

**For Immediate release
2 December 2015**



The Joanne Harris Scholarship Fund will take NAISDA's Developing Artists to soaring new heights

Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD, CVO unveiled NAISDA Dance College's new scholarship program, the Joanne Harris Scholarship Fund, during the launch of its end of year production of KAMU last week.

As Australia's premier Indigenous training college, NAISDA has a proud tradition of producing the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers since 1976.

The scholarship program, available to NAISDA Developing Artists, will have a 'whole of career approach' and provide funding in the areas of early talent identification, tertiary studies support for NAISDA Developing Artists, recognising talented and committed Developing Artists and transition to early career support.

In addition, there will be an annual recognition of teaching excellence for a NAISDA teacher, in honour of Joanne Harris' lifelong commitment to dance.

Joanne bequeathed a substantial amount from her estate to be used for the betterment and education of Aboriginal people, with a preference given to young Aboriginal women. The executor of the estate, her brother Chris Harris, has focused on the area of dance education as the logical field of endeavour to honour his sister's wishes.

Joanne spent her life studying, teaching and performing dance and the Joanne Harris Scholarship Fund will be established in honour of her magnificent vision, foresight and leadership.

Executive Director of NAISDA, Kim Walker said, "The substantial bequest will provide an immeasurable positive influence for the NAISDA Developing Artists, who already have a proven history of becoming leaders in Australia's cultural life."

The scholarship program will be launched in 2016 to coincide with NAISDA's 40th anniversary.

"2016 will be an extremely exciting time for NAISDA as we celebrate 40 years. We've got a lot planned including a community Open Day, a two-week season at Carriageworks Sydney, as well as a Mid-year show and workshops at the new Wyong Artspace to celebrate NAIDOC week and NAISDA's presence on the Central Coast.

The Joanne Harris Scholarship Fund was launched by Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir to a room of special guests on Thursday 26 November, 2015.

-MORE-

brilliant logic

Central Coast PO Box 4427 East Gosford NSW 2250
Sydney PO Box 530 Woollahra NSW 1350

P 02 4324 6962 F 02 4321 0762 ABN 11 066 317 771
www.brilliantlogic.com.au

media release

-MORE-

"To quote a well-known saying - 'There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots, the other, wings'," said Debra Schleger, General Manager of NAISDA.

"The Joanne Harris Scholarship Fund will provide our future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural leaders with the opportunity to fly," she added.

-ENDS-

For more information, photos of the event and interviews:

Alison Orren | Brilliant Logic

aorren@brilliantlogic.com.au

02 4324 6962

brilliant logic

Central Coast PO Box 4427 East Gosford NSW 2250
Sydney PO Box 530 Woollahra NSW 1350

P 02 4324 6962 F 02 4321 0762
www.brilliantlogic.com.au

ABN 11 066 317 771