



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

YALU ABORIGINAL  
CORPORATION



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*a year's overview*

# INCLUSIVITY MATTERS

**Yalu acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Yolngu Country throughout our Songlines, language, cultural education, connection to land, culture and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Pictures of Yolngu people that are deceased remain in this report with permission from their family.**

Galiwinku is an Aboriginal community in the Northeast Arnhem region, which has been home to peoples of the Yolngu Nation for thousands of years. Yolngu proudly continue to practice cultural traditions, which have been passed on through countless generations.

Yalu Aboriginal Corporation is based in Galiwinku where Yalu operates as an inclusive organisation wherein members from different Yolngu clan groups have the opportunity to participate and be represented. Members agree that acceptance of other cultures, religions, and life-paths are to be embraced, including the diverse LGBTIQ+ community. Yalu also supports the employment of those with disabilities, further demonstrating the organisation's commitment to equality.

We strongly believe in regional inclusivity to ensure that the diversity of Yolngu people are acknowledged. Therefore we also collaborate with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations to build strong and resilient local economies and trusted relationships

As part of Yalu's commitment to social justice, collaboration with other Indigenous corporations continues to build robust relationships which support the cultural, entrepreneurial, and employment aspirations of Aboriginal people beyond state barriers. From the grassroots, Yalu aims to build a strong foundation that influences the lives of Aboriginal people locally, nationally, and globally. Yalu's collaborations with universities and governments in Australia helps to achieve visibility of issues that can affect Indigenous peoples in other countries.

We welcome you to Yalu.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



I would like to firstly acknowledge our past founders.

During my term as chair Yalu has grown and is being recognised by NT and commonwealth governments.

While serving as chair of Yalu I am very happy of our team for their commitment and dedication to come to work and do their best. I am very proud of them for taking on this hard work and delivering the services that we have taken on. They are increasing their learning over time which is excellent and they will hopefully be able to pass on their learning to the next person.

Our aim is for more Yolngu people to be in employment with Yalu and for us to continue to expand our services in the future. My wish is for the community to grow up healthy and strong. I hope Yalu will continue to go from strength to strength. I also hope the future Yolngu Board of Directors continue to take the team forward toward the shared mission of Yalu.

Our achievements over the last year have included;

- Repatriation Project with NCIG
- Birthing on Country with CDU/Menzies
- Strong Kindship Carer Services model
- Receiving ongoing funding for cultural programs
- Expanding into 3 offices and grown our fleet of vehicles
- Run successful pilot programs
- Established a new executive structure
- Strengthened our committee structure
- Increased financial literacy of the board
- Establishing an emerging leaders/community support team

Ross Wunungmurra sadly passed away 27th November 2021

*Ross Wunungmurra*



# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The year of 2021 has been one that will not be forgotten. This year has brought about much change for Yalu including a change in executive management with a new Business Manager role, the introduction of a new program manager as well as new team members. This is a reflection of the strength of the organisation along with commitment and capacity of the team as a whole.

After two years of involvement alongside an incredible executive team and board that have worked extremely hard to shift the organisation to where it is today, I am honoured to be serving as the the Chief Executive Officer of Yalu in 2021, following from the amazing work of the former CEO Helen Westbury.



Our focus has been on capacity building and governance. This has allowed our board to have a genuine overview of the direction we are accelerating towards which is an established, engaging and flourishing grass roots Yolŋu organisation. Our key areas being in research, family and children services and community cultural programs really allow us to have an all inclusive overview of the community needs and we are able to be agile to meet these needs within the scope of our key areas.

The world as we know it has changed during this pandemic however what that means for Yalu is to remain as the nest for the community. I am incredibly proud of the whole team for their commitment and effort to work together to pull through these challenging times to continue the hard work they do to ensure children remain in kinship care, support is provided to families in need, reunification of institutionalised youth continue, cultural programs continue to be delivered and data is collected for research to continue important advocacy work that is necessary for change to happen. This year has been one of determination, commitment and hard work from all, and we very much value the collaboration and partnerships of our members, stakeholders, funding bodies and community members that make all we do worthwhile. Without our team none of this work would be possible, therefore we will continue to invest and build the capacity within to be able to achieve our goals as an organisation with the support of our Cultural Liaison Manager.

