



Warlpiri Youth Development  
Aboriginal Corporation

Mt Theo Program

**Annual Report**

07/08





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# Committee

A committee of 62 elected Aboriginal people from Yuendumu community manages the Mt Theo Program. Committee members represent all family groups and organisations. Associate committee members may be drawn from Nyirrpi and Willowra community members.

## Executive:

Thomas Rice	Chairperson
Jean Brown	Chairperson, Traditional Owner
Robbie Walit	Treasurer
Serena Shannon	Executive Member
Donovan Rice	Executive Member
Ned Hargraves	Executive member
Larissa Granites	Executive Member
Connie Walit	Executive member

## Committee:

Alan Dickson  
 Albert Wilson  
 Audrey Brown  
 Barbara Martin  
 Bethany Langdon  
 Caleb Hargraves  
 Cecily Granites  
 Charro Watson (Jaru)  
 Cherylyn Granites (Jaru)  
 Connie Walit  
 Donovan Rice (Executive Member)  
 Enid Gallagher (Executive Member)  
 Gina Spencer (Jaru)  
 Jeannie Egan  
 Judith Hargraves  
 Katrina Brown  
 Larissa Granites (Executive Member) (Jaru)  
 Lawrence White (Jaru)  
 Michael Wayne (Jaru)  
 Ned Hargraves (Executive Member)  
 Nellie Wayne  
 Neville Poulson  
 Otto Sims  
 Ratasha Watson (Jaru)  
 Riley Oldfield  
 Robbie Walit (Treasurer)  
 Ruby Williams  
 Sebastian Watson  
 Serena Shannon (Executive Member)  
 Shaun Brown (Jaru)  
 Shaun Watson  
 Shaun Wilson (Jaru)  
 Sherman Spencer (Jaru)  
 Steven Marshall  
 Thomas Rice (Chairperson)  
 Thomas Watson  
 Valeria Martin  
 ASSOCIATE MEMBER (Willowra)  
 Teddy Long

## Traditional Owners:

Carson Brown  
 Cecil Johnson  
 Charlotte Langdon  
 Coral Gallagher  
 Dennis Williams  
 Ernest Brown  
 Glenys Brown  
 Gracie Johnson  
 Jean Brown (Chairperson)  
 Jimmy Langdon  
 Johnny Miller  
 Johnny Williams  
 Joylene Langdon  
 Liddy Walker  
 Louanna Williams  
 Margarina Miller  
 Mary Ross  
 Ormay Gallagher  
 Pamela Sampson  
 Perry Langdon  
 Rex Forrest  
 Scotty (Clifford) Brown  
 Warren Williams  
 Warwick Williams







# Manager's Report



This year demonstrates a period of dynamic expansion for the Mt Theo Program. The extension of Mt Theo Program across the Warlpiri region, the increasing attention to the Program as an alternative to incarceration, and a focus on young people dealing with issues other than substance misuse, culminated in the Committee decision to change the Corporation name to better reflect the complex and comprehensive nature of what we do today.

The Committee chose Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation as a more appropriate name for a Corporation that focuses on assisting young Warlpiri people from all over the region to build strong futures for themselves and their communities. The change was an outcome of a review, undertaken over 2 days at Mt Theo by over 40 past and present Committee and staff, of the last 14 years of operations. The review allowed time for reflection on what has been achieved, and confirmation of future directions. Together, elders agreed on a new jukurrpa (featured in this report) that reflects the strong growth of young people through the Program. Thomas Jangala Rice, Chairperson, painted the bush tomato jukurrpa, which Liam Campbell then adapted as the new logo.

The adoption of the regional approach was made possible through community funds alone and is yet to attract significant long term government funding. The Warlpiri Education Training Trust (WETT) is administered by the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation, a body of Warlpiri entrusted with allocating royalty funding in the Warlpiri Lands. This funding has allowed us to extend youth and media activities in Willowra and Yuendumu, and implement the youth program in Nyirрпи. We will commence activities in Lajamanu in 2008-2009.

The Mt Theo Outstation remains a powerful diversionary initiative with 78% of total clients this year referred by Department of Community Corrections (35%), Police (26%), FACS (9%), or were family/self referred (30%).

Out of a total of 61 clients cared for at Mt Theo, 30% had been sniffing petrol, primarily in Alice Springs. There was only one incident of petrol sniffing in Yuendumu during this period and no incidents recorded in Willowra or Nyirрпи. Youth activities in Willowra and Nyirрпи were frustratingly intermittent due to the difficulty in finding appropriate staff. Community members remained committed to the program and worked as casual workers with patience and enthusiasm. We now have permanent Youth Workers to support them in both communities, Youth Committees to provide direction, and a solid program of activities.

The Jaru Pirrjirdi (Strong Voices) Program is an ongoing source of inspiration for us all. The Program addresses issues underlying substance misuse and anti-social behaviour. The Jaru members are emerging as mentors and youth leaders, working on community development projects that help create positive futures for both individuals and the community. A natural outcome of strong personal development has been 16 young people employed in a range of community organisations, and another 20 engaged in meaningful pathways in the community.

Members of Jaru Pirrjirdi continue to run all activities in the Yuendumu Youth Program. This year 79 workers provided 6108 hours of varied activities. Jaru Night Club (formerly Night School) attracts an average of 26 men and women between 16 and 25 years old. A variety of activities are offered, including those promoting literacy, numeracy, youth





development, educational and vocational activities. As a result of their participation in Night Club, 6 young men and women re-enrolled in secondary education.

In September 2007, Mt Theo opened a Diesel Mechanics Training Workshop. Four young men are now enrolled as apprentices in Cert 111 Heavy Vehicle Mechanics. The workshop has a dual function as a diversionary strategy, and the means to provide appropriate local training for local jobs. Despite significant success, the workshop is yet to attract set-up funding.

