



Anniversaries, Action and Achievements !!

From the Development Desk

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Reflecting on 2007, one can't help but think of the important anniversaries that fall this year:

- 50th NAIDOC Week - Nationally established but too many of our observances are still of tragedies.
- 40th Referendum - but in many areas of control or influence you count very few Indigenous people.
- 35th The Tent Embassy ACT - but where are the Indigenous Parliamentarians?
- 15th Black Deaths in Custody Report - but deaths still occur with sickening regularity.
- 10th 'Bringing them Home' Report - but the legacy of separation and pain inflicted still remain.

All of the above milestones, stress the importance of a good education in improving living standards, health and well being for Aboriginal people.



2007 is also the 6th Anniversary of the Opening the Doors Foundation which, due to your generosity, has gone from strength to strength.

In 2001 we allocated \$12,718 to support 32 students and this year we have dispersed \$160,000 approx to 340 students.

From little things, big things certainly grow but only due to the determination of these Aboriginal Families and the support and nurturing of our generous sponsors.

The Development Office has had an increase in correspondence from students and families, telling us how well they are doing and how much they appreciate the support they receive.

....."When I showed the kids they were really surprised to think that someone, anyone, who doesn't even know them personally would support them in this way."

Some outstanding achievements of our students include:

- Arts Captain, rep on House Committee, Junior and Senior Band (trombone), choir, school rowing and hockey teams, basketball outside school and loves to socialize—*One very busy, talented girl*
- Member of the Youth Choir to sing at Dallas Brooks Hall twice, and at the Arts Centre this year.
- Currently ranked fourth in javelin across Australia for her age group and will be representing Victoria in the 2007 Australian Championships and participating in the Oceania Games to be held in Samoa.

My children enjoy learning about maths, art, reading, playing on the computer and love their sports - Thanks for making sure they can.

A Message From the Chairman of Trustees

Opening the Doors Foundation has the vision of increasing the retention rates of Indigenous students in the education of their choice.

The Foundation was the dream of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in Melbourne which has now been fulfilled, with much gratitude to our generous supporters and donors.

The dream should not end here. Children of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families should have the educational skills to be tomorrow's leaders of our country. Then, true reconciliation will be achievable.

John Arthur — Chairman



Musical Students

- another plays trombone
- Several are members of choirs

Bidja Clan Update



Congratulations on your Global Award nomination after winning a National Award. **Well Done!**

END OF FINANCIAL YEAR Yes, It is that time of year again!!!

I am enclosing a donation slip with this Newsletter just in case you would like to take the opportunity to make a donation for the 2006/7 tax year! **Donations to the Foundation are critical to our work and are tax deductible.**

The Statistics Sheet will tell you that the need is great and we are not yet able to meet all of that need so your continued support is critically important to the lives and futures for all the Aboriginal students we are able to assist. **THANK YOU!!**