

## Media Release

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# Sports stars to deliver motivational messages at sugar industry forum

Two of Australia's most inspiring sports stars will share their experiences at a major sugar industry forum in Townsville next week.

Champion rugby player Mark Connors and acclaimed Paralympic swimmer, Karni Liddell, will be special guests of the General Next conference at the South Bank Convention Centre on March 14 and 15.

The conference will attract a new generation of growers, harvesters, researchers, millers, service providers and marketers to explore the future of the Australian sugar industry.

Convenor Cheryl Phillips said the conference, to run from Wednesday to Friday, would allow delegates to share knowledge, experiences and views and identify opportunities to build a profitable and sustainable industry.

"An important aspect of the conference is to instill in delegates that they have the potential to help build a sound future for the sugar industry in Australia.

"We are privileged to have two of Australia's most outstanding achievers, Mark Connors and Karni Liddell, to provide insights into how they overcome some hurdles in their careers to become great champions and wonderful ambassadors for their sports."

Mark Connors, who gained 20 caps for Australia and 134 for Queensland, went on from his brilliant rugby career to become a respected lawyer and investment advisor. He will speak at the official opening of Generation Next at 5pm on Wednesday.

Karni Liddell overcame a degenerative muscle wasting disease from birth to become one of the best swimmers in the world, breaking her first world record at the age of 14.

Now a journalist, commentator, model, ambassador and fundraiser for a wide range of sporting and other organisations, Karni will speak at the conference dinner on Wednesday night.

Warren Truss, the Federal Minister for Trade, will also be a special guest at Generation Next dinner in Townsville addressing the specific issue of the new world order of trade.

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Other issues to be addressed at the conference include identifying regional priorities, innovation, value adding, creating successful partnerships and marketing.

Cheryl Phillips said the objective of Generation Next would be to heighten the performance of delegates at an individual, enterprise and industry level.

To register or access further information about Generation Next, contact Kelly Tape on 0408 850 110 or visit the website [www.srdc.gov.au](http://www.srdc.gov.au)

**Interview:**

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