


Napranum on world stage

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News



 Community transforms: Napranum elder Maryann Coconut and Annalise Jennings will speak at an international leadership conference later this year about the transformation in Napranum on Cape York Peninsula.



NAPRANUM elder Maryann Coconut will grace the international stage later this year to promote the success of a community transformation project in the Cape York Peninsula community.

Ms Coconut, an elder with the Thaynakwith Nation, will speak at an leadership conference, the CTT International Conference, on the journey Napranum, has taken over the past five years.

Napranum is a remote Indigenous community, 819 km northwest of Cairns, on the west coast of Cape York.

Joining her will be Annalise Jennings, director of Dynamic Exchange, who helped the community develop and implement a community-owned plan which dramatically increased employment and community infrastructure and decreased domestic violence and adult court appearances.



Ms Jennings, who left a 27-year career in the corporate banking world after she started working with Napranum, said the Napranum community embraced the strength-based program which created a narrative of self-determination and ownership.

“In November 2011 I was engaged to create a community owned plan and one of my philosophies is around community ownership and self-determination,” Ms Jennings said. “I created an approach called whole of community change which engages every sector of the community in conversation, where people have a voice and they can create their own future.

Ms Jennings said hundreds of people had a say on the community owned vision plan published in 2012.

She said the practical examples of improvement were outstanding.

“Within 18 months of creating this community owned plan we increased employment in the community by 60 per cent (from 80 pc unemployment) and increased community owned infrastructure by 40 pc.”



Ms Jennings said her program focused on the “positive core” of the community.

“People having self-belief and empowerment resulted in an 80 pc decrease in domestic violence and 50 pc decrease in adult court appearances,” she said. “I was there in May doing an interim review and we have been able to

sustain those figures.”

Ms Jennings said key to the success of the transformation was a council open to listening, a program which mobilised the hearts and minds of people and the then state government which was willing to direct funding to what people wanted.

She said the happiness index which measures happiness or well-being of a community measured 32 pc misalignment in November 2011. “Within 18 months that score had dropped to nine pc which is within the range considered to be a healthy and viable community,” Ms Jennings said.

A fundraising campaign is underway to support Ms Coconut's trip <http://fnd.us/napranum-to-toronto>