Every day the childcare bus drives past the swimming pool site to see how much closer they are to going for a swim in their own pool. They count the days. After 4 exasperating years of delays, the pool will at last be handed over to the community at the end of August 2008. Six Jaru Pirrjirdi men and women have been successful in attaining their bronze medallions and lifeguard qualifications and are ready to start work. When the pool opens, ongoing training will ensure a large group of qualified workers to ensure the safety of all swimmers.

A strong and beneficial partnership is developing with Newmont Asia Pacific (Tanami Operations), facilitated by Paul Davis, Community Relations Coordinator. Newmont provided funding for professional development for staff, provision of education at the Outstation, and strategic planning for the regional program. They also supplied us

with protective clothing for the workshop, sheets, blankets and clothing for outstation clients, computers for Jaru Night Club, and a house for youth workers in Nyirрпи. Newmont have also committed to supporting operational costs for the swimming pool for 3 years, and Paul is a member of the Yuendumu Pool Steering Committee.

This year of the Northern Territory Emergency Response, or Intervention, has been a difficult one for the community and the Program. The anger and confusion arising from the Response required all members of the team to spend considerable time supporting community members as they came to terms with the changes.

Mt Theo Program management team faced significant obligatory additional work as a direct result of the Intervention. This was due, in the first part, to the need for briefing the high numbers of Government visitors to the community, as well as those engaging in new projects as a result of the Intervention. During this period, we averaged 4 verbal briefings and 3 written briefings a week. Thomas Jangala Rice and Jeannie Nungerayi Egan were invited to attend the Prime Minister's 20/20 Summit, and used the opportunity to make community concerns known.

The heightened awareness of child safety, while a positive initiative, also increased the workload of our Counsellor

and Youth Workers, with little funding provided for additional staff to meet the need. The effect of an imposed, essential increase of services on staff has been significant, with a marked decline in physical and emotional health demonstrated by stress-related sickness. Staff absences, in turn, place more demands on remaining staff and the cycle continues. So, while our services have increased exponentially, essential staffing levels and infrastructure has not.

In addition, the NTER had a deleterious effect on recurrent program funding with considerable government contractual obligations put on hold. We struggled to maintain essential services during this time.

On the positive side, the presence of the Government Business Manager gave us direct access to Government to articulate our needs, and a pathway to pursue avenues to meet some of those needs. Through the GBM fund, we were grateful to receive funds for staff housing in Willowra & Nyirрпи, sporting and media equipment for the regional program, and notably, additional funding for the construction of the swimming pool.

While we wait for the results of the NTER Review, due for release in September 2008, we remain committed to the principles and outcomes of the Mt Theo Program as a

community initiative that has achieved remarkable outcomes through a solid community development approach. We believe NTER outcomes will only be achieved through strong partnerships in this approach, enabling the provision of vital infrastructure.

After 14 years caring for young Warlpiri men and women, the core objective of the Mt Theo Program remains strong: the commitment to supporting young people to recognize their personal and cultural strengths, to fulfill their potential as strong leaders and mentors in their communities. The stories shared in this Annual Report inspire us every day. Stories of young people making good choices, of a Program growing, fuelled by dreams of these same young people, and their relentless pursuit of opportunities to make the community a better place, of elders who share their time and their stories to make their young people proud of who they are.

Finally, I again pay tribute to the consummate Mt Theo team, dedicated Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men and women who understand the challenge, and embrace the privilege, of being part of the Mt Theo Story.

Susie Low  
Manager, July 2008



# Mt Theo Outstation

Established in 1994, the essence of the Mt Theo Program is still the provision of cultural rehabilitation and strengthening of young people through the care of Warlpiri mentors and elders. This rehabilitation occurs at the remote Outstation, 160km northwest of Yuendumu.

From its beginnings as a program for recovering petrol sniffers, the Outstation has expanded its focus and expertise to accommodate young Warlpiri people suffering from the effects of a wide range of personal problems. Alcohol and cannabis misuse, self-harm, domestic/family violence and other criminal or anti-social behaviour (such as drink-driving and property damage) have been articulated by the Mt Theo Committee and the Warlpiri community as constituting the most serious issues currently affecting the health and well-being of their young people. The police, Community Corrections or other government and non-government organisations now regularly refer clients to us.

This year 78% of total Outstation clients were referred by Department of Community Corrections (35%), Police (26%), FACS (9%), or were family/self referred (30%).

Out of a total of 61 clients cared for at Mt Theo, 30% had been sniffing petrol, primarily in Alice Springs. Other clients were from Willowra, Lajamanu, Katherine, Darwin and Yuendumu.

All clients typically spend their day in a blend of cultural and recreational activities. Hunting, tracking, cooking traditional foods, traditional painting, fire-making, story-telling, and trips to significant sites provide an environment not only for cultural strengthening, but also a non-threatening forum to engage in discussion about the problems they are working through.

They play football and basketball and participate in workshops that range from music to health promotion. This year special activities included song-writing and recording, landscaping and solar power maintenance. We are currently developing a partnership with NT Open Education to deliver school at the Outstation, and Warlpiri Rangers to instigate an ongoing land management program for clients.

## Case Management

All clients are case managed during their time at the Outstation, and on return to the community. Case files are maintained by Mt Theo staff and updated through regular contact with the Outstation, participation in youth activities in the community, and Jaru Pirjirdi mentors. With Youth Workers now in Willowra and Nyirripi we can offer better aftercare to clients from those communities, however it is often difficult to provide follow-up for clients returning to Alice Springs. Where possible, staff negotiate with families and agencies to encourage these clients to remain in Yuendumu for several months after exiting Mt Theo to allow appropriate aftercare through the Youth Program and Jaru Pirjirdi mentors. Our experience shows that this intensive aftercare assists in strengthening clients to re-engage with their families in a stronger, more positive way.

