

'Talk About Uni: considering university as a possible and desirable post-school pathway

*Ms Jill Barker
University of Melbourne*

Abstract

Years 9 and 10 are important years in students' lives as they make decisions that form the basis for future educational directions. Research demonstrates that young people are more likely to consider tertiary education if others around them are familiar with and open to the possibility of university as a post-secondary school option. With this in mind, the Equity and Diversity Planning (EDP) unit at the University of Melbourne sought ways to address access issues experienced by students from backgrounds not well represented in higher education and/or whose families may have no experience of tertiary study.

While Talk About Uni is a program to raise awareness of pathways to higher education for students in secondary education, it is becoming increasingly obvious that the First Year university experience does not generally reflect the diverse composition of society. This is what TAU hopes to address.

This Nuts and Bolts session will explore the process and challenges involved in the establishment of the Talk About Uni (TAU) program and will discuss

- the reasons for developing a program like Talk About Uni*
- the process involved in its design*
- adjustments made along the way and the reasons for them.*

In particular, the TAU team is keen investigate the way forward including different avenues for targeting students, their teachers and parents in order to overcome some of the barriers inherent in traditional methods of communication.

Key words •equity and access •under-represented •secondary outreach