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A big past with an even bigger future

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Host: Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development — Aboriginal Business Development Project

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The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development’s Aboriginal Business Development project works with multiple stations throughout the Kimberley. Darrylin Gordon is 26 years old, a mother and lives on Lamboo station. Darrylin is manager Robin Yeeda’s niece (and of his greatest assets!).

Darrylin has a keen passion for community development and empowering local Aboriginal people. She has impressive past and big plans for the future. She works on the station, is a director and helps out with business admin support. In addition to all of this she works as an Indigenous community alcohol and drug worker for Kimberley Mental Health and is completing a degree in Indigenous Community Management and Development at Curtin University. Darrylin has a long list of community service in
formal positions and as a volunteer. In 2015 she was recognised for her contribution and named winner of the 'Kimberley Girl' competition.

Darrylin at the Kimberley Girl Competition in 2015.

Darrylin has given much to the Halls Creek community over the years. Now she has moved back to the station, she is ready to focus her efforts on the property (not forgetting about the community of course!). She explained her excitement about living back on the property. “I love being out on country, you don’t need to leave home to do your job. It’s so exciting getting to see the place grow and change each year. I’m always learning out there. For example, I raised a calf from when it was born and the process has taught me and the other cattle so much”.
Darrylin is currently working on a project to get job pathways workers out on the property. She explains...

“In 2014-15 the Indigenous employment rate was 39.5% in WA, down from 56.3% in 2008. Local Aboriginal people in Halls Creek are currently working for the dole through a Job Pathways program. Where there are high levels of education there is virtually no gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. I would work in conjunction with the program by developing a Community Training and Empowerment program at Lamboo station.”

“Firstly I’ll collaborate with job pathways further and plan a program. This would involve consultation with local Aboriginal people so they are engaged. We will be working on grant applications to fund upgrades to our facilities so we can accommodate these workers throughout the week. This means they will be removed from distractions and the drugs and alcohol abuse associated with town. Training would fit in with recognised courses such as a Cert II in Agriculture so people can complete units on the station. I’d also like a mental health worker to come to the property and do workshops and mental health checks regularly.”
“The program will empower the trainees and give them a sense of self and financial independence. Training will include life skills such as cooking, cleaning and general hygiene, challenging traditional gender roles. Trainees will be able to see real outcomes of their work. For example they might weld a laneway and then see it being used when muster times come. They will be able to see why it was necessary and its usefulness in herd management. They will learn more than just work skills. For example in horse breaking training they will learn patience, mind control and trust. At the end of their six months they will do resume writing training and interview practice.”

“I want Lamboo to be a place of hope for young people, a place where they can connect to country and culture, learn invaluable life skills and gain a sense of pride. The training program will be symbiotic with the community. It will allow us to reduce costs and wages whilst contributing to the people of Halls Creek. I hope the trainees will be role models to others in the community and encourage them to take their lives into their own hands and make a change.”

Darrylin’s commitment to the station and empowering local Aboriginal people is simply commendable. Her humbleness takes the cake. When asked how she does it all, she replied, “I’m lucky to have what I have. I love what I do and being out in the station. Sure there have been some hard times and I’ve had to prove myself but I’m thankful for where I am today. I want to encourage other young women, in agriculture especially, if you have a passion go for it. Love what you do and make the best of it.”
IF YOU’VE GOT SOMETHING, MAKE THE BEST OF IT AND MAKE IT HAPPEN

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