

Tribal Warrior Aboriginal Corporation

Sydney Morning Herald 25 January 2011 AUSTRALIA DAY has not traditionally been a time of celebration for the Indigenous population. But the Tribal Warrior Association will have a distinctive presence on Sydney Harbour on Wednesday when its flagship, the Tribal Warrior, acts as the starting vessel for the annual ferry race.

For the association's chief executive, Shane Phillips, playing a role in the day's festivities will broadcast the message: "We've survived, we've thrived, and here we are on Sydney Harbour."

The association was established by a group of Aboriginal elders and community members to vitalise the indigenous culture and create employment.

The Tribal Warrior is a 15.4-metre gaff-rigged ketch. It was built more than 100 years ago in the Torres Strait and is used to train indigenous skippers and maritime workers.

It also hosts cultural cruises, where tourists and students can learn about the Aboriginal significance of Sydney landmarks and coastal life.

"This is one of those occasions when we can showcase how strong our people are," Mr Phillips said.

The Tribal Warrior Aboriginal Corporation has a proud history of mentoring and training disadvantaged indigenous and non-indigenous youth, leading to self-esteem, empowerment and employment. The Corporation is the only indigenous maritime training company in Australia, and programs are facilitated by qualified Maritime trainers. We have trained youth at risk from all corners of Australia and offer a full range of maritime courses.

Our programs are largely funded by our [Cruises, Charters and Cultural Performances](#) as well as donations and support from companies, NGOs, governments and individuals.

The Tribal Warrior has trained many skippers who work boats around Sydney Harbour. Many former students work in the offshore industry.

The mentoring program is a grass roots community, a holistic exercise, assistance and referral program helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth of all ages. Mentoring in association with the [Clean Slate Without Prejudice](#), in partnership with the Redfern Local Area Police Command, make big changes in the community.

The concept is simple: forming good habits, guiding by example, acknowledging our achievements and including everyone.

The program is designed to reduce recidivism – helping youth to stay out of jail through commitment to the program and learning discipline in physical training. The local police report a decrease of 70% in crime!

The program creates a supportive family environment. Mentors and the kids they mentor go on excursions to places of cultural significance and learn the history and heritage of certain sites. Recent activities include fire-making, canoe-making and spear-making workshops, keeping our culture alive and well.



Flagship - the boat is used for cultural cruises and training