



Bendigo Student Association

Joint Announcement from the Chief Executive Officer and the President, Board of Directors

The Bendigo Student Association (BSA) strives to make student life better on the La Trobe University Bendigo (LTUB) campus each day. Whilst we are in our absolute element and thrive when the campus is bursting with life during semesters, we have met the many challenges created by COVID-19 by immediately responding and adapting how we deliver services and support to students. We continue to provide all services in modified unique ways and have shown fantastic initiative and commitment whilst we all remain off campus.

One part of our business relies solely on campus life existing. Sweeney's Café is an institution and has served LTUB students, staff and visitors to the campus for 32 years. Our commitment to providing outstanding service, fantastic value and opening each day for our customers has seen Sweeney's constantly adapting to remain a familiar presence on campus.

Sweeney's Café has been at the heart of the Student Union (SU) for three decades, and it is with a deep sense of sadness that the difficult decision has been made to permanently close. With no ability to trade and no end in sight as to when campus life shall return to a level that would make it viable to operate, Sweeney's cannot recover. The direct impacts on the campus of COVID-19 and the pending merger of the BSA with the La Trobe Student Union and Wodonga Student Association has resulted in this regretful decision.

The wonderful Sweeney's Café team constantly demonstrate their dedication, passion and enthusiasm to make student life better. Julie Houlahan and Raelene Hughes, Joint Managers, have displayed their commitment and love for their work over a combined period of 15 years. Felicity (Flick) Hicks and Joanna Murthy-Nitka joined Jules and Rae, forming a formidable team. The BSA is very proud of Sweeney's reputation and service to customers with one of our greatest achievements providing casual employment to hundreds of LTUB students. Every member of our team over the past 32 years is thanked for your contributions. You form part of the history of LTUB campus life and you have ensured that Sweeney's holds a special place in the heart of the countless customers you have served.

The University is acknowledged for working closely with the BSA throughout Sweeney's Café tenancy. Leasing Bundoora and the Acting Head of Campus Bendigo are thanked for collaborating with the BSA over the past six weeks to look at various options to prevent closure. Unfortunately, owing to the current economic climate and the level of continued uncertainty, none of the options explored were viable.

Sweeney's Café could never have opened our doors for as long as it did without the support and loyalty of our amazing customers. Thank you all for your unwavering support. We will miss you.

Mitch Trevena

Chief Executive Officer

Bendigo Student Association

William Griffin

President

Board of Directors, Bendigo Student Assoc.