



The Australian Journal of **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

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P R O F I L E

Lawrence Moser, Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Lawrence was born and grew up in Swan Hill. He left school at 15 to begin a series of labouring jobs that ranged from picking fruit, digging holes and demolition work in Shepparton, to pumping petrol and apprentice carpentry in Swan Hill as part of the government short-term employment training programs.

When Lawrence was 20 he started working as a teacher aide at Swan Hill Central Primary, which involved organising education programs of cultural significance for the various grades, looking after the general welfare of the Aboriginal students and undertaking administrative work related to the school and its activities

Turning 21 was a time of reflection and re-evaluation for Lawrence, who started to consider his role as a teacher aide and his future prospects. He came to Bendigo with the firm intention of investing his time and energy in tertiary studies in an effort to consolidate his education and employment prospects.

While studying at Bendigo C.A.E. Lawrence began to question the lack of direction of education initiatives which were being handed down as policy by the Commonwealth and State education bodies which were meant to be responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. For Lawrence the progressive policies and practices of the 70s were fast becoming redundant.

Lawrence's growing dissatisfaction with the lack of direction in education policy and practice coupled with his own growing awareness and understanding of what could be possible solutions to the problems posed by the education system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students gave Lawrence a sense of purpose in his studies.

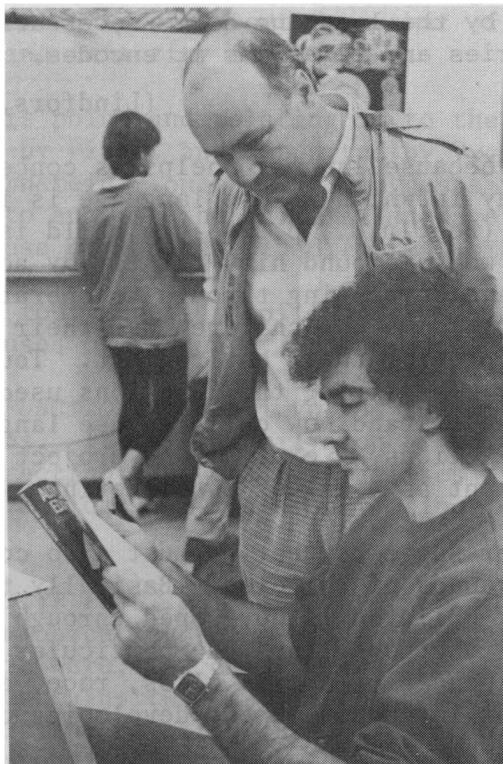
As a result, though Lawrence may not necessarily teach, he felt strongly that he would like to be involved with providing the impetus for change that would be progressive enough to address the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and community, as well as meeting the aims and objectives of education per se.

Lawrence found his course at first daunting, having been away from a study environment for so long. He believes that anyone

interested in taking on any study needs to be prepared to exercise self-discipline and accept failure. On a positive note, Lawrence felt that the more you became involved with a course, you gained an increasing awareness and confidence and came to gain a wider understanding of the politics of education and other relevant issues.

Lawrence, like many of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, felt that the A.S.T.U.* helped him to cope with not only his course as far as providing study skills support and tutorial assistance, but also with feeling a part of the tertiary scene and part of the supportive student environment of the A.S.T.U.

The most beneficial aspect of undertaking tertiary studies for Lawrence was the opportunity it provided to show to the staff, lecturers and students of the College, as well as the wider community, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, given the opportunity, can succeed.



Lawrence Moser (seated). See "Language in Education" pp.28-40.