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Shoalhaven City Council

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Referred to: GR

To whom it may concern,

5 Aboriginal Cultural Arts students from Nowra TAFE, myself and another 5 Business Studies students from Wollongong TAFE and their teacher (Mr Ken Brunker) have received funding to travel to Beijing China in October as part of a Cultural Exchange Program.

It is envisaged that we will be visiting many Art Precincts and Learning Institutions to experience first hand contemporary Chinese Art practices. The Central Academy of Fine Art is included in our itinerary and it is planned for us to perform a presentation whilst visiting this establishment that tells of Aboriginal Art in its wider context and then more specifically what is happening in Indigenous Arts on the NSW South Coast. Other presentations are also being planned.

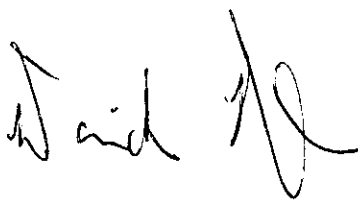
The Business Studies students from Wollongong are also organising for us to meet with several Business people to introduce them to our Art with view at possibly negotiating further Business initiatives.

I spoke with Mayor Paul Green today about meeting with some of the Beijing Sister City citizens whilst we are in China to assist in further developing the relationship that currently exists between the Shoalhaven and Beijing. I asked Mr Green about possible assistance with sponsorship for our 5 Aboriginal Cultural Art students and he indicated to me to make contact with your committee.

Each of the 10 students that have been selected to travel to China has been asked to contribute \$500 towards the overall costs to participate in this opportunity of a lifetime. Some of our students are finding it difficult to raise the necessary funds asked for as they are also required to save their own spending money.

On behalf of the 5 students that have been selected from Nowra I am asking your committee to please consider our request by assisting us with possible financial sponsorship. If you want further information in regards to this request please do not hesitate in giving me a call on the above mentioned numbers.

An excerpt from the South Coast Register dated Monday 27th June is attached in relation to our visit to China.

Yours sincerely,

29/6/2011



TALENT: Local indigenous artists Noel Wellington (sitting), Glenn Duffield and Warwick Keen are part of a cultural exchange program that will see six local indigenous artists travel to China in October.

Aboriginal artists head to China

By **CHRIS DOBIE**

THREE local indigenous artists exhibiting their work at the Nowra Art Gallery are part of a TAFE Illawarra cultural exchange group chosen to travel to China later this year.

The group will sample the local culture, discuss indigenous art and draw on their experience as inspiration for future work.

Glenn Duffield and Noel Wellington from Nowra Campus will be joined by fellow art students Marie Stewart, David Nolan and Jasmine Haby-Atkinson. Their art studies lecturer and fellow indigenous artist Warwick Keen will lead the group. Five business studies students from Wollongong Campus will also be making the trip accompanied by their TAFE teacher.

While China may at first seem a strange destination for indigenous artists, Mr Keen said China had an emerging presence as an influential player in the art world.

"We will be visiting the central academy

of fine arts and a number of art precincts within the city," he said.

"There are also some good business contacts to be made in China and that is why we are travelling with the business students."

Mr Wellington, one of the traditional descendants of the Shoalhaven, believes the trip to Beijing will help enhance the profile of Aboriginal art to an overseas market.

"It's an opportunity to not only promote Aboriginal art to another country but also give us the chance to experience their culture," he said.

Glenn Duffield is also excited about the trip and believes experiencing a culture as old as China's will be great for his art.

"For sure I think there will be a lot of experiences to call on for inspiration when I get back," he said.

"We are even looking at doing something while we are there if the opportunity arises."

Mr Keen also hopes to visit Nowra's sister

city during their visit.

"Nowra has a sister city in one of the provinces of Beijing and we will be speaking to Mayor Paul Green next week about the possibility of visiting there to promote the Shoalhaven," he said.

Before they pack their bags for the east, the trio will be busy with their exhibitions at the Nowra Art Gallery.

Each has a room displaying their own unique take on contemporary indigenous art, and while all three come from the same cultural background their work is unique to the individual artists themselves.

Running concurrently in the Gallery's main room is a travelling exhibition for the finalists of the 2010 Parliament of NSW Aboriginal Art Prize.

Included in the exhibition are works by Warwick Keen, Glenn Duffield and another Shoalhaven based artist Mark Willers Ponakim and Clyde Groves and Natalie Bateman.

All of the exhibitions run until July 6.

27/6/2011

SOUTH COAST REGISTER