

# ***Fort Peck Community College***

## ***Visitor Presentation***

# **INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN SUICIDES FROM AN ABORIGINAL NURSE PERSPECTIVE**

**Monday, April 15, 2019**

**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Lunch will be provided**

**Greet the Dawn Auditorium**



**Raelene Ward, RN  
Senior Lecturer (Indigenous Nursing)**

**University of Southern Queensland  
Toowoomba, Queensland**

Raelene Ward, RN Senior Lecturer (Indigenous Nursing) University of Southern Queensland Toowoomba, Queensland Raelene Ward is an Aboriginal Australian Senior Lecturer (Indigenous Health) in the School of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia. Raelene completed a Masters in Health and recently submitted a PhD in Aboriginal suicide and has been employed at USQ for the last 10 years.

Raelene originates from a small rural and remote community in Queensland called Cunnamulla, she's a descendant of the Kunja traditional owner group of Cunnamulla and surrounding areas on her grandfather's (Albert McKellar) side and her grandmother (Hazel McKellar) is a descendant of the Kooma people also from South West Queensland. Raelene is a practicing clinical nurse for the last 28 years, focusing clinical work and research on Suicide Prevention, Aboriginal health, Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health in the broader areas of Social Justice and Determinants of Aboriginal health.

Raelene coordinated a three-year National suicide prevention project (2007-2009) funded by the Department of Health & Ageing under the National Suicide Prevention Strategy followed by undertaking independent consultancy work predominantly in rural and remote communities facilitating community engagement processes in building capacity of rural and remote communities in responding to suicide. In 2010, Raelene was awarded the Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA): LIFE Award – Indigenous Category, for the unique and creative health program, service partnership encompassing the holistic and social view of health (physical, emotional, cultural and spiritual), wellbeing of Indigenous individuals and communities in promoting suicide prevention across the Darling Downs and South West Queensland. Most notably the Knowledge of Life textbook – Awarded 2016 Educational Publishing Award (EPA) from Australia's Publishing Association (APA) – Tertiary (Wholly Australian) Scholarly Resource and the 2015 Tertiary (Wholly Australian) Teaching and Learning Resource Category in the prestigious annual Educational Publishing Awards for 'Yatdjuligin': Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nursing and Midwifery Care textbook. Raelene recently submitted her PhD titled 'Suicide Prevention: Exploring Aboriginal understandings of suicide from a Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework' awaiting outcome.