

2025 First Circles Leadership Program gets underway in Mparntwe



This year's First Circles program welcomes 15 emerging leaders, representing communities from across the Territory, including Pirlangimpi, Wurrumiyanga, Galiwinku, Wadeye, Tennant Creek, Jilkminggan, Barunga, Alice Springs, Yuelamu, Santa Teresa, Jabiru and Kalkarindji.

Members will attend 5 workshops during 2025, culminating in a presentation to Northern Territory Cabinet Ministers later in the year.

The workshops will provide members with the opportunity to develop and expand their personal capabilities and become strong leaders in their communities.

Workshop One

The arrival into Mparntwe kicked off with a wonderful Welcome to Country by Arrernte Elder Ms Kumalie Riley. Kumalie inspired members by reminding them that they bring a significant amount of knowledge to the program. She explained that the First Circles program offers them the skills to balance Aboriginal ways and the Western ways.

The workshop commenced with members getting to know each other and learning about the First Circles Program. Connections between members

are an integral part of the program and will provide a valuable platform for knowledge sharing, mutual

support and exploring ways to collaborate in the future.

A highlight of the workshop was hearing from prominent Aboriginal keynote speakers who are well connected to their community and serve in senior management and leadership roles. Keynote speakers were:

Sera Bray – Executive Director, National Aboriginal Art Gallery Project

Red Tails Pink Tails Right Tracks Program

Ian McAdam, Program Manager

Darren Talbot – Sports and Health Coordinator

Jezebel Moketarinja-Sena, Regional Coordinator for the Aboriginal Interpreter Service in the Southern Region - Department of Housing Local Government and Community Development



Sera Bray kept members captivated with her motivational presentation and leadership advice.

Some of the experiences shared, emphasised the benefits of:

- Working across various sectors, including government, non-government and corporate industry.
- Building and maintaining strong stakeholder relationships, as many members were often the first point of call when services engage with communities.

First Circles

Supporting Aboriginal leaders from across the Territory

- The impact of mentoring and how this is an important element in addressing challenges in the community, at the grassroots level.
- Leading with a “community first” perspective which created powerful and relatable experiences amongst members.



Kevin Dumoo from Wadeye, presents Ian McAdam and Darren Talbot with a gift in appreciation of their presentation to the group.

The Aboriginal Partnerships and Reform (APR) unit provided an overview of the Aboriginal affairs portfolio in the NT, the current Government’s key priorities and what this means for Aboriginal communities. Also discussed were key aspects of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.



2024 Central Australian Alumni Mentor, Sally Sena and Barkly First Circles member, Nicholas Tracker.

First Circles new look for 2025!



Corbin Mujandi from Jabiru show casing the new First Circles polo shirt designed by local Mparntwe company Mulla Mulla Art.



Members, Zelda Dhamarrandji, Patricia Puruntatameri, Lateesha Coombes and Simone Baker visit ANZAC Hill.

Simpsons Gap Photo Shoot

The picture-perfect surroundings of Simpsons Gap, 20 minutes out of Mparntwe, was used to highlight this year's photo shoot. With the view to update the program's promotional material, Members had the opportunity to speak on camera and share what they were hoping to achieve from the program and what this opportunity means to them

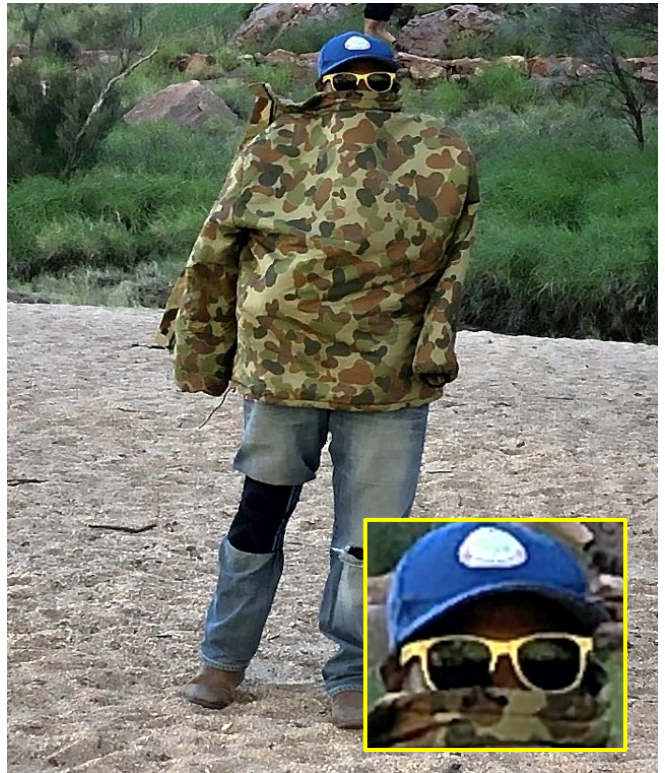


Patricia Puruntatameri from Pirlangimpi speaking to camera about the First Circles program and what it means to her.



Members took the opportunity to snap a few photos of their own for family and friends back home.

Simone Baker from Jilkminggan found Simpsons Gap a little chilly, but luckily, she had her yellow 'Aboriginal Partnerships and Reform sunglasses' on to help us recognize her.



**Next First Circles
Workshop**

Big Rivers Region

2-6 June 2025 - Katherine

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Supporting Aboriginal leaders from across the Territory

2025 First Circles Members



Corben Mudjandi
Jabiru



Selma Smiler
Kalkarindji



Karly Ahfat
Barunga



Zelda Dhamarrandji
Galiwinku



Stacey Davis
Santa Teresa



Nicholas Tracker
Tennant Creek



Lateesha Coombes
Wurrumiyanga



Casey Smiler
Jilkminggan



Kevin Dumoo
Wadeye



Terrence Wilson
Yuelamu



Shane Dhamarrandji
Galiwinku



Lindsay Katararinja
Mparntwe/Ntaria



Veronica Peters
Santa Teresa



Patricia Puruntatameri
Pirlangimoi



Simone Baker
Jilkminggan