

# LAYNHA NEWSLETTER

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## Become a Laynha member

Laynha currently has more than 640 members.

If you are a Yolŋu person over 18 and live in a Laynhapuy homeland community, you may be eligible to become a member.

Come in to our Yirrkala office or call us to find out more.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

➤ **Board Meeting - Yirrkala**  
25 - 26 February 2026

➤ **Laynhapuy's International Women's Day Lunch**  
11:00 AM 26 March 2026  
Nhulunbuy Town Hall

➤ **Dhadalal Festival**  
10 - 12 June 2026  
Gängan



## Message from the Chair

As we reflect on the past few months, it's been a busy and rewarding time for Laynha.

Late last year, we celebrated another successful semester of Bush University at Garrthalala, where students studied Linguistics and Yolŋu History. Congratulations to our four graduates; Tina Dhamarrandji, Jairus Marawilli, Munhala Dhamarrandji, and Aaron Burarrwanga - who presented their work to family, friends, and community members during a memorable graduation evening. Their dedication and effort, or "yindi djäma", was rightly acknowledged, and we are grateful to all academic and Yolŋu staff who supported the semester, helping create a safe and engaging learning environment.

The Laynhapuy RAES program, launched at the start of November, has been another exciting focus. By December 2025, 60% of the caseload had been commenced, making Laynha Health the highest performing provider nationwide.

**LAYNHAPUY HOMELANDS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**

Our Yirralka Rangers have also achieved significant milestones, with members completing Certificate III in Fisheries Compliance and advancing toward Coxswain Grade 2 qualifications. Sea Country patrols, compliance work, and the continued growth of the Yirralka Miyalk Bush Foods enterprise highlight the dedication of our rangers and the importance of caring for Country, culture, and community.

In October 2025, the Yirralka Miyalk Bush Foods team was proud to be announced winners of the Blak Excellence Award in the Bushfoods & Botanicals category. This prestigious award, run by the Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network, recognises and celebrates the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses across the Territory. The team has grown the business since 2011, creating and distributing Yolŋu bush medicine products to local and national markets, art centres, gift shops, and events.

Over the festive season, Laynha Health brought joy to the homelands with Christmas lunches, Santa visits, and presents delivered to children and young people across nine communities, including Wandawuy, Rurrangala, Baniyala, Balma, Garrthalala, Doyndji, Gan Gan, Gurrumuru, and Dhalinybuy.

Early in the New Year, the Gatjpu'yun Hub has been a busy and welcoming space for the community, offering support in food, emergency relief, financial counselling, and a comfortable space to rest. We're thrilled to welcome new team members Emily Marawili, our Community Engagement Mentee, and Jacob Mununggurr, our driver supporting Hub users, Aged Care, and NDIS transport. The arrival of new massage chairs in the resting room adds an extra layer of comfort for visitors.

As we move into 2026, we are proud of what has been achieved and remain committed to supporting education, employment, youth engagement, and the ongoing care of Country. On behalf of the Board and staff, I thank the community, staff, and partners for their dedication, support, and collaboration - together we continue to build a strong and resilient Laynhapuy.

God Bless Bukmak,

**Yananymul Mununggurr  
Chairperson**



Talking homelands collaboration in Baniyala and discussing Laynha's ongoing partnerships in housing and economic development opportunities, with Baniyala Garrangali Aboriginal Corporation Chair, Djambawa.



Laynha Board attending a soft launch of our new financial wellness hub in Nhulunbuy.



# Message from the CEO

The last quarter of the calendar year was full of excitement with Laynha being awarded the Remote Australia Employment Service (RAES) contract for Laynha Homelands and the Gove Peninsula. This is a monumental outcome for the organisation, creating up to 20 new internal jobs and supporting ~830 Yolngu job seekers across Arnhem Land. Laynha is working towards retention and cultural strength by developing a Social, Emotional, Wellbeing program as the foundation to RAES.

Laynha welcomed two Jawon secondees; Ana Vrancic and Jennell Sorensen. Ana supported us on developing a new governance model and review of the Garrthalala Bush University, whilst Jennell built policies and standard operating procedures to help implement RAES. Laynha would like to thank Jonathan Wearne for sourcing and proactively assisting them in the region to maximise their stay.

