

Workplace Learning Coordinators Program

A Victorian approach to providing young people with meaningful school to industry experiences

BANYULE NILLUMBIK LLEN BAW BAW LATROBE LLEN YOUTH CONNECT YOUTHNOW CAMASPE COHUNA LLEN INNER MELBOURNE VET CLUSTER INC CENTRAL GRAMPIANS LLEN CENTRAL VICTORIAN GROUP TRAINING COMPANY SKILLS PLUS LIMITED GIPPSLAND EAST LLEN WESTVIC STAFFING SOLUTIONS HIGHLANDS LLEN KANGAN INSTITUTE MURRAY MALLEE LLEN THE CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION NORTH CENTRAL LLEN HUME REGION DEECD NORTHERN MALLEE LLEN OUTER EASTERN LLEN GEELONG REGIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COUNCIL INC SOUTH EAST LLEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE GIPPSLAND SOUTH WEST LLEN WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LLEN BANYULE NILLUMBIK LLEN BAW BAW LATROBE LLEN YOUTH CONNECT YOUTHNOW CAMASPE COHUNA LLEN INNER MELBOURNE VET CLUSTER INC CENTRAL GRAMPIANS LLEN CENTRAL VICTORIAN GROUP TRAINING COMPANY SKILLS PLUS LIMITED GIPPSLAND EAST LLEN WESTVIC STAFFING SOLUTIONS HIGHLANDS LLEN KANGAN INSTITUTE MURRAY MALLEE LLEN THE CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION NORTH CENTRAL LLEN HUME REGION DEECD NORTHERN MALLEE LLEN OUTER EASTERN LLEN GEELONG REGIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COUNCIL INC SOUTH EAST LLEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE GIPPSLAND SOUTH WEST LLEN WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LLEN BANYULE NILLUMBIK LLEN BAW BAW LATROBE LLEN YOUTH CONNECT YOUTHNOW CAMASPE COHUNA LLEN INNER MELBOURNE VET CLUSTER INC CENTRAL GRAMPIANS LLEN CENTRAL VICTORIAN GROUP TRAINING COMPANY SKILLS PLUS LIMITED GIPPSLAND EAST LLEN WESTVIC STAFFING SOLUTIONS HIGHLANDS LLEN KANGAN INSTITUTE MURRAY MALLEE LLEN THE CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION NORTH CENTRAL LLEN HUME REGION DEECD NORTHERN MALLEE LLEN OUTER EASTERN LLEN GEELONG REGIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COUNCIL INC SOUTH EAST LLEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE GIPPSLAND SOUTH WEST LLEN WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LLEN BANYULE NILLUMBIK LLEN BAW BAW LATROBE LLEN YOUTH CONNECT YOUTHNOW CAMASPE COHUNA LLEN INNER MELBOURNE VET CLUSTER INC CENTRAL GRAMPIANS LLEN CENTRAL VICTORIAN GROUP TRAINING COMPANY SKILLS PLUS LIMITED GIPPSLAND EAST LLEN WESTVIC STAFFING SOLUTIONS HIGHLANDS LLEN KANGAN INSTITUTE MURRAY MALLEE LLEN THE CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION NORTH CENTRAL LLEN HUME REGION DEECD NORTHERN MALLEE LLEN OUTER EASTERN LLEN GEELONG REGIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COUNCIL INC SOUTH EAST LLEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE GIPPSLAND SOUTH WEST LLEN WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LLEN



Introduction

The Workplace Learning Coordinators Program is a DEECD initiative and is in response to the Commonwealth Governments National Partnership of Youth Attainment and Transitions.

The program has opened up more opportunities for young people aged 15 – 19 years of age to improve their skills and workplace knowledge through ‘on the job’ experience whether it be via Work Experience, Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) or School Based Apprenticeships/ Traineeships (SBAT’s).



These Case Studies have been provided by each of our thirty one WLC's across Victoria to provide some understanding into how essential these partnerships with education, employers and the community have been to create successful outcomes for students.

Case studies are not simply about promoting the replication of existing models or setting unilateral standards of partnership 'best practice'. Far from it, they are about encouraging and empowering practitioners to find appropriate solutions to the specific challenges they face by building on the insights and experiences of others. This is what we believe to be the real value and purpose of partnership case studies and this view has underpinned our decision to establish the one-year Case Study Booklet.

