

## **“Leading The Way” Cultural Race Day successfully launches**

**Sydney, Tuesday 20 June 2017.** The Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) successfully held the “Leading the Way” Cultural Race Day on Saturday, 10 June 2017, at the Royal Randwick Turf Club, which aimed to raise awareness of, and launch the AHC’s “Leading the Way” Fund.

The core focus of “Leading the Way” is to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enhance their career paths through further education, training, and employment opportunities, by offering assistance, scholarships, foundational studies, apprenticeships, and student accommodation at Pemulwuy.

Over 300 people attended the event, including community members and elders from the Redfern Community, the La Perouse community, sponsors, as well as guests. There was a very positive community response on the day. One of Redfern’s elders, Shirley Lomas, delivered an impromptu speech in which she honoured Mick Mundine’s vision throughout the years and she expressed her full support for the initiative.

“Leading The Way” – the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander event to take place at the Royal Randwick Turf Club, opened the day on the racetrack with a heart-warming and lively Welcome to Country by Bidjigal elder and entertainer Uncle Vic Simms, he then proceeded to provide a Welcome to Country for everyone attending the event in the Grand Ballroom.

Hosted by popular TV and radio commentator Brad Cooke, event highlights included traditional Aboriginal dances by a group from Lewisham Boys and songs from Uncle Vic Simms. Seven unique silks designed by Aboriginal artists national-wide were worn by jockeys then auctioned off in the afternoon. The horse “Heavenly Anna”, whose jockey wore the specially designed silks won race six - The Pemulwuy Handicap.

Of the initiative, the AHC Chairperson Alisi Tutuila says, “We’re extremely proud about what this fund stands for and we’re thrilled to have received an abundance of support”.

The AHC would like to thank Gondwana and Aruma who were partners in the Cultural Race Day, the organisations, and companies who supported the event, as well as the Australian Turf Club who provided a wonderful venue and staff on the day.

For more information about the AHC and their initiatives visit the website:

<http://www.ahc.org.au/>

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**For further information please contact:**

Cathy Yao | [cyao@heardagency.com](mailto:cyao@heardagency.com)  
D +61 02 8279 7860

Lucy Jones, Senior Account Manager | [ljones@heardagency.com](mailto:ljones@heardagency.com)

**Notes to Editors:**

Must acknowledge Bradley Photographers if using attached images.

**About the Aboriginal Housing Company**

The Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) is an independent non-profit charity and the first community housing provider in Australia, incorporated in 1973 as a company limited by guarantee. It is an all Aboriginal governed organisation, located in the heart of Redfern, which lies in the traditional lands of the Gadigal People, part of the Eora Nation.

The company was formed in direct response to the widespread discrimination Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and families experienced in the private rental market. The AHC is self-funded and operates on income derived from rental properties. Affordable housing is located across Sydney and country regions in NSW.

A current focus is the redevelopment known as Pemulwuy Project. The redevelopment will breathe new life into Redfern and restore a strong and healthy Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community with an emphasis on cultural values, spirituality and employment. The Pemulwuy Project will make Redfern the best urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Australia and in doing so, set the benchmark for all other communities.