

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia

Churchill Trust Fellowship Report

‘Indigenous leadership in education and economic development’



Andrea Harms 2009 Churchill Fellow

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Signed: Andrea Harms..... Dated: June 10th 2010

'Indigenous Leadership in education and economic development'

INTRODUCTION

When I was informed of my success in being awarded a Churchill Fellowship, it was both a surprise and a delight. It is widely acknowledged that a Churchill Fellowship offers a 'once in a lifetime' professional opportunity to undertake some focused study which will align with and inform one's professional direction and field. My experience has certainly confirmed that.

The opportunity to spend time in meaningful exchange of ideas and examples across countries was enormously powerful in focusing my thinking about the issues I wanted to explore. But the time was never long enough, there were always more people who were recommended as vital by their colleagues, to speak to, and I was provided with far too many ideas to capture, document and think about implementing them all on my return. I seriously would like to revisit several key places and people to continue the thinking and talking that has been such an amazingly rich and rewarding part of the Fellowship experience for me.

However, in acknowledging that there is never enough time, I also need to thank the many people who gave their time for me and who indicated that they too would have liked to continue the conversations, and found that what I had to share was new and relevant to the work that they were doing. We have committed to maintaining the relationships that have been established and it is my hope that there could be an exchange visit with a number of them. I will certainly take every opportunity to promote several of them as key speakers for forums and conferences in Australia. We have much to learn from other models.

My topic of focus, 'Indigenous Leadership in education and economic development' emerged from the work that I have been involved in over the past seven years with the 'Dare to Lead' project (Leadership in Indigenous education for school principals), and more recently the DTL4B strategy (engagement in school to work transition by corporate CEOs and their staff). A recurring issue for me has been the awareness of the need to achieve a critical mass of confident young Indigenous leaders in Australia – those who are able to succeed in formal education and make the transition to higher education, careers and other meaningful pathways in an accelerated period of time. Incremental achievement is not going to cut it in the current situation with Australia's demographics and industry needs. My study tour provided me with some significant experiences, which have influenced my thinking around this issue and helped me to find some clarity around what the way forward was for me as a professional working in this space.

My sincere thanks go to the Churchill Trust for the inspirational professional journey that I have been able to undertake.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The focus of my study tour was on Indigenous education in leadership and economic development – and the countries from which I gained the most significant information were New Zealand and Canada. While there are some significant differences between these countries and Australia, the data around the socio-economic indicators for Indigenous peoples in these three countries is strikingly similar. Some of our approaches to issues are similar (for example, the focus on strengthening Indigenous community capacity, the development of cultural perspectives in school curriculum) but there are also some very different approaches across the country.

I found that Australia's 'Dare to Lead' project is unique –there is nothing like it anywhere else. While there are many small scale regional and local initiatives that I heard about, the engagement of the leadership in the education profession in playing a significant role in closing the educational gap is a unique approach, and there was a great deal of interest in it wherever I met with people and spoke – whether from the schooling sector or from higher education.

I also found a general sense of urgency in regard to Indigenous youth becoming fully educated and taking on career pathways. In Canada, the same business case around full employment for Indigenous youth exists just as it does in Australia, and is a key driver for initiatives which focus on successful school to work (or study) transition.

Developing a critical mass of successful Indigenous youth, who could be role models for their peers and those younger, was an issue that occupied the attention of educators in New Zealand and Canada just as it does here.

There seemed to be more engagement by Alumni of universities in mentoring Indigenous undergraduates, and there seemed to be a very high level of commitment of summer programs for Indigenous students of high potential – with links made early with schools and extending over four and five years as students transitioned in and through university. We could do more in this regard in a more integrated way nationally, linking professional associations with their industry counterparts.

What was particularly of note was the degree to which Aboriginal ways of knowing are acknowledged and built into the learning at school and especially at universities. This extended to the provision of quite a larger range of formal and informal opportunities for leadership learning for Indigenous youth and adults, which included an Indigenous perspective as the foundation of the content. I feel that this is an area, which needs development in Australia. It touches on the issues of identity and spirit, acknowledgement and cultural respect. I think we have a way to go in this regard.

The staff at the University of British Columbia, the University of Saskatchewan, Lakehead University and the Indigenous Leadership Development Institute in Winnipeg was all enormously helpful and informative. It was good to see that information flowed both ways, and their enthusiasm for their work and for sharing the details as well as considering the bigger questions that framed our thinking was really stimulating.