We opened the Gatjpu'yun Hub, our new financial literacy and wellness hub in Town. This space will provide a peaceful and safe place for homelands residents to drop in during the day for some respite. It will also be the centre of our homeland outreach services in banking, finance, superannuation, tax etc. I encourage you visit Gemma and the team upstairs next to the Nhulunbuy NLC office and book a time to talk about your financial needs.

Unfortunately, there has been a spike in anti-social behaviour in Yirrkala which is costing Laynha significant money in repairing properties. In addition our staff are feeling very unsafe so we are investing in more security including private security over the holidays and more screens, cameras, sensor lights and alarms. In December we hosted a community meeting which was well attended by Yirrkala business, schools, organisations and residents. A strategy to create a safe a community is important and concepts will be developed in 2026 through collaboration with a number of community groups. This won't take our focus off the homelands, it is about supporting homeland residents when visiting Yirrkala and for our Laynha staff who inversely support the homelands.

Off the back of our AGM in Dhalinybuy we hosted a number of member and resident strategy feedback sessions. This extended to a workshop with the board and a number of individual executive inputs. In 2026, we will play back the outputs, make sure we have a sound strategy for the next few years which will aim to deliver on; real employment, education, health and housing. There is a real need for financial resilience beyond the mine closure and update our systems and processes, including a new website which will enable greater visibility of Laynha.

Internally the first phase of the new financial management system has gone live. I want to thank all the staff involved in the project and for your patience whilst we transitioned. Further work is underway to design reporting for managers and self-service portals to help in budgeting against grants. The next instalment is the Human Resource Management Tool (Employment Hero) which we aim to rollout in early 2026.

The annual report was also released in December - [link here](#). It is important to take the time to look back and reflect on our successes. I encourage you to read and share within your networks.

As we reflect on the festive season, I want to acknowledge the hard work and coordination of the health team in this year's Santa visits and Christmas launches across the homelands. The season was a wonderful opportunity to bring joy to the community and celebrate together. To allow time for rest and rejuvenation. We look forward to another productive and rewarding year ahead.

**Glenda Abraham**  
CEO



# Updates from Departments

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Bush Uni

From September - November 2025, Laynha hosted semester 2 of the Bush Uni semester at Garrthalala. The two university units in Semester 2 were Linguistics and Yolŋu History.

Four students graduated from bush uni in November. Congratulations to Tina Dhamarrandji, Jairus Marawilli, Munhala Dhamarrandji and Aaron Burarrwanga on your graduation. On graduation night, Bulpunu was the MC for the evening, and welcomed as many as 40 family members of the students and community members from Garrthalala for the celebrations. Students were danced to the front of the stage by their families to receive their certificates. Tina, Jairus, Aaron and Munhala presented their university work to the audience and explained some of the lessons they had learned from their semester of study. In congratulating the students, Bulpunu acknowledged the "yindi djäma" - the significant work, dedication and effort - from each of the students to complete the semester of study.

Bush Uni was fortunate to have a number of experienced visiting academic staff from Macquarie and ANU, including Frances and Howard Morphy, Nick Evans, Amina Mettouchi, Haoyi Li and Bridget Campbell. Yolŋu staff members provided academic teaching and language expertise throughout the semester - thank you to Bulpunu Munungurr and Rrurrawiliny Ngurruwuthun. Yolŋu operational staff cooked, cleaned, drove troopies and maintained the bush university space to make the bush uni semester a safe and happy place. These staff included Hudson, Banul, Josefa, Rosetta, Munhala and Cameron.

Thank you to Yananymul for her ongoing support of bush uni operating at Garrthalala, to the Laynha Rangers for allowing the bush uni to use the ranger base, and to the Garrthalala community for hosting bush university for another semester.



## HEALTH

# School Holiday Program

Dream Impact Inspire worked with Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation to deliver a range of engagement activities including ball games, boxing, mentoring, disco and movie nights as part of the December 2025 / January 2026 school holiday program.

Previous visits, youth consultation and the strong relationships built with the homelands helped make it easier to run activities at Gangan homeland.

Over the four days of workshops and activities, more than 40 young people and 35 adults participated. It was a fun and engaging program, with an overwhelming response from young people and encouraging feedback from parents who attended.

No incidents were reported, and everyone involved had a great time.



