
Chancellor, I have the honour to present to you **Michael Long OAM**, who Council has determined should be awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Arts.

Michael Long, known as Longy, is a proud Anmatyerre, Maranunggu and Tiwi First Nations man. The former Essendon footballer has dedicated his life to the advancement of First Nations people and First Nations Affairs. Longy is admired and respected in equal measure for his footballing prowess and passion for First Nations rights.

Longy began his football career in 1984 in the Northern Territory and played his first league game at the age of sixteen. In 1988 he represented the NTFL and was named in the 1988 Bicentennial All -Australian Team. In 1989 Longy was picked up by Essendon and played with the team until his retirement in 2001.

During his time with Essendon he became the first, First Nation's player to captain an AFL team. In 1985 he made history after speaking out against racism following an on-field incident in the Bombers' inaugural Anzac Day clash with Collingwood.

The AFL subsequently introduced the racial vilification policy which many other sporting codes in Australia and internationally have adopted.

In 2004 Longy began the journey between Melbourne to Canberra on foot to raise awareness to the social and economic issues facing First Nations communities, and to promote reconciliation. Now famed “The Long Walk” it is considered a pivotal moment for First Nations affairs.

Longy is held in highest regard for his commitment to First Nations people however his legacy does not stop there. He is the force behind the NT Thunder and the Michael Long learning and Leadership Centre.

In 2021 Michael Long’s vision of promoting education and sport in remote communities was solidified through a Memorandum of Understanding between CDU and the Michael Long learning and Leadership centre. This partnership ensures that students from remote communities across the NT have access to vocational education and training while learning other lifelong skills such as leadership and resilience, sports governance, employment pathways, literacy and wellbeing and research projects.

Longy has earned a string of prestigious accolades. In 2018 he was named the Northern Territorian of the Year in recognition as a First Nation's leader in the Northern Territory and in 2021 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia "for service to Australian rules football and the Indigenous community."

Longy used his football career as a foundation to create long lasting change for First Nations people in the Northern Territory and beyond.

Chancellor,

In recognition of his outstanding services to First Nations people in the Northern Territory and Australia, the Council of Charles Darwin University awards Michael Long the Honorary degree Doctor of Arts.