## Mt Theo Outstation within contemporary Warlpiri Culture

The distinctive identity of the Mt Theo Outstation within Warlpiri youth culture, and indeed among the broader Warlpiri community, is a significant and contributing factor in the program's ongoing success. Warlpiri youth widely express a perception of Mt Theo as a 'life-saving' place, where young people are safely and appropriately 'looked after' in a 'proper' Warlpiri way. This can be clearly observed in the way that young people themselves will strongly encourage their at-risk peers to go to Mt Theo as a safe and supported environment for dealing with their problems, and occasionally even refer themselves to Mt Theo for respite care. Furthermore, young people from Yuendumu, regardless of their own personal issues, are enormously proud of the fact that their community has so effectively dealt with a problem as significant as widespread petrol sniffing, and facilitated a healthy, petrol-free youth culture.

This pride in and respect for Mt Theo among Warlpiri youth does not negate the deterrent or punitive element of spending time at Mt Theo. Being sent to Mt Theo is still very much a 'punishment' in the minds of Warlpiri youth. However the 'punishment' of sending a young person to Mt Theo for substance misuse, domestic violence or anti-social and criminal activity constitutes for that young person a community-sanctioned penalty for these behaviours through appropriate and powerful cultural avenues. It has been the experience of the Mt Theo Program that the active censure of these behaviours from within the Warlpiri community is by far the most effective measure for eradicating or positively modifying them. This is the essence of what Mt Theo uniquely and effectively achieves.

*The Outstation program is funded by the Department of Health and Aging (Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health; Drug Strategy Branch), and the NT Department of Health and Community Services. The Attorney General's Department funds care of Community Corrections clients through CAYLUS.*





# Youth Programs



Youth Program activities target 4 – 16 year olds, providing diverse and vibrant alternatives to substance abuse and other anti-social behaviour. The Mt Theo Model also provides for over 16 year olds to work as casual youth workers whereby they have the opportunity to gain significant personal and professional development. The recent funding provided by WETT enabled Mt Theo to appoint a Coordinator to manage specific youth and media projects in all communities, with a particular focus on support to Willowra and Nyirрпи.

## Yuendumu

The Youth Program operates seven days per week in Yuendumu, every week of the year and incorporates several activities after school every day and a number of activities every evening. Jaru workers are paid by voucher system for this work. In addition to the benefits of the youth program for the young children of Yuendumu, the work for the Jaru Pirrjirdi workers provides young adults with meaningful activity and responsibility. Jaru Pirrjirdi workers act as the 'on-the-ground' youth worker under periodical supervision from senior Jaru and Mt Theo staff.

There are generally 5-6 youth program activities every day. Allowing for concurrent activities this means that there were over 117 hours of youth program activities provided by 79 Jaru Pirrjirdi workers for the youth of Yuendumu every week. Young people returning from Mt Theo Outstation are engaged to work alongside staff and Jaru Pirrjirdi workers in running youth activities. This aftercare also provides a natural forum for mentorship by senior Jaru members. Regular activities this year have included basketball, softball, football, indoor soccer, painting, concerts, discos, IT skills development, pool table and video games, film nights and excursions. Special vacation activities included workshops in graffiti art, multi-media, song writing, recording, and CD production.

InCite Arts continued to support our dance and music projects, providing guest artists and funding for 2 x 4 week Graffiti art projects and a 2-week Hip Hop project including CD production and concert.

*Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; NT Office of Sport & Recreation; Warlpiri Education Training Trust (WETT); Arts NT; in-kind support from Newmont Mines.*



## Willowra

Despite a range of contributing factors affecting the sustainability of the Willowra Youth Program, the close of this financial year brings an extremely positive outlook. After the long term popular Youth Worker left the community, the fact that we had no youth worker accommodation meant that we were unable to recruit for her position. We resorted to begging, and borrowing accommodation from the Council, NT Health, even the Store Managers to house temporary workers for periods of up to 2 months at a time. While these workers valiantly attempted to continue the program of activities, the constant changeover of staff was unsettling for the community and detrimental to the sustainability of the Program. Some vital aspects of the Program were sacrificed in order to maintain at least a minimum of diversionary activities.

After months of searching for funds, NTER provided permanent accommodation for youth workers, and Central Australian Youth Link Up Service (CAYLUS) & NT Department of Health & Community Services funded renovation of an old house for trainer accommodation and the Program office. At last we could recruit!

Amy Hardy and Kyle Jarvie hit the ground in early June and haven't stopped running yet. Slowly they are developing relationships in the community and re-building pride and participation in the Youth Program. PAW have trained Amy and Kyle in media skills to equip them for the increasing role of multi-media projects offered through the Warlpiri Education Training Trust (WETT) funding.

Despite sorry business, and ongoing community unrest, they are managing to run regular activities, with a special focus on bush trips as a way of re-engaging the young people, and making friends. The young people of Willowra are committed to creating positive futures. Amidst community conflict, young men from opposing sides met together and formed Yangu Pala Patu (Young Men Together). These young men are driving the directions of their activities. They have decided the Willowra version of the Jaru Pirrjirdi model is to be known as Jukurrpa Ngurrju (Good Story).

Some highlights of the year:

- 2 week Graffiti art project with visiting artist
- local Lander River Band record a CD at CAAMA and perform in Alice Springs
- CAAMA music and dance workshop and donation of musical and recording equipment
- trip to Ali Curung to participate in ceremonial dance
- helicopter rides for young people, facilitated by previous work associates of Kyle at Atlas Geophysics
- construction commenced on addition of a music/band room at the youth centre.

*Funded by the NT Department of Health and Community Services; the Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; Warlpiri Education Training Trust (WETT). Funding from Commonwealth Department of Health and Aging Illicit Drug Strategy for a youth worker position has now ceased, so we will be seeking further funding for this critical position.*



## Nyirрпи

During the Christmas Holidays, CAYLUS provided holiday program funding, so two Mt Theo Yuendumu workers moved to Nyirрпи to deliver the program. They loved it so much they stayed on as the first WETT youth workers. Unfortunately their contract was cut short due to poor health. For 3 months local worker Hamilton Morris ran activities, with support from the WETT Coordinator, and community member Lance Turner. A permanent youth worker has now been appointed and will commence work early in August 2008.

