



Chris Burns
MINISTER FOR BUSINESS

24 September 2009

Recognising Territory Innovators

Business Minister Dr Chris Burns has congratulated four Territory innovators recognised at the inaugural Charles Darwin Research and Innovation awards last night.

Dr Burns said the four innovators all received a Charles Darwin Medal in recognition of their outstanding contribution to research and innovation across the Territory.

“Over many years each of the four recipients has dedicated themselves to countless hours of research in their chosen field,” said Dr Burns.

“This research benefits all Territorians through significant economic, social and environmental development.

“The Charles Darwin Medal is a prestigious award which will not be allocated on an annual basis, but rather it will only be awarded when the Northern Territory Research and Innovation Board considers a nominee worthy of this honour.”

The four outstanding Territorians recognised at the inaugural awards are;

Dr Goff Letts who has worked to significantly improve disease control in cattle. From 1957 Dr Letts led a field team responsible for controlling the impact of bovine pleuropneumonia on the pastoral industry across northern Australia.

His work has had a significant economic impact on the cattle industry and he has been directly involved in renewing interest in live cattle exports to Asia.

Lorna ‘Nanna Nungala’ Fejo has spent a lifetime committed to improving the health of Indigenous Territorians. Lorna recognised that the severe health problems faced by adult Indigenous Australian are influenced from the time they are *in utero*.

Whilst working as an Aboriginal Liaison Officer at the Menzies School of Health, she developed a culturally sensitive program to address low birth weight of Indigenous infants in the Top End. This resulted in the *Strong Women, Strong Babies, Strong Culture* program, which operates in communities throughout the Territory, Queensland and Western Australia.



Dr Peter Whitehead arrived in the Northern Territory in the 1970s, and has had a key role in the development of the research capacity of the Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory.

He contributed to the exceptional quality of research that has emerged from the CCNT and its successors and continues to provide advice on research and innovation in his role as a Senior Policy Advisor in the Department of Natural Resources, Environment, Arts and Sport.

Dr Alan Andersen is a Chief Research Scientist with CSIRO in Darwin, where he has been for 23 years. He has led the expansion and diversification of CSIRO to address the challenges of sustainable land management and regional development across northern Australia, especially on Indigenous lands.

Alan is the world's leading expert on the ecology of ants and their use as bio-indicators in land management. He has received significant international recognition of his achievements.

"I congratulate each of these recipients for their many years of hard work which is making a difference in the Territory and around Australia."

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