Anahita Tonkin



## OUR ORGANISATION

Yalu Aboriginal Corporation (Yalu) is a Funded for Purpose organisation established in 2002 and rejuvenated in 2019 to be a facilitating partner and hold funding in its own right. Yalu has grown to 37 team members since 2018 where only 6 team members were operational. We are expecting projected growth to 60 staff by the end of 2026. Yalu has now grown in its financial capacity, currently housing approximately \$2million of funding per annum to support children, families and the community as a whole in Galiwinku and neighbouring communities, by providing benevolent support. We do this through our Stronger Communities for Children programs, Family and Children Services and multiple Research and Community Engagement projects.

## OUR VISION

Yalu's vision is to progress the health and wellbeing of Yolŋu people in Galiwinku by fortifying Yolŋu Walŋa (well-being) rom (law), and culture through traditionally appropriate programs, partnerships and research. We will achieve this by strengthening our capacity of being a strong Yolŋu community driven organisation and strengthening local decision making by our Yolŋu Board with the support of our advisors and supporters.

## OUR MISSION

Yalu has been established to nurture and support strong Yolŋu culture and language for future generations, encompassing the core values of Yolŋu rom: harmony, sharing and respect. We are committed to working under strong transparent governance principles and leadership to deliver culturally appropriate programs with integrity and honesty

## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**Culture:** We adhere to appropriate cultural processes underpinning our organisational structure and operations in accordance with Yolŋu rom.

**Strategy:** Everything we do must sit within a strategy that will benefit Yolŋu people both short and long term

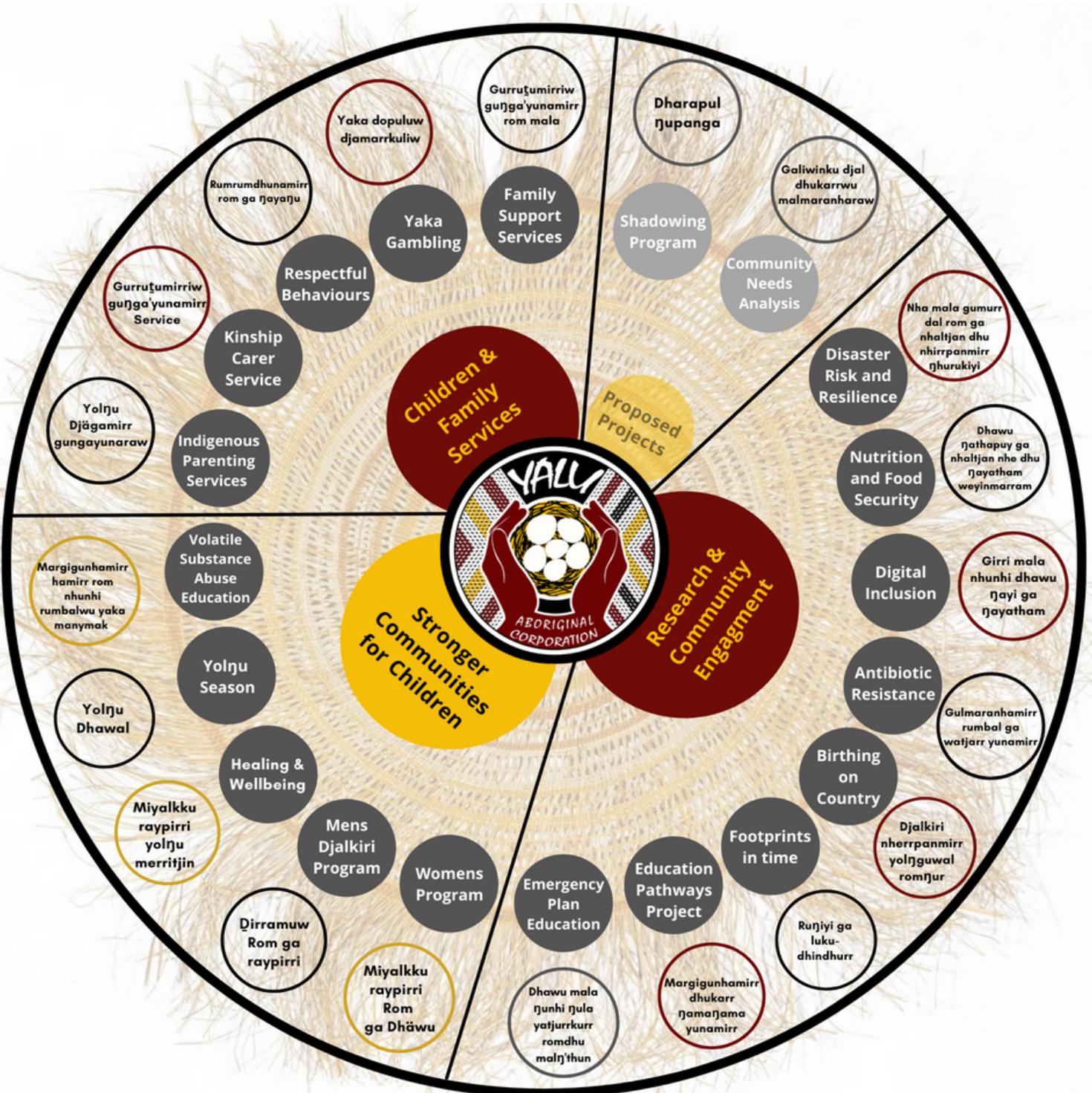
**Impact:** We support critical projects that provide lasting and measurable outcomes for the Yolŋu community

