

**Name:**

Donna Tschuna, aka Coulthard

**Current role:**

I currently work x2 part time jobs: Community Nurse at Metropolitan Youth Health Christies Beach SA and Practice Nurse at the Glenelg Family Practice

**How long have you been a nurse/midwife?**

Since 1982

**Why did you want to you want to become a nurse/midwife?**

Nursing was not something I wanted to do at school, an opportunity came to me when I was at school to attend TAFE at Port Augusta in 1982 doing a foundation course for entry into Enrolled Nursing- I took to opportunity as a way of leaving home and getting out of school, I was repeating year 11. I was 16 , left my family in Ceduna and moved to Pt Augusta for 18 months. I completed this program and graduated- it was during this period that I fell in love with nursing – it was a nature thing for me to do. i worked as an EN for many years then another opportunity came my way to do a foundation course for entry into Uni SA today my Batchelor of Nursing, I graduated in 1992.

**What were the enablers and barriers for you to complete your degree? Pathway into nursing/midwifery – how did you get to where you are today?**

Doing the foundation course was great, I started with about 10 other Aboriginal students and we became good friends who supported each other greatly, there was great team of educators who also supported us on our journey for entry into Uni, study life was great, Uni started with 6 of us but as time went by my friends were dropping out and this was hard, the main support at the Uni had left with no replacement and this was really difficult for us- by 2<sup>nd</sup> year I was the only student left out of the group- this was such a challenging time for me, I then felt culturally isolated and lonely – I did defer my studies and failed a unit which held me back for extra 2 years – but hey I got through I had a strong desire to complete my studies, I had always believed in finishing what you start, I wanted more autonomy and responsibility as a Nurse. I got through with the support of my family and friends who were there encouraging me.

**Do you believe our nurses and midwives are role models for our communities, if yes do you think it is a priority that we increase our workforce and why?**

Nurses and Midwives are definitely role models in our community and we need more Aboriginal nurses on the ground caring for our people – Aboriginal people are still experiencing injustices even in the health sector- having more Aboriginal nurse ensures our people feel safe and are cared for with dignity