

## Honorary Doctorate Citation

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### Kathy Guthadjaka

#### CHANCELLOR

Chancellor, I have the honour to present to you Kathy Guthadjaka, who Council has determined should be awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Education honoris causa.

Kathy Guthadjaka, known as Gotha, has dedicated her life to the education of Yolŋu people. Her work in the formation of bilingual and intercultural education is known across Australia and stems from her passionate belief that children who form a strong, clan-based identity, who know their connections to kin and land, will be able to confidently bridge over to take their place in the 'mainstream' of Australian society.

For over 45 years Gotha has championed bilingual education success at Galiwin'ku, Elcho Island, and has established a 'return to country' community for her own Warramiri clan to the ancestral estate at Gäwa. Both of these significant community development programs took vision, resilience and decades of negotiation to achieve.

Since the establishment of the Gäwa community, Gotha has invested increasing time on the revitalisation of Warramiri language and culture through extensive linguistic work with The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation, and through her work as Senior Research Fellow and Elder on Country at Charles Darwin University's Northern Institute.

The Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation has described her as a 'visionary' and her contributions to Warramiri literacy as 'immense and transformative'. The Warramiri language resources Gotha first developed through the ALNF - the Warramiri Children's Dictionary, the Warramiri Discovery Phonogram Cards and the Learning to Read and Write in Warramiri course - have been the foundations that have transitioned the future of Warramiri speaking children from the restrictions of an oral only language, to the freedoms of interactive engagement with their language through oral, print and digital formats.

Gotha has, through the Northern Institute, won funding to pursue her own research agenda and continues to play an active role in Charles Darwin University's research activity, in projects which demonstrate and enhance the University's commitment to collaborative transdisciplinary research, and through publications, conference presentations, research reports, and supervision of Higher Degree by Research students.

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Gotha's role in the ground-breaking Teaching from Country program, initiated by the Yolŋu Studies program at Charles Darwin University, has been significant. She has been a strong advocate for teaching language and culture together and of understanding land and kinship as fundamental to Yolŋu identity and has regularly taught classes from her Gäwa homeland using Skype.

In the last decade Gotha has become a powerful advocate for her people, presenting to academic audiences, to the Governor-General and delegations from the UN Committee on Human Rights concerning Indigenous health, education and literacies, and partnering with others to achieve mutually beneficial goals

Gotha has also been a key researcher in the Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultancy Initiative, a consultancy service that respects the knowledge and authority of community elders in research and service design and delivery. She has made invaluable contributions to research and consultancy projects on areas as diverse as remote Aboriginal housing, gambling and gambling-related harm, the education of gifted Yolŋu young people, mathematics in Yolŋu communities and their schools, and the emerging uses of digital technologies in Yolŋu life.

Gotha is a woman of deep faith, who continues to combine both her traditional world-views with her Christian spirituality. She has worked with AuSiL on the translation of Scriptures to Warramiri, whilst also tirelessly recording stories, songs, hunting and seasonal information, over many decades, for the intergenerational transmission of Warramiri knowledge.

Gotha has been recognized formally for her lifelong work by being named 2018 Senior Australian of the Year for the Northern Territory.

#### CHANCELLOR

In recognition of her services to her people, to the Northern Territory and Australia, the Council of Charles Darwin University awards Kathy Guthadjaka the degree of Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*.