Some actions to consider:

- *Continue with advocacy for such work as the Dare to Lead project, involving professional associations more widely in the work.*
- *Advocate for the development of a stronger focus on Aboriginal knowledge in the curriculum – timely with the development of a national curriculum.*
- *The Australian Government should consider increasing its support to the summer school models – especially where they include a mentoring component post summer school. The National Indigenous Higher Education Network (NIHEN) could play a significant role in this regard.*
- *Review the current range of opportunities that provide Indigenous Leadership development for youth and disseminate that information to schools and through Indigenous Consultative bodies.*

Specific:

- *Establish/conduct a 'national forum for educator's' through a number of peak agencies/representative bodies to raise the understanding, profile and commitment to the issues.*
- *Use current corporate networks to facilitate the development of more school to work transition projects. Develop some promotional materials around this and disseminate. Document what is already happening and look for opportunities to link this information to a number of websites for corporate engagement. E.g. Business Council of Australia members, Diversity Council, Tran Tasman Business Circle, Global Foundation members etc. These all involve Board Chairs and CEOs in their membership.*
- *Develop a range of models of mentoring for upcoming entrepreneurs. Link corporates with individual Indigenous entrepreneurs in a mentoring relationship. Include entry skill level through to senior management. Develop some information about this put on website and document and promote the success of initiatives taken up.*
- *Check on the status of Indigenous business students in Australian institutions, and encourage those organizations, which support business to develop cadetships or bursaries.*

2. PROGRAMME

New Zealand

Wellington,

Jody Hamilton, General Manager Centre for Social Research and Evaluation

Canada,

Vancouver,

Dr Linc Kesler, Senior Adviser to the President on Aboriginal Affairs and Director of the First Nations House of Learning at UBC.

Dr John Claxton the Director of the Sauder School of Business at UBC

Banff

Staff at the Banff Aboriginal Leadership and Management Centre.

Saskatoon

Dr Marie Battiste, Academic Director Aboriginal Education Research centre, University of Saskatchewan

Yvonne Vizina, Associate Director, Aboriginal Education Research centre, University of Saskatchewan

Winnipeg

Barb Bruyere, Director, Indigenous leadership Development Institute, Winnipeg

Rosa Walker, President and CEO , Indigenous leadership Development Institute, Winnipeg

Thunder Bay

Beverley Sabourin, Vice Provost – Aboriginal Initiatives Lakehead University

Judy Flett, Aboriginal Education Programs Coordinator, Lakehead University

Paul Berger, Associate Professor, Education, Lakehead University

United Arab Emirates

Abu Dhabi

Dr Saeed Al Shamsi, the UAE Ambassador in Australia

Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development

3. Background context to my study tour:

When I first developed a proposal to the Churchill Trust, my focus was on the compulsory years of education, as that is the area in which I have been working for over twenty years. The question that guided my thinking was 'where could we apply resourcing best to achieve high outcomes in accelerated time.'

I have been the National Coordinator of the *Dare to Lead* project for seven years, and with a team of highly experienced school principals have developed the framework and the content of an enormously successful profession driven, peer teaching/learning leadership development program for school leaders and their teams. Data collected over five years shows that the student outcomes have been outstanding in *Dare to Lead* schools, and the project now has a critical mass of school leaders in Australia engaged in project activity. Over five thousand schools (53% of all schools across Australia) are *Dare to Lead* members. The really critical things that make a difference over time for Aboriginal students in schools are identified, to some degree in place in many schools, and being promoted and taken up where they are not in place. In some ways, what has been happening in *Dare to Lead* is a quiet education revolution, led by the profession and driving in -school systemic and sustainable change over time. It is definitely a 'grassroots' movement, but fortunately through its partnerships' focus, the project has strong government support, the support of education jurisdictions, support from high profile Indigenous educators and with the high end of the profession involved and committed, it is inevitable that we will see systemic and jurisdiction changes over time as well.

However, two things became apparent to me, which drove me to search for more strategic ideas. One was that 'leadership in Indigenous education 'is not the same as 'Indigenous leadership in education.' The degree to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators were underrepresented in the education profession, as teachers but more specifically as principals and school leaders, was startling. The *Dare to Lead* project was supporting the profession in its own capacity building and leadership in education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, but this did not provide the much needed support for Indigenous leadership in education by Indigenous people. Where were the Indigenous leaders in education going to come from, especially if so many of the youth did not complete schooling?

