

# BARKLY REGIONAL COUNCIL



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**14 October 2014**

## **Barkly Desert Culture DVD Launch**

Locals crowded into Elliott and Ali Curung last week to watch the launch of a DVD of films, songs and stories about desert cultures in the Barkly last week.

Barkly Regional Council's Regional Youth, Sport and Recreation Coordinator Sean Spencer has been working with indigenous youth in Ali Curung and Elliott to engage with elders in a three-month pilot multi-media project about their desert cultures.

"The main idea of the project was to bridge the gap between young and old," said Sean. "Youngsters engaged with elders to discuss topics like drinking and substance abuse. They also asked what it was like for elders when they were young and looked at how communities can move forward in a positive and healthy manner."

The results of these community talks were then expressed through song, hip hop music, storytelling, film, posters and animation which Sean compiled into a 30-minute DVD called Barkly Desert Culture, launched in Elliott last Thursday and Ali Curung last Friday.

Sean appointed Melbourne sound engineer Monkey Mark, filmmaker Leo Ortega and Beatrice Lewis from Sista Sounds Music NT Program back in May this year to collaborate with local youth and teach them the skills needed to film, lay down a track, record and edit.

"Community response to this activity has been fantastic and has engaged locals of all ages. There has been a handing down of knowledge through youth interviewing elders and gathering stories on culture and being strong," said Sean. "The program has been a huge success."

Funding came from various sources, including the Federal Government, Catholic Care NT and the Warrabri Aboriginal Land Trust (Ali Curung). Traditional owners from Ali Curung used money from the Federal Government's compensation for the five-year lease of the community after intervention, spending \$40,000 on repairs and maintenance of equipment, the purchase of cameras and recording and filming software and the installation of new computers in a multi-media room in the Ali Curung community.

The multi-media team spent eight weeks in Ali Curung followed by six weeks in Elliott teaching multi-media skills to youngsters there. "The program was well received and there was a high participation rate from the community," said Sean. "Eventually we want to roll the program out across the Barkly as a long-term sustainable project and as a pathway into multi-media jobs for indigenous youth."

The DVD launch of Barkly Desert Culture was held at the basketball courts in Elliott at 7pm on Thursday, October 9 and at the big screen in the park in Ali Curung at 7pm on Friday, October 10.

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