

Unique education collaboration wins 2016 Queensland Premiers Reconciliation Award

Women Yarning Up, a collaboration between the Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia and Bond University, has won the 2016 Premiers Reconciliation Award at last night's Queensland Reconciliation Awards.

This achievement made more notable by the fact that education collaborations have only won the Premiers Reconciliation Award once before in its 16 year history.

Over the last two years *Women Yarning Up* has taken 13 Principals from city-based Alliance schools into remote communities of Far North Queensland to learn first-hand about the issues remote communities face, including the challenges remote students may have to cope with if coming to board in city schools.

Headmistress of Abbotsleigh School in Sydney, Judith Poole said one of the things she took away was the need to really focus on the transition points, both when students come into their school from a remote communities as well as when they leave.

'There was a lot of discussion during our visit to Lockhart River in 2014 about what happens to students when they finish school and return to the community for that long break before university starts,' said Mrs Poole.

For Fran Reddan, Alliance President and Principal of Mentone Girls Grammar School in Melbourne, the stand-out message was the unique experience of journeying with Indigenous people who walk in both worlds.

'It's opened my eyes to the need for us to be mindful of the different influences Indigenous students will encounter back in their communities and what we can do to help them stay on track towards achieving their goals,' said Mrs Reddan.

'Our challenge is taking this experience and share it among the Alliance schools

'It's a two-way street but if we can work together and walk that journey hand-in-hand, I'm confident that *Women Yarning Up* will have far-reaching impacts on us all,' she said.

The annual awards program recognises businesses, community organisations, educational institutions and partnerships that foster reconciliation in Queensland.

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About the Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia:

The Alliance is a not for profit organisation which advocates for and supports the distinctive work of girls' schools in their provision of unparalleled opportunities for girls. It represents all school sectors – independent, Catholic and state, and has over 140 members throughout Australasia.