As usual in remote communities, accommodation was an issue. We are grateful to Batchelor College who offered their house as temporary accommodation for the first few months of the Program. Newmont Mines then supported us significantly with 3 demountables and NTER provided funds to renovate as youth accommodation and program office. The new accommodation is now a testament to the fine artistic skills of young people during a recent graffiti art workshop!

Regular sporting and recreational activities are now held in Nyirрпи, and based out of the community hall. Bush trips are a vital part of the program. The Youth Program was also able to provide uniforms, trophies and equipment for the Nyirрпи Sports Weekend.

Two elders, former members of the Mt Theo Committee, live in Nyirрпи and guide program direction.

*The Nyirрпи Youth Program is wholly funded by community funds, through the Warlpiri Education Training Trust (WETT).*





# Warlpiri Education and Training Trust

## (WETT) Youth and Media Project

Last year Mt Theo Program was approached by the Kurra Aboriginal Corporation to provide youth activities, with a focus on media training and employment, across the Warlpiri region. Kurra is responsible for allocating royalty funding in the Warlpiri Lands, through WETT projects. This funding has allowed us to partner with PAW (formerly Warlpiri Media) to extend youth and media activities in Willowra and Yuendumu, and implement the youth program in Nyirrpi. We will commence activities in Lajamanu in 2008-2009.

The Project aim is to support Warlpiri youth to develop their sense of self, family and culture through diversionary programs with a special focus on media.

The model initially focuses on diversionary activities for young people, including sport, recreation and new media. Project-based media workshops will focus on process, developing interesting youth and media opportunities for youth people as a diversion from anti-social behaviour. Over time media activities will move toward the development of employment options and media products for use in the communities involved and the wider community.

**Stage 1** Diversionary programs, including sport and recreational activities, and including a strong media focus  
**Stage 2** Engage broader community  
**Stage 3** Introduce a training and employment structure  
**Stage 4** Focus on the production of media products  
Detailed plans for each community will be developed in consultation with those communities.

Mt Theo Program is excited about the possibilities inherent in this Project. Micah Wenitong was appointed as Coordinator in March 2008, and comes with extensive experience in both media and youth programs. His vision is to ultimately do himself out of a job by harnessing the considerable community skills in music and media.

Youth workers in Willowra and Yuendumu have undergone training with PAW and several film and music projects are ongoing. The Nyirrpi worker will soon receive similar training. Two young Yuendumu participants filmed a significant event at Mt Theo Outstation recently, and will complete the project after training in editing and production in September. Both these young people are now developing their own stories for filming. The concept and storyboards are complete and the process is continuing with Mt Theo and PAW mentors.

A music production workshop scheduled for Willowra in June 2008 was postponed due to sorry business and community unrest. It will be rescheduled as soon as possible. A similar workshop in Nyirrpi will be held before the end of 2008. All participating communities are excited and responding extremely positively to this new aspect in our Program.





# Jaru Pirrjirdi

## (Strong Voices)

The Jaru Pirrjirdi Program is a youth development and leadership program, as well as an aftercare program for 'at risk' youth. It aims to produce strong, empowered, skilled and dedicated young leaders for the community of Yuendumu. The Jaru Pirrjirdi Program creates meaningful and positive futures for young adults aged 16-25, as distinct from the 'diversionary' aims of the Youth Program.

The Jaru Pirrjirdi Program has two aims a) to resolve the many issues that may place Warlpiri youth 'at risk' such as substance abuse, self-harm, family violence and/or criminal behaviour and b) to create positive and meaningful futures for young Warlpiri people. This occurs through a progressive six-stage program structure (see below). These levels and elements represent growing degrees of capacity and responsibility for young Jaru Pirrjirdi members and culminate in potential life and career pathways. Many of the young adults who were previously 'at risk' are now successfully working throughout the community. There are currently 79 young adults involved with the Jaru Pirrjirdi Program.

### Level 1: Youth Program & Jaru Night Club

The Yuendumu Youth program operates seven days a week, every week of the year and incorporates several activities after school every day and a number of activities every evening. Each activity is run with the assistance of Jaru workers and supported by Mt Theo staff. In addition to the benefits of the youth program for the young children of Yuendumu, the work for the Jaru Pirrjirdi workers provides young adults with meaningful activity and responsibility. There are generally 5-6 youth program activities every day and two workers can be paid for each activity.

The use of Jaru workers enables them to grow as leaders in the community who can monitor youth at risk. As well as the constant provision of activities Jaru workers are able to act as mentors to Yuendumu youth. This involves conflict resolution, family negotiation and counselling on a daily basis and the regular contact facilitates early identification of youth who may be seriously at risk for more significant issues. Perhaps even more importantly, it provides workers with a sense of pride and leadership within the community that helps them to overcome their own underlying and unresolved issues.

Jaru Night Club is held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday every week of the school year. Jaru Night Club is a Jaru Pirrjirdi initiative created to allow young adults to engage in productive and enjoyable practical learning. Jaru Night Club is not a replacement for secondary education but rather a less formal environment through which young adults can re-access education and participate in an alternative positive set of activities during the evenings.

Moreover, the transition to Jaru Night Club (formerly Night School) elucidated more clearly the practical aims of the project as distinct from formal education. Jaru Night Club included recreational activities as well as directed practical learning activities such as story writing, mathematics, painting, printmaking, reading, computers, cooking and music. Additionally Jaru Night Club has a practical or project focus in that it may include workshops on issues such as sexual and relationship health, substance misuse forums and dealing with 'government forms'.

This financial year Mt Theo Program reestablished a partnership with Youth Challenge Australia to provide 2 volunteers per term to act as tutors. Night Club was held on 94 nights out of a possible 104, with an average nightly attendance of 24.





