



**Garma**

**29 July – 1 August 2016**

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## **Statement in remembrance of Ms Gurruwiwi**

**Wednesday, 23 March, 2016**

It is with great sadness that the Yothu Yindi Foundation mourns the passing of Ms Gurruwiwi, our dear friend and board member.

A leader of her large Galpu family, Ms Gurruwiwi was a strong, resilient, senior traditional Yolngu woman who was a passionate advocate for her people and community.

Day in day out Ms Gurruwiwi tirelessly contributed everything she had to her family and her people. She was a strong spokesperson for Yolngu people and their future and never stopped working to find a rightful place for her people in the modern world.

First and foremost she was a Yolngu woman who sought to bridge the gap between Yolngu and non-Yolngu people.

She was involved in numerous community projects and sat on many boards, including Miwatj Health, Lirwi Tourism, ARDS and Yolngu Radio, and the Ladies Choir.

She is a treasured and highly respected member of the Yothu Yindi Foundation, and her contribution to our education projects has been priceless.

In her role as a director of the annual Garma Festival in northeast Arnhem Land, she delivered numerous cultural awareness workshops to our guests, generously helping others to gain a better understanding of Indigenous traditions and customs.

Her love of linguistics was evident in the Yolngu Matha classes she provided many Garma guests, often delivered with a dose of good humour.

She was also instrumental in supporting Yolngu prisoners, many of them serving time for minor offences, through the introduction of the Elders Visiting Program in the township of Gove, a program credited with greatly assisting offenders in their rehabilitation & reintegration.

Born in 1955 to a Gumatj mother and Galpu father, Ms Gurruwiwi was loved by all who knew her.

She passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family.

*The rock that stands against time, she moves freely between worlds.*

**Ends**