



For immediate release

MEDIA RELEASE

How does an organisation based in a town of 1000 people possibly find – and train – enough people to coordinate the second NATIONAL INDIGENOUS LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE (October 9-12) and FESTIVAL (October 13-14) – the biggest event Cardwell, NQ, has ever seen?

Girringun Aboriginal Corporation, in conjunction with the Queensland State Government, has solved this pressing issue by looking to their local community for assistance. In January 2007 the Department of Employment and Training announced a \$340,000 Community Jobs Plan grant, which has provided Girringun with the funds to employ over 20 local Indigenous people.

“The Conference and Festival provides a wonderful opportunity for our local Indigenous community, because the skills required to successfully organise the event will be directly beneficial in future positions of employment,” says Project Manager Christine George.

“With 20 people already started, there are more exciting positions available for Conference tour guides who will assist the hundreds of visitors to Cardwell from all over Australia. They need to contact Girringun NOW.”

The Government grant provides members of the Indigenous community with training sessions and seminars in the fundamentals of office administration, which enables them to effectively fulfil their roles as part of the Conference coordination team. Ingham TAFE, Great Tropical Drive and other organisations have also assisted with providing training in fields including IT, tourism, community arts, hospitality and publicity.

Attendance at Microsoft Office training seminars has equipped Indigenous employees of Girringun with a necessary knowledge of computer skills, while local high school students have been invited to explore their artistic ability through painting sessions.

“One of the overall outcomes of this grant is that it builds the community as a whole – it’s not restricted to those working on the conference. Indigenous youth, in particular also benefit from the projects we are working which have been enabled through the training sessions on offer.”

“Since working for Girringun, I’ve travelled to Sydney and participated in three days of publicity training, which was a great opportunity to learn something new and make a contribution to my community,” says Girringun Media Coordinator Wendy Salam.

Girringun Aboriginal Corporation is still seeking 20 keen, enthusiastic Traditional Owners to act as guides and showcase areas such as Moombay Rainforest, Echo Creek, Mungalla Station and Garden Island over the Conference week.

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“These training sessions are fantastic because they provide Indigenous people with the skills to move forward in a positive direction,” says Christine. “I would strongly encourage all members of the Indigenous community to take advantage of these wonderful opportunities.”

The second National CARING FOR COUNTRY NATIONAL INDIGENOUS LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE (9-12 October) and FESTIVAL (13–14 October) is held in Cardwell North Queensland. Presented by Girringun Aboriginal Corporation, the Conference points to the future and is one of the most relevant and important environmental and cultural events held in Australia this year.

For more information on the new training opportunities, please contact Christine George on 07 4066 8300.

Any interested tour guides are urged to attend the orientation session: 9am, Tuesday 7 August at Girringun Aboriginal Corporation 235 Victoria Street, Cardwell.

MEDIA: For interviews and images please contact

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CARING FOR COUNTRY www.caringforcountry.com.au

CONFERENCE PROGRAM <http://www.caringforcountry.com.au/program-day1.php>

BACKGROUNDERS TO LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT ISSUES <http://www.clc.org.au/>



**Queensland
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