## Level 2: Culture & Projects

### Culture

Culture represents an essential element of the Jaru Pirrjirdi Program. It has been suggested that Warlpiri youth need to 'move away' from their culture in order to better access the Kartiya (whitefella) world. Apart from the inherent beauty and value in Warlpiri culture and the attendant benefits, it has been our experience that those who are culturally strong are most likely to positively engage in the Kartiya world. This is because it makes the young people feel confident, empowered, knowledgeable and that they have something of value to offer and share with the world. Jaru culture is accessed in a variety of ways.

While our objective was to conduct a lengthy bush culture trip every 6 weeks, this was not achieved due to two factors. Firstly, our Jaru culture elders were required to attend countless meetings after the implementation of the Northern Territory Emergency Response. The second factor was the focus on supporting the establishment of Warlpiri Rangers training bush trips for Jaru members. Initially the Warlpiri Rangers project, a Central Land Council initiative, required significant support in planning and implementation. Ultimately all young participants were Jaru Pirrjirdi members, and we are enthusiastic about an ongoing partnership. The program, which provides on the job training in land management, has been well received as a good way to work out bush and meet traditional obligations to country.

A total of 11 lengthy bush trips were conducted though Jaru Pirrjirdi or Warlpiri Rangers during this year. Perhaps the success of the bush trips can also be measured by a significant increase in Jaru member's involvement in formal cultural ceremonies of Men's business and Women's Law and Culture.

Weekly day trips continued their success, with 47 being conducted over the year. The focus of these trips is at risk young men and the facilitation of appropriate mentoring and group discussion regarding issues such as culture, domestic violence, suicide, substance abuse, employment, football and notions of manhood. Youth Mentor Sherman Spencer, a Jaru Pirrjirdi 'graduate', conducted the majority of these trips.

### Projects

During the course of this year Jaru Pirrjirdi members undertook 41 projects. Project work involves regular work in a wide range of activities. These activities may be classified into groupings and examples that provide some understanding of this element (below). This project work also enables the Jaru Pirrjirdi Coordinator to identify the individual interests and aspirations of individuals, for which specific training and support can be provided. Of particular note is the almost constant need for external representation of the Jaru program to other communities, organizations and government agencies. This type of project work is an important element in the validation of young people efforts within the Jaru program as well providing opportunities for learning and travel.

#### A sample of Jaru projects during 2007 – 2008: Ongoing/Permanent Projects

##### **Professional development:**

- Yuendumu Mechanic workshop, Swimming Pool Lifeguards, Warlpiri Rangers (28 participants)

##### **Financial management and security:**

- Creation of bank accounts, Introduction to internet banking, Centrelink processes (44)
- Cultural liaison role for new staff/visitors (7)

##### **Sports and Recreation Projects**

- Yuendumu Sports Weekend – assistance with football, basketball, softball, concerts, BBQs, discos for 4 days (all Jaru)
- Jaru Family Night – Basketball competition and BBQ to bring community together and promote recreation for all ages (all Jaru)
- Community Summer Football Competitions – run by Jaru, scoring, umpiring, organizing, preparation, results and venue management. Daily games. 84 games, 300 work hours (9)
- Community Summer Basketball Competitions – run by Jaru, 80-100 participants per night. 400 hours worked (23)

##### **Arts and Media Projects**

- Graffiti Project with Brisbane artist Kieran Wilson. 2 weeks vacation project (18)
- Swirl Project, collaboration with Melbourne School volunteers. 2 weeks vacation project. Literacy based art project (12)
- Hip Hop Project with guest artists. 2 weeks vacation project. CD produced, concert (16)
- Song writing, sound engineering and CD production with Melbourne artist Alex Jarvis. 4 weeks (22)

##### **Leadership/Representation**

- Suicide Prevention Workshop. Central Australian Mental Health Association. Presentation (4)
- BIG GIG, Foundation for Young Australians Youth Leadership Conference. Melbourne. Jaru presentation and workshops (2)
- 'Lifeguard Racism Row'  
Jaru trainee lifesavers experience racism at Alice Springs Hostel. Media representation and preparation of anti-discrimination complaint. 11 Jaru involved, action led by Jaru graduate Bethany Langdon.
- Mt Theo Committee quarterly meetings. Jaru representation and overview presentations (10)





Level 3: Mentoring & Future Pathways  
Mentoring

Mentoring comprises perhaps the most important and critical work done by Jaru members. This year it has grown from a natural expression of leadership in the community into a methodical and coordinated approach.

Typical or key issues include substance abuse, domestic and/or family violence, suicidal ideation and general personal difficulties. While the Program Counsellor coordinates the Mt Theo Program response, mentoring from senior Jaru Pirrjirdi members is an essential element of this casework. Because of the large number of Jaru Pirrjirdi members and their local knowledge they provide an invaluable source of information on those potentially ‘at risk’ within the community. Both they and the community at large are aware of, and support, the Jaru casework and mentoring process. If they are concerned for a young person they report this information so that support can be provided to that individual and their family. Jaru mentors are selected from the Senior Jaru group according to important local and cultural factors such as gender, family group and skin name. This ensures the greater success of any casework and mentoring and more importantly that the individual at risk is in constant contact with individuals who can support them.

This year, 20 senior Jaru provided 1543 hours of mentoring, and undertook 1318 mentor contacts. Of the 56 Yuendumu clients, 52 received mentoring support.

‘Graduation’: Future Pathways

Once Jaru members are deemed ‘Senior Jaru’ they are considered to have ‘graduated’ from the program. This graduation is a measure of their personal capacity, achievement and development during their participation in the program. This personal development and strength, overcoming of significant personal issues, ability to help others and community leadership, is the ultimate outcome of the Jaru Pirrjirdi program.

