

## **MS LINDA JEAN BURNEY**

### **Citation for the conferral of Doctor of Education (*honoris causa*)**

Linda's name is synonymous with Aboriginal education not only across New South Wales. She has a high profile at State and national levels in education and training as well as Aboriginal affairs. She is a prominent spokesperson and is an effective public speaker, an experienced mediator, manager, meeting facilitator and media representative.

A member of the Wiradjuri nation, Linda was born at Whitton, a small Riverina farming community. She attended school at nearby Leeton. Completing senior school at Penrith High School, she won a government scholarship and was the first Aboriginal person to gain a Diploma of Teaching at Mitchell College of Advanced Education (now the Bathurst Campus of this University).

In 1979 she began teaching at Lethbridge Park Public School in western Sydney and became involved in the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (NSW AECG). From 1981 she worked with the Aboriginal Education Unit of the NSW Department of Education and was instrumental in developing and implementing the NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Education Policy (the first of its kind in Australia). In 1983 she was appointed Executive Officer of NSW AECG and was elected President in 1987.

During her presidency, 1988 to 1998, the NSW AECG became incorporated, moved into its own offices and embedded the principles of negotiation with Aboriginal communities through the AECG on all Aboriginal education policy and issues.

Under Linda's presidency the NSW AECG was instrumental in achieving Aboriginal Studies electives in Years 7-12 and core Aboriginal history and geography for all students in years 7-10 in all NSW State high schools. She was the principal consultant to the national teacher education project Teaching the Teachers and securing Departmental action on the impact of Otitis Media (middle ear infection) on the education of Aboriginal children in New South Wales.

Linda played an integral part in re-writing the *NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Education Policy* to apply to all students, all staff and all schools.

Linda has chaired and been a member of boards and committees at both state and national levels including: the ATSIIC National Social Justice Task Force; the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) of Australia; the National Council for Aboriginal reconciliation; the NSW State Reconciliation Committee; the NSW Board of Studies; the NSW Juvenile Justice Advisory Council; the NSW Centenary of Federation Board; the NSW Advisory Committee for the International Year of Volunteers 2001; and Australian Volunteers International.

In 1995 and 1998 Linda represented Australia at meetings in Geneva on the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations. She was involved in the World Indigenous Peoples' Conferences on Education in 1990, 1993 and 1996.

Awards made to Linda include: the 1993 NSW Department of School Education Director-General's Award for Outstanding Service to Public Schools; the NSW TAFE Medal in 1995 and the Lipton's Australian Women's Quality of Life Award in 1996.

Linda is the founding Director of the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre.

Chancellor, I present to you for conferral of the award Doctor of the Education (*honoris causa*), Linda Jean Burney, for her contribution to education, particularly to Indigenous education in Wiradjuri country.

**Dated This Ninth Day of May Two Thousand And Two**