

Dear Principals and Managers,

RE: Bidjipidji School Program & First Nations-focused Schools Engagement 2024, Charles Darwin University.

I am delighted to share with you the video link from our 2023 Bidjipidji School Camp (Link [here](#)).

This program provided many opportunities for First Nations students to consider and experience what life at university might look like for them. They attended and participated in a wide range of informative, fun and engaging activities over 5 days and evenings. Along with presentations by Faculty staff in various disciplines, our program included sessions on identity, leadership, values and career pathways. Students were fully supervised by CDU Student Mentors and youth workers over the entire program including accommodation at Darwin's Club Tropical Resort. 2023 was another successful 'Bidjipidji' and we saw 35 students graduate.

As in previous years, we undertook reviews and evaluations of the entire program experienced by all stakeholders; school students, school staff, CDU mentors, CDU academic and professional staff and external providers. As a result, we are making some changes to our 2024 engagement with NT schools.

2024 Program

5 Day On-Campus Experience

The Bidjipidji experience at our Casuarina Campus is specifically tailored for First Nations High School students and will return for a fourth year as a fixture of our annual program – with a focus on recruiting students from the Darwin area. Historically we have had excellent representation across the Northern Territory, particularly from regional and remote communities, however we have had very little engagement from students in Darwin and Palmerston. Our focus in 2024 will assist us in driving the costs of the delivery of the program down as we consolidate our learnings and potentially impact more students moving forward. In the interest of continuous improvement, we will be working with Darwin schools to deliver an on-Campus program over 5 days, from Saturday to Thursday in mid-August (2024 will not include Sunday or any overnight stays).

Regional and Remote Schools Engagement

Since 2021 our Bidjipidji experience has attracted a lot of interest from regional and remote schools and we will continue to build on these relationships throughout 2024 and beyond. We will do this through our CDU Aspire Program and working more closely with our regional Associate Vice-Chancellors based in Alice Springs, Katherine and Nhulunbuy. First Nations Leadership are visiting schools as expanded outreach approach this year- also reaching out to Bidjipidji alumni and school leaders who have previously engaged with our program.

If you would like to discuss anything in relation to the 2023 or 2024 Bidjipidji Programs or First Nations-focused school engagement, please contact Barbara Baugh, Manager Pathways and Engagement in the first instance at Barbara.baugh@cdu.edu.au or 8946 7421.

Yours sincerely



Professor Reuben Bolt
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