

KAARAK NYITTING

OUR JOURNEY LIGHTS THE WAY

THE LOOKING FORWARD STORY

2011-2024

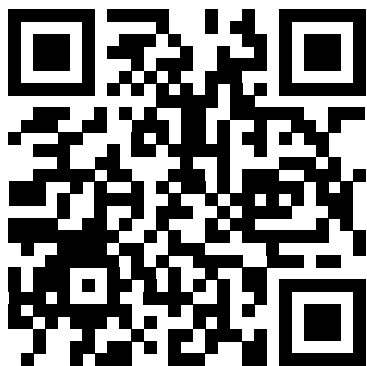


LOOKING
FORWARD



Credit: designed by Aunty Cheryl Phillips and River Starcevich.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this book contains images and names of Elders who have passed. The images and names have been used with permission.



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debakarn.com

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Looking Forward research team is based on Whadjuk Nyoongar Boodjar. We acknowledge the Whadjuk people as the spiritual and cultural custodians of the land on which we are located. We also acknowledge the Yawuru people who guide our work in Rubibi (Broome). We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging for without their knowledge, stories, generosity and commitment our projects would not be possible.

We extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their lands and enduring culture.



Co-researchers

Elders:

Aunty Cheryl Phillips
Uncle Greg Phillips
Aunty Linda Dean
Uncle John Puertollano
Uncle Kevin Puertollano
Uncle Gary Culbong
Aunty Carmel Culbong
Aunty Sandra Wilkes
Uncle Peter Wilkes
Aunty Muriel Bowie
Aunty Millie Penny
Uncle Fred Penny
Aunty Charmaine Pell
Aunty Oriel Green
Aunty Moya Newman
Uncle Charlie Kickett
Aunty Helen Kickett
Uncle Albert McNamara
Aunty Irene McNamara
Uncle Percy Hansen

Aunty Joanna Corbett
Aunty Dot Getta
Aunty Liz Hayden
Uncle Jim Hayden
Aunty Viv Hansen
Uncle Mort Hansen
Aunty Cheryl Davis
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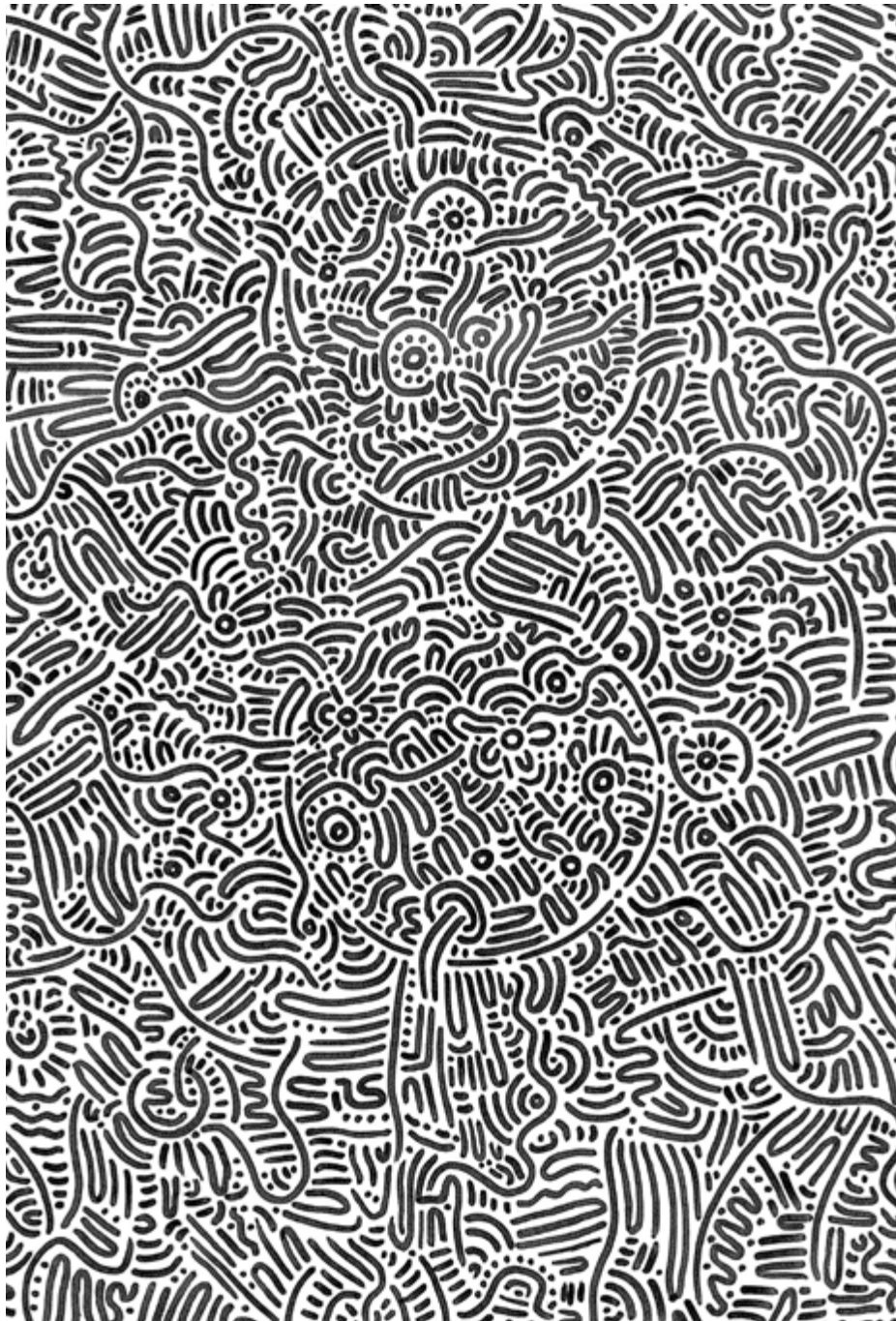
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Toby Millar
Tonii Skeen
Vincent Carter
Zali Morgan



