

MEDIA RELEASE

8 April 2022

AMSANT CEO, John Paterson, awarded Honorary Doctorate of Arts

AMSANT is very proud to recognise the significant achievement of our Chief Executive Officer, John (Patto) Paterson, in being awarded the title of Honorary Doctor of Arts by Charles Darwin University (CDU).



John, received the honour in recognition of his leadership, commitment, and exemplary work over many decades, particularly in the Aboriginal community-controlled health sector and advocating for Aboriginal Territorians during COVID-19.

John's achievement is especially significant for the 'AMSANT Family' that John has led for the past 16 years as our CEO, supporting the personal and professional development of so many staff and strongly advocating for our Aboriginal community-controlled health service members.

John is a proud born and bred Territorian with family ties to the Ngalakan people in Ngukurr and has worked in Aboriginal affairs in the public and community sectors since 1979 at a local, Territory and Federal level, focusing on First Nations health, housing and education.

Donna Ah Chee, Chair of AMSANT said, "John's commitment and leadership in Aboriginal Affairs has essentially been life long, and is now being rightly highlighted and formally acknowledged by Charles Darwin University.

"It is important to recognise people like John, who are local, who have lived experience, and believe change for the better can and will happen when we listen to the people we serve and work together with our hearts in the right place."

At the Territory level, John currently chairs the NT Aboriginal Health Forum, and has championed its strategic importance in Aboriginal health, particularly in the process of transitioning government health clinics to Aboriginal community control.

A similar vision has characterised John's strong leadership as part of the engagement of the Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT (APO NT) as a member of the National Coalition of Peak Aboriginal Organisations (CoPs) in the development of the Closing the Gap National Agreement. John also represents the CoPs on the National Council on Closing the Gap.

John has held many leadership roles in Aboriginal organisations as well as in community and government roles. Recently, he was appointed the co-chair of the new CDU-Menzies School of Medicine board, where he has committed to the growth of the Territory's own Aboriginal medical and health workforce.

His award of the title of Honorary Doctor of Arts by Charles Darwin University is very well-deserved, and in his own words "is representative of not only personal achievement, but more so an acknowledgement of the efforts of all AMSANT and member service staff and our united vision of improving the health and wellbeing of all Aboriginal Territorians."

Media inquiries: David Cooper 0418 486310