The second factor was that despite improvements over time, there is still such a huge gap in outcomes for Indigenous youth – on every aspect of their lives, that we need to identify how we could achieve a critical mass of successful Indigenous entrepreneurs who would change the narrative and the aspirations and lives of Indigenous youth overall. These role models would present a 'norm' for Indigenous youth, which includes achieving a full education and economic participation.

Both of these issues are set in a context of Australia's demographics – a growing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders compared to the non-Indigenous population. Most of the Indigenous population in Australia is under eighteen, and the pressures of personal but also national potential in an economic sense, are significant factors, which make the issues I have signaled issues of national significance. We need to act now to ensure that Indigenous leadership is supported, and in a short timeframe, not in twenty years. Over half of the Indigenous Australians are under eighteen. We do not have the luxury of time to work out effective solutions. With the *Dare to Lead* model and framework in place for schools, I believe that the next point of concern is the transition space between the end of schooling and a productive pathway into higher education or careers. Where are the Indigenous leaders in business and professions? How are young Indigenous entrepreneurs being supported to become economic leaders and leaders in all professions?

The focus of my study was around what could be done and should be done to accelerate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership development so that the education and economic opportunities that currently present themselves can be grasped.

My study tour became an opportunity to search for ways in which this question was being addressed by others elsewhere.

4. Similarities and differences

One of the most striking things that I discovered from my conversations with people in Canada and New Zealand, was how much the issues for the Aboriginal minority was the same compared to Australia. In every case, when we discussed relative data and socio economic statistics and scenarios, we could have replaced the country name with any of 'Australia', 'Canada' or 'New Zealand', and the information would have been correct. I was aware that we had some similar circumstances, but the degree of match was striking. What was different was the diversity in approach to the issues. As I said earlier, the information exchange on this level was exciting and inspiring

Through my discussions with people across Canada, it surprised me to find out about the degree of inconsistency in the mandated curriculum in relation to the focus specifically on Aboriginal perspectives in the school curriculum. However, I was also surprised at the wide acknowledgment of Aboriginal ways of knowing and knowledge in the higher education sector.

In my discussions with the staff at Saskatchewan University, they shared their work in developing community models of leadership and they're to make these the foundation of their teaching and learning. They also referred to the work of the Council of Ministers of Education in Canada (CMEC), which has resulted in an Aboriginal Education Action Plan, through which a consultation process with Aboriginal communities and education stakeholders, there would be an improvement in Aboriginal education outcomes. Currently, student drop out is high and transition to high school is low. In the next 15 – 20 years, First nations students will represent over 25 % of the school population in some territories and provinces. This sounded very much like the situation in Australia. Among the challenges they listed that are faced in Canada, are that the number of well trained Aboriginal teachers remains small, and that existing curricula and teaching methods do not sufficiently reflect Aboriginal needs and values. This is being addressed in some unique ways in different countries, but all including remote delivery of Indigenous teacher education and mentor support back in their own community, rather than expecting everyone to come to the city and complete lengthy courses.

We also shared the same issues of concern around education and economic engagement of the Indigenous minority in the country. There was the general understanding that education and employment outcomes are two of the most significant factors in the individual or community's well being – economic, social and cultural.

In Ontario, specifically Thunder Bay, for example, where the Aboriginal population has doubled in the last decade and the economic base is changing, it is commonly held that 'increasing Aboriginal peoples' access to education and employment opportunities and building a new relationship among communities is vital for the (regions') future.'¹ This view was echoed in other places I visited in New Zealand and Australia.

¹ Ontario's proposed 25 year growth plan, October 2009

In each of the three countries, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, the social demographics and the status of the labour market meant that it was imperative to secure the untapped potential of Indigenous peoples – both in schooling, and in post secondary pathways. We need to assist in the development of strong leadership in Indigenous youth and community to ensure that this could happen. How was this being addressed in different places?

5. Focus on economic leadership development

I was able to have a discussion with David Claxton at the Sauder School of Business at the University of British Columbia (UBC) who heads the Ch'nook Aboriginal Business Education Program at the First Nations House of Learning. (ch-nook.ubc.ca)

He said that like Australia, there is no history of business education in Aboriginal education. His program uses a peer mentoring and corporate partnering approach to ensure that prospective undergraduates are encouraged to enroll and stay on to complete their courses. The engagement with corporates in the summer school program leads to cadetships, and having graduates connecting with undergraduates through support networking activities and mentoring ensures a very high retention rate. The third cohort of the course graduated last year from the tailored course, which focused on business essentials and Aboriginal business leadership, that is, the subject content of the field but with an Aboriginal perspective.