Building Bridges

The featured artwork was created by the talented artist and illustrator Kamsani Bin Salleh for the Looking Forward Moving Forward and Building Bridges projects. Kamsani is descended from the Nimunburr and Yawuru people of the Kimberley and the Ballardong Noongar people of the Perth region in Western Australia.

To see Kamsani's other works, please visit his website kambarni.com or Instagram page [@kambarni](https://www.instagram.com/kambarni)

In reference to the Building Bridges piece, Kamsani said "The design is taken from my piece 'Reactive' and draws on the relationship between mental state and the connection to land."



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Kaarak, the red-tailed black cockatoo, is the bringer of light. Kaarak saw the light coming from Meeka the moon and so flew up and took the fire and brought it home to share with all the animals. Kaarak was gentle and steady (debakarn) with the light, making sure it was not too bright and not too dark to nurture and protect the young.

Kaarak calls out a Welcome to all, inviting everyone on a journey through the Looking Forward program of research. Kaarak lights the way through the project stories, dropping red tailfeathers of insight and learning along the way. Kaarak flies above the Boodja, with the big “Building Bridges” tree taking centre stage for all to gather beneath its branches. Here, the Elders share their stories and wisdom with young people and with services. Through the storying and on Country experiences, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people work together to change the way services respond to the needs of Aboriginal people.

We are stronger together.

We will keep the fires burning.

