



For immediate release
22 April 2016

**GURINGAI AGREEMENT SEES FIRST UNIVERSITY STUDENT
SPONSORED BY WALLARAH 2**

The Mutual Advancement Covenant established between Wyong Coal and the Guringai Tribal Link Aboriginal Corporation (Guringai TLAC) is delivering increased education and training opportunities for the Indigenous community of the Central Coast, with the first of four tertiary scholarships being awarded.

23-year-old Rachel Kulk from Wyee is the first recipient of a scholarship under this agreement that is seeing her undertake studies for a Bachelor of Science at the University of Newcastle, Callaghan Campus.

Rachel, in her first year of the Bachelor of Science degree, is proud of her Aboriginal heritage with the Guringai people and says the opportunities created through the agreement between the Guringai TLAC and Wyong Coal are important for her family and other local Aboriginal and Indigenous young people.

"My Aboriginality is a part of me; it's a part of my spirit and a connection to my country," said Rachel.

"Science is a field I've always been really interested in, particularly chemistry and earth sciences are so important because we need to look after our environment for all future generations.

"I'm not sure exactly what job I'd like to do when I finish my degree yet, but postgraduate studies are definitely a goal for me. I may even pursue science within the coal industry," she said.

The Mutual Advancement Covenant was developed collaboratively between Wyong Coal, the proponents of the Wallarah 2 Coal Project, and the Guringai TLAC as positive and beneficial opportunities to aid Indigenous people to develop robust skills that will strengthen their long-term prospects.

The five program areas that are funded under the three-year agreement include apprenticeship scholarships, business start-ups, mentoring, a Green Team scheme and tertiary scholarships. The agreement also provides for a guaranteed minimum target of 10 per cent employment for Indigenous people once the Wallarah 2 Coal Project becomes operational.

The agreement is not only an outstanding opportunity for education, training and business development, but also aims to increase awareness of the rich local heritage, identity and culture of Aboriginal people on the Central Coast.

"Receiving this scholarship to study at university is an opportunity to really challenge the generational barriers in my family and embrace my Aboriginal heritage and I thank Wallarah 2 for seeing my potential and helping me reach my goal of becoming a university graduate, in a field of study I am truly passionate about," said Rachel.

The Guringai TLAC is a support and educational organisation committed to uniting the traditional clans of the Guringai through promoting their family history and culture. As traditional owners of the coastal land on the Central Coast, the Corporation undertake cultural heritage assessments, provide education workshops and develop educational resources.

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