



NAIDOC Week 2018



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health

Professor Rhonda Marriott – Because of Her, We Can

It seems somehow fitting that Professor Rhonda Marriott pays homage to her mother at the start of our interview, given that the 2018 NAIDOC Week theme is 'Because of Her, We Can'.

For Rhonda, an education was important and she always wanted to be a nurse – all the more so because her mother had to leave school at 15 and sacrifice her own dream of becoming a teacher.

"I didn't consciously think at 16, I'm going to be a lifelong learner," says Rhonda. "In some ways my career has been an accidental journey."

At just 17 years old while she was waiting for the next nursing intake at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, an aunty suggested Rhonda should, like her, work at Heathcote Hospital until her placement at 'Charlies'. This would be the start of a 10-year career in mental health nursing, fulfilling Rhonda's inspiration of helping those most at need.

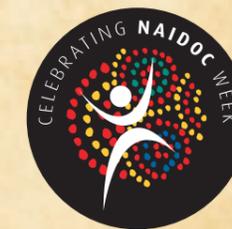


When she was ready for a new challenge, with the support of her family, she started a three-year conversion course at the then named WA Institute of Technology to become a registered nurse.

From here, Rhonda's career went from strength to strength and in 2003, after a 40-year career in nursing and midwifery, she became the first Aboriginal Dean of a University School of Nursing and subsequently a Professor at Murdoch University.

Rhonda is now the Director of Ngangk Yira (Sun Rising) Research Centre at Murdoch University and the ethos of this centre is based on her experience over five decades, recognising the journey of life and the influence mothers have on this journey.

"This centre is based on the fundamental principles that we sometimes forget – kindness, caring, respect and honouring someone's dignity," says Rhonda.



BECAUSE OF HER, WE CAN!

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