

Media Release

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DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF INDIGENOUS LEADERS

Members of the next generation of Indigenous leaders will come together for *The Gathering* in Brisbane from the 9-12th September to celebrate their achievements as part of the Indigenous Youth Leadership Program.

Adam Smith CEO of the Foundation for Young Australians, the organisation charged with convening *The Gathering*, highlighted the importance of the event *“the Gathering will create an outcome focused environment for members of the next generation of Indigenous leaders to be equipped with practical skills and a tangible toolkit to drive positive change in themselves and their community”* Mr. Smith said.

The Australian Government’s IYLP initiative is helping to close the gap on Indigenous educational disadvantage through scholarships for Indigenous students, mostly from remote and regional areas, to attend high performing secondary schools (day and boarding, government and non-government) and universities.

Funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA*) has delivered IYLP over 2006–2009 with Cape York Institute and Yalari Ltd joining FYA in 2008. The IYLP is supporting Indigenous students achieve Year 12 attainment and/or completion of a university degree. The IYLP also supports the development of a pool of positive role models and future leaders, to inspire other Indigenous students and illustrate the successes that can be achieved through educational attainment.

Since 2006, 72 secondary students have graduated year 12 as part of the IYLP, another 289 secondary and 49 tertiary students are currently receiving scholarships. To date, the IYLP is enjoying a 90% retention rate, a strong endorsement for the program and its objectives.

Year 9 student T’kido Titasey a student at Saint Augustine’s College in Cairns, spoke highly of the program *“When I joined IYLP, my parents saw a change in my results at school rapidly. Other students who are in IYLP also said how great the experience was and how they met other people from all around the country”* Titasesy said.

Convened at Rydges Hotel in Brisbane, The Gathering will bring together over 200 young Indigenous students from across remote, regional, and metropolitan Australia. These students will be engaged by a diverse range of expert facilitators, who will inspire, mentor and extend students through open discussion, leadership exercises and cultural activities.

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Interviews at The Gathering are available upon request

For more information on the IYLP visit www.fya.org.au; or www.deewr.gov.au

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