

## Media Release

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### COLLINGWOOD STAR HELPS GEO PRISONERS

The GEO-operated Junee Correctional Centre was proud to host a visit from Collingwood Football Club forward Andrew Krakouer to launch an innovative program aimed at helping indigenous prisoners break free from the cycle of crime.

Called *It's Your Time*, the program is being trialled at Junee prior to an expected wider roll-out to other correctional centres across Australia. Junee's expertise in cultural programs made the facility a clear choice for the program's introduction.

The centre worked closely with Krakouer to ensure a successful launch of the program, with Junee's outstanding cultural centre acting as the launch venue.

While Krakouer's 132 AFL games and 148 goals, first for Richmond and latterly for Collingwood, were talking points for Junee's prisoners during his visit, Krakouer was primarily at Junee to launch his program. *It's Your Time* is a reform program for indigenous prisoners based around a series of videos in which Krakouer discusses issues prisoners may confront on release.

Krakouer speaks with authority and experience. He brings a unique perspective to the program as he spent time behind bars, being sentenced in 2008 to 32 months imprisonment for assault with intent to cause bodily harm.

"Unfortunately there's always going to be people who get in trouble and find themselves in jail. But if I can use my experiences to help them in any kind of way and give them a little bit of hope I'm more than happy enough to put my hand up and do that," Krakouer said.

"I want to talk to people about getting through the dark times and dealing with their issues while they're incarcerated. I know myself that I was lucky enough to have a support structure with family and mates, but some inmates don't have as many people to turn to or as much to look forward to.

"But it's a matter of believing that there are people out there willing to give you an opportunity. And also that you've got to want to do it yourself as well.

"I was saying to the boys, 'The greens you have worn, I've worn. I've been in the same position you are'. I tell it how it is. I don't fabricate anything and I think that is why they can relate to it and I think that is why this course should be a success."

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Junee staff have been trained as facilitators of the *It's Your Time* program. The program's DVD includes segments in which Krakouer and other prominent Aboriginal men talk about their lives, what led to them serving custodial sentences and how they facilitated positive change. The program also includes a workbook.

Prisoners participating in the *It's Your Time* program will have the opportunity to personally reflect on the circumstances and choices that have led them to prison, their plans for their future orientation, and their love for family, culture and community.

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**About The GEO Group Australia**

The GEO Group Australia is Australia's largest provider of outsourced correctional services. With 1,500 employees, The GEO Group Australia provides safe and secure services to the Victorian, New South Wales and Queensland Governments through the management of correctional centres and the provision of primary health care services. GEO delivers critical public services that are cost effective and represent value for money for the taxpayer. With security and public safety as a priority, The GEO Group Australia intervenes with the 3,500 offenders in our care to reduce reoffending and prevent the community becoming victims of crime. The GEO Group Australia is part of The GEO Group, Inc. the world's largest international provider of outsourced correctional services, with over 80,000 offenders and 116 facilities under management across four continents. For further information please visit [www.geogroup.com.au](http://www.geogroup.com.au)

**About Junee Correctional Centre**

Junee Correctional Centre is one of the largest prisons in New South Wales. Holding 790 prisoners, Junee is primarily a sentenced facility, holding those serving their sentences and with a particular emphasis on progressing offender's sentence management plans by delivering activities and programs that address offending behaviours. Junee includes a minimum security unit for low-risk prisoners. Junee has been managed by The GEO Group Australia since it opened in 1993. For further information please visit: [www.correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au](http://www.correctiveservices.nsw.gov.au)

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