There is an Advanced Management Program (AMP) with a focus on Entrepreneurship and business success for people with five or more years of work experience who want to start and manage a business. Sessions are held on weekends and are delivered by distinguished Aboriginal leaders and School of Business lecturers. Topics include: Aboriginal values, entrepreneurship, accounting, human resources, financial management, marketing, operations, business strategy and planning, communications and Aboriginal business leadership.

The point of difference is that there is an Aboriginal perspective and approach, which shapes the material in the course.

The Ch'nook program also involves Business school Alumni, the local High Schools and Colleges to support Business as a career and to raise the aspirations of Aboriginal youth. The Ch'nook Cousins is an annual 'talent' summer /spring school drawing Aboriginal youth from all over Canada to engage in design and IT projects, career options exploration and learning about Business education and employers who take on Business graduates. High school students and Ch'nook scholars participated in a career workshop the program is funded by banks and other corporate bodies for bursaries and the work of the Ch'nook Program.

The CEDAR program at UBC described by Professor Linc Kesler has a similar outstanding success. It is an initiative that involves at least fifty volunteers from various departments at UBC. There are about forty Aboriginal youth who participate in the program each year, undertaking workshops, experiments, hands on learning. However, the unique approach of CEDAR to education is to encourage young Aboriginal students years 8 – 12, to develop a comfortable relationship with UBC instructors and the campus. The CEDAR program also fosters community engagement in that it encourages parents and the students to form lasting connections. The point of difference is that the CEDAR participants come back year after year. There is no cost to parents, and if there were, they could not afford to attend.

I am aware that in Australia there are a number of industry and profession 'summer schools' which are conducted through the support of universities and professional bodies. My own recent experience in Adelaide of providing advice and support to a group staging (a very successful, as it turned out) Science and IT summer school in Adelaide, involved the equivalent of at least a half time volunteer to source funding. It was hard work and not entirely the success it should have been. It should not be that hard. There is a business case for the government to invest in these kinds of initiatives, and a business case for the corporate sector to more fully support these initiatives.

What is needed is some support for the facilitation of these opportunities. And a commitment to provide that support for a number of years so that the relationship building has the opportunity to result in numbers of students enrolling in and staying on at university. If the government were to commit to matching corporate funds for a prescribed minimum number of years for these mentor programs, it would be a significant catalyst to the growth of a critical mass of Indigenous leaders.

The final word on support for this kind of initiative is that in all three cases where this issue was discussed (UBC, University of Saskatchewan, University of Thunder Bay) the point was made that the majority of the Aboriginal graduates indicated that they planned to return to their homes and practice. I am not sure if we have gathered this same kind of information about Australian Indigenous graduates, but it would be useful to compare.

6. Focus on Aboriginal Knowledge in education and leadership development

Meeting Yvonne Vizina and Marie Battiste from the University of Saskatchewan was really illuminating. They manage the Aboriginal Education Research centre, and Marie was in Australia presenting at the international Indigenous Conference in Melbourne in December 2008 where I heard her presentation. The Centre has, amongst its goals, to 'work to transform the preparation of future teachers, administrators and staff that will result in the creation of more effective learning environments'. It aims to improve the educational capacity of schools to retain and meet the needs of Aboriginal students, but also to improve the knowledge of students and staff of Aboriginal peoples.

Their remote teacher education program includes delivery of off campus teacher education programs in First nation communities. First Nation Elders and other Aboriginal resource people assist in the delivery of the program. Some of this parallels what Australian institutions are doing, but it is the degree of Aboriginal perspectives in the academic programs that struck me as advanced on what Australia's status is in this regard. This was also the case when I spent time with the staff at Thunder Bay University. Their very successful remote teacher program is able to ensure that every year, a very high percentage of Aboriginal graduates are successful in completing and continuing their studies. But the personal commitment of people like Judy is integral to this outcome, and the kind of support that she manages to put in place, practical and personal and designed to make it possible for full participation by the students.

Marie Battiste at Saskatchewan University has undertaken vast amounts of research and is a prolific writer. A recent article ² describes what is for Aboriginal people, an 'erosion of spirit, a result of forced assimilation policies and practices that disrespected who they were, where they came from, their language, culture, relationships or skills on the land.' She argues that 'learning, as Aboriginal people have come to know it, is holistic, lifelong, purposeful, experiential, communal, spiritual and learned within a

² Nourishing the Learning Spirit: Living our way to new thinking, Winter 2009/2010 Education Canada.

language and a culture'. Marie senses a 'renaissance in scholarship as scientists begin to realize the potential of Indigenous knowledge.