The objectives of the Workplace Coordinators Program are to:

- Increase the numbers of young people undertaking workplace learning placements in places of employment, with emphasis on industries that provide strong vocational outcomes;
- Increase the alignment between Vocational Education and Training (VET) provision and local industry needs; and
- Increase the number of Koorie young people undertaking workplace learning placements.

The Role of the Workplace Learning Coordinator will include:

- A liaison role with industry and schools (both government and non-government) and VET and ACE providers
- Generation of work placements expanding on the number and quality of placements currently available to young people in their region
- Dissemination of information to all stakeholders, industry, government and non-government secondary schools
- Promotion to industry the benefits of workplace learning
- Providing a contact point for employers
- Working with Koorie Transition Coordinators to increase Koorie young peoples' access to appropriate workplace learning placements



Youth Attainment and Transitions

WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS WORK WITH LOCAL LEARNING & EMPLOYMENT NETWORKS (LLENS), SECONDARY SCHOOLS, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) PROVIDERS, THE LEARN LOCAL ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION SECTOR AND LOCAL EMPLOYERS TO COORDINATE WORK PLACEMENTS FOR SCHOOL-BASED APPRENTICESHIPS/TRAINEESHIPS, STRUCTURED WORKPLACE LEARNING AND WORK EXPERIENCE.

DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS ACROSS THE STATE OF VICTORIA HAVE BEEN PROVIDING EXTENSIVE SUPPORT, LINKING EDUCATION PROVIDERS AND EMPLOYERS BY SOURCING QUALITY WORK PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS 15-19 YRS. THE FIGURES BELOW DEMONSTRATE THE INCREDIBLE WORK THAT THE WLC'S HAVE ACHIEVED BUILDING STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITH EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT.

PLACEMENT TYPE	MAINSTREAM	KOORIE	NEWLY ARRIVED /REFUGEE	DISABILITY	AT RISK	TOTALS
SWL	9354	225	583	723	1293	12178
SBAT	1552	99	59	128	319	2157
Non School Placement	644	33	96	95	396	1264
Work Experience	5796	195	389	381	415	7189
TOTALS	17346	552	1127	1327	2423	22788

Total Placements Sourced 2011/2012

12,178

STRUCTURED WORKPLACE LEARNING

(On the job training whilst completing an accredited course)

- We can be flexible to work around the employer.
- Most placements run through the school term one day per week.

2,157

SCHOOL BASED APPRENTICESHIPS/TRAINEESHIPS

An opportunity for a student to combine part-time employment, school and training at your workplace two days per week.

1,264

NON SCHOOL PLACEMENT'S

Placements provided for TAFE's and Registered Training Organisations

7,189

WORK EXPERIENCE

(Short term placement to provide insights into the industry)

- Hosting students for 1 – 2 week blocks

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PAGE	LLEN AREA	LGA'S COVERED	WLC PROVIDER	CONTACT DETAILS
8	Banyule Nillumbik	Banyule, Nillumbik	Banyule Nillumbik LLEN	Nancye Harrison - BNWL Manager T: 9431 8000 M: 0425 784 616 E: nancye@bnllen.org.au
9	Baw Baw Latrobe	Baw Baw, Latrobe	Baw Baw Latrobe LLEN	Mike Jungwirth T: 5633 2868 M: 0458 014 451 E: mike@bbllen.org.au
10	Bayside Glen Eira Kingston	Kingston, Glen Eira, Bayside	Youth Connect	Daniela Ascone - Manager T: 8306 6300 E: dascone@youthconnect.com.au
11	Brimbank Melton	Brimbank, Melton	YouthNow	Colleen Bergin - Manager T: 8311 5800 M: 0400 548 447 E: colleen@youthnow.org.au
12	Campaspe Cohuna	Campaspe, part Gannawarra	Campaspe Cohuna LLEN	Alison Dunstan T: 5482 6055 M: 0401 486 715 E: dunstan.a@ccllen.com.au
13	Capital City	Melbourne	Inner Melbourne VET Cluster Inc	Janine Livingston - Manager for IMVC areas of Capital City, Gateway, Inner Eastern and Inner Northern T: 9686 2354 E: jlivingston@imvc.com.au
14	Central Grampians	Ararat, Northern Grampians (southern section)	Central Grampians LLEN	Belinda Healy - Manager T: 5352 3266 M: 0429 437 689 E: bhealy@cglten.org.au
15	Central Ranges	Mitchell, Murrindindi, Macedon Ranges	CVGT Australia	Carmen Fifield T: 5823 3480 M: 0447 100 723 E: cfifield@cvgt.com.au
16	Frankston Mornington Peninsula	Frankston, Mornington Peninsula	Skills Plus Limited	Jane Ling T: 9781 3388 M: 0438 897 808 E: jling@skillsplus.com.au
17	Gateway	Monash, Whitehorse, Manningham	Inner Melbourne VET Cluster Inc	Janine Livingston - Manager for IMVC areas of Capital City, Gateway, Inner Eastern and Inner Northern T: 9686 2354 E: jlivingston@imvc.com.au
18	Gippsland East	East Gippsland, Wellington	Gippsland East LLEN	Michelle Weatherall M: 0428 511 121 E: michelle@gellen.org.au
19	Glenelg Southern Grampians	Glenelg, Southern Grampians	Westvic Staffing Solutions	David Gladman E: dgladman@westvic.org.au
20	Goldfields	Greater Bendigo, Central Goldfields, Mount Alexander	CVGT Australia	Greg Free T: 5449 2100 M: 0447 100 722 E: gfree@cvgt.com.au
21	Goulburn Murray	Greater Shepparton, Moira, Strathbogie	CVGT Australia	Michelle Mosenki T: 5823 3400 M: 0447 100 725 E: mmosenki@cvgt.com.au
22	Highlands	Ballarat, Hepburn, Moorabool, Pyrenees, part Golden Plains	Highlands LLEN	Lisa Howlett T: 5336 5018 M: 0419 512 027 E: lhowlett@highlandslen.org

