



Working together to create opportunities for Wajarri Yamatji students

Geraldton Universities Centre (GUC) has welcomed funding from Sinosteel Midwest Corporation (SMC) that will offer pathways and support to encourage Wajarri Yamatji people to undertake higher education programs.

With the aim of maximising employment opportunities for Wajarri Yamatji people in the resources sector, the Yanburi program will include a pre-maths bridging program to be offered only through GUC.

The pre-maths course - a first of its kind - will address a need identified at the GUC to assist Aboriginal people who may be missing some fundamental maths skills that prevent them from starting or successfully completing CQUniversity's STEPS bridging program supported at the Centre. One of GUC's most popular courses, STEPS provides a vital link to degree programs by preparing students for university study and helping them to meet course eligibility requirements.

GUC Director, Natalie Nelmes, welcomes SMC's donation of \$10,000 for the development and delivery of the pre-maths program.

"It is a goal of GUC for the proportion of Aboriginal students studying at GUC to reflect Geraldton's broader Aboriginal population figures," she said. "This program will help us to achieve this goal, with the ultimate aim of producing qualified Aboriginal professionals in a range of disciplines from nursing and social work to accounting and engineering."

Scholarships to support the cost of studying higher education courses will be the other key feature of the Yanburi program.

SMC will offer up to six scholarships of \$1,000 per semester to eligible Wajarri Yamatji full time university students throughout their study programs, to a maximum of four years. For full time STEPS bridging students studying at GUC, there will also be up to six \$500 incentive payments available for Wajarri Yamatji, with both scholarships also available on a pro-rata basis for part time students.

SMC have made the funding available as part of the Weld Range Project Native Title and Heritage Sustainable Benefits Agreement 2014.

"SMC are really pleased that this partnership with GUC will offer Wajarri people the opportunity to access higher education. It's innovative and really fills a current gap in the system," said SMC Wajarri Liaison Officer Marianne Miller.

Anyone wanting to register their interest in joining courses at GUC should call the Aboriginal Student Support Officer Tiambra Calvin on 9920 4400.

Ends

For further information please contact the GUC on 99204400