

Bernie Singleton Scholarship

Bernie Singleton has had a career in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander affairs spanning fifty years, often acting as cultural broker for the organisations he has worked for and represented over the years.



Growing up in Yarrabah, an Aboriginal Community near Cairns, his paternal grandfather is a Yirrikanji man whose country runs from Cairns to Port Douglas. His paternal grandmother is an Umpila woman whose land is a part of the KULLA Land Trust and runs into the Lockhart River Land Trust. His maternal grandfather is a Bindal man (Townsville) of the Birri Gubba tribe. His maternal grandmother is a Woppaburra woman from Great Keppel Island and he has family connections all over the state of Queensland.

When Bernie took the reins at Apunipima there were only 15 employees and the organisation was on the brink of closure. His stewardship saw Apunipima scope and develop its role as a community controlled health service.

One of his greatest achievements was in 2004 when he was instrumental in securing a Deed of Commitment from the Cape York Regional Health Forum to develop a community controlled health organisation in Cape York. Shortly afterward, Apunipima began to deliver Maternal and Child Health Services, Healthy Lifestyle Services and medical services across 11 communities in Cape York.

During his 13 years tenure as Chairman, Bernie also ensured that Apunipima was an active member of NACCHO and QAIHC, national and state peak bodies for Aboriginal and Islander health.

Apunipima now has over 160 employees - over half of whom identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; is an organisation governed under ASIC; has a turnover of over \$18 million; has a fully community controlled, nationally accredited primary health care centre in Mossman Gorge; Atharpuch, a mums and bubs centre in Kowanyama and national accreditation for our quality systems and processes.

Bernie operated with a clear mandate from community and made it clear to everyone that everything Apunipima does is for the people of Cape York.

“Our approach is for the people by the people and is based on a grass-roots approach rather than a top down approach, and this is where the key difference is for our services.

“We believe that the health system needs to change if it is not resulting in better outcomes for our people.”

The Bernie Singleton Scholarship was developed in recognition of the work that Bernie completed for the people of Cape York.

Aim of the Scholarship

The aim of the Apunipima Bernie Singleton Scholarship is to provide support to Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander people from Cape York communities to undertake a full time university qualification in Health or Management related studies. Central to the concept of the Scholarship is the development of a local, stable, sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce for the communities of Cape York. It is anticipated that the provision of the Scholarship support will not only assist in building capacity, but will also impact social determinants of the people of Cape York communities, and potentially assist in facilitating generational change.

The scholarship will provide financial support to community members who have been successful in securing a place at University or are currently enrolled in University, in Health or Management related studies, such as:

- Allied Health
- Health Promotion
- Dentistry
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Midwifery
- Business Management eg accounting, management
- Health planning / design e.g. health economist, epidemiology,

Eligibility/Selection Criteria

- Applicants must identify as, and be able to prove their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status - Must provide Confirmation of Aboriginality
- Applicants must be from Cape York communities and their application must be supported by the community - Written reference to be provided by Health Action Team, Local Council or recognised community body
- Applicants must be currently enrolled at University or have been accepted for placement to a University (Health or Management focused studies) for full-time studies - Letter from University to be provided showing proof of acceptance and enrolment
- Successful applicants of the Bernie Singleton Scholarship must be willing and available for marketing purposes such as photographs, articles and DVD's etc - Provide statement outlining commitment to this - no more than 2 paragraphs
- Candidates must be able to demonstrate to the selection committee a genuine interest to enter into either a Health or Management profession within the community controlled health services sector - Provide a response no more than 2 paragraphs
- Provide Mid-year Year 12 school report for current year (or annual report if available)
- Resume outlining current employment, volunteering or work experience

Financial Support

Financial support will be offered to the successful applicant for up to \$7500.00 over 3 years, allocated at up to \$2500.00 annually for the following:

- a. Personal incidentals such as lap tops, text books, travel pass (bus / rail tickets), bonds
- b. Fees for study

Proof of results (pass in all subjects) must be provided at the end of each year in order to be eligible for the following year's support.

One scholarship will be issued annually, to provide support for a 3 year period.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a management panel and will be endorsed by the Apunipima Board. Once applications have closed and a scholarship has been offered and accepted all applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome.

Monitoring of Scholarship

The Bernie Singleton Scholarship will be monitored and reviewed as required. Each successful candidate will be required to report back to the Human Resources Manager (for reporting to Apunipima Board members) and supply regular updates such as:

- Proof of enrolment in their university study
- Reference from tutors outlining commitment to study on a 6 monthly basis
- Transcript of results following each semester
- Criminal History Check to be completed prior to commencement of study

Frequency of Offer

Annually

Scholarship Length

- The scholarship will be offered for a period of up to 3 years per applicant

Study Requirements

- Full Time Study: The Bernie Singleton scholarship will be offered for full time University study only
- Scholarship recipients must maintain a minimum of 'pass' result in all subjects in order to continue to receive the Scholarship support

Age Requirements

- Open

Open Date: November 2016

Closing Date: Friday 20 January 2017

Applications must be in by close of business. If an extension is required you may apply by contacting the contact officer for the scholarship who will advise if an extension will be granted.

Applicants will be advised of the outcome no later than: Friday 17 February 2017

How do I apply?

Applications for the Bernie Singleton Scholarship are to be submitted by either email or post to the contact details listed below and must address the eligibility selection criteria.

Find out more

Apunipima Cape York Health Council
PO Box 12045
Cairns QLD 4870

Contact officer: Allison Wallace, Human Resources Manager

Phone: 07 4037 7242

Email: allison.wallace@apunipima.org.au