



fulbrightalumni.org.au

## 2019: Celebrating a year of engagement and social impact

During 2019, the Australian Fulbright Alumni Association (AFAA) has celebrated two important milestones: (i) the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Australia's Fulbright Program; and (ii) AFAA's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. As 2019 draws to a close, I am writing to celebrate with you our many activities and achievements during this landmark year.

To celebrate Australia's 40<sup>th</sup> Fulbright Anniversary in 1989, AFAA was formed through the efforts of the Fulbright Commission and Fulbright Alumni. AFAA remains Australia's only organisation led by Fulbright alumni to inspire others; promote free thinking, debate and ideas; and challenge the status quo for a better world. AFAA's activities today remain strongly aligned with the original vision for the Association set out in 1989.

As documented below and on AFAA's [website](#) and [Facebook page](#), during 2019 we held dozens of events and engaged hundreds of people across Australia. The year's events began on 1<sup>st</sup> March with the Canberra public Salon on the *Future of the Australian-American Relationship*. The year concluded some 30 events later in Adelaide on 28<sup>th</sup> November, with the South Australian Thanksgiving dinner held in conjunction with the Australian-American Association. Our major initiative for 2019 was the *Frayed Lives, Threads of Hope* program. Through nine events held throughout November across three capital cities, the program engaged more than 500 people. Throughout the year we have welcomed our engagement with the Australian-American Fulbright Commission, the US State Department and many other partners.

On behalf of AFAA's National Committee, I wish you a vibrant and meaningful year ahead. Please join us in 2020!

Best wishes

Iain Butterworth  
President

## 2019 Event Highlights

We led at least 30 events during the year.

Date	Event
1-Mar	2019 Annual General Meeting, Canberra
1-Mar	Salon on the Future of the Australian-American Relationship, Canberra
20-Mar	Victorian Chapter Gathering: an evening with Trevor Hancock
4-Apr	Informal Queensland gathering - planning for the future
25-26 May	AFAA Strategic Planning Session, Sydney
13-Jun	Public forum co-hosted by the United States Study Centre, University of Sydney
25-Jun	Fulbright Public Lecture presented by Brian Silliman, Fulbright Distinguished Chair 2019
27-Jun	Victorian June Gathering - Welcome to 2019 Victorian Fulbright Scholars
28-Jun	'A Natural History of Beer', Questacon Canberra with Fulbright Visiting Distinguished Chair Prof Robert DeSalle
3-Jul	Melbourne Public lecture with Prof William Schoenberg, visiting Fulbright Distinguished Chair in Advanced Science & Technology
4-Jul	4 <sup>th</sup> July Queensland alumni celebration
5-Jul	Melbourne dinner with Prof Robert DeSalle
22-Aug	Brisbane Alumni seminar - fun with science
12-Sep	September Quarterly Victorian Gathering
20-Sep	Brisbane Festival Fulbright Get-together
22-Oct	Queensland Fulbright Social dinner and discussion
5-Nov	Melbourne Breakfast with the US Fulbright Association
6-Nov	2019 Western Australia Annual Dinner
6-Nov	70 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cocktail Reception at US Consul-General's residence, Sydney.
6-Nov	Professional Development seminar on communicating with people who are refugees, Blacktown Hospital, Sydney
7-Nov	2019 Sydney AFAA Salon - Frayed Lives, Threads of Hope: Australia's response to the global refugee crisis
8-Nov	Professional Development seminar on communicating with people who are refugees, Westmead Hospital, Sydney
8-Nov	Fulbright Sydney Social Function: Cocktails and Canapes in Manly, hosted by Dr Iona Novak
12-Nov	Communicating with people who are refugees. Professional development seminar held at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Melbourne
14-Nov	2019 Victoria AFAA Salon - Frayed Lives, Threads of Hope
15-Nov	Melbourne Concert and cocktail reception: Refugees, Remembrance and Resilience: Weaving Together Frayed Lives
19-Nov	Professional Development meeting with ASRC volunteers, Brisbane
20-Nov	Professional Development seminar at QUT on running Salons
21-Nov	2019 Brisbane Salon - Frayed Lives, Threads of Hope
28-Nov	South Australia Thanksgiving dinner - Australian American Association, AFAA joint event

## Some 2019 highlights

### Kokomini Writer Graham Akhurst Received Fulbright WG Walker Scholarship

We were delighted that Graham Akhurst, currently enrolled in a MPhil of Creative Writing at the University of Queensland, was this year's recipient of the Fulbright WG Walker Scholarship.



