

Media Release

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Santos Foundation's first Australia-based program to boost education and training for young Northern Territorians

Young Northern Territorians will have access to new education and training opportunities thanks to a program funded by the Santos Foundation, marking the not-for-profit organisation's first Australia-based initiative.

The Foundation's two pilot initiatives are helping more than 30 young Territorians develop skills in Aboriginal healthcare and enrol in apprenticeships while they complete high school.

The two programs have been developed to help address skills shortages identified by the Northern Territory Government in health and trades.

Santos Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Kevin Gallagher said the launch of the Youth Opportunities Program marked the beginning of the Santos Foundation's Australia rollout after 14 years of building resilience in Papua New Guinean communities.

"The Santos Foundation has a proud history of investing in partnerships and initiatives that have helped PNG communities thrive, so I am delighted that the Foundation will now benefit Australian communities as well," Mr Gallagher said.

"The two new programs are just the first for the Santos Foundation in Australia and we look forward to working collaboratively with government, donors and local partners to drive positive change and empower communities here in the NT and across the nation."

A dedicated Aboriginal health initiative will support eight participants to earn a Certificate IV Aboriginal Health Practitioner (AHP) accreditation and secure employment with Danila Dilba Health Services (DDHS), Darwin's Aboriginal community controlled health service.

Additionally, 25 high school students will enter a separate school-based apprenticeship program facilitated by GTNT Group, the largest employer of apprentices and trainees in the Territory, allowing the students to remain in school while working toward their Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training.

The two streams, engaging service providers Danila Dilba Health Services (DDHS) and GTNT Group, aim to equip young Territorians with job-ready skills, bridging the gap between school and the workforce.

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Santos Foundation Chief Executive Officer Jodie Hatherly said, “We are committed to investing in initiatives that build stronger communities where we operate and these programs demonstrate our dedication to the creation of opportunities that empower young people to forge a brighter future.”

DDHS CEO Rob McPhee highlighted the impact of Santos Foundation’s Youth Opportunities Program, noting that DDHS provides primary care to over 12,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people annually.

“Aboriginal Health Practitioners are the first point of contact for clients, offering culturally safe care, and the addition of eight more will ultimately lead to better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families living in Darwin,” Mr McPhee said.

GTNT Group CEO Kathryn Stenson said the Santos Foundation’s support meant more young people in the Territory will be able to access the learning opportunities they need to build long-lasting, fulfilling and productive careers.

“Our school-based students participating in the program will gain skills for a long-term career or a learning foundation that they can use to obtain another wonderful opportunity in the Territory,” Ms Stenson said.