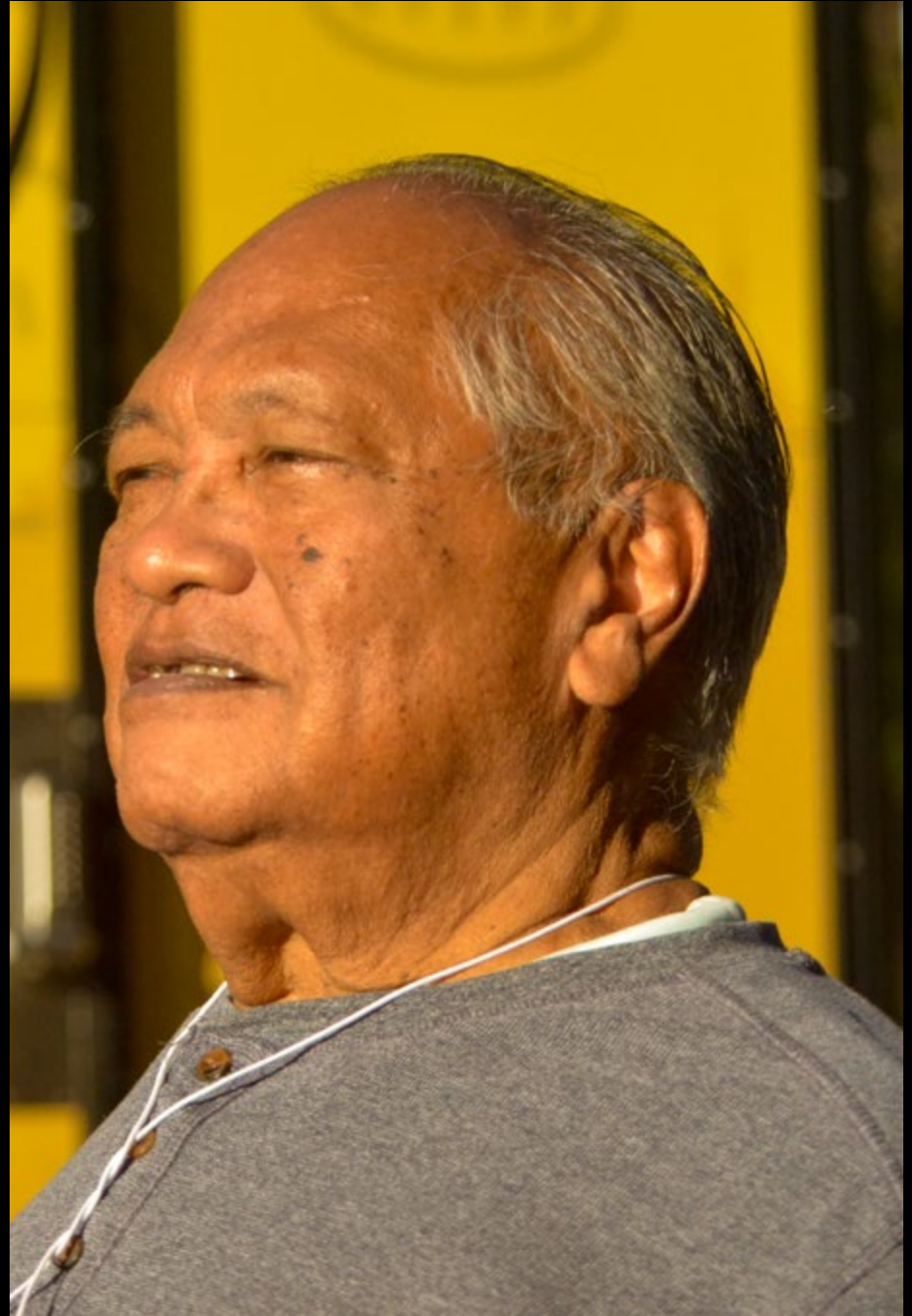
We will continue to light the way for others.

Debakarn. Koorliny. Wangkiny.

The Looking Forward program of research spans 2011 to 2024 and featured eight projects guided by more than sixty Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth co-researchers and community supporters, and over 20 Government and non-Government Mental Health and drug and alcohol support services and peak agencies, including the WA Mental Health Commission and Office of the Chief Psychiatrist.