PAGE	LLEN AREA	LGA'S COVERED	WLC PROVIDER	CONTACT DETAILS
23	Hume Whittlesea	Hume, Whittlesea	Kangan Institute	Frank Hardy – Assistant Manager, Centre for Youth T: 9094 3011 M: 0401 143 965 E: fhardy@kangan.edu.au
24	Inner Eastern	Port Philip, Stonnington, Boroondara	Inner Melbourne VET Cluster Inc	Janine Livingston – Manager for IMVC areas of Capital City, Gateway, Inner Eastern and Inner Northern T: 9686 2354 E: jlivingston@imvc.com.au
25	Inner Northern	Darebin, Moreland, Yarra	Inner Melbourne VET Cluster Inc	Janine Livingston – Manager for IMVC areas of Capital City, Gateway, Inner Eastern and Inner Northern T: 9686 2354 E: jlivingston@imvc.com.au
26	Maribyrnong Moonee Valley	Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley	YouthNow	Colleen Bergin – Manager T: 8311 5800 M: 0400 548 447 E: colleen@youthnow.org.au
27	Murray Mallee	Swan Hill (excluding Robinvale), part Buloke, part Gannawarra	Murray Mallee LLEN	Sue Grumley – Workplace Learning Coordinator Program Manager T: 5033 2017 M: 0428 112 061 E: sgrumley@bigpond.net.au
28	NE TRACKS	Wangaratta, Benalla, Mansfield	The Centre for Continuing Education	Shane Crispin T: 5721 0241 M: 0400 904 106 E: shane.crispin@thecentre.vic.edu.au
29	North Central	Loddon, Buloke, Northern Grampians (northern section)	North Central LLEN	Barry McKenzie T: 5491 1144 M: 0400 696 156 E: wlc@ncllen.org.au
30	North East	Wodonga, Alpine, Indigo, Towong	The Centre for Continuing Education	Shane Crispin T: 5721 0241 M: 0400 904 106 E: shane.crispin@thecentre.vic.edu.au
31	Northern Mallee	Mildura, Swan Hill (Robinvale only)	Northern Mallee LLEN	Chris Mitchell T: 5021 3266 M: 0428 349 570 E: chris@nmlen.com.au
32	Outer Eastern	Yarra Ranges, Knox, Maroondah	Outer Eastern LLEN	Kaz Erbs T: 9723 2717 M: 0409 027 581 E: kerbs@oellen.org.au
33	SMART Geelong Region	Greater Geelong, Queenscliffe, Surf Coast, part Golden Plains	Geelong Regional Vocational Education Council Inc	Lynne Clarke T: 5222 8511 M: 0401 222 605 E: lynne@grvec.org.au
34	South East	Casey, Cardinia, Greater Dandenong	South East LLEN	Mandy Stevens T: 9794 6921 E: mstevens@sellen.org.au
35	South Gippsland Bass Coast	Bass Coast, South Gippsland	Community College Gippsland	Alex Todorovski – Operations Manager T: 5662 6700 M: 0429 664 094 E: alex@ccg.asn.au
36	South West	Warrnambool, Corangamite, Colac-Otway, Moyne	South West LLEN	Jennifer Lowe T: 5561 0047 M: 0428 344 309 E: jennifer@swllen.net.au
37	Wimmera Southern Mallee	Horsham, Hindmarsh, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack	Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN	Dimity O'Bryan T: 5381 0122 M: 0408 810 123 E: wlc@llen.com.au
38	WynBay	Wyndham, Hobsons Bay	YouthNow	Colleen Bergin – Manager T: 8311 5800 M: 0400 548 447 E: colleen@youthnow.org.au

