**World Teachers’ Day 2023**

**Amanda Budby - North Shore State School**

**Announcer:** This is a Queensland Department of Education podcast.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** In Queensland, World Teachers’ Day is celebrated annually, on the last Friday of October.

In recognition of the hard work and dedication of our teachers, we talk to three teachers from diverse backgrounds in very different teaching settings about their teaching journey.

I’m Virginia Bowdidge from the Department of Education, and today, Amanda Budby from the North Shore State School joins me.

Hi Amanda, thanks for joining me today.

**Amanda Budby:** Hi Virginia, thank you for having me.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** How long have you been teaching and what inspired you to choose teaching as a career?

**Amanda Budby:** I’ve been in the Department of Education for over 20 years. I first started as a teacher’s aide. Working in that school as a teacher aide and working with those teachers, it inspired me to actually become an actual teacher and have my own class. Started as a teacher aide and just enjoyed working with students and that lead me to having the belief to becoming a teacher.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** And was that hard making that transition from a teacher aide to a teacher?

**Amanda Budby:** It wasn’t for me because I was in a school that was very supportive of me doing my Bachelor of Learning Management as they called it then, and the support from my family. I didn’t find it overwhelming, I thought this is something I want to do, and a mature aged Uni student, I think that helps. I knew what I wanted and there was an end goal to become that classroom teacher.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** Was Uni something you had thought about before becoming a Teacher Aide?

**Amanda Budby:** I would probably say, no. When I finished grade 12 I actually wanted to become a police officer. One of the other criteria was to do a bit of study. So I actually went to TAFE and did a Diploma of Business. I got to the interview and I missed out so then I became a teacher aide. It still becoming a teacher aide I still didn’t think that I’d go to Uni and become a teacher. I just loved working in that teacher aide role and then having those particular teachers say you should become a teacher. And then yeah it was, ‘okay let’s do this’. And I had my mind set and there was no turning back.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** And, are you happy with that discission that you made?

**Amanda Budby:** Absolutely, if you’d told me that from a classroom teacher I would end up being Deputy Principal, I probably wouldn’t have believed you. Yes, so starting from a teacher aide, going to becoming a teacher and then I become a regional principal office advisorin regional office for a couple of years. Now I currently sit as a Deputy Principal 3-6 at North Shore State School.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** Congratulations!

**Amanda Budby:** Thank you, it is an accomplishment. Growing up we didn’t have many of our family in a position of you know, of that hierarchy, so it is an accomplishment for all my family.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** And what is it, you love about your job?

**Amanda Budby:** I think it’s just seeing that you can make a difference and whether it is academic, or sporting or even just that social difference. You’ve made that difference for that student – they’re leaving, it was your classroom or your school and you know you’ ve equipped them with some skills to keep them going into the future.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** And what are those skills you hope to impart on your students?

**Amanda Budby:** The biggest one that has really struck a cord with me, is belief, in themselves that you can achieve anything that you want. There’s no limit. You know, you have the belief and the work ethics, you can be that job that you aspire to whether it is an engineer, whether it is a police officer. I think it’s given the belief and hope that yeah, you can do it.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** Do you have any standout moments in your career that you’d like to share with us that helped shape the teacher that you are today?

**Amanda Budby:** I think it comes back to when I was actually at school and we had a Deputy Principal (that then became good friends with my family but) when I became a Deputy Principal I remembered back to what he did as a Deputy Principal and it’s that real networking relationships with students. It’s getting down to their level, having conversations and really getting to know your students and their story.

I always live by a quote that’s in my office here and it’s like, ‘*strong relationships is the key to every student succeeding’* and it’s #everychildhasstory. And I guess that’s one of my legacies that I want to leave is, get to know your students, build that relationship and you can make anything possible for that student to achieve.