She writes, ' Today, Indigenous peoples from around the world continue to feel the tensions created by a Eurocentric educational system that has taught them not to trust Indigenous knowledge, but to rely on science and technology for tools for their future, although those same science and technologies have increasingly created the fragile environmental base that requires us to rethink how we interact with the earth and with each other.'p16.

I have quoted at length here as the article, which Marie gave to me to read, has managed to draw together my thinking around a number of discussions I had with people across Canada. What she says about understanding and respecting Aboriginal knowledge is something that keeps coming up in conversation and appears with regularity in university handbooks and brochures. The difference in explicit articulation of the place of Aboriginal knowledge is in considerable contrast to what I have experienced in Australia nationally. The University of Saskatchewan has an Indigenous Management MBA Specialization, which is the first of its kind in Canada. Areas of study include Aboriginal organizations, Aboriginal economic and business development, contemporary issues in Indigenous management and economic development, and the implications of treaties and self-government on management decision-making.

There are also courses on Indigenous Business Administration, Indigenous Peoples Resource Management Program, Aboriginal Public Administration etc.

There is a world of difference between teaching *about* Aboriginal culture and knowledge, and teaching Aboriginal youth in a culturally explicit way. The education sector in Australia I think provides the former with the unfortunate outcome, I suspect, of Aboriginal culture and cultural knowledge regarded as 'not relevant' to contemporary times. The impact this has on self-identity and pride must be devastating.

Lakehead University is one of Canada's most progressive and comprehensive universities. It provides a very rich and supported learning environment for Aboriginal students. Last week they celebrated the installation of their permanent Elder in residence. What they do to optimize graduate student success is innovative and holistic. This is certainly a valuable approach to working to support Indigenous leadership. Their Aboriginal graduates return to communities as professionals and the whole community benefits.

But the Director of the Student Support program spent about four weeks last summer making sure that families of graduates in their summer school had access to enough food and living needs while they and their families came to the city to undertake their studies. There never seems to be enough funding to support the bottom line for Aboriginal students – and yet if one were to do a cost analysis and community benefit survey. I am sure that it would support early and vastly increased funding commitment to such initiatives.

7. Focus on Indigenous Leadership Development opportunities

There is a need to make available for Indigenous peoples in a diverse range of opportunities, the skills, understandings and knowledge required for advancement in economic independence.

Banff Centre's Leadership Development programs reflect an acknowledgment of Aboriginal ways of learning, and in its delivery of all courses, the Centre also considers new methodologies for learning. They emphasize experiential arts and nature based learning, but also conduct specific Aboriginal

Leadership and Management programs for First nations, Métis and Inuit communities. An Aboriginal Program Council, an Advisory body of Aboriginal Community and business leaders, assist in the program development.

The specific courses offered, each through a five day residential program, include; Indigenous Women in Leadership, Best Practice in Aboriginal Business and Economic development, Principles and practice of good Governance, Negotiation Skills training, Revitalizing Nationhood

Leadership is conceptualized as being intrinsically linked to the needs of the community, not just the individual. How is the issue of leadership explored? Providing what is needed – the community decide what they need. The course content acknowledges the Aboriginal learning and ways of learning. This is elaborated on in a recent document 'Redefining how success is measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning'³ which explores this issue fully. I'd recommend this document to educators in Australia, particularly at this current activity of development Australian national curriculum content and measurements of achievement.

The other organization that does similar work that I visited was the Indigenous Leadership Development Institute in Winnipeg - a non-profit organization established to build leadership capacity in Indigenous peoples. It is run by Indigenous people and directed by an Indigenous volunteer Board, which identifies specific training required to produce able and accomplished Indigenous leaders.

Again, the range of program offerings is seen to be very explicitly related to the developing of leadership needs of those in a strategic role in Aboriginal community and those who want to develop their skills for their professional development. There are Executive training sessions such as; Traditional teachings for Contemporary leaders, Strategic Planning, Mastering reports and Proposals, Capacity building for Aboriginal Professionals. In addition, a focus on youth leadership development in the Empowering Aboriginal Youth in Governance and leadership (EAYGL) is a really successful part of the program.