## Dr Tracey Westerman Training

In October, Dr Tracey Westerman delivered her training program with Laynha Health, focusing on complex racial trauma, mental health, and attachment. The sessions provided valuable insights and practical strategies to better support the wellbeing of individuals and communities.



## Graduations and training

Laynha Health celebrated CDU graduations in the Youth team.

Also, it was the commencement of the Certificate II in ATSI Primary Health Care for Homeland Healthcare Employees in collaboration with Miwatj Health, with participants Dhalinyirr Munyarryun, Nungunu Mununggurr, and Xephina Nungumajbarr.



## HEALTH

# Christmas in the homelands

Christmas in the homelands included bring Christmas lunches, Santa and presents to Wandawuy, Rurrangala, Baniyala, Balma, Garrthalala, Doyndji, Gan Gan, Gurrumurru and Dhalinybuy.

Presents were delivered to children and young people ranging from babies to teenagers and young adults. One of the biggest highlights was the homeland basketball singlets given to the older kids at Baniyala, Gan Gan and Garrthalala. They were very popular and have already been requested again for next year.

Thank you to MAF for supporting the Santa Runs and helping make these visits possible.



## OPERATIONS

### Charlie retires

We said thanks to Charlie, and wished him well for his retirement on country in Bukudal.

Charlie has worked hard to support homelands for over 20 years. The whole of Laynha especially the Operations crew will miss seeing him at work.

Excitingly, Charlie will be supported by Laynha Aged Care team in his retirement so will still very much be apart of Laynha.



## Out and about in homelands

Cleaned out houses in Gängan ready for works to start.



Installed ramps at Bäniyala.

## CORPORATE

We held the Laynhapuy AGM on 13 November in Dhälinybuy. Thank you everyone for coming and travelling to attend, and to Dhälinybuy for hosting this year.



## RANGERS

### Ward Mala

The Ward Mala was held in Dhälinybuy on 13 November. It was held prior to the Laynha AGM to encourage a maximum turn out. Thank you to the residents of Dhälinybuy for having us.

### Certificate II in Government

In October 2025, 14 Rangers completed their Certificate II in Government. The training gave graduates the skills and confidence to apply the compliance powers necessary to keep our Country safe from illegal activities.



## New compliance agreement

### Statement from Ward Mala Meeting

The Djalkiripuyju, Miyarrkapuyju, Laynhapuyju Ward Mala is made up of 45 leaders from the Laynhapuy homelands in North East Arnhem Land. We are the governing body for the Laynhapuy Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) giving direction to the Yirralka Rangers.

We are the Traditional land and sea owners of this region recognised under Yolŋu law as well as the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976 and through the Blue Mud Bay case 2008.

For many years we have been concerned about non-Indigenous people entering our lands and waters without our permission. Our leaders and rangers have tried to manage these issues over time but we haven't had the compliance powers to support us.

In November we met together in Dhälinybuy homeland to talk about a new compliance Agreement between the Yirralka Rangers, Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Commission and the Northern Land Council. This new Agreement aims to give compliance powers to the Yirralka Rangers and allow for by-laws under the NT Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act to be put into effect in our IPA.

It has always been our protocol that visitors need to get permission from the right people before entering into our Country and to respect and follow our rules when they visit. This protocol keeps people and Country safe.

This new Agreement will build the skills of our Rangers through training and joint patrols with NT Parks and Wildlife staff. It provides a pathway for our Rangers to obtain real compliance powers and authority to effectively manage visitors into the Laynhapuy IPA like NT Parks and Wildlife staff can do in other conservation areas.

This is about respecting each other and caring for our Country and culture.

This is an exciting stage for Yirralka, the Laynhapuy IPA and our Homelands as we continue to work towards Our Old People's Vision of Yolŋu in the Homelands managing their own affairs.



## RANGERS

### Sea Country

The Yirralka Ranger Sea Country team has had an exciting and rewarding period, with achievements that strengthen both ranger capability and the care of Sea Country.

We are proud to acknowledge Hamish Gondarra and Ganawa Burarrwanga, who have successfully completed their Certificate III in Fisheries Compliance. Hamish recently travelled to Darwin to finalise training at the Bachelor Institute. This qualification provides rangers with the legal authority to question individuals engaged in fishing activities, with refusal to provide information constituting an offence. This greatly strengthens our ability to protect fish stocks while ensuring Sea Country monitoring and compliance are led by people with deep cultural connection and responsibility to Country. Building on this, the team will be organising joint patrols with Fisheries, supporting coordinated enforcement and information-sharing on the water.