There have been moments, you know from working in a little country school with just over 100 students. I guess it’s those connections I have made with those students, I still have connections with them today. And I’ve even attended my student’s weddings and in particular, one student, I was their MC for their wedding. Country kids, I guess are just a little bit shy but these particular students I encouraged them, you know, to stand up, it doesn’t matter where you come from. You know you have a stereotype of what country kids (are like), no you got this, you can achieve. That particular student went onto become the school captain of the high school, he’s got a great job and then he’s leading his own business now as well. I guess it’s that belief that I’ve put into some students that you can achieve no matter where your background is.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** What excites you the most about the future of the profession and where do you see the profession heading?

**Amanda Budby:** I think in the last few years the excitement is around the First Nation students. I’m a proud Aboriginal and South Sea Islander woman and I’m from the Barada Barna mob, our land is west of Mackay. I guess with learning about my culture more and more, there is that gap between First Nation students and non-Indigenous students. And helping to build or help to close that gap and in particular, this year to highlight at North Shore was that we first entered a team into an ATSIAP program, which stands for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspiring program. The students had to form a team, they had to create a poem, they had to create a speech and artwork. So they worked on all of these six activities with two of our teachers and just the growth I saw in them. They walked taller and prouder, because they were proud to represent their families, proud to represent their culture and learnt so much. You can see that they are willing to go further now and aspire to be anything.

You know,we went to university and taking some students first time to university, they went I can actually come here. Yes, you can, because you can do it. You have the ability and you know, believe in yourself.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** That would be a wonderful thing to be able to give that to a student.

**Amanda Budby:** Oh, absolutely. They went and competed and they won a silver and a bronze but that wasn’t … yeah they won medals but just watching them come back and they walked taller and prouder now at school. I guess for me as a First Nation person (I) realised that we need to do more of these programs to inspire our students that they can do it. There’s no limits. I know I keep going back to that but, I guess it’s just getting that belief in themselves. There’re examples for other students now and we just continue to grow that group in our school.

S o growing up at school there wasn’t many opportunities for First Nation students to have the programs that are available today. You know, we did ATSIP for the first time this year. We are also doing Deadly Choices and we have grown that because when we first started it was just with Year 6, then we went to Year 5 and now this year, every First Nation student from Prep to 6 will be completing a Deadly Choices program. And again, that teaches them about their culture and their identity. It gets them to start thinking where they’ve come from, where they want to go and how do they want to make their mob proud.

So, the Deadly Choices is another proud program that we pride ourselves on to offer that at North Shore State School.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** Where do you see the future of the profession heading?

**Amanda Budby:** So, I guess there is two things I hope for (that) is to have more First Nation people in the teaching career. Not just as teacher aides you know classrooms and also in leader positions, you know principals and deputy principals. And the other hope is for teachers to keep building their capability around First Nation students. We are just starting a journey here at North Shore and we’ve just completed four sessions of professional development and building cultural capability within our staff. So, learning how First Nations learn and how the best way to get learning from them it will increase the engagement. It will help close the gap, and I just see there’s benefits from building everyone’s capability in First Nation Students.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** What advice would you give to people thinking about studying teaching or just at the beginning of their career in teaching?

**Amanda Budby:** The teaching game is very rewarding. It can be a hard slog to begin with, but once you find your feet with all of how schools are run and the way classrooms are it becomes rewarding and you reap the benefits when at the end of the day, that one student or that one parent comes up and says, ‘thank you’. You know, ‘thank you for supporting my student’ or ‘thank you for helping me learn maths’. That’s the most rewarding thing is you know you’ve made a difference, whether it was just that day, that week or that whole year.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** Thanks for your time Amanda. What a great career you’ve had.

**Amanda Budby:** Thank you Virginia. Yes, it has been a journey and I’m still loving coming to school every day. There hasn’t been a day that I didn’t want to come to work, so I still enjoy coming to work and working with the students and teachers. It’s an enjoyable job.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** That’s great to hear!

**Amanda Budby:** Thank you.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** Thank you very much.

**Announcer** You have been listening to a Queensland Department of Education podcast.

**Virginia Bowdidge:** The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to the Elders, past and present, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.