

17 March 2021

Bridging the Gap Foundation launches Workplace Giving Program

Bridging the Gap Foundation has launched a new Workplace Giving Program, supporting initiatives that create health, education and employment equity in Australia.

The program is in response to the heightened interest from Australians looking to support Indigenous programs, at a time when the latest Closing the Gap report has been released and significant community debate about a Voice for Indigenous Australians continues. This new program will make it possible for people, no matter where they are or where they work to contribute on an ongoing basis.

By signing up to the foundation's Workplace Giving Program, corporations will be able to offer their employees a simple and cost-effective way to make a difference. Employees can specify a set pre-tax amount each pay cycle to donate. This means that every dollar donated will go towards supporting health and education initiatives in Indigenous communities and building a strong Indigenous workforce in Australia.

Contributions will go directly towards supporting the following initiatives:

- **Indigenous Children's Hearing for Learning Program:** Indigenous children experience some of the highest rates of otitis media (middle ear infections) in the world. This leads to hearing impairment, compromised early learning, poor school performance, higher rates of unemployment and even incarceration. Menzies School of Health Research is addressing this problem through research and early prevention strategies.
- **Indigenous Secondary Schooling Scholarships Program:** A lower school completion rate for Indigenous students directly impacts employment opportunities and contributes to high rates of incarceration. The foundation's scholarship program, in partnership with applied learning provider SEDA, provides young Indigenous Australians with a fully funded position in a SEDA program. This provides recipients with a pathways-focused senior secondary education tailored to their own goals and aspirations.
- **Indigenous Traineeships Program:** Traineeships offer Indigenous school graduates structured and supported pathways to employment through on-the-job training and opportunities to complete nationally accredited qualifications in diverse, multicultural work environments. Bridging the Gap Foundation works with a range of partners to create career development opportunities, including Menzies School of Health Research.

Charles Darwin University was the first organisation to offer a Bridging the Gap Foundation Workplace Giving Program to its staff. "CDU is strongly committed to the aims of the Bridging the Gap Foundation to create health, education and employment equity in Australia. The CDYou staff giving program is a means by which University staff can support

the Bridging the Gap Foundation and contribute to initiatives that addresses the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians' health and education outcomes," said Professor Mike Wilson, Interim Vice-Chancellor, Provost and Vice-President of Charles Darwin University.

"Every contribution, no matter how big or small makes a difference," said Richard Ryan AO, Chairman, Bridging the Gap Foundation. "Even a small amount per month can enable us to create scholarships, traineeships, and improve hearing health which make a real and substantial difference to Aboriginal people's lives."

For more on the Workplace Giving Program, visit btgfoundation.com.au. To discuss signing up, contact Colin Baillie (Head of Development) at 0410 634 889 or email colin.baillie@menzies.edu.au.

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Available for Interview

Bridging the Gap Chairman Richard Ryan AO
Bridging the Gap Foundation Deputy Chair Dean Rioli

Media Contacts

Lyn Tuit: 0405 160 275
btg@momentum2.com.au

About Bridging the Gap Foundation

Bridging the Gap Foundation has been established by Charles Darwin University and Menzies School of Health Research to address one of Australia's most important issues, the ten-year gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The foundation aims to improve health and education opportunities and outcomes for Indigenous Australians.