



**MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
MINISTER FOR SPORT AND RECREATION  
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Mr Brian Doolan  
CEO  
Fred Hollows Foundation  
4 Mitchell Street  
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Dear Mr ~~Doolan~~, *Brian*

During the Ninth Assembly of Parliament in the Northern Territory, on Monday 22 March 2005 I did an adjournment to record on Parliamentary Hansard and to acknowledge and recognise the contribution that the Fred Hollows Foundation has made to the Remote Nutrition Program that has bettered the health of residents at Wugularr Community through the work of Ms Martha Bennett.

Please find attached a copy of the adjournment which I have also sent to other organisations such as the Sunrise Health Service and the Katherine Town Council to acknowledge the assistance they provided to the nutrition program.

Congratulations on this recognition of the continuing hard work being done through the Fred Hollows Foundation at Wugularr Community.

Yours sincerely

*J. Ah Kit*  
JOHN AH KIT

C.c.

Ms Martha Bennett – Wugularr Women's Centre  
Mayor Katherine Town Council  
CEO Sunrise Health Service  
Manager Indigenous Programs Darwin Fred Hollows Foundation





**John Ah Kit MLA – Member for Arnhem  
Minister for Local Government  
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## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr AH KIT (Arnhem):** Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise tonight to speak to the House about an Aboriginal woman from the community of Wugularr, Martha Bennett, who is the motivating factor towards a remote nutrition program that has bettered the health of residents at the Wugularr community. For her efforts and hard work, on 24 February 2005, Martha was presented the Tattersall's Award for Enterprise and Achievement, which recognises community initiated programs. The previous awards in the Territory had gone to the Tiwi Islands and Gove. The monthly awards are spread across the Tattersall's jurisdictions of the Northern Territory, Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania and Victoria. As part of the Tattersall's Awards, the Wugularr Women's Centre received \$15 000 for their centre and Ms Bennett received \$5000.

Martha Bennett is a strong community member with a great deal of responsibility and commitment to ensuring her fellow community members understand the importance of healthy living, nutritious food and good hygiene which contributes to greater health and wellbeing. Martha's involvement with the health and nutrition program began through the Women's Centre where she joined as an assistant. She became enthusiastic about nutritious food and quickly noticed the benefits derived from providing nourishing and balanced meals with the feeding program, particularly at a time when, in the majority of the remote Aboriginal communities, there can be habits of utilising pre-packaged and often highly refined processed foods. Through her hard work and dedication, Martha is now the Coordinator of the Women's Centre. With the assistance of her sisters and external agencies such as Sunrise Health Service and Fred Hollows Foundation, Martha has been instrumental in creating change with eating habits among the youth of her community, especially young mothers and infants in their early years of development. Martha and her team provide breakfast and lunch for the school, meals for the aged and meals for the 'at risk' children aged between 0–5 years. The reason this program is such a success is because it is a community initiated, fully funded and sustained through \$30 fortnightly deductions from Centrelink and CDEP participants. This equates to \$2 a day.

An employee of the Fred Hollows Foundation, Mr Nick Di Candilo, shared a story with me where, one day no one turned up for work at the Women's Centre and Nick asked Martha, 'well, what do we do since nobody has turned up for work', and Martha's response was, 'well, the kids and old people still need to be fed'. This shows the dedication and commitment Martha has for her community and the families that live at Wugularr.

Along with representatives of the Fred Hollows Foundation and Tattersall's NT, I go further to acknowledge the Mayor of Katherine, Anne Shepherd who, with these representatives, travelled to Wugularr to make the presentation to Martha. The reason this is so significant is because this is the first time the Mayor of Katherine has been involved in making a presentation to the people of the Wugularr community at Wugularr. The Mayor advised me that when she travelled to Wugularr, and I quote:

*I was overwhelmed and thought it was wonderful, just wonderful as the whole community came out for the presentation, there were kids everywhere with smiles and I was so impressed with Martha and her sisters as it was such a good news story for our region.*

We talk about partnerships, relationships and reconciliation, but this is what it is really about. Thank you to the Mayor of Katherine, Anne Shepherd, Tattersall's and Fred Hollows Foundation for walking the walk and talking the talk.

In August this year, Tattersall's will celebrate the 25th year of the awards, where an overall winner will be chosen from the past 12 months, and they will receive an additional \$15000 personal prize, and their chosen beneficiary \$75 000. I hope Martha and Wugularr win the big one.

Whilst I am here, I would also like to pay tribute to another strong Aboriginal woman who lives in my electorate. She resides on Groote Eylandt. Her name is Linda Williams. She took out the Outstanding Individual Achievement CDEP Award held in Alice Springs on Monday, 21 February 2005.

When Groote Eylandt teenager Linda Williams started work at the island's only print shop at the age of 18, she was shy, and would not talk to anyone. Eight years later, through learning and against considerable odds, Linda changed her life. Not only has she completed an apprenticeship to become a qualified printer, she is now also a mother to a three-year-old daughter Loretta. To cap off her success, Linda has taken over as Manager of the print shop where she once worked. The once-shy girl is now a confident, skilled, creative and conscientious young Aboriginal woman whose leadership qualities are immediately obvious to those with whom she works.

Linda is the only qualified printer on Groote Eylandt. The Angurugu CDEP owns the indigenous-run print shop where Linda has shown her true potential. The CDEP Co-ordinator, Andrew Clarke said:

*Since Linda completed her apprenticeship, the community has seen the benefits of having skilled and qualified people in the community and are signing up for another seven new apprentices in various fields.*

Andrew Clarke went on to say that he believes that Linda has made a important contribution to cultural maintenance for her community by showing that their culture is not only the past, but is the future as well, and if they try hard, they can achieve what she has done.