**Partnerships:** We convene strategic partnerships to nurture our efforts and achieve holistic impacts for Yolŋu people.

**Legacy:** We work in both worlds

# OUR SERVICES

Currently there are three arms to Yalu. Our first arm is research. We were founded in research and will continue to do valuable research that benefits the community. Secondly our Stronger Communities for Children arm is funded by the Commonwealth Government with a key focus on cultural programs within the community to close the gap on access to language and culture. Our most recent arm is our Children and Family Services arm is predominantly funded by the Northern Territory Government to support a number of closing the gap targets with a focus on reducing out of home care rates.



# OUR FOOTPRINT



Yalu is based in Galiwinku and operates its programs across the Galiwinku community. We are also committed in ensuring local Yolngu team members are working with Yolngu djarmakuli (children) across the East Arnhem region. This is what we refer to as our footprint.

We are also operational in three other communities; Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak and Ramingining. We have a Memorandum of Understanding with local Aboriginal Corporations and organisations to provide placed based services for Family Support Services and Kindship Care Support.



# OUR FOOTPRINT

## GALIWINKU

Galiwin'ku is the main community of the Wessel Islands, located near the island's southern tip. It is the largest and most remote Aboriginal community in northeast Arnhem Land, the second largest Aboriginal community (in terms of concentrated population) in the NT, and ranks eleventh in population of the 69 local government bodies in the Territory. There are 60 mala or hereditary tribal groups with up to 22 different dialects being used in the community. The main language is now Djambarrpuyngu. The people of Galiwin'ku, approximately 3,000 residents, retain their traditions and culture.



## MILINGIMBI

Milingimbi is a small community based in the crocodile islands on East Arnhem Land. The combined populations of the homelands and Milingimbi community are approximately 1000. The residents are spread through 13 clan groups. There are six established outstations. Milingimbi is a traditional Aboriginal community with restricted access. It also hosts incredible artwork and furniture which can be purchased online.

## GAPUWIYAK

Gapuwiyak community has an average population of around 1000 Yolŋu people. Gapuwiyak is a traditional Aboriginal community with restricted access. Permission to visit is required and can be made through the Northern Land Council directly or via the Gapuwiyak Council. Art and craft is very diverse in Gapuwiyak where items are requested from across the globe.