AWM Sparks Interest in Career Opportunities

HOW DO YOU ATTRACT YOUNG PEOPLE TO A SKILLS SHORTAGE INDUSTRY? IT SEEMS SIMPLE ENOUGH, ADVERTISE JOB OPPORTUNITIES WITH CAREER PATHWAYS TO MANAGEMENT AND WATCH THE APPLICATIONS ROLL IN. HOWEVER THIS IS NOT ALWAYS THE CASE, PARTICULARLY IF THE INDUSTRY HAS A LOW PROFILE WITH STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS AS MMEM ELECTRICAL MERCHANDISING DISCOVERED. MMEM IS A NATIONAL ELECTRICAL AND DATA WHOLESALING COMPANY. LOCALLY THE BRAND IS KNOWN AS AWM ELECTRICAL & DATA WHOLESALING, SUPPLYING CABLE AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS TO ELECTRICIANS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS/DATA SPECIALISTS.



Rohan Doherty, AWM & Luke Lepore, Loyola College

“This is a great opportunity to get experience and get ahead of everyone else. I didn’t know about AWM or the career paths and I like the idea of a Management traineeship if it was available”.

Luke Lepore, a Year 11 student from Loyola College

Banyule Nillumbik Workplace Learning approached Rohan Doherty, Manager of AWM Eltham and Plenty Valley early in 2011 regarding the possibility of hosting a local secondary school student. Rohan was quick to understand the benefits of workplace learning to both students and his business and was keen to act as a host employer. In March 2011, Luke Lepore, a Year 11 student from Loyola College also studying Certificate II Electro Technology at Parade Trade Training Centre, began a Structured Workplace Learning placement of one day per week. Luke performs a variety of tasks which have exposed him to all aspects of the AWM branch. These tasks included; receiving goods, reconciling orders, stock administration, warehouse maintenance, customer service, onsite deliveries and administrative tasks. Luke said, “This is a great opportunity to get experience and get ahead of everyone else. I didn’t know about AWM or the career paths and I like the idea of a Management traineeship if it was available”. Luke’s school, Loyola College, awarded him the VCAL/VET Student Award for 2011. Rohan Doherty said hosting a student work placement was a “Win/Win situation and an avenue for growing his business”.

Brendan McMahon and Rodney Bruce, MMEM Regional General Managers, were impressed with the success of Luke’s placement and invited BNWL and Hume Whittlesea Workplace Learning (HWWL) to make a presentation to all MMEM Victorian Branch Managers. The response from Branch Managers was very positive, and MMEM now offer placements in a number of AWM branches across Victoria, including Heidelberg AWM where Branch Manager, Richard Harapas is currently hosting Daniel Shallard a student from Parade College. We are now working with MMEM on the next step of the strategy to retain young management trainees through a School Based Traineeship Program.

The MMEM Workplace Learning Project has shown that providing students with an industry experience can raise the profile of an organisation and promote interest in career pathways. BNWL can also assist your organisation to host industry placements and develop a future workforce, just as we have with AWM.

The Structured Workplace Learning Arrangement Program with Fonterra Australia Pty Ltd, Darnum

A KEY PRIORITY IDENTIFIED BY THE BAW BAW LATROBE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS PROGRAM IN PLANNING FOR THE 2012-2013 PERIOD WAS THE NEED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WORKPLACE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ENGINEERING TRADE AREA.



With approximately 120 students across the region undertaking VET engineering studies at Certificate II level in 2012, demand for relevant and meaningful Structured Workplace Learning placements (SWLs) was high. This reality was further highlighted as a result of the WLC's consultation with VET and VCAL staff from secondary schools across the region.

In seeking to identify opportunities in this industry sector, the WLC Program forwarded letters to more than 80 businesses involved in some form of engineering trade-related activity.