Under Linda's leadership, the CDEP print shop handles all printing on Groote Eylandt, from the simplest of order forms to full colour work, as well as the island's only newspaper, *The Echo*. And so the wheel has turned full circle with Linda Williams now passing on her hard-earned skills to a new print shop apprentice.

To finish off, I share with you Linda's words:

*I completed my printing apprenticeship with the help of CDEP. I travelled from Groote Eylandt to Brisbane a few times a year to attend classes at the TAFE. I am the only qualified printer on Groote Eylandt.*

Congratulations to both Martha and Linda on their achievements.

Madam Acting Deputy Speaker, as Minister for Sport, I was privileged to visit Nguiu last weekend for the 2005 Tiwi Grand Final, but at least as much, I was privileged to attend an extraordinarily important opening, important for Aboriginal and Tiwi art, and also for Aboriginal enterprises. Everyone knows that the Tiwi islanders are great football players, but what is perhaps less well known is that Tiwi islanders are also great artists. In Bede Tungatalum, we have a real Tiwi champion. Bede, along with Giovanni Tipungwuti, established Tiwi Designs back in 1970. Beginning with single colour wood cuts, Tiwi Designs expanded to work in silk screen printing on fabric.

Tiwi Designs has become, over the years, the most significant exponent of Aboriginal art on fabric in the nation and, with a history spanning 35 years, is one of the longest running Aboriginal art enterprises in Australia. Arguably, the work of Tiwi Designs has become one of the most recognisable in the world, and Bede has matched that. He has been a practising professional artist for all of those 35 years. As an individual artist, as well as a member of Tiwi Designs, Bede has been at the forefront of developments in modern Tiwi art, blending and expanding on traditional designs to create works of great originality and strength.

He has worked as an artist, not just here in the Top End, but interstate and overseas. His work has been collected by major public collections in every state of the country as well as the National Gallery and many private collections. And this, Bede's latest enterprise, is perhaps his most significant: Bede is the first Aboriginal visual artist in Australia to undertake the establishment of a fully private one-man gallery on an Aboriginal community.

The Purrikikini Gallery is an individual enterprise of great significance to the development of Aboriginal art, but it is also the great tribute to Bede himself. His work has always been deeply embedded in Tiwi tradition. His genuine courage in undertaking this new enterprise is something that deserves the highest praise. I joined everyone on that day in wishing Bede the very best and had the great honour to open Bede's Purrikikini Gallery.

After the opening of the gallery, I journeyed on over to the footy oval to the Stanley Tipiloura Oval. About a week earlier, I was asked by Tony Shaw, a well-known Top End identity who coached football sides like St Marys, played a lot of football himself with the South Adelaide Football Club back in his early days, and was involved with Bridge Autos for many years and is still tied up with businesses of some sort in Darwin. Tony asked me to do him a favour while I was on the Island for the grand final. He could not be there. He was away on business down south, so I was asked to – or I was privileged - to present a special award to the daughter of the legendary David 'Soapy' Kantilla. The 1960s Australian Rules Football trailblazer, David Kantilla, was honoured through me with his posthumous induction into the South Adelaide Football Club's Hall of Fame at a ceremony prior to the grand final match. I presented the award to David Kantilla's daughter, Marie Clare Pilakui. As I said last Sunday, this was a wonderful and significant gesture by the South Adelaide Football Club and will be a great source of pride, not just to his family, but to the Tiwi Islands and Territory football generally.

David Kantilla's playing prowess woke the footy world to the wealth of untapped indigenous sporting talent up here. He really led the way for the Territory. He was playing decades before the advent of the AFL and would undoubtedly have made the grade in the nation's national league if the opportunities he pioneered were then available for Territory players. Since then, of course, many, many indigenous Territorians have played at the elite level of AFL in the past, and as many as that again are currently playing in the national competition. David Kantilla was recruited to South Adelaide from St Marys in 1961, and went on as a ruckman and full forward to kick 106 goals in 113 games until 1966. He kicked six goals in his first game with the Panthers, and went on to achieve the unequalled record of winning the Knuckey's Best and Fairest Cup in his first two years with the Panthers. He played state football for the South Australian premiership side of 1964, a match in which he was awarded best on ground. He is remembered at South Adelaide for his unassuming nature, his courage on the field and his soaring, fingertip marks. In elevating David Kantilla to their Hall of Fame, South Adelaide has honoured a great Tiwi man and I sincerely thank them for recognising his contribution to the club.

In conclusion, the Tiwi Islands Grand Final last Sunday was a great game. Despite the huge hardships faced by the Milikapiti team, Muluwurri, they really took the fight to Tuyu Buffaloes. They had to play a delayed preliminary final, courtesy of Cyclone Ingrid, and then face an undefeated Buffaloes in the grand final three days later. It was an incredibly hot afternoon, with a lot less shade for spectators, thanks to Ingrid. The players on both sides have to be congratulated for excelling at the fast running, courageous game that makes Tiwi footy shine so strongly. As it turned out, the Magpie Geese failed to beat the Buffaloes, despite a brave fight back in the last quarter. It seems the Buffaloes can only win these days on the islands, that is the Tiwi islands which, of course, I regret for personal reasons, but I am thankful Tuyu was victorious in 2005.