



"IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HEROES"

# KOKODA

## *Spirit*

### Media Release

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## Indigenous Youth Group about to embark on the Kokoda Trail

A group of young Indigenous people are about to embark on a trek of the 96km Kokoda Trail and for many it will be their first trip outside their own communities.

The Indigenous Youth Program is a pioneering initiative of the Jobs Australia Foundation to develop the leadership skills in young Indigenous people. The thirteen young people aged 17-22 and seven mentors aged 26-65, will be accompanied by former Olympian and Foundation Patron, Kyle Vander Kuyp.

The group head out on from Owers Corner at midday on Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup> and will be led by Wayne Wetherall, Managing Director of Kokoda Spirit.

Wayne participated in the inaugural Jobs Australia four day Indigenous Youth Leadership Program held in Victoria earlier this year. He said, "I am excited and honoured to be leading this fantastic group of young Australians. There will be some nerves among the group as we take our first steps but I am confident that this group will learn a great deal about themselves, about the history of the track and of the local Indigenous Papuan people."

Mr Wetherall says having Australian Olympian Kyle Vander Kuyp along as a mentor and role model will add a depth to this trek that will benefit everyone fortunate enough to be participating.

"Kyle will bring a wealth of experience, his own life story, its hardships and rewards. He will be an inspiration in developing leadership skills and confidence to the group and I believe we will have leaders of the future among these young people."

The group will arrive at Port Moresby Airport at 12.30pm on Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup> and commence their trek on Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup> leaving the Gateway Hotel at 8am and Owers Corner at midday.

**Wayne can be contacted on +61 437470008.**

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