## RAMANGINING

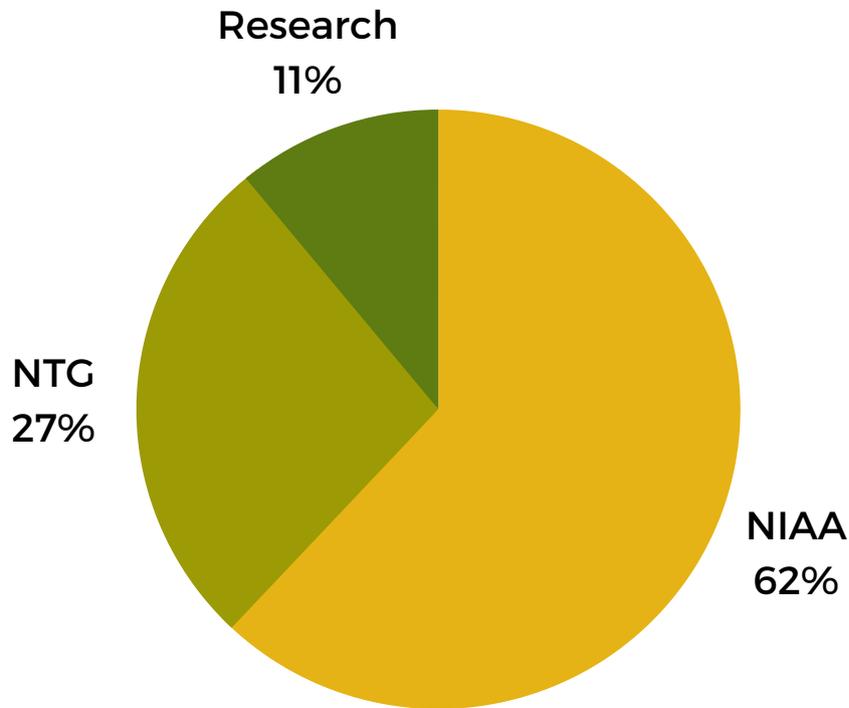
In the 2016 Census, there were 872 people in Ramangining. Of these 48.6% were male and 51.4% were female. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people made up 92.3% of the population. The median age of people in Ramangining is 26 years of age. There is a very rich art culture and history, and some pieces are exhibited nationally and internationally.



Yalu Aboriginal Corporation

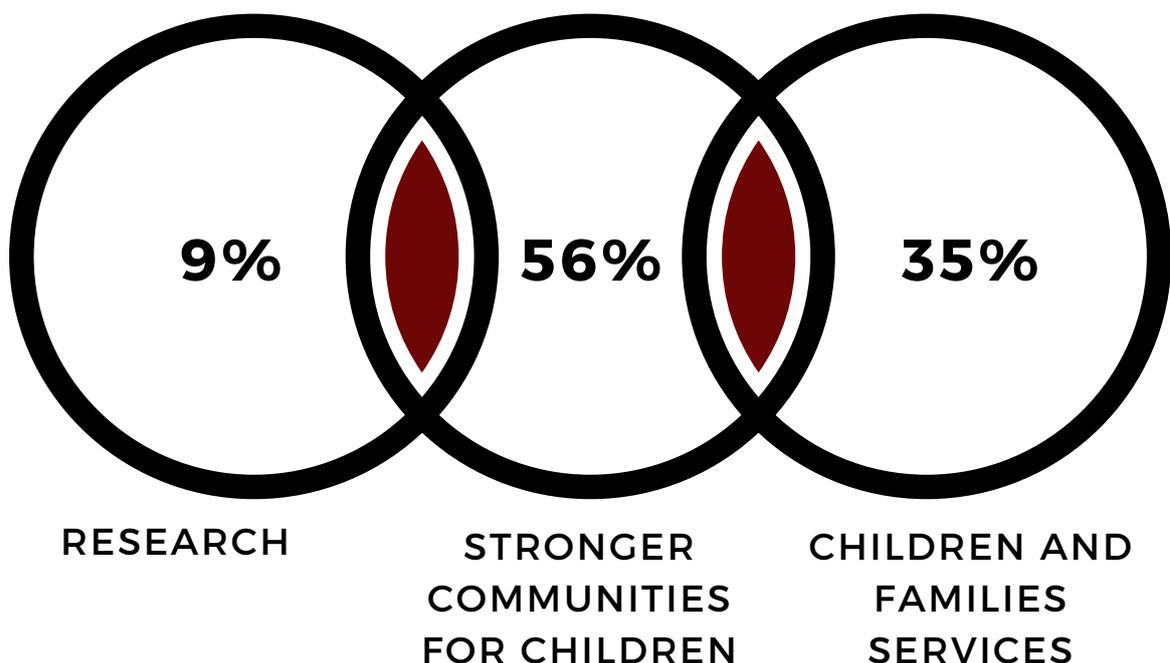
# OUR FUNDING

This graph shows the funding Yalu has successfully secured from government levels and research funding partners.



