

Otto Bulmaniya Campion (Gamarang)

Vice-Chancellor, I have the pleasure of presenting to you Otto Bulmaniya Campion (skin name Gamarang), who council has determined should be awarded the honorary Doctor of Letters.

Gamarang is a strong, well-respected senior elder and ceremony man from Central Arnhem Land. Otto is a Traditional owner of Malyangarnak and he also has strong family connections across Arnhem Land.

He has participated in several world-acclaimed documentary and film projects and co-authored several publications and reports. He has travelled to Canada, Botswana, South Africa and Malaysia to present or participate in platforms to share knowledge and learnings.

Gamarang has held several positions in local organisations in Maningrida and Ramangining. He is one of the founders of the Djelk Rangers and has worked in land and sea management for many years. He was one of the earliest rangers to participate in the Northern Land Council's Caring for Country program and he continues to be an influential voice in that space.

He is currently director of the Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation, a collaboration between clan and ranger groups around Ramangining. Gamarang worked very hard for that organisation to become independent.

He is an influential and active leader in northern Australia's carbon abatement efforts and has sat on the boards of Arnhem Land Fire Abatement and Western Arnhem Land Fire Management groups.

Gamarang's journey in research began when he made his first ever presentation to a group of eminent Australian scientists at a CSIRO workshop—a presentation that was well received.

Gamarang has collaborated with key organisations including The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance and Bush Heritage Australia. He is a recognised cultural authority on fires and his work is recognised through important interviews and documentaries.

Gamarang is one of the founding members and a co-chair of the Aboriginal Research Practitioners Network, or ARPNet, which is hosted by Charles Darwin University's Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods. He has contributed extensively to research on significant projects undertaken through ARPNet.

In ARPNet, Gamarang advocates for stronger recognition of Bininj law, knowledge systems and languages. He upholds the aspiration that Bininj must create their own platform—in the form of a bush university where Indigenous knowledge exchange is strengthened among clans and families, and where information is stored, shared and new ways of working together are developed.

Gamarang continues to inspire First Nations people in the community and advocates for their involvement in research and land management. Gamarang is a strong leader and a voice for his people.

Vice-Chancellor, in recognition of his significant contribution to Charles Darwin University and to First Nations peoples, Otto Bulmaniya Campion is awarded the title of Honorary Doctor of Letters.