Senior Jaru can choose to remain working with the program as Senior Jaru, most particularly as mentors, or they may choose to pursue work or a career in another organization. This year, in addition to their significant personal development, 36 senior Jaru members have taken up positions of employment, leadership or training at other community organizations. This represents a further measure of the progress in personal capacity of these young individuals and the empowerment of the Jaru Pirrjirdi process.

The creation of career pathways is a gradual process that requires considerable support and facilitation but combined with the mentoring roles provides senior Jaru with more challenging and meaningful activities. This also serves to build local capacity and achieve true community development. Moreover, it creates space within the program for young adults to keep entering and moving through the elements of the program.

In the interest of collective development pathways several key partnerships or projects have been created to assist Jaru build meaningful futures:

- 1. Warlpiri Rangers: Ranger program run by CLC, which aims at caring for country, tracking flora and fauna and using indigenous land and cultural knowledge. 23 Jaru involved. Paid by CLC at hourly rates.
- 2. Yuendumu Swimming Pool: Managed by Mt Theo Program. To be completed in August 2008. Fully trained lifeguards to be supplied by the Jaru Pirrjirdi membership. 14 Jaru in training. 6 fully qualified.
- 3. Yuendumu Diesel Mechanic Workshop: Managed by Mt Theo Program. Four Jaru Pirrjirdi members have commenced Cert 111 in Heavy Vehicle Mechanics. Trainer Pete Malden, Mt Theo mechanic. An additional 11 Jaru involved.

*The Jaru Pirrjirdi Program was funded by the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH), and the Health Strategies Branch.*





# Yuendumu Swimming Pool

At last, the dream unfolds. The pictures tell it all. Excitement is mounting in Yuendumu. The frustrations of the last 4 years are drawing to a close. The Pool Manager has been employed since May 2008, and is working overtime in preparation for the pool opening.

Six Jaru Pirjirdi men and women have been successful in attaining their bronze medallions and lifeguard qualifications through RLSS, and are ready to start work. When the pool opens, ongoing training will ensure a large group of qualified workers to ensure the safety of all swimmers.

Dick Aitken, a landscape architect from Canberra, is working pro-bono to design and manage the massive task of landscaping the site. We are yet to secure funding for this project, but will be ready when we do!

Earlier this year, our Jaru Pirjirdi trainees made national headlines when evicted from an Alice Springs hostel, less than 30 minutes after check-in, for being Aboriginal. They were there with RLSS and Mt Theo supervisors to continue their lifeguard training. The group were devastated, and yet determined. They told their story to the media with dignity. A complaint has been lodged with the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner, and we hope to play a small part in educating the hospitality industry about the many faces of racism.

At that time, Mt Theo Program and RLSS received letters of outrage and support from all over the world. International blogs were created in support of our trainees, offers of hospitality poured in. There was a general sense of disgust and shame from the wider Australian community.

In a short time, Rob Bradley, CEO of RLSS, facilitated a remarkable response to this shameful incident. Qantas provided flights for 10 trainees to fly to Sydney for training at the Emerton Leisure Centre. Quest Apartments supplied luxurious accommodation at Castle Hill. Kieren Perkins spent time encouraging the trainees. They were treated to a Harbour Bridge Climb, a day at Taronga Park Zoo, a tour of News Limited, and time in the company of the Sydney Swans. One of our young women was even offered a part in a film! At the end of the week, all returned home with Bronze Medallions.

We anticipate the official pool opening at the end of October, and EVERYONE is invited.

*The Pool construction was funded by the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments, Yuendumu Community members, the Poola Foundation, the Ian Potter Foundation, Warlukurlangu Artists and Yuendumu Mining Store. Statewide Pools, SA and ProBuild, Alice Springs, are building the pool and amenities block.*





# Diesel Mechanics Training Workshop

A major focus for the Mt Theo Jaru Pirrjirdi Project is to assist young people to develop meaningful futures as an alternative to substance misuse and anti-social or criminal behaviour. Many young Yuendumu men expressed interest in pursuing employment in diesel mechanics both here and at Newmont Mines.

Mt Theo Program opened a Diesel Mechanics Training Workshop in November 2007. This was a step taken after NTER personnel assured us that the Workshop model would address several key concerns – a diversionary activity for young men, an alternative to incarceration, real training for real jobs in the mechanics field, formal apprenticeships, a partnership with Newmont mines, and jobs on completion of training. Four young men are now signed with the NT Apprenticeship Board to complete Cert 111 in Heavy Vehicle Mechanics (Earthmoving).

Newmont Mines partnered with Mt Theo on the project, opening their workshops to our trainees for several rotations during the year so they become skilled in working on a wide range of diesel machines. They will also experience the machinations of a larger workshop and a formal work regime. When apprentices finish their training, they may continue in the Mt Theo Workshop as mechanics/trainers, join Newmont's mechanical teams, or seek employment elsewhere.

In an exchange of culture and skills, occasional training takes place informally out bush with mechanic/trainer Pete Malden, trainees and elders teaching and learning the interaction of mainstream mechanical skills and bush mechanics.

The Workshop is meeting all expectations. Three of the four apprentices are on Community Work orders with Mt Theo Program, rather than in prison. Pre-vocational mechanical training is popular and limited only by resources. Despite all the government representatives who have visited the Program and praised our efforts, we remain unfunded.

With our trainees working on Mt Theo vehicles here in the community, we have halved our annual vehicle repairs and maintenance budget. While this saving has helped to offset some of the workshop expenses, we continue to pursue appropriate financial support.

*Mt Theo acknowledges the special few who have supported our efforts so far: Frankston Rotary Club Victoria, Solar Systems, Karl Hampton MLA and David Stones, Management Consultant.*



# Talking Story

Mt Theo Committee is dedicated to sharing the success story of Mt Theo Program, and inspiring communities to take strong action in strengthening their young people. We are not always able to respond to the numerous requests for information and interviews, and where appropriate promote our website as a first source.

