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**FLASTAFF KICKSTARTS A NEW GREEN SPACE YOUTH ENTERPRISE IN SOUTH NOWRA**

The Flagstaff Group is excited to launch a new youth enterprise in the Shoalhaven called Binowee, a kickstart Native Nursery and green space learning project aimed at improving the lives and wellbeing for young people with disability.

The program, funded by the “Our Region, Our Voice” Regional Youth Investment Program, will enable young individuals living with disability to learn transferrable work skills that will incorporate working with flora, grounds maintenance, learning about species native to the Shoalhaven region, discovering indigenous culture and the importance of project-based tasks.

Aboriginal for ‘green place’, the Binowee project will liaise with indigenous representatives and youth who would like to take part in the 18-month project. The development of work-based skills will include: seed and sapling planting and production, appreciation for the natural native environment, learning indigenous culture, garden bed construction, discovering how to use tools, safety and maintenance. All the skills will support youth with disability and indigenous youth with disability to learn, achieve and develop employment skills and opportunities within Flagstaff’s future landscaping services to Shoalhaven based businesses .

To document the journey of the youth involved in the project, Flagstaff has engaged, Beyond Empathy to record the progress of the project from construction to completion, capturing participant stories, achievements and learnings along the way.

Flagstaff’s Chief Executive Officer, Roy Rogers, said he is excited about the project. *“We are very grateful to the Department of Regional NSW for funding this program that will provide valuable work skills and employment for youth with disability and indigenous youth with disability. This offering provides a new opportunity for youth to gain skills and a job in their own community and be supported in being work ready.”*

Flagstaff’s Group Services Manager, Hayden Fineran, who will oversee the project also commented*, “I’m excited for the Flagstaff team to undertake this project and create a new opportunity for young people living with a disability in the Shoalhaven to connect with likeminded people and learn about our beautiful Shoalhaven.”*

If you are a young person with a disability, an indigenous organisation or garden group that would like to get involved in the project, contact Belinda Franklin on 0417 285 138 or email Belinda.Franklin@flagstaffgroup.com.au

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