While the power industry in the Latrobe Valley has traditionally provided the bulk of engineering-oriented work placements in the region, the fact that this industry is centred in that geographical area, has often made accessing placements quite difficult for students in the Baw Baw Shire.

Therefore, in endeavouring to address this imbalance, the WLC focused upon identifying potential employers within that region.

As a large multi-national milk processing operation, Fonterra Australia Pty Ltd which is located at Darnum, was identified as an organisation that had the capacity to expand its involvement in work placement programs.

The WLC's first contact with Fonterra was in early April 2011, via a telephone call to the Human Resources Manager.

A face to face meeting was subsequently arranged during which the WLC outlined what the WLC Program was about and the ways in which Fonterra could become involved in providing meaningful work placement opportunities for local students.

Points highlighted during this meeting included:

- The kind of work placements that could be offered
- How many placements could be offered
- How placements would be organised
- How suitable students would be identified
- What work the students would do if placed

Unfortunately, not long after this meeting, a change in HR personnel at Fonterra, led to progress stalling and it wasn't until late in July that the appointment of a new HR Manager (Bridget Jacobson) enabled discussions and subsequent planning to be resumed.

The second meeting was attended by three members of Fonterra's maintenance team who readily acknowledged the potential benefits of the program in terms of:

- Adding to the career pathways structure of the company
- Providing opportunities for trialling potential apprentices
- Providing opportunities for current employees to undertake mentoring roles and responsibilities
- Enhancing the reputation of the company within the broader community

Fonterra subsequently made a commitment to participate in a pilot placement arrangement which would begin in Term 4, 2011.

The HR Manager and members of the maintenance crew agreed to prepare a position description that the WLC would distribute to Careers Advisers at the local schools.

The WLC also agreed to:

- Liaise with schools to identify applicants and organise pre-placement interviews for student applicants and the signing of SWL work arrangement forms

This process was undertaken during September and a student from Trafalgar High School was subsequently selected to commence a one day a week throughout Term 4.

During the course of the placement the WLC:

- Contacted Fonterra on a regular basis by email to monitor the progress of the placement
- Provided the employer with an evaluation form requesting comment
- Met with the HR manager and employees to seek direct feedback on the placement
- Liaised with the Careers Advisers at the student's school to check on the student's response, attendance, etc.

As a result of a positive review of the pilot placement undertaken in December 2011 Fonterra agreed to extend the work placement arrangement, by offering four further SWL work placement opportunities in 2012.

Fonterra also indicated that it would assess the performances of the students involved in the placements and give serious consideration to offering an apprenticeship position to one of the students at the end of 2012.

Additional positive outcomes of the partnership with Fonterra have been:

- A commitment to maintain the current arrangement beyond 2012
- The company's decision to become a signatory to the Gippsland Youth Commitment
- An agreement to participate in the Baw Baw Latrobe LLEN's Job Skills Expo

In reflecting upon the success of this partnership, the key points to note are:

- The WLC Program ensured the employer was provided with a clear explanation of the WLC program objectives and how participation in the WLC Program could benefit the organisation
- The WLC Program accessed the right person in the organisation to champion the concept
- The WLC Program met with the supervisors who would be working directly with the students and established a position description outlining the duties the student would undertake
- The WLC Program and Fonterra agreed to guidelines and protocols regarding the management of the placements would be managed and the responsibilities of each stakeholder (employer, school, student, WLC)
- The WLC Program communicated the company's expectations to schools and the students identified as potential applicants

Student given the ‘Ticket to Work’ by local employer

THE YOUTH CONNECT (YC) WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS (WLC) PROGRAM AIMS TO IDENTIFY AND MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE WORKPLACE LEARNING PLACEMENTS, PARTICULARLY IN INDUSTRY AREAS WITH STRONG VOCATIONAL OUTCOMES, AND TO CONTINUE TO EXPAND THIS RANGE OF PLACEMENTS TO BETTER CATER FOR THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF OUR LOCAL STUDENTS. IN 2011 THE YC WLC'S AIMED TO ASSIST LOCAL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES BY IDENTIFYING SUITABLE PLACEMENT FOR THE TICKET TO WORK (TTW) PROGRAM. THE FOLLOWING CASE STUDY WILL DOCUMENT THE STORY OF ONE PARTICIPANT OF THE TTW PROGRAM AND HOW THE YC WLC USED INITIATIVE TO ASSIST THE STUDENT IN ENTERING THE WORKPLACE SUCCESSFULLY. THE WLC IDENTIFIED A SUITABLE PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE STUDENT WITH A LOCAL AUTOMOTIVE BUSINESS, WHERE THE STUDENT COMPLETED A WEEK OF WORK EXPERIENCE IN PREPARATION FOR COMMENCING A SCHOOL BASED APPRENTICESHIP OR TRAINEESHIP (SBAT) IN 2012.



