

## Report for the Uniting Church Northern Australia Synod October 2019

For over forty years ARDS Aboriginal Corporation has been working with Indigenous communities, government agencies and other bodies in the Northern Territory, helping to build understanding across cultures.

It has been a difficult year for our Board, with the passing of a long serving member and the illness of other Board members, including our Chair. It is important that the Board's effort be recognised and I would like to thank our Board for their tireless support, encouragement and wisdom.

### Success Stories

- In **Harmony for Health** we used the love of music to entice Darwin long grassers to Bagot Community to play music. There we provided education about overcoming issues with alcohol and other health education as well as increasing the understanding and subsequent effectiveness of the services of primary service providers.
- Harmony for Health improved the communication and outcomes between primary service providers and long grassers.
- As part of our **family violence program**, we produced the *Wunḁanarr Yolḁu Gurruṯu* (Strong Yolḁu Families) resource.
- *Wunḁanarr Yolḁu Gurruṯu* assists non-Yolḁu practitioners in their work with Yolḁu affected by family violence. It includes background information about family violence and gurruṯu (kinship), ways to work in a gurruṯu-centred approach and a glossary of Yolḁu Matha terms.
- Our family violence program has been well received with the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) seeking to have the program expanded.
- ARDS developed the ***Dharaṇanaraw dhiyak NDIS-ku: waṇakanharaw ga dhukarrwu manyakku (Understanding the NDIS: Facilitators guide)*** to improve understanding of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for both Yolḁu health workers and the broader community who are or may be NDIS participants, and their family.
- The guide contains a wordlist of key disability terms and NDIS specific terms translated into Yolḁu Matha.
- **Yolḁu Radio's** *The Gurraṇay Matha on Radio* program, where elders explain a Yolḁu Matha word and its importance to Yolḁu people and culture, has been nominated in the "Excellence in Indigenous Broadcasting" category for the 2019 CBAA National Awards.
- At the Garma Festival, Yolḁu Radio covered forums and key speeches, interviewed VIPs and broadcast the bunguls and musical acts.
- ARDS has signed a sponsorship agreement with Developing East Arnhem Land (DEAL) giving DEAL sponsorship rights to major events filmed by Yolḁu Radio, including the 2019 Gove AFL Grand Final, which will be screened on NITV in late October.

- Earlier this year we signed an agreement with the Northern Territory Government to develop **Cultural Competency Training (CCT)** for all NTG staff working in northeast Arnhem Land. The training will lead to NTG staff having a better understanding of Yolŋu language and culture and ultimately better outcomes for Yolŋu.
- The business will provide ongoing jobs for Yolŋu people and gives ARDS the chance to reduce our reliance on Government funding.
- ARDS developed a new **multi-lingual Yolŋu Matha-Plain English Dictionary of Anatomy app** to help Yolŋu and non-Indigenous health workers improve health for Yolŋu.
- The app contains audio and text definitions in four different languages; Dhuwal, Dhaŋu, Dhuwala and Plain English.
- The audio content will enable health professionals to play entries to their patients in their patients' first languages, and make the content accessible to those Yolŋu-matha speakers who don't read in their languages.
- The ARDS produced and directed **Nambi** won "Best Short Documentary" at the inaugural First Nations Media Awards held in Sydney recently.
- Also acknowledged was the ARDS produced film **Wata Burrmalala (Cyclone Culture)**, which was nominated in the "Best Language/Culture Production" category.
- ARDS develop **Nhät̪ha ŋali dhu wap̪thun wäŋalil Gäwalŋalilnydja? Moving to a Place of Plenty** to effectively communicate the dangers of Volatile Substance Abuse (VSA) to communities.
- On behalf of the Northern Synod, ARDS examined the **impact of kidney failure on Aboriginal people in remote areas**. We found that kidney failure is compounded by issues of poverty, miscommunication and dislocation, often removing senior leadership from communities.
- ARDS is working on the development of the northeast **Arnhem Land Local Decision Making** framework.
- The agreement allows Yolŋu people and the NT Government to work towards a full commitment giving Yolŋu people the ability to make decisions on a range of topics including health services, housing, business and tourism.
- ARDS is working with locals on Croker Island, two hundred kilometres northeast of Darwin to record and **save two critically endangered languages**.
- We are documenting traditional knowledge in Iwaidja and Marrku and taking kids on bush excursions to look at plants and animals and film it as a resource for students in the future.
- And we're recording local musicians singing Iwaidja songs, including "Djurtbirrk"; traditional love songs young men sing to whom they were courting.