

KIMBERLEY GIRL

Statement

HON KEN BASTON (Mining and Pastoral) [9.52 pm]: I would like to bring to the house's attention an event that occurs annually in the Kimberley; that is, the Kimberley Girl. The event is run by Goolarri Media Enterprises. It is designed for Indigenous women in the north. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend the finals in Broome last Friday, 15 October. For those who are not aware of this event, it is all about leadership for the female entrants. The girls complete a program. This year, it was a 13-week program to prepare the girls. The program reflected the diverse culture, history and heritage of the region. Each girl is aged between 16 and 25 years. This year, of course, it was different in the sense that the Pilbara region was included for the first time. Since 2004 entrants have only been from the Kimberley. The heats were held right across the north, in Kununurra, Fitzroy Crossing, Broome and Roebourne. The program included certificate I training, and gaining access to and training for employment. The Pilbara and Kimberley TAFEs were involved in training the girls in such things as deportment, make-up, hair, public speaking, and other aspects as well. That, of course, was a huge advantage to all. Over the number of years that I have been attending either a heat or the finals, the support for this event has grown. I was very pleased to see support from bigger sponsors such as Virgin Airlines and resource companies such as Woodside and Rio Tinto. The finals that I attended consisted of 14 girls. Ten of those girls were from the Kimberley and four were from the Pilbara. The winner of the Kimberley Girl was Buna Tuaty, a very popular choice. Buna is a Broome girl aged 18 years. She is hoping to do an arts degree. Members may have seen her picture in an article in last weekend's *The Sunday Times* entitled "Buna teen queen of the Kimberley". She is hoping to finish her arts degree and wants to mentor young women in the Kimberley.

The winner of the Pilbara Girl was Synarra Murphy, a 16-year-old from South Hedland. She was featured in the *North West Telegraph* on 13 October before she won her heat in Roebourne and before travelling up to Broome for the finals. The article states —

Synarra Murphy ... who attends a Perth high school on a BHP Billiton scholarship, hopes to follow in the stiletto footsteps of supermodels Jennifer Hawkins and Samantha Harris.

I congratulate those two young girls for winning the Pilbara title and the young lady, Buna, for winning the Kimberley title. I am sure that all the entrants who went into those heats across the Kimberley and down in Roebourne and the Pilbara gained immense confidence and will benefit from going on and tackling their dreams. I would also like to congratulate all the organisers involved. It is quite a big event. I think some 500 people turned out. One of its founders, Kira Fong, has been the foundation driver of this event since 2004. Once again, my congratulations go to her for running this function, which is growing year by year. I also congratulate the two winners again—Buna and Synarra. I am sure that they will go on to be excellent ambassadors for both the Pilbara and the Kimberley next year.