Research shows that young people with a disability have a lot to offer businesses and when matched with a suitable employer this can lead to a wide range of benefits for the business and have a significant difference in the life of a student once they leave school. In response to this, the Bayside Glen Eira Kingston Local Learning Employment network, Inner Eastern Local Learning Employment Network, Berendale School, Montague School, Marriott Disability Support services and other local disability employment, training and youth organisations developed the TTW pilot program. TTW is an SBAT program for young people with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities which aims to assist in increasing their work, training, and post-school employment opportunities.

Within the BGK LLEN region, a number of Berendale (a local alternative education school for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities) students were selected to take part in this pilot program. Through 2011, the YC WLC's supported the TTW program by matching students with suitable host employers, enabling them to take part in an SBAT for between 1 – 2 years. Students will commence their SBAT with their host employer in early 2012 and will undertake the training and employment as part of their VCAL certificate.

One applicant was a male year 11 Berendale student with an intellectual disability, who is hoping to complete an Automotive SBAT in 2012. The student was assisted by Berendale School and his Marriott support worker in completing an interview and application for the TTW program. It was identified in these early stages by the TTW interview panel that this student may not be ready to undertake an SBAT in an open employment environment, despite his enthusiasm towards the program. The WLC sourced an employer who was identified as being suitable for hosting the student and the employer was

approached about supporting the program. The WLC met with the employer to disseminate the appropriate information and provide a point of contact. The WLC explained the TTW program and provided appropriate paperwork. The employer was cooperative and supportive of the program and happy to be involved, and the WLC ascertained that the workplace was a supportive and suitable environment for the student. On the advice of the WLC, the employer and the student agreed that a work experience week would be beneficial to ensure the students compatibility with the workplace and that expectations were level between the student and employer before commencing an SBAT.

The student commenced the week of work experience on 28th November 2011 with the employer. The young person was supported throughout their placement by their Marriott support worker. The support worker was required for

As a result of this week long placement, the student has increased his confidence in the workplace, and the employer gained an understanding of the student's abilities and strengths.

the first hours on the initial day of placement and attended on the third day of the student's placement week to lessen the student's anxiety levels, as the student suffers from social discomfort. The WLC conducted a site visit during the student's placement and the student reported that he was thoroughly enjoying the work experience. During placement, the student was able to observe and practice various aspects of the work and identified that he especially enjoyed working in mechanics and that he was not as interested in the panel beating aspect of the work.

Throughout the week the student undertook a variety of basic tasks in the workshop, and there were initial concerns about his ability to work in an open employment environment however during his placement he was supported by various employees, giving the employees supervision experience and encouragement for the student to meet new people. The student enjoyed the placement and the employer was impressed by the students abilities, attitude, and interaction with co-workers. Through communication with the WLC, the employer reported that he was satisfied that the student completed his set tasks to the best of his ability, including stripping parts, trial fitting parts, and some light filter work.

As a result of this week long placement, the student has increased his confidence in the workplace, and the employer gained an understanding of the student's abilities and strengths. The outcome of

this placement is that the student is prepared to commence his SBAT in 2012, and the employer was sufficiently impressed by abilities to agree to take him on for the duration of his TTW SBAT. It could be suggested that the week of placement in 2011 was the antecedent for determining the student's suitability to an SBAT in 2012, throughout which he will continue to receive support from Berendale and his Marriott support worker.

School-Based Apprenticeships & Traineeships

THROUGH EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND STRONG COMMUNICATION, THE WLC IN MELTON, YOUTHNOW, DIRECTLY SUPPORTED A NUMBER OF SCHOOL-BASED TRAINEESHIPS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY. IN 2011 YOUTHNOW WORKED CLOSELY WITH THE SERVICE CREW TO QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY PROMOTE 13 NEW TRAINEESHIPS FOR LOCAL STUDENTS WITH LOCAL EMPLOYER, TABCORP PARK. THE OPPORTUNITY ALIGNED STRONGLY WITH THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND WAