesses. Parents and guardians have always played a significant role in the success of their child. Congratulations to all those who have started a new career. Special thanks to all volunteers and ATAC board members who have tirelessly supported the mission and vision of ATAC.

Staffing

After a few years of service to ATAC, Mr. Gary Suthers had declared that he will not be able to teach due to health reasons after emergency hospitalization. We sincerely thank Gary for his service and contribution to the education and training of our students. Some students had greatly benefitted from his nature, tolerance and understanding. To ensure that students were fully resourced for the 2024 school year, the position was publicly advertised on the “Indeed” jobs platform and on our website. The most meritorious and experienced candidate was appointed in consultation with the Board. We have been fortunate to have two teachers who are familiar with our college and share our mission

and vision and now joined as ATAC staff. 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 to prepare them for the challenging world around us. 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.

With their 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 if you have not been able to attend the first parent evening in the second week. Please feel free to make an appointment after school at your convenience.

Ms. Marnie Parker

My name is Marnie (Parker) and I will be working with your student every Monday. I am a qualified Secondary teacher, Chef, and Justice of the Peace.



I have a master's degree in training and development (Vocational Education), Bachelor of Education (Secondary), Graduate Certificate in Career Development Practice, and a range of other VET qualifications.

Over the years, I have been a Principal, Head of Department, VET Coordinator, classroom teacher, and most recently, the Education Services Advisor for VET and Careers for every Independent school throughout Queensland – employed by the Head Office of Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ). While I have lived in Redlands City for 44 years, I am originally from Wollongong and therefore a Blues supporter!

I am an avid gardener and have a passion for cooking with native ingredients. On the weekend, I can be found walking along the foreshore foraging for bush foods.

My focus as a teacher is bringing the world of work to the classroom and 'learning through doing'. I have a long association with ATAC, Dr Nand, and Radhika, and consider it a privilege to work with your students.

Should you have any questions, concerns, or just want to say hello, my door is always open.

Mrs. Nandani Chandra

I have been in the teaching profession for over 20 years and in this time, I have taught at various schools throughout Queensland. Born in Fiji and emigrating to Australia at the age of 7, I am a true-blue Fiji-



Indian/Aussie at heart! My teaching areas are in the Sciences, mainly Chemistry and Biology but I am also a qualified horticulture teacher. I will also endeavor to learn and teach new subject areas. I have a Master of Education, Bachelor of Applied Science and because I am passionate about wellbeing and life-long learning, I am also currently studying for a post-graduate diploma in psychology. My aim is to instill a curiosity and a love of learning into our students, so they too gain an interest in understanding the importance of education. Before moving to ATAC, I taught at Stretton State College. I look forward to implementing the skills I bring from the College in helping students in completing the academic/curriculum aspect of their studies at ATAC.

Most importantly and underpinning all I do, both professionally and personally, are my ideals of inner wellbeing for all. I am particularly concerned about the rise in mental health problems, especially amongst the youth in our society today. For this reason, I am a passionate advocate of the implementation of positive education in schools. I look forward to working alongside you and your child to help provide a holistic educational experience for our students; an experience that helps our students flourish in every aspect of life, not only academically but also through inner health and wellbeing.



*Mr. Bhagwanji Bhindi
Retired Linguistics Lecturer Fiji*

POEM - CELEBRATE RISING DREAMS

The dawn of the new year is around the corner
Thank God for letting us all see a New Year
And learning to live once more

Ring in a start to new year
Is a moment to acknowledge?
To celebrate and reflect on our past experiences
And to welcome the best ones in store
The New Year offers another opportunity to get things right
Or will it be the same old story?

Let us aim for the best in the new year.
To grow more mature, loving, wise and open-minded
All embracing, inclusive, compassionate, and caring

Life is not always about success.
Failure is nothing but a shadow of success.
Do not be disheartened by sorrow or loss.
As all facets of life are temporary

Learn to rise every day like the sun.
And our goals and dreams will come true.

Tackle new challenges with new perspectives.
Think dynamic and march forward gallantly
This is the magical way to march on in life

Rebuild our relationships and nurture our existing ties
Feel blessed that we have one more year.
There are many in the world who don't

Carry forward the spirit of Christmas
Across the entire New Year
And not just the festive season

Let's re-vision and re-align our paths in the New Year
The first step to any dream is to try
And remain consistent, persistent and resilient
In good times and bad times

With the rising dreams
We hope for fulfilment, contentment.
Peace, goodwill and love
A brighter, better new dreams
Then we have ever had before

It's another chance to love and forgive.
It's another chance to make a real effort.
To give more than we get
It's another chance to make a difference.

Let's celebrate rising dreams like sunrise on the horizon.
Beckoning us to face the challenges of the New year.
With optimism, faith, enthusiasm, altruism
Magnanimity, openness, humility and love

A new chapter awaits to be written
A painting yet to be painted
A path yet to be stepped on
Press on the magical restart button
Rejuvenate and reinvent ourselves
Let us unite, heal and rebuild in the New Year
Happy New Year!!

Bhagwanji Bhindi



Mrs. Nandani Chandra assisting a new student, Mark Sawyers with his mathematics.



Mark Sawyers practicing some mathematical skills. He has shown a lot of interest in trying to complete his tasks on time. We are happy to see your interest in your subjects.



Ms. Marnie Parker assisting year 11 & 12 students with personal skills for job readiness.



New year 10 students getting relaxed with the bearded dragon, a native lizard which has been a member of the class team since 2021.



Opening a 20 cm Bunya nut is not fun. Mark and Lachlan try to split the cone.



Tyler and Zeke checking if the Bunya nuts were ready for consumption. It does require some patience.



Tyler of year 12 leading the cooking team for preparing bunya nuts for lunch.



Mathew Freckelton (Left) and Jai Garsden of year 10 assisting to prepare for a burial of a dead chook. Thank you.



Matthew (L) Jaxon and (Jai) preparing garden beds for planting native plants along the driveway below.



The first garden bed beside the driveway is ready for planting. Thank you, Jai (L) Jaxon and Matthew (R).



Year 10 students garden soil (below) in the garden beds



Garden beds planted with vegetable seedlings grown in week one. The transplanted seedlings faced a lot of heat and needed shade cloth cover.



Few egg laying chooks with a rooster. Two or three eggs are picked up per day and they are looking forward to using them for their life-skills sessions with Ms. Parker.



The new attractive addition to our duck project. Thirteen ducklings hatched on 5th February 2024.



The bearded dragon and blue tongue lizards in tanks in the classroom are good attractions and stress relievers for a few students.



Six ducklings from the previous hatching in November 2023 are coming to maturity age.

2024 Education Queensland Term Dates

Term	Start Date	End date	Length
Term 1	Monday 22 January	Thursday 28 March	10 weeks
Term 2	Monday 15 April	Friday 21 June	10 weeks
Term 3	Monday 8 July	Friday 13 September	10 weeks
Term 4	Monday 30 September	Friday 13 December	11 weeks

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



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