



Aboriginal Business moves into Newcastle's CBD

Aboriginal people now have their own Information Technology and business training centre in Newcastle's business district. With the Torres Strait Islander, Aboriginal, and Australian Flags flying proudly over 840 Hunter Street, Yarnteen Creative Enterprise Centre has opened its doors for training. Yarnteen's Chairperson, Mr Jimmy Wright, said at the opening of the Centre that he wants the Centre to be a bridge between Newcastle businesses and the 20,000 Indigenous people who live in the region.

"The opening of Yarnteen Creative Enterprise Centre at 840 Hunter Street is a sign that Aboriginal people are making their way into the mainstream of Newcastle business", said Jimmy Wright at the opening of the Centre on Tuesday 30 October 2007. "We might be located at the quieter end of Hunter Street but it does not mean we are going to be quiet", Mr Wright said.

The opening of the Centre last week featured Aboriginal dancers, Aboriginal leaders, Newcastle business leaders, and most importantly some of the clients that Yarnteen hopes to serve. Over the past three years, Yarnteen has been out in the community surveying the training needs of Aboriginal people. It has a range of Information Technology and business courses on offer to meet the identified needs. "Yarnteen has flexibility to deliver the courses our people need", said Leah Armstrong, Executive Director of Yarnteen. One of the things that makes Yarnteen different from most training organisations is that it tries to link training with jobs through its business partnerships such as the one Yarnteen has with HunterTech. "Further, the cost of the IT and business courses are free for most clients", said Leah Armstrong.

Yarnteen's strategy to build a bridge with Newcastle's business and University has included engaging business and university leaders on its advisory committee. A number of these leaders have been involved with Yarnteen over the 15 years of Yarnteen's existence. As the Chairperson of Yarnteen, said at the opening, Yarnteen had its humble beginning in a railway workshop. Yarnteen has steadily expanded so that it now owns a property at Wollombi where it provides camps and cultural training.

Yarnteen's vision includes business and government agencies using the Centre. It believes that its cultural training is one of the best on offer. It has spent years

developing its training framework especially when it became Microsoft Australia's only Indigenous partner with Unlimited Potential Program.

The acquisition of 840 Hunter Street was partly funded by the Commonwealth Government. Substantial capital funds were provided by Yarnteen.. "Yarnteen sees its funding of the Centre as giving back to the Aboriginal community of Newcastle", said Jimmy Wright

Contact: Bill Fisher – Enterprises Manager
02 49408422

Paul Gordon – CEO
02 49625366