



Garma

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Statement on the passing of Mr Wunungmurra

Sunday, August 9, 2015

The Yothu Yindi Foundation (YYF) would like to express its deep sadness at the passing of senior Dhalwangu leader Mr Wunungmurra.

A senior *dilak* Mr Wunungmurra was a friend to all Yolngu people, a careful adviser in difficult times and a man who has showed his people that there is a place for Yolngu people in the future.

YYF chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu AM, a cousin and life-long friend, said Mr Wunungmurra was passionate about Yolngu education and employment.

"We were sent by our fathers to Methodist Bible College to be leaders of the future. Far from our families we supported each other and began a life-long collaboration on behalf of our people".

"My cousin served his people always and was a close adviser to the Yolngu leadership, as well as playing his own role" Mr Yunupingu said.

"He was also a brilliant sportsman and a champion footballer who showed many young Yolngu men how to play the game".

Mr Wunungmurra was born at Yirrkala in 1946. He grew to be a ceremonial leader and *dilak* of the Dhalwangu nation of northeast Arnhem Land.

An educator and a teacher at Yirrkala, Mr Wunungmurra also served with distinction as the chairperson of Layhnapuy Homelands, the Yambirpa School Council and the Northern Land Council.

He was a key player in the establishment of the Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation and the Miwatj Aboriginal Legal Service.

A signatory to the landmark 1963 Yirrkala Bark Petition, an interpreter in the Gove Lands Rights case, Mr Wunungmurra was honoured at the recent Garma for his lifetime of advocacy on behalf of his people.

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