In December, the team conducted patrols around the Isle of Woodah, maintaining surveillance for illegal fishing vessels and reinforcing ranger presence across Sea Country. These patrols are critical for deterrence, compliance, and early detection of unlawful activity.

We are also nearing another significant milestone, with five members of the ranger team weeks away from completing their Coxswain Grade 2 Near Coastal qualifications. Araluen, Djatji, Ganiwuy, Bec and Lachy have been working hard towards this qualification, and the entire team are proud of their commitment and perseverance. This qualification allows holders to command vessels under 12 metres in sheltered waters or within five nautical miles of the coast while carrying passengers. Once completed, our Sea Country team will consist of ten qualified coxswains, significantly enhancing our ability to care for Sea Country.

Supporting this growing capability, the team has completed the 10-year annual surveys of Miyangi and Yarrawarri, ensuring the vessels meet all safety and compliance requirements for continued operations. Looking ahead, the team is excited for a busy 2026, with an increase in planned patrols, more rangers undertaking fisheries compliance training, and additional coxswain training planned to continue building a strong, capable Sea Country team.



## Yirralka Miyalk

In October 2025, the Yirralka Miyalk Bush Foods were announced the winners of the 2025 Blak Excellence Awards in the Bushfoods & Botanicals category. The [Blak Business Awards](#) are prestigious awards in Australia's Northern Territory, run by the [Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network \(NTIBN\)](#) which recognise, highlight, and celebrate the achievements, innovations, and growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, entrepreneurs, and leaders throughout the Territory.

The Yirralka Miyalk Rangers are very grateful to win this award and are humbled by the recognition from the NTIBN for our small business which became established in 2011 and has grown over the years by creating and distributing Yolŋu bush medicine products which are now being wholesaled to a variety of boutique retailers, art centres, gift shops both locally and nationally, in addition to being sold at local markets and events.

We are proud to continue to focus on and promote women's empowerment by continuing cultural practices and supporting meaningful employment opportunities throughout the homelands with a strong focus on caring for Country.



## GATJPU'YUN HUB

We are excited to share that the Gatjpu'yun Hub had a successful opening over Christmas and has been warmly received by many Community Members. The pre holiday opening created a great opportunity to support people with food, financial counselling, Emergency Relief and a cool, welcoming space to rest and relax. Our new financial counsellor, Martina, is settling in beautifully working remotely and connecting with many Community Members over Teams.

Early in the the New Year, the Hub has been incredibly busy, with visitors coming from all across the region to use the space for a wide range of needs. We're also thrilled to welcome two new team members: Emily Marawili, who has started as a Community Engagement Mentee and is already doing a wonderful job, and Jacob Mununggurr, our new driver supporting Hub users, Aged Care and NDIS transport. Jacob is looking to expand transport options for Community Members travelling between Yirrkala, the Airport, Town, and Gunyangara soon also.

We're also happy to share that our new massage chairs have arrived in the resting room, adding an extra layer of comfort for those who drop in. We look forward to welcoming you to the Hub soon. As we continue building our team, we genuinely appreciate your patience when sending referrals.



## REMOTE AUSTRALIA EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Laynhapuy RAES program launched at the start of November, and it has been a busy and rewarding time implementing the new program.

By December 2025, 60% of the caseload had been commenced, making Laynha Health the highest performing provider nationwide.

Employment Services hubs were established in Nhulunbuy, next to Gove Pizza, and at Yirrkala within Laynhapuy, with on going work happening to get permanent hubs in homelands too. The hubs are providing accessible support to the community. Seven homelands including Gängan, Bäniyala, Wandawuy, Garrthalala, Bawaka, Gurrumuru, and Dhälinybuy - were visited for consultation on community projects and case work, ensuring local voices and needs guided planning.

A total of 28 job vacancies were registered, and research with stakeholders, traditional owners, and caseload informed the selection of two key community projects to co-design: mini farms and a community-led driving school. The first substantive work plan for these projects is currently being collated, accompanied by letters of support from key partners. Engagement and consultation with stakeholders around employment placements and community projects has been successfully achieved and continues to be a priority.

