



Francis Hayes

Francis is a Ngalakan man who has been living in and giving back to his community for most of his life. In his younger years Francis served Australia as the first Indigenous soldier from the Katherine region. Upon returning from service, Francis continued to give back to his community through tireless efforts to improve the health of men and vulnerable people (homeless or 'long grass' mob) in Katherine. Francis currently sits on the board of Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service and volunteers weekly at the StrongBala men's clinic in Katherine. Francis is passionate about Aboriginal men's health and helps by creating linkages between the clinic and the community to enhance access to health care for Aboriginal men. Francis has a special focus on the very vulnerable members of society and works with the clinic staff to introduce programs that help these people feel safe and comfortable accessing health care. Francis is proud of his culture and traditions; he runs cultural awareness programs to help non-Indigenous people understand the world from an Indigenous perspective and also contributes towards increasing cultural safety in primary health care contexts. Francis also sits on the board of the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency. Francis is a well-respected Katherine community member and should be recognised and acknowledged for all of his great work!

Ruby Stanley

Working alongside Ruby on our project that seeks to improve access to eye care for Aboriginal people, allowed me to understand the tireless efforts and contributions she has made to improve the health of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people over the course of her long life. Finding her place in Katherine NT around 50 years ago, she has continued to work to improve the quality of Indigenous aged care, setting up aged care hostels in several communities in the Top End and delivering food education programs to improve nutrition and wellbeing among the elderly. Ruby has a great amount of energy and since 'retiring' continues to give back to her community through sharing her knowledge and expertise on two boards: Wurl Wurlinjang Aboriginal Health Service and the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency. Ruby was nominated by Wurli Wurlinjang to work alongside our team on the Eye care project because she is known to be a knowledgeable, reliable person who is committed to improving the lives of Aboriginal people in her community. Ruby has undoubtedly been an Unsung Hero already for more than 50 years.

