

Aunty Eileen Cummings

Chancellor, I have the pleasure of presenting Aunty Eileen Cummings, for the honorary Doctor of Letters.

Aunty Eileen is a Rembarrnga Ngalakan woman from Central Arnhem Land and has lived in the Top End for all of her life, devoting herself to education and social justice for Aboriginal people across the nation.

The first qualified Aboriginal Pre-school teacher and Adult Educator in the Northern Territory, Aunty Eileen has dedicated her career to Indigenous policy development and program management, tertiary education and research.

She has been a policy adviser to the Chief Minister in the Office of Women's Policies, coordinated the consultation in the development of the Aboriginal Family Violence Strategy, and led Aboriginal social policy training in NT communities.

In the 2013 Federal Election, she stood as the Australian First Nations Political Party candidate for the Division of Solomon in the House of Representatives.

Aunty Eileen has also developed an extensive profile nationally and internationally, through academic papers, policy publications and presentations at renowned seminars.

Now a great-grandmother but still engaging in research and advocacy, her focus has shifted to supporting a new generation of Indigenous researchers and evaluators.

She has been an Adjunct Fellow at Charles Darwin University for several years; as a research associate for The Northern Institute, a co-developer of the Master of Public Policy degree, and a lecturer on cultural policies and education. Still linked to many community organisations, she has a special interest in Stolen Generation issues, as a survivor herself, and has been active in influencing government policy in this area.

Aunty Eileen provides inspiration, leadership and authority for the evaluation team to develop their work with Aboriginal communities. Her commitment to this important research and improving the approaches used to evaluate Aboriginal social policy has been remarkable.

Chancellor,

In recognition of her significant contribution to education, research, and social justice for Aboriginal peoples, Charles Darwin University Council awards Aunty Eileen Cummings the title of Honorary Doctor of Letters.