

Professor Barney Glover:

Vice-Chancellor, Charles Darwin University, 2009-2013

01 Barney Glover on: his first priorities on becoming Vice-Chancellor in 2009

When I first became Vice-Chancellor the biggest priority for me was to get to know the university I was leading but importantly to begin what I felt at the time would be my highest priority and that was to connect the university with the community of the Northern Territory. I think it's fair to say there were concerns in the community about the quality of the organisation of the university. A great deal of affection for it but some questions around whether it was providing high quality tertiary education to the NT. I was convinced the university was and it was very clear to me that I needed to engage with the community to explain to them the university's vision and direction

02 Barney Glover on: what has been achieved at CDU in his 5 years there

Over the past 5 years an enormous amount has been achieved at Charles Darwin University. I am extremely proud of the work that our staff have done in ensuring that the university in many ways I think exceeded my vision for it in 2009 in what we have been able to do. There's a range of things that I'd highlight. We have made great strides in the quality of our teaching and learning in both vocational training and higher education. By any objective measure the university is now seen to be an organisation with very high quality programs across the board and I think that's a major tribute to the work our staff have done in that 5 year period.

Our research continues to be highly ranked and in fact one of the reasons over the last few years we have actually received international ranking for the university has been as a result of the great research going on at CDU. It has gone on for many, many years but recognition of the high impact of our research is now leading to international recognition. That's a very important step. The Times Higher Education's rankings were a wonderful opportunity for the university to be seen and profiled on the world stage, and this year to be ranked in the top 100 universities under 50 years of age, for a small regional Australian university that is a great tribute.

03 Barney Glover on: the infrastructure refresh at CDU

We've also been able to very fortunately invest in a lot of important infrastructure and facilities for the university. By the middle of 2014 when the last of the major suite of buildings is completed for the university we will have invested more than a quarter of a billion dollars over 5 years to really in a once in a generation way refresh the buildings, the infrastructure, the facilities of an institution that really is such an important part of the Northern Territory's development.

We have been able to develop a joint medical program with Flinders University. We have an oil and gas centre to do training for this emergent oil and gas industry. Later this year we will commence construction of a trade training centre that is a state-of-the-art facility – the best of its kind in northern Australia. We have our Waterfront business school that will be finished by the end of 2013. And of course with Menzies, the Menzies School of Health Research, our great partner, we are building a major public health and child health and development research facility on our campus at Casuarina.

So there have been some wonderful infrastructure developments that position the university very well for the future.

04 Barney Glover on: the challenges of the past five years leading CDU & online learning

I think leading any Australian university is a great privilege. In the context of northern Australia, and particularly the Northern Territory where you are dealing with a relatively small population base and a very extensive geographic area to support, and leading an organisation where our campuses and our learning centres can be so widely spread, that there are always going to be challenges. And I think one of the great outcomes from the challenges we've had in terms of our financial sustainability has been our outreach into the online world. The university is one of Australia's most important providers of online education, online higher education. And at a time when technology enriched education is at the forefront of everyone's mind in education around the world, CDU is very well placed to position itself as a major player nationally and internationally in that space.

05 Barney Glover on: the challenges of regional and remote delivery

There have been challenges in the context of delivering education into regional and remote parts of the NT. And from that perspective from time to time we haven't done as well as we could, and I think the university now is seen internationally as an organisation that has significant expertise and capability in that regard. But no, there have been challenges and we have learnt from those challenges and I think the university is better placed into the future to be very robust and respond to anything that is thrown at it.

06 Barney Glover on: the future for CDU

The future for Charles Darwin University I think is a fabulous future. If you were to look across Australia at universities and their positioning with all of the externalities that actually impact upon higher education I think you'll find that Charles Darwin University is nicely placed to respond to those external challenges.

We are at the gateway to Asia, so our connectivity to the Asian region is going to place us in an exceptionally strong position as Australia endeavours to be part of Asia in the twenty-first century.

We are also part of northern Australia. Everyone is interested in the development of northern Australia and how that development both fits within the Asian Century as it is described but also talks about the development of this important part of the country. And again Charles Darwin University is ideally placed to support the workforce development, the skills that are needed, the economic prosperity that should come from that development in northern Australia in a sustainable way so I think there are reasons that the future is extraordinarily positive for the university.

But equally there are going to be some challenges.

The university is already facing budget cuts over the next few years and they could in fact become worse. How the university positions itself in that financially constrained way is another important challenge which is why I think the university is equally well placed because of its online education capability. So the next generation of delivering higher education around the world is going to be the purview, the bailiwick, the responsibility of organisations that have this capacity to deliver high quality online education in synchronous and asynchronous ways and CDU is well placed to do that. We have the technology, we've been investing in it and upgrading it over recent years so in that regard I think CDU is again on the threshold.

07 Barney Glover on: Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)

I think our relationship with Batchelor and what we are doing with indigenous leadership is something that I also am very proud of. BIITE has a wonderful history in the Northern Territory of providing tertiary education, both vocational and higher education, to Indigenous Australians. For a long time we have been hoping to draw our two institutions together and we have been able to do that with the establishment of the Australian Centre for Indigenous Knowledges and Education (ACIKE). We have been very fortunate by virtue of that partnership to secure significant funding from the Commonwealth Government – almost \$40M in funding – which has enabled us to build what is the most impressive facility focussed on Indigenous knowledges and education on any Australian campus. On that basis I think we have a great infrastructure base to build a partnership to support pathways to higher education for indigenous Australians and particularly indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory. I think it is one of the great success stories of the last few years is that relationship with Batchelor.

08 Barney Glover on: the commitment of the NT Government to CDU

[Note: You need to correct *commitment* in title on interview file to *commitment*]

One thing that I have been so enormously impressed by is the commitment of the Northern Territory Government to its university, and I've dealt with governments now of both political persuasions – a labor government when I first arrived and a CLP

government over the best part of a year. I've found bi-partisan support for the university in a way I didn't imagine I would see when I came up here. And a level of commitment and support of the university that is so much deeper and stronger than you find in any other Australian jurisdiction. From that perspective it has been an enormous support to the university and to myself to be able to reach out to a government that was willing on many occasions to step up and assist the university as it navigated its strategy.

I think that has probably been one of the things that I'll look back on and I know I won't find it elsewhere in Australia by the nature of being in different jurisdictions but it has been a hugely beneficial part of being the Vice Chancellor of CDU.

09 Barney Glover: reflections

I certainly see Charles Darwin University as deeply embedded in my heart for the future.