Examples of representation by Mt Theo Program staff, Committee and Jaru Pirrjirdi members during 2008 – 2009 include:

- Balgo community
- Lajamanu community
- Kintore community
- NTER executive officers
- Commonwealth Government:
  - Department of Health & Aging, Office of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health, Mental Health Workforce Division, Drug Strategies, Family & Community Services & Indigenous Affairs, Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations, Indigenous Coordination Centre, Attorney General's Department, Central Australian Petrol Sniffing Strategy Unit\*
- Northern Territory Government:
  - Department of Health and Community Services, Office of Sport & Recreation, Family & Children's Services, Community Corrections, Central Australian Mental Health Association, Department of Employment, Education & Training, Alcohol & Drug Services of Central Australia\*

- OATSIH National Excellence Awards, Sydney
- OATSIH Annual Stakeholder Conference, Alice Springs
- School of Art History, Cinema, Classics and Archaeology, Melbourne University
- Suicide Prevention Workshop, Central Australian Mental Health Association
- FACSIA Outside School Hours Care Conference, Alice Springs
- Big Gig, Foundation for Young Australians Youth Leadership Conference, Melbourne
- Mt Evelyn Christian College, Melbourne
- Dulwich Narrative Therapy Workshop, Mt Theo
- Senator Trish Crossin, Chief Justice Brian Martin, Karl Hampton MLA
- Burdon & Torzillo, Consultants, Tanami Regional Partnership Agreement
- Youth Challenge Australia, volunteer tutors.
- Yuendumu Police, Clinic, Childcare, Women's Centre, School, Council, WynHealth staff

Names of government departments subject to change without notice





# Media

The Program has been featured regularly in the media this year. As a nationally recognised and respected community program we are often used as a source for ‘expert comment’ in features and in-depth reviews of Aboriginal substance abuse issues, or programs focussing on young people. Mt Theo staff, Committee and Jaru Pirrjirdi members are interviewed, on average, once a week.

Earlier this year, our Jaru Pirrjirdi trainees made national headlines and international press when evicted from an Alice Springs hostel, less than 30 minutes after check-in, for being Aboriginal. They were there with Royal Life Saving Society and Mt Theo supervisors to continue their lifeguard training. The group were devastated, and yet determined. They told their story to the media with dignity. The response of journalists and the broader Australian community was one of outrage and support. In a follow-up training trip to Sydney journalists followed their every move and celebrated their success widely in the media.

## [www.mttheo.org](http://www.mttheo.org)

The increase of activities this year has had an impact on our resolution to keep the website regularly updated. Next year we hope to do better, and to include the capacity for online donations.

## Yapa-kurlangu yimi

Our newsletter publication also suffered from the expansion of services this year. Mt Theo Program apologises to those faithful donors and supporters who look forward to our newsletter. Unfortunately, we cannot promise to resume regular publication until we are able to fund additional office workers. Moreover, the newsletter is our primary source of private donations, and gifts to the Program have reduced significantly during this period.



# Mt Theo Program Partners

In 2007-2008 Mt Theo Program received funding from:

## Commonwealth

Department of Health & Aging

Office of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health

Health Strategies Branch

Drug Strategies Branch

National Illicit Drug Strategy – Community Partnerships Initiative

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs

The Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination

Central Australian Petrol Sniffing Strategy Unit

Stronger Families & Communities Strategy

Emergency Relief

Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations

Outside School Hours Care

Attorney General's Department

Northern Territory Emergency Response

## Territory

Department of Health & Community Services

Office of Sport & Recreation

Arts NT

## Independent

AER Foundation

Central Australian Youth LinkUp Service (CAYLUS)

Collingwood Industrial Magpies Coterie Group, Victoria

The Ian Potter Foundation

Frankston Rotary Club, Victoria

Kurra Aboriginal Corporation

Newmont Asia Pacific

The Poola Foundation



# Mt Theo Program Partners

## Private donors

Mt Theo gratefully acknowledges those private individuals and groups in the broader community who donate regularly. As these donations are not encumbered with project-specific funding conditions, they allow us to respond to community concerns as they arise. Such funds provide invaluable operational flexibility.

## In-kind and professional support

Atlas Geophysics  
Bruce and Rhea Hearn-McKinnon  
Canberra Doctors Association  
Craig san Roque, Consultant Psychologist  
David Stones, Management Consultant  
Dick Aitken, Landscape Architect, Canberra  
John Lewin  
Karl Hampton, MLA  
Newmont Asia Pacific  
Professor Sherry Saggars and Anne Stearne  
Solar Systems, Alice Springs  
Visiting artists: Alex Jarvis, Kieren Wilson, Elf and James, Jesper Sorrensen,  
Quest Apartments, Sydney  
Qantas

## This report

Mt Theo Program especially thanks Anthony Dinham ([www.dinham.com.au](http://www.dinham.com.au)), for his wonderful work designing this year's annual report.

## Community Partnerships

Bush Mob, Alice Springs  
Central Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Unit  
Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Services  
Central Australian Youth LinkUp Service (CAYLUS)  
Central Land Council  
Community Corrections, Alice Springs  
Family & Children's Services (FACS), Alice Springs  
InCite Youth Arts, Alice Springs  
Life Promotion, Alice Springs  
Newmont Asia Pacific  
PAW Media  
Remote Mental Health, Alice Springs  
Royal Life Saving Society  
Warlukurlangu Artists  
Worrawa College, Melbourne  
WynHealth  
Youth Challenge Australia  
Yuendumu CDEP  
Yuendumu Childcare  
Yuendumu churches  
Yuendumu Clinic  
Yuendumu Law and Justice Committee  
Yuendumu Men's and Women's Night Patrols  
Yuendumu Mining Store  
Yuendumu Police  
Yuendumu School  
Yuendumu Social Club  
Yuendumu Women's Centre  
Kormilda College, Darwin

