

## **John 'Foxy' Robinson AO**

Chancellor,

I have the pleasure of presenting John 'Foxy' Robinson AO, who has been awarded the Honorary Doctor of Letters.

Mr Robinson's legacy as one of the Northern Territory's most prominent entrepreneurs and philanthropists spans decades, stemming from a desire to make a positive community impact.

Mr Robinson, one of seven siblings, from Bourke, New South Wales left school at 13. After a stint in the Royal Australian Navy as a Cadet, Mr Robinson began making his mark in the NT in the late 1960s. He worked in the meat industry for 15 years, during which he met his future wife of 45 years, Trish. They went on to have four children and 13 grandchildren.

After the decline of the meat industry in the early '80s, Mr Robinson became a landscaper at the Katherine Swimming Pool his managerial skills were quickly noticed, and he was appointed manager. This experience piqued his interest in the tourism industry, which he ventured into by acquiring and transforming struggling businesses including the Redgum Caravan Park, Knotts Crossing Resort, and the Adelaide River Pub.

Mr Robinson's journey continued with the purchase of the Palms Resort in Darwin, the construction of Darwin Airport

Resort and Darwin Airport Inn, he also consulted with the Anindilyakwa Land Council for the construction of Dugong Beach Resort. He constructed the Darwin Airport Lodge, and its success led him to develop the former Wickham Point Immigration Detention Centre, and the Bladin Accommodation Village. Mr Robinson ventured back into hotels and hospitality, building the Rydges Palmerston and, in the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, opened the Rydges Gold Coast Airport.

Mr Robinson's legacy is also defined by his commitment to philanthropy with many notable contributions such as providing furniture to communities affected by Cyclone Lam in 2015, helping a local girl born with Microphthalmia to receive a prosthetic eye, is a major sponsor of St Johns Ambulance Service, hosting the annual Biggest Morning Tea for the Cancer Council of the Northern Territory, and supporting the Humpty Dumpty Foundation.

In 2016, Mr Robinson's endeavours were recognised when he was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia.

Chancellor,

In recognition of his outstanding contribution to the business development in the Northern Territory and his philanthropic commitments to the community, Charles Darwin University council awards John 'Foxy' Robinson AO the title of Honorary Doctor of Letters.