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Gathering set to empower women from all walks of life

Universal Sisters inspire inaugural women's multicultural event.

A new event to be held at the Mackay Wintermoon site (Cameron's Pocket) will bring together women from across cultures and geographic bounds to celebrate, share their stories and learn from each other's diverse life experiences.

Reef Catchments is proud to support The Gathering which will unite Indigenous women groups from across Australia with women from all walks of life locally to share culture, spark change and create a network of support.

The event is the culmination of a long time dream for organisers, including Kimberley aboriginal woman Mena Stemm and Mackay local Celeste Philips. The pair saw a real need for a forum to encourage women to share, inspire and empower each other.

"This event is a celebration of women. We will have everyone from artists and storytellers, to musicians, healers and performers coming together to inspire, entertain and share their skills," Celeste said.

"But beyond a celebration, we also want this event to be a driving force for positive change, to bring cultures together and to empower women from all walks of life by recognising and encouraging their capacities and interests."

Mena said she knew first-hand the importance of giving women a way to connect.

"I am of the Stolen Generation from Beagle Bay Mission in the Kimberley area of Western Australia. I have spent my whole life coming to terms with my past and to recognise my own strength," she said.

"A forum like this one is so important, because with the right networks and support, women really can make a difference – in their own lives, and the lives of their family and communities.

"It is so vital across cultures that women have a platform to connect and help one another. We are expecting 300 or more inspiring women to be at this year's event and are so excited about what we can achieve."

The Gathering will be a four-day, three-night camping event from Friday 28th - Monday 31st August. All women are welcome and invited to attend.

Sponsors are currently being sought for the 2015 event.

To find out more contact Mena Stemm (0439 394 723) or Celeste Philips (0409 491 237).

Reef Catchments is proud to support this Traditional Owner event through funding from the Australian Government.

IMAGE (originals attached): From left Universal Sisters Celeste Philips and Mena Stemm are coordinating a multicultural event to connect women from all backgrounds and walks of life.

