

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 31 March 2021

Local artist puts finishing touches on Canberra mural at AEIOU ahead of World Autism Awareness Day on Friday

Canberran graffiti artist and father to his child with autism, Geoff Filmer, today put the finishing touches on his one-of-a-kind mural at AEIOU Canberra Region. He was joined by AEIOU and John James Foundation staff who are touring the facility which will be opening in July.

“This Friday 2nd April is World Autism Awareness Day, and it’s timely for AEIOU to remind local families that Canberra will open its very first autism-specific early intervention centre later this year,” said AEIOU’s Canberra Region Manager, Enia Alberto.

“The mural being finished on the wall of our centre today has an educational connection to both Canberra and to autism, and we know it will be a bright, warm and welcoming addition to our playground for children who attend AEIOU Canberra Region.

“Interested families can register now to enrol, and we’re spending the next few months getting to know waitlisted families via intake meetings and free educational workshops that can assist families while raising young children with autism,” Ms Alberto continued.

Touring the purpose-built centre today, Enia was joined by Project Coordination Project Manager, Domenic Malfone, and John James Foundation CEO, Joe Roff.

John James Foundation has a strong collaborative partnership with AEIOU, bringing the centre to the Canberra Region, working with the building project managers, Project Coordination, and also Geoff Filmer on the commission and design consultation for the 20-metre-long mural which features Canberra icons, flora and fauna.

“I created this mural to help raise awareness about AEIOU Canberra Region and how they can assist families of young children on the autism spectrum. The children who attend will enjoy connecting with Canberra’s birds, animals and familiar landmarks including Parliament House, the Australian War Memorial, National Arboretum, the lake, and hot air balloons,” said Geoff Filmer.

“It was all about translating the design from the inside to the outside – children can also interact with the mural via several framed blackboards which they are welcome to draw on,” Geoff continued.

Domenic Malfone, Project Manager from Project Coordination, has worked tirelessly to bring the AEIOU building to life, saying it's a building they can be proud of and look forward to sharing with the Canberra community.

AEIOU Canberra Region is hosting two tailored workshops for the Canberra community in April at Marymead. On Tuesday 13th April *Understanding Behaviour* will look at functions of behaviour and the evidence behind AEIOU strategies. On Tuesday 27th April *Play: more than fun and games* will identify how play relates to communication, social and gross motor skills and more. These workshops are available for families, along with allied health professionals and students studying allied health and education, or with an interest in paediatrics. To register go to www.aeiou.org.au/community

Enrolments are now open for AEIOU Canberra Region: families with children aged 2-6 with an autism diagnosis or a suspected diagnosis are welcome to contact AEIOU Foundation for more information and to join the waitlist. For more information visit www.aeiou.org.au or call 1300 273 435.

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