



# Success for education scheme

New Mapoon's Margaret Bond is one of four Cape York students who have played a historic role in the Cape York Institute's Higher Expectations Program as the first group of students graduating from Year 12.

Margaret and Ramana Walker and Marijke Bassani, from Coen, and Kowanyama's Valencia Gilbert all plan to continue to tertiary education.

Margaret, who aims to study business at Griffith University, said: "Higher Expectations has given me the best educational opportunity. The interesting lifestyles and diverse cultures that I have experienced at Lourdes Hill College also gave me a better understanding of life."

Currently, only six per cent of students from Cape York complete Year 12.

The Higher Expectations Program was established in 2005 to enable the region's top indigenous students to attend Queensland's leading boarding schools, and is funded by the **Macquarie Group Foundation**.

They studied at Lourdes Hill College and Rockhampton Girls Grammar School this year.

Last year's sole graduate, Leona Yunkaporta, is now working for Rio Tinto in Brisbane.

John Wenitong, National Indigenous Education Development Officer for the Cape York Institute, said Higher Expectations had provided a setting in which the Cape's indigenous students could excel.

"Higher Expectations gives students opportunities they would never have in their local community and they have risen to the challenge," he said.

"The students have had to overcome many cultural and educational hurdles along the way but the program is structured to ensure they have support from their families, communities, schools and the program staff.

"As a result, the Higher Expectations Program has an almost 100 per cent retention rate, which also shows the commitment the students are prepared to make to their education when they are given the opportunity."

Valencia, who will study Early Childhood at Cairns TAFE, said growing up in Kowanyama on the west coast of Carpentaria, she had never heard of boarding

schools.

"My first day at Rockhampton Girl's Grammar was a big change for me but I thought to myself if I give up now I will never have this opportunity again," she said. "Higher Expectations was the best thing that ever happened in my life. It gave me pathways to achieve my goals."

Ramana, who joined Higher Expectations in Year 10 at Lourdes Hill College, hopes to study criminology and criminal justice at Griffith University.

"This program has opened a door to many opportunities," she said. "It has allowed me to further my education and given me the opportunity to travel overseas. It has also provided me with financial assistance which has made my schooling experience a lot easier."

Also, eight Year 11 students in the Higher Expectations Program will spend two weeks in Japan next month as part of a student exchange program funded by the Japanese Government.

The trip has been facilitated by AFS Intercultural Programs and the Macquarie Group Foundation.



**(From left): Valencia Gilbert, Ramana Walker, Margaret Bond and Marijke Bassani.**



# Kids work out with netball idols

By JONA TURLE

**Two world champion Australian netballers landed in Perth on Thursday for a free coaching clinic with local kids at Lords in Subiaco.**

About 80 Year 6 and 7 students from West Leederville, Floreat and Wembley primary schools met their idols and enjoyed a spirited workout.

Taking the clinic were recently retired Australian netball captain Liz Ellis, current star player Catherine Cox and West Coast Fever squad members Susie Fuhrmann and Andrea Gilmore.

The clinics are run by **Macquarie Group's** community service arm, and are part of a nationwide grass roots program, giving kids the chance to meet their sporting heroes.

Macquarie Sports spokes-

woman Georgina Baldock said: "The clinic aims to develop the girls' netball skills, while providing them with positive role models and inspiring them to strive for their goals."

Ms Ellis said she had run about 20 clinics a year for the past three years.

"It is one of the most rewarding things I do - we've coached thousands of girls and they all come away with a greater love of the game and a stronger belief in their abilities," she said.

Ms Fuhrmann said: "This is a great opportunity for these girls to meet Liz and Catherine, and get coaching from the top players in the country."

Macquarie Sports have been running clinics hosted

by national and international sporting identities for the last 10 years in cricket, rugby, netball and basketball.

More than 8000 children a year have received coaching, but this is the first time the program has come to Perth.

Lords general manager Dean Williams said it was great to see the netball stars mixing with local kids at the Subiaco venue.

"Lords is the only place in Perth with five indoor wooden courts suitable for netball, protected from the sun and rain," he said.

"That is why they wanted to come here and why it is madness to think about closing this centre."