Having the opportunity to see first hand the range of Aboriginal leadership development opportunities that both of these organizations provided, coupled with what was clearly a proactive position on acknowledging and valuing Aboriginal ways of doing and knowing – made me realize that in Australia we are resistant to this perspective on the whole. Or maybe it is that we have not had the champions to promote this as much as is needed? The reality is that the same level of activity as in Canada does not exist in Australia. I plan to discuss this with my colleagues and see what, as a profession, we can do about indicating our clear support for more work and outcomes in this area. If school principals are demanding or even expecting these competencies of their teaching staff, then the universities will have to take steps in providing this through reviewing what they offer in graduate teaching courses.

The other obvious thing that comes to mind is that we need to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who are keen to develop their leadership capacity in the area of business entrepreneurship have ready access to programs which will skill them and equip them in the roles they will need to be able to start up a business enterprise and grow it. If we could link corporates and individual Indigenous entrepreneurs in a mentoring relationship, and also provide easy access to the business information and skills that are needed for success, then we would have done much to contribute to Indigenous leadership in economic development.

This model has already been explored by the DTL4B strategy, which I developed over two and a half years as an adjunct to the Dare to Lead project. Its intent was to engage the support of corporate leaders

³ Redefining how success is measured in First nations, Inuit and Métis learning', Report on Learning in Canada 2007 (Ottawa: 2007) Published in November 2007. Ontario

in this space, educate them and then facilitate links with schools to provide 'line of sight' into employment for many Indigenous school leavers who would otherwise not have made a successful transition. A number of social impact groups, philanthropic organizations and corporate Diversity teams have also successfully worked in this area.

I intend to work on this partnering with several of the corporate CEOs who have been part of the work that I have been doing with DTL4B and my team over the past two years. I will set a target of three partnerships before the end of this year, and look to double it next year. That will provide a huge increase in outcomes over a very short period. It may well serve as a model for future national initiatives.

On the outside, the concept appears pretty straightforward – get more Aboriginal kids through school, ensure they have a post secondary pathway, provide opportunities for economic independence through employment. However, the execution of this process is fraught with difficulties. One of the key issues is the understanding that this process is about relationships, and for relationships to be developed and maintained requires time, regular and consistent personal attention, and commitment. These elements are not well supported through current policy and funding processes in Australia through Government sources and even some philanthropic sources have criteria and timeframes that make the inclusion of these elements unlikely.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The experience provided me with some time to seriously consider my professional role and where I could best contribute. I have been National Coordinator of the Dare to Lead project for seven years, a very successful project focused on supporting school leadership in Indigenous education and I have experienced an enormous sense of satisfaction through that work. My study tour generated a desire to do more in the space of Indigenous youth transitioning to work or study, which was a focus that I had been developing as an adjunct to the Dare to Lead project. It became clear to me that while supporting Indigenous students through school continues to be a very necessary focus, too few transition successfully to post schooling pathways. More needs to be done to link schools with the business sector to enable this situation to change. I decided that I needed to find an opportunity to work in this area and have, since my return, explored a number of opportunities, which would enable me to do that.

So what are the implications?

- Continue the initiatives that keep kids at school and raise their skill level. ('Dare to Lead' is just one of these initiatives, though with 53% of schools engaged, it is the largest initiative.)
- Indigenous Youth leadership needs more attention from both Indigenous leaders and mainstream non-Indigenous leaders. Establish mentor programs with alumni and senior management groups in business. We need to create explicit opportunities for the development of Indigenous leadership – both culturally and in terms of contemporary workplaces.
- Work to establish stronger and clearer links with universities and schools (not just random, but longer commitment)
- Facilitate the links between schools and their local businesses
- Provide practical and appropriate assistance for Corporates to invest in long-term programs and initiatives with schools and within local Indigenous community.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- *Ensure that we continue with advocacy for such work as the Dare to Lead project as we are on the right track. Work more strategically with School Principal Associations at the state and jurisdiction level to revitalize their interest and commitment as a network of colleagues committed to making a difference in Indigenous education.*
- *Advocate for the development of a stronger focus on Aboriginal knowledge in the curriculum - discuss with the project team and the State Education Ministers. Current requests for involvement in this work by the government are an ideal opportunity to have an impact.*
- *The Australian Government should consider increasing its support to the summer school models – especially where they include a mentoring component post summer school. The National Indigenous Higher Education Network (NIHEN) could play a significant role in this regard.*
- *Review and resource opportunities through a range of agencies, which provide Indigenous Leadership development for youth. .*