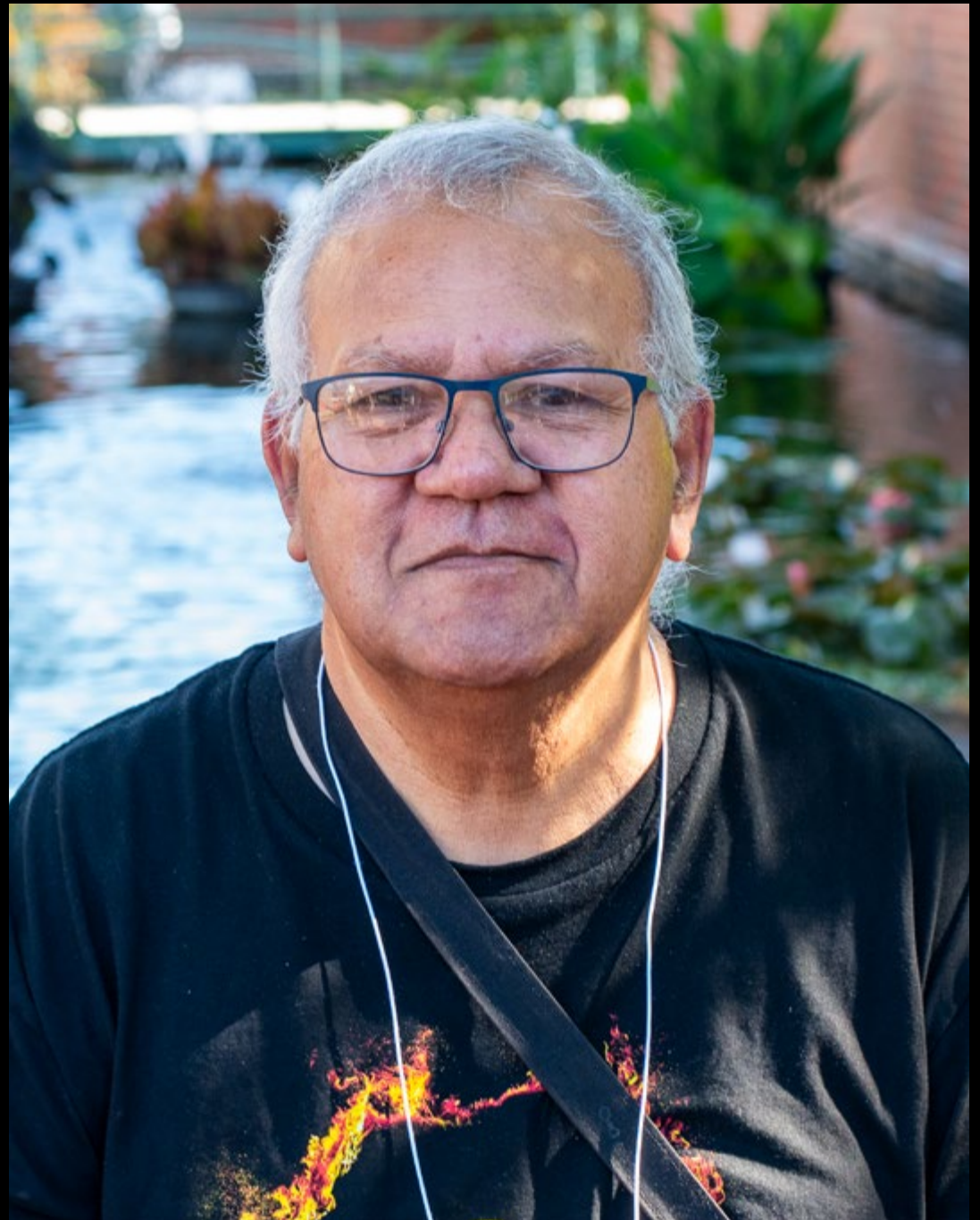
Associate Professor Michael Wright is a Yuat Nyoongar researcher with a background in social work, epidemiology and service management. The Looking Forward program of research was based on Michael’s doctoral thesis, *Out of the Blue*, which investigated the caregiving experiences of Aboriginal families experiencing serious mental illness. Michael (pictured above) reflects back to his early work: “While there were many findings [from my thesis], the one that led me to my current work [Looking Forward] was how the system is so difficult for Aboriginal people in its lack of understanding about Aboriginal culture.”





The Elders are key.

They are wisdom holders
and a portal to Community.







Debakarn,
go steady.

Slow down
and reflect
and truly listen.

Working together through co-design.
The co-creation of the Debakarn
Koorliny Wangkiny framework...

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...and its implementation within services, shifts the power balance.







It's all about
relationships.

We cannot do
good work with
strangers.



This work transforms people through cultural immersion, on Country experiences and shared storying.





Aboriginal young people
are our fire, now and
into the future.





Acknowledgements

Remembering Elders who worked with us who have passed:

Aunty Shirley Thorne

Aunty Gwen Corunna

Aunty Theresa Walley

Aunty Margaret Culbong

Aunty Janet Hayden

Aunty Louise Hansen

Uncle Albert Corunna

Uncle Paul Parfitt



Funders & Supporters

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Always was. Always will be.

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NO
Reverse