## TEAM DISTRIBUTION

This graph shows our team distribution according to programs.





YALU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

# THE YALU TEAM



SEPTEMBER 2021

# OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Ross Wunungmurra**

Chairperson  
DECEASED 27/11/2021



**Glen Gurruwiwi**

Deputy Chair



**Dorothy Bukulatjpi**

Director



**Roseanne Ganambarr**

Director



**Joan Dhamarandji**

Director



**Evelyn Bukulatjpi**

Director



**Shane Bukulatjpi**

Director



**Rhonda Bukulatjpi**

Director



**Manuel Dhurrkay**

Director



**Nancy Gudaltji**

Director

# OUR TEAM

## Independent Advisors



**Adam Mooney**  
Independent Director



**Sue Abhary**  
Independent Director



**Azure Hermes**  
Research Committee Advisor

## Executive Leadership Team



**Ross Wunungmurra**  
Cultural Liaison Manager  
DECEASED 27/11/2021



**Helen Westbury**  
Business Manager



**Anahita Tonkin**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Management Team



**Glen Gurruwiwi**  
Cultural Program Manager



**Alice McCarthy**  
Program Manager



**Robin Tonkin**  
Program Manager

# OUR TEAM



# Administration Team

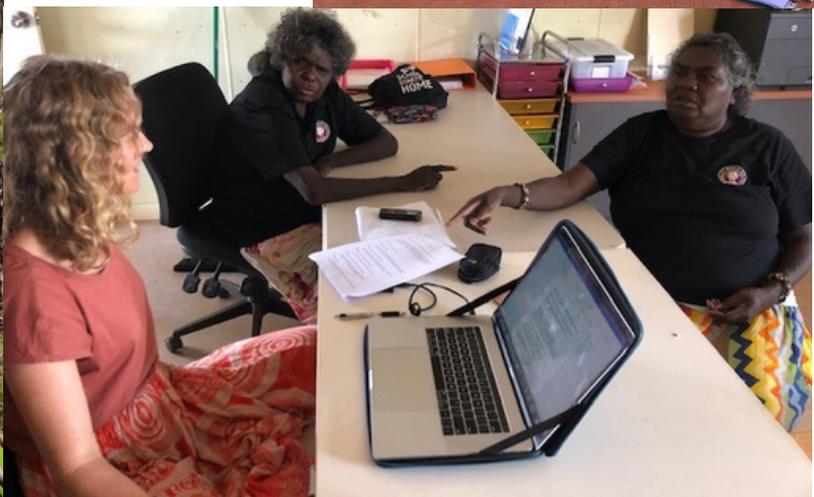


# OUR TEAM



# Research

# Team



# OUR TEAM



# Stronger Communities for Children Team



# OUR TEAM

# Children and Family Services Team





**100%**

**YOLNGU BOARD**

We are a completely Yolngu driven and all decision making is done locally by our 100% Yolngu Board

**96%**

**YOLNGU TEAM**

This includes managers, front line supervisors and support staff

# OUR COMMITTEES

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

The finance committee has an important role to meet bimonthly to discuss key financial goals, budgeting prospective and any new programs costs that sit in line with our strategic plan. The committee ensure they are reviewing the financial statements and really understanding our rupiah (money) story and ensuring we are spending it according to our contracts with integrity and probity. Outcomes of the meetings are reported at the Board of Directors meetings.

The research committee was formed in 2021 to continue the solid foundation Yalu has in research. We have raised the profile of this committee to ensure we have both internal and external advisors. The committee have established strong guidelines for universities, organisations or individuals wanting to collaborate on research with us. They will come together quarterly to review any Expressions of Interests and provide their endorsement to the Yalu Board of Directors for final sign off.

