

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 18th March, 2024



KARROONG KANYOOL “HOME OF THE YOUNG” LAUNCHED AT FORSTER STREET

The Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative (Wathaurong) Community came together on Friday 15th March to officially launch the new Healing Spirit Youth Hub, known as Karroong Kanyool (meaning “Home of the Young” in Wathaurong language).

The space on Forster Street in Norlane was originally opened in 1984 and was one of the first homes for Wathaurong which was formed in 1980, before moving to its current community hub on Morgan Street, North Geelong in 1996.

Since then, Forster Street has operated as an additional community space for ad-hoc events and programs, but a \$1.6m grant from the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program in 2022 along with a contribution from the Victorian Health Building Authority enabled Wathaurong to re-imagine the space as a healing space for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the region.

The space was designed in consultation with the youth of the community and includes dedicated consulting suites for young people to access health and wellbeing specialists, a sensory space, access to computers and technology, a TV room, access to a laundry and a deadly outdoor basketball halfcourt in the colours of the Aboriginal flag.

The outdoor space also includes gathering space for men’s and women’s business and a central firepit for yarning circles, as well as a deck connected to the indoor function space for indoor/outdoor activities.

The launch was attended by Community members who shared memories of raising their kids at Forster Street in the 80s and 90s, and CEO Simon Flagg shared the vision of the Board for the next generation to be able to call Forster Street home.

“Wathaurong has listened to our young people, and we are thrilled to finally deliver on a space that has been developed by and for our young mob,” said Mr. Flagg. “Our youth are our future, our Elders of tomorrow, and we want them to grow and become our leaders through the programs and supports we offer here.”

The Aboriginal flag was officially raised by Jordan Edwards, Lachlan Edwards and Shantelle Baillie, who led the initial youth consultation process starting in 2020 to bring the ideas of what the youth hub could look like.

Karroong Kanyool will be opening for programs in Term 2, more details on the programs available will be published on www.wathaurong.org.au

END

For more information, please contact Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, Marketing & Communications Manager beth.davis@wathaurong.org.au or 0400 565 476

WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE LTD

ABN 26 564 626 453

LOT 62, MORGAN STREET, NORTH GEELONG 3215 * PO Box 402, NORTH GEELONG 3215

PH: (03) 5277 0044

FAX: (03) 5278 4123

EMAIL: admin@wathaurong.org.au

