

Bowraville dancers inspired



LEFT: Beyond Empathy's Dance Camp group strike a pose in Sydney after they performed *Here I am*. Students who travelled from Bowraville include Tasman Jarrett (back row, fifth from left), Carah Keen (back row, seventh from left), Lloyd Quinlin (back row, fourth from right), Nala Ballangarry (seated, second from left), Valerie Quinlin (crouching centre). Dance tutor Tammie Jarrett is crouching, second from right.

Five talented young dancers from Bowraville recently travelled to Sydney to gain inspiration from some outstanding performance artists.

Sixteen dancers were chosen to participate in the dance camp held late last year, organised by community arts organisation Beyond Empathy.

Five days of workshops led by professional performing artists culminated in a stellar performance at Sydney Theatre Company's Open Day at the Wharf.

For Nala Ballangarry, Tasman Jarrett, Carah Keen, Valerie Quinlin and Lloyd Quinlin, the journey from Bowraville to Sydney came about because they had been stand-out participants in Beyond Empathy's leadership programs and arts-based projects and had all revealed a talent for the performing arts.

The group rehearsed with a creative team of noted professional artists that included Morganics, Travers Ross, Nicole Iovine (Lamb), Jason Winters, Chris Merriman and Tammie Jarrett.

Ms Jarrett was also from Bowraville and had spent the past few years in Sydney studying and performing dance. For her, a highlight of attending the camp as a dance tutor was the opportunity to work with and inspire five young people from her hometown.

Directed by Morganics and long-time Beyond Empathy dance mentor Travers Ross, the young dancers, who had never worked together before, developed an original and innovative performance piece titled *Here I am*.

The work told the story of young people finding their place in the world and the choreography combined contemporary forms of dance, including hip hop and breakdance.

Interacting with professional artists and hearing how they progressed in their careers was inspirational for the young dancers, Beyond Empathy's Dance Camp participant support coordinator Kellie Martusciello said.

She said she had worked closely with many in the group for a number of years.

"The artists were so generous with their knowledge, giving these kids confidence in their own abilities and making them realise that they too, can follow their dreams," she said.