

23B Brown St
Claremont WA 6010
7 August 2016

Mrs Denise Bowden
CEO
Yothu Yindi Foundation

Dear Denise,

re 2016 Garma Festival

My thanks to you and the Foundation for another wonderful Garma experience.

It was an intense four days. Being exposed to the reality of Yolgnu culture is the best reminder I know of the reality that we have the world's oldest living cultures. The richness and depth of the culture is on display in conversation, music, dance, artefacts, and the visual arts. We are indeed a lucky country to have this and other Indigenous cultures as part of our national fabric.

Being exposed to the thinking of leading Aboriginal intellectuals and activists is immensely valuable to all of us who work with first nation peoples. There were literally hundreds of such individual Aboriginals participating in the festival but it was remarkable to hear in close order at one location Galarrwuy Yunupingu, Senator Patrick Dobson, Noel Pearson, Marcia Langton, and Mick Gooda. In that alone it was an intellectual feast.

The 450 business attendees alongside the wide range of participants with active involvements across education, medicine, culture, reconciliation, recognition, and economic development made for a rich mix too. There were many opportunities for cross fertilisation in business sessions but importantly also in informal and sometimes chance meetings. Many of the business representatives are involved in partnerships and other relationships with Indigenous people and organisations through Reconciliation Action Plans. All of them, like me, would have left Garma better informed and reinvigorated by the experience.

How you manage to put 2,500 people together in a remote location in the way you do is a miracle of organisation. I am sure Garma has a profound impact on many participants from the school students through all ages, to old guys like me and my friends. I, and those who attended Garma with me, are all deeply grateful to you and Yothu Yindi.

Warm regards.



Fred Chaney