

Educating with elections

JAMAL BEN HADDOU

Students learn about democracy with mock elections

ALTHOUGH the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) is mainly tasked with facilitating elections, it also plays an important role in educating students in Alice Springs about democracy.

In the time between Territory elections, the NTEC has delivered education programs for adults, students in remote locations and local students in Alice Springs schools.

John Bateup who is an electoral services officer with the NTEC said it is important for students to understand politics from a young age.

"By having it done at a young age, they can develop their knowledge and understand our democratic system and how it works," he said.

"We have a compulsory voting system but there are

many benefits so young people can empower themselves democratically."

According to the NTEC, the youth enrolment participation rate was 64.7 per cent in 2018, compared to a national average of 86.0 per cent.

One of the practical ways that children can learn about elections is to actually participate in them.

In recent years, Alice Springs schools have conducted elections where students learn about protocols, informal voting and how to count votes in a preferential election.

"Some schools do these activities to vote in a school captain and they'll do it with a preferential election," Mr Bateup said.

"The same boxes we use in

polling booths for our Territory elections are used in schools to elect their captains."

The commission also has an education program specifically for Aboriginal students in remote schools that uses teaching techniques for students who speak English as a second language.

In another targeted education program, the NTEC will

be holding a "democracy dash" event in Alice Springs for the first time in September this year designed to teach middle and senior students.

The program educates students on democracy, democratic institutions and the responsibilities of citizens.

Students 'dash' around the CBD visiting organisations that are important in an Australian democracy including courts, NT Legal Aid and the ABC studios.



The formal opening of Territory Pharmacy Alice Springs was held on Friday.

Picture: SATRIA DYER-DARMAWAN

New pharmacy catering for remote NT

SATRIA DYER-DARMAWAN

TERRITORY Pharmacy Alice Springs had their formal opening on Friday at the Tenancy Southern Cross Building at the Alice Springs Airport.

With Territory Pharmacy having successful operations in Darwin and Katherine, they

decided to build a base in Alice Springs to service a variety of communities.

Mark George, Director of Territory Pharmacy Alice Springs, said they look forward to the community's support of the pharmacy and will strive to provide the region with high quality health care services for

customers.

"With the pharmacy environment and this location in particular, this is where we could set up a base the quickest," Mr George said.

"We have been servicing remote communities for a number of years, it's a focus of ours, and a passion of ours.

"Obviously they don't have the same access as the larger population do for services so we do our best to try and improve the health outcomes through the service we provide.

The Pharmacy will service areas as far as Western Australia, and will deliver the medica-

tions through freight channels that are available and any mechanisms that can be used to deliver medications to remote places.

Mr George said the Pharmacy is focused on providing accessible and affordable services to the communities of Central Australia.

NT drinks at risky levels

ANTHONY GEPPA

REMOTE Territorians are drinking more than recommended according to research released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

In a study released earlier this year, it was found that 29 per cent of those living in very remote NT drank alcohol at levels that placed them at harm over a lifetime.

29 per cent of those living in outer regional NT, similar to Alice Springs, also drank at higher levels than recommended. Remote Western Australia led the category with 36 per cent drinking alcohol at levels that placed them at harm over a lifetime. Outer regional Tasmania had the lowest rate at 13.4 per cent.

Gas project earns honour

THE successful completion of the Tanami Natural Gas Pipeline project has featured in the 2019 Northern Territory Earth Awards.

The awards were announced on Friday night in Darwin by Australia's peak voice in the civil construction industry, the Civil Contractors Federation.

The Tanami Natural Gas Pipeline project was announced as a finalist for the award for a project value of \$75 million or more.

This followed a joint submission to the CCFNT Earth Awards from the Australian Gas Infrastructure Group and MPC Kinetic on the Tanami Natural Gas Pipeline project completed early this year for Newmont Goldcorp.

Long term investments are needed

ANTHONY GEPPA

A GREATER need for long-term investments into drug prevention is needed in Australia according to a new study.

The Australian Drug Harms Ranking Study, published in The Journal of Psychopharmacology, brought together 25 experts to rank drugs based on their harms to individuals and the broader

community. Alcohol and crystal methamphetamine were overall ranked as Australia's most harmful drugs to both individuals and others. Alcohol was ranked number one, with drug-related deaths, injuries, family adversity and economic costs listed as major contributors. Alcohol is an issue Central Australia has had particular issues with in recent years. "Harms from alcohol

and other drugs, including crystal methamphetamine are preventable. Long term investments in prevention are critical in building a healthier Australia," said the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's CEO, Dr Erin Lalor.

For drug information or support, people can visit the Alcohol and Drug Foundation's website or call the DrugInfo line on 1300 85 85 84.

The NT's shameful violence statistics

ANTHONY GEPPA

THE Northern Territory has been revealed as one of Australia's biggest offenders of domestic violence according to an Australian Institute of Health and Welfare study.

The study, titled *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story*, lays bare the NT's horrendous domestic violence

epidemic. It found that of all assaults recorded by police in the NT in 2017, 58 per cent were related to family or domestic violence. Only WA had a higher rate with 61.3 per cent.

The rate increases significantly in Indigenous cases with 74 per cent of NT Indigenous assault victims, or 3900 people, found to be victims of family violence.

It was also found that in the

NT, 88 per cent of family violence offenders were Indigenous.

Women were found to be the most at risk, particularly in cases of sexual assault in the NT, with females found to be 8.3 times more likely than males to be victims between 2010 and 2017.

2600 defendants were found guilty of family violence through 2017-2018.