

ESTHER BEVAN — TRIBUTE

Statement by Member for Kimberley

MS J. FARRER (Kimberley) [12.53 pm]: I want to pay tribute to Esther Bevan, a strong Gija woman who passed away on the weekend. Esther was always passionate about women and education in the Kimberley. She received her passion from her strong culture and the St John of God Sisters, who showed her what women can achieve. A big influence in her life was Father Luewm of the Pallottine Centre in Perth, where she was given the opportunity to complete secondary school because they saw her potential. Esther committed herself in education initially through the Catholic Education Office by tirelessly supporting Aboriginal teachers and students. She was a motivator in education by enabling students to achieve their potential. Working with Sister Pat Rattigan, Esther was instrumental in the establishment of Notre Dame University in Broome and never lost her passion for involving Aboriginal people in the life of the college. She encouraged Notre Dame to invest in Aboriginal art and Aboriginal people's gifts and skills. She travelled the Kimberley giving people canvas and paints and encouraging people to tell their stories through art. That is why art is central to the university. Esther has left behind two sons and two daughters, and the Kimberley has lost a dedicated and passionate advocate. We all miss her.