# Mt Theo Team

As at 30 June 2008

Susie Low, Manager  
Brett Badger, Assistant Manager, Counsellor  
Ruth Bignell, Outstation & Diversion Coordinator  
Talitha Low, Jaru Pirrjirdi & Youth Coordinator  
Alex Cadden, Office Manager  
Emma Stubbs, Administration Officer  
Amelia Watson, Community & Youth Worker  
Micah Wenitong, Outreach Coordinator  
Pete Malden, Mechanical Workshop Coordinator  
Amy Hardy, Youth Worker, Willowra  
Kyle Jarvie, Youth Worker, Willowra  
Riley Oldfield, Cultural Mentor  
Jeannie Egan, Jaru Pirrjirdi Project Worker  
Sherman Spencer, Jaru Pirrjirdi Mentor  
Michael Watson, Mt Theo Project Worker  
Steven Marshall, Mt Theo Supervisor  
Jean Brown, Mt Theo Supervisor  
Allan Dickson, Mt Theo Supervisor  
Scotty Brown, Mt Theo Supervisor  
Audrey Brown, Mt Theo Supervisor  
Robbie Walit, Mt Theo Supervisor  
Darren Talbot, Yuendumu Pool Manager  
Hamilton Morris, Youth Worker, Nyirрпи  
Lance Turner, Youth Worker, Nyirрпи  
Liam Campbell, Consultant  
Craig san Roque, Consultant Psychologist

This team comprises 14 Aboriginal and 9 non-Aboriginal members.

## Jaru Pirrjirdi casual workers

Shane Kennedy	Kristen Granites	Kirsten Spencer
Shaun Brown	Jessica Hargeaves	Ayeeta Dickson
Liam Jurrah	Courtney Singleton	Leslie Walker
Geraldine Mulda	Kirsten Egan	Randall Brown
Sebastian Watson	Dennis Nelson	Elijah Brown
Lorraine Brown	Jamie Nelson	Gregson Collins
Francis Forrest	Horton Wilson	Tasha Collins
Azaria Robertson	Charro Watson	Vistaria Ross
Delvene Langdon	Rosena Dickson	Malcolm Dickson
Louie Watson	Jason Woods	Lisa Martin
Larissa Granites	Samara Brown	Sean Wilson
Pauline Singleton	Clayton Watson	Mark Wilson
Cherylyn Granites	Rochelle Spencer	Leon Penhall
Shaun Wilson	Chris Walker	Eugene Forrest
Ritasha Watson	Sharelle Shannon	Isiah Collins
Gina Spencer	Alvin Williams	Mel Langdon
Bethany Langdon	Geoffrey Wilson	Nathaniel Dickson
Daphne White	Nathaniel Sims	
Danielle Egan	Selma Gibson	
LouAnna Williams	Lawrence White	
Renee Stevenson	Leah Sims	
Terrence Wilson	Charmaine Wilson	
Polly Anne Dixon	Willow Langdon	
Sebastian Robertson	Lekeesha Walker	
Bruno Wilson	Dion Brown	
Tom Tom Sailor	Gisella Brown	
Vicky Wayne	Alison Lechleitner	
Andrea Tasman	Basil Stevenson	
Preston Hargreaves	Adam Gallagher	
Warrick Dickson	Stuart Kelly	



# Statistics

Petrol sniffing free days in Yuendumu 364

## Mt Theo Outstation

Young people cared for at Mt Theo 61

From Yuendumu 45

From Willowra 1

From Alice Springs 10

From Lajamanu 3

From Katherine 1

From Darwin 1

No. petrol sniffing clients 18

No. diversionary clients 48

Alcohol related 26

Cannabis related 19

Domestic/family violence 16

Assault/violence 2

Breaking in/stealing 25

No. of girls cared for at Mt Theo 9

No. of boys cared for at Mt Theo 52

No. of young people who went to Mt Theo  
more than once 11

No. of FACS referrals 6

No. of Corrections and Police referrals 38

No. of family/community/self referrals 22

No. of client days 1501

## Yuendumu

Average no. of hours of youth program activity  
per week 117

Average no. of activities per day 5

No. of clients case managed 56

No. of clients mentored by Jaru Pirrjirdi mentors 52

No. of Jaru Pirrjirdi mentors 20

No. of lengthy Jaru Pirrjirdi & Warlpiri Rangers bush trips 11

No. of weekly day mentoring trips 47

No. of Jaru Pirrjirdi special projects 41

No. of Jaru Pirrjirdi members employed as casual  
youth workers 79

No. of Jaru Pirrjirdi graduates moving to paid  
employment 16

Data not yet available for Willowra and Nyirrpi.

# Financial

## Profit & Loss Prev Year Comparison

	Jul '07 - Jun 08	Jul '06 - Jun 07	\$ Change	% Change
<b>Income</b>				
130 Grants Received	2,881,420.48	2,281,903.69	599,516.79	26.27%
140 Other income	1,844,862.61	534,316.74	1,310,545.87	245.28%
160 Grant Surplus Funds	854,645.75	0.00	854,645.75	100.0%
Total Income	5,580,928.84	2,816,220.43	2,764,708.41	98.17%
Gross Profit	5,580,928.84	2,816,220.43	2,764,708.41	98.17%
<b>Expense</b>				
200 Salaries	1,086,309.72	605,605.34	480,704.38	79.38%
400 Depreciation & Amortisation	116,226.00	46,286.00	69,940.00	151.1%
500 Services	1,795,012.57	604,325.68	1,190,686.89	197.03%
700 Motor Vehicles	272,474.34	196,783.22	75,691.12	38.46%
800 Repairs & Maintenance	12,565.97	45,761.87	-33,195.90	-72.54%
900 Capital Purchases	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Total Expense	3,282,588.60	1,498,762.11	1,783,826.49	119.02%
Net Income	2,298,340.24	1,317,458.32	980,881.92	74.45%



**Warlpiri Youth Development Aboriginal Corporation  
Mt Theo Program**

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