

Mines do support local communities

IN response to the article written in the *Townsville Bulletin* by John Andersen (TB, February 13, 'A reef beef is arising').

The article asserts that getting money from large mining companies to support the local communities in which they are based is a joke. To quote the article 'the request was treated as a joke' and 'they look at you like you've just busted out of the asylum'.

As co-ordinator of a community organisation in Collinsville, a mining town mentioned in the article, I wish to comment on our experience, which is in stark contrast to the opinion expressed in the article.

Our organisation has been able to source four years' funding for a full-time youth worker in Collinsville, from Xstrata and Collinsville Coal. This is a much needed and valued position. On other occasions where we have required resources, including prizes and other incentives, the mines have consistently been supportive.

I also am aware of other organisations that have been able to secure funding from Xstrata, Collinsville Coal and Sonoma Coal, for community-based initiatives. I believe that the mines were somewhat branded negatively in the article and felt that I had to respond and inform the wider community of our experience.

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