

Chancellor,

I have the pleasure of presenting Ms Josephine Lee, who has been awarded the Honorary Doctor of Social Work.

Ms Lee, a First Nations woman from Charter's Towers, Queensland, has made a lasting mark on the social work profession, particularly in the Northern Territory (NT).

The daughter of an Gudjula and Girramay Woman from Gudjal Country, Ms Lee's journey into social work is deeply rooted in her heritage, lived experiences, and a profound commitment to supporting communities facing adversity. Since relocating to the NT in 1997, Ms Lee (formerly Battaglini) has become a highly respected and influential figure in health, recognised for her leadership, professional expertise, and pioneering contributions to social work practice.

A career-defining moment came in 2018 when Ms Lee was awarded the prestigious Mary Moylan NT Social Worker of the Year Award, an honour from the Australian Association of Social Workers, which recognised her exceptional contributions to the social work field in the Territory. This award, named after Mary Moylan, the first remote social worker for the Commonwealth Department of Social Security, celebrates those who continue

her legacy of innovative and compassionate social work practice.

Ms Lee was nominated again, by CDU students, in 2025 for the same award, a testament to her lasting impact on the profession and her ongoing dedication to student mentorship.

Between 1997 to 2000, Ms Lee was a foundational counsellor at the Danila Dilba Emotional & Social Wellbeing Centre offering emotional support to members of the Stolen Generations and later became the Centre's Director for five years.

As the Centre's director, Ms Lee led efforts to build a First Nations workforce, training mature-aged staff from the Stolen Generations to serve as community outreach workers.

Ms Lee firmly believes that "addiction is a human problem," challenging the stigma surrounding substance use by reframing it as a challenge that can be understood and overcome. This perspective has not only helped destigmatise addiction but also fostered compassion for those facing it.

Chancellor,

In recognition of her outstanding contributions to social work in the Northern Territory and her drive to training the next generation of social workers, Charles Darwin University council

awards Josephine Lee the title of Honorary Doctor of Social Work.