### Salon on the Future of the Australian-American Relationship

Led by Daniel McNamara this event held in Canberra on 1<sup>st</sup> March at ANU attracted some 150 registrations. Our thanks to our excellent keynote speakers (L-R):



Prof James Curran, Professor, Department of History, University of Sydney; Alex Oliver, Director of Research, Lowy Institute; Prof Brian Schmidt AC, Vice-Chancellor, Australian National University. For full details, click [here](#).

### Relaunched Queensland Chapter

Led by Angela Heise (L) and Caroline Smith (R), the QLD Chapter has been very busy this year.



Our refreshed chapter got off to a flying start on 4<sup>th</sup> July, with a celebratory dinner for 17 people in Brisbane



### 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cocktail Reception, held in November at the US Consul-General's residence in Sydney

Led by Vanessa Adams, on 6<sup>th</sup> November we were honoured to welcome 70 AFAA members, visiting delegates from the US Fulbright Association, Australian-American Fulbright Commission Executive Director, Thomas Dougherty and guests to our event at the residence of US Consul-General to NSW, Sharon Hudson-Dean. We thank the Consul General for her kind hospitality.



**(L-R): Dr Zachary Dunbar, music curator; Angela Heise, QLD lead; Dr Mara Adelman, our visiting Salon curator (California); Dr Iain Butterworth, program lead (VIC); Daniel McNamara, NSW lead; and Erwin Cho, visiting Fulbright alum (US Fulbright Association).**

### Sydney social gathering, hosted by Dr Iona Novak

On 8<sup>th</sup> November, Prof Iona Novak (R) graciously hosted AFAA members and visiting delegates from the US Fulbright Association (including Georgia Gresham, L; Dennis Gallon, centre)



### *Frayed Lives, Threads of Hope* program

As part of our community engagement and social justice agenda, in November AFAA hosted a series of public events. Our goal was to increase Australian awareness and action for the global refugee crisis.

Held across three capital cities, this program comprised three Salons a major concert and five professional development seminars. Our special guest was Fulbright alumna, Salon Curator and communications expert from California, Dr Mara Adelman (seen below at the Sydney Salon). For full details, click [here](#).



To host the Melbourne events, we secured funding of \$8500 from the 'Being Human' Festival at Melbourne University's Arts Faculty.



**Singer-songwriter Beckah Amani (QLD)**

Some sample statistics include:

- Our 3 Salons engaged 90 registrants in Sydney, 70 in Melbourne and 60 in Brisbane
- 12 Salon guest speakers included 4 people who were former refugees and 3 Fulbright alumni.



**Kagi Kowa (Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Brisbane Salon)**

- We engaged personnel from at 18 organisations
- We held 5 professional development seminars across Western Sydney (2 x 50 people), Melbourne (50 at Asylum Seeker Resource Centre) and Brisbane (18 at QUT; 3 at a mentoring session for Brisbane ASRC volunteers)



**Dr Mara Adelman with staff from Blacktown Hospital and the Western Sydney Multicultural Health Program**

### Refugees, Remembrance and Resilience: Weaving Together Frayed Lives

Our Melbourne concert, curated by AFAA member Dr Zachary Dunbar, was attended by 150 people. The concert featured 14 performers (including AFAA members and virtuoso pianists, Zachary Dunbar (below), and Dr Danae Killian.



The event included a post-concert cocktail reception attended by 80 people and sponsored by Vice Chancellor's Office at University of Melbourne. This reception featured an art exhibition featured at the post-concert cocktail reception, curated by volunteer students Kate Murray and Caitlin Wilson (below) from University of Melbourne and featuring artworks by three former refugees.



### Other outcomes

- AFAA Committee members provided at least \$50,000 in-kind support to *Frayed Lives, Threads of Hope*
- Our [dedicated Facebook Page](#) reached 32,927 people; 605 Post Engagements; and 388 Link Clicks.
- Our Salons generated a list of over 100 Next Steps that participants identified they would take to create change
- We raised US\$3000 to pay directly for medicine for people seeking refuge on the islands of Lesbos and Samos
- *For full reporting, visit our Frayed Lives Facebook Page*