

## Waymamba Gaykamangu

### Citation upon receipt of Honorary Doctorate

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Waymamba Gaykamangu has had a long and distinguished career in education in the Northern Territory. She was born and grew up on Milingimbi Island in East Arnhemland. Her father was a strong leader and peacemaker for people throughout the Yolngu lands.

She undertook her schooling at Milingimbi, and became a Teaching Assistant at Milingimbi Bilingual school where she worked from 1973 until 1987. She received an Associate Diploma of Teaching from Batchelor College in 1987.

As a visiting teacher for Homeland Centres, Waymamba continued studies in Remote Area Teacher Education at Batchelor College in 1988-89, and was employed at the Curriculum Development Unit of the NT Education Department in Darwin from 1990-93.

In 1994, Waymamba was chosen by a group of Yolngu advisers at NTU to become the inaugural Lecturer in Yolngu Languages and Culture at Charles Darwin University. The program was established and still continues under the authority of the Yolngu advisers. The teaching program began with students learning Gupapuyngu, Waymamba's language.

In her fourteen years employed as the Yolngu studies lecturer, Waymamba taught many hundreds of Yolngu studies students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and in short courses. She also present guest lectures in education, anthropology and linguistics, and undertook supervision of higher degree students.

She has worked with other Yolngu elders through the Yolngu Aboriginal consultancy Initiative on a range of research and consultancy projects, bringing traditional Yolngu practices of knowledge production and agreement making to emerging Indigenous research methodologies. Through this work she participated in significant transdisciplinary research, for example in the governance of Aboriginal housing after all NT remote Aboriginal housing was compulsorily acquired by the government as state housing.

Her other research included

- working with the Department of Justice understanding the history and culture of Aboriginal gambling and gambling-related harm,
- issues of health literacy and health communication,
- the education of future leaders in Aboriginal schools,
- the teaching of mathematics as a community practice
- remote-urban migration among Yolngu women, children and family groups.

In 2005 she and her team received the Prime Minister's Award for University Teacher of the Year, and in 2007 the Vice Chancellor's Award for Exceptional Performance in Research. In 2010 she was presented with the National Elder of the Year award by the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council.

Waymamba Gaykamangu continues part-time work as a Yolŋu bilingual, bicultural consultant to Charles Darwin University on indigenous remote area education, governance and leadership programs, the development of the Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages, and Yolŋu Radio.

Now twenty years after establishment, the Yolngu studies program is still going strong, Australia's only program teaching a full course of studies in an Aboriginal language at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. And Waymamba, now living in retirement at Milingimbi, continues to be an active advisor and educator in a range of teaching and research programs through CDU.