## RESEARCH COMMITTEE

# PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATORS

## MAIN FUNDING PARTNERS



Australian Government  
National Indigenous  
Australians Agency



NORTHERN  
TERRITORY  
GOVERNMENT

## RESEARCH PARTNERS



**NCIG** | NATIONAL CENTRE  
FOR INDIGENOUS  
GENOMICS



Australian  
National  
University



UNIVERSITY OF  
CANBERRA



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE



CHARLES  
DARWIN  
UNIVERSITY



menzies  
school of health research

## STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS



SIMPSON COLLEGE  
SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION



ALPA



MARTHAKAL  
RANGERS



Galiwin'ku  
Women's  
Space



East Arnhem  
Regional Council



Anglicare NT  
RESPECT • FAIRNESS • COMMUNITY



North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency



Miwatj Health  
Aboriginal Corporation

## MEMBERSHIPS & ALLIANCES



SNAICC



LARRAKIA  
NATION



Tangentyere  
Council



KALBARRI COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION  
Katherine N.T.



JULALIKARI COUNCIL  
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



Ngaanyatjarra  
Pitjantjatjara  
Yankunytjatjara  
Women's Council



Kimberley Stolen Generation  
Aboriginal Corporation



Yalu is the nest for Galiwinku, we  
walk together, each on teaches one  
*Yalu Marnggithinyaraw*

# MESSAGE FROM THE BUSINESS MANAGER



In January 2021 the decision was made for a new Business Manager (BM) position to sit within the Executive Management team. Strategically I moved across to this position due to the workload of my current CEO role as well as the need for Yalu to have continuous support from a financial and governance perspective. In addition to my role overseeing our finances and business continuity I also have management responsibility for the Family and Children's Services area and this area has increased its service delivery by 70%.

## Family & Children's Services

The Yalu Aboriginal Kinship Care Program has secured funding over 5 years across Yalu's footprint communities of Galiwinku, Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak and Ramingining. With over 150 referrals since July 2020. Referrals cover kinship care, reunification back to family, family support including domestic violence intervention and mediation. Reunification of children in non-Aboriginal care back to families has increased by 90% and includes a partnership between Yalu and Territory Families to establish short term reunification housing for children and youth to visit extended families, holidays, sorry business, and ceremonies.

**Advocacy** – in my role of Business Manager I represent Yalu and specifically Yalu's Family and Children's Services in the national SNAICC forums, and the Kids Across Regions Forum. Yalu is a founding member of the NT Aboriginal Kinship Carer Services Alliance with membership of seven Aboriginal Controlled Organisations- this has given Yalu a strong voice in Aboriginal Child Protection across the NT. Yalu is the only organisation in this alliance which operates in remote areas and we are proud of the good will and collaboration we have built in our footprint communities of Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak and Ramingining to deliver family and kinship care services.

The Family and Children's Services work has grown over the past year and three new programs have been developed and two implemented as of 30 June 2021.

1. Men Protecting Children & Partners & Family with Respectful Behaviour – Dirramurruwurr dhu ga Djaga Milyalk Djamarrkuliw ga Gurrutumirri Mala Ngayanguy Manymakdhu ga Makmakhhunamirriy Rom. Dhu ga Guyanganhawuyu. Timeframe 12 months and across the footprint communities of Galiwinku, Milingimbi, Gapuwiyak and Ramingining.
2. Gambling Amelioration – Yakka Gambling over 3 months in Galiwinku.
3. Family Support Gamurr Dhangimirr across footprint communities of Galiwinku, Milingimbi, and Gapuwiyak.

Yalu has received the commitment from NTG Territory Families, Communities and Housing for funding over 5 years for this program which will start in January 2022.

This is my third year with Yalu and I have seen tremendous growth, strengthening of governance, policies and procedures which has allowed Yalu to finally become an independent organisation with local decision making. It has been a privileged to work alongside an amazing Yalu Board that have consistently shown courage to reshape and strengthen Yalu's business acumen and build onto our community service delivery platform.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Westbury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

