

NUS Victoria State Branch President

Mark Baker

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Cross Campus Student Unionist Network

Victoria has now had a few cross campus meetings aimed at organizing and building the national days of action. So far we have had student activists from VU, Monash, Melbourne, Latrobe and Swinburne participate in these meetings.

Regional Campus Tour

Throughout February I visited a number of regional campuses and regional student unionists across the state to engage them with the national union and its campaigns. This includes Nick James at Monash Berwick, DUSA reps at their Geelong campuses and students at Monash Gippsland. The meetings with Monash Gippsland and Berwick were very productive and they were both eager to engage with NUS and the DABF campaign. I have also been in contact with Levi from Ballarat and we are trying to organise a time convenient for both of us to meet up.

Deregulation Announcement

Following Julia Gillard's deregulation announcement on higher education I helped coordinate a small, but effective, action outside her Werribee office. The action managed to get attention from a number of media outlets so we managed to get the student voice out there into the community.

Demand a Better Future Campaign

Coordinated and helped build the DABF campaign in Victoria. An unprecedented number of student organizations participated in the campaign, including a number of perceived conservative and "dead" campuses in terms of activism. MONSU Caulfield was one of the most active campuses in the campaign holding a student poverty awareness fair with stalls, information regarding the issue and a two-minute eating competition. I spent hours and hours lecture bashing, running stalls and poster running on a number of campuses.

-NDA Campus

Went reasonably well. Actions took place across at the Monash campuses, Melbourne and Latrobe and managed to get hundreds of students sign up to the campaign. I was located at the Melbourne NDA where we got students to hand print a banner demanding fair income support and signing petitions.

-NDA Central

The central NDA was below expectations. We did manage to mobilize over a hundred students at the central event and channel seven did cover it – so not a total fail. We had a number of speakers representing a wide variety of student perspectives and the activists involved in building the campaign in Victoria should be proud of their efforts in the face from opposition from anti union and anti student forces.

Community Engagement

Participated in a dialogue with Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional development over an Overseas Experience Taskforce relating to the experiences of regional international students.

Represented NUS at the RMIT Islamic Prayer Room rally in front of a few hundred students. This important campaign is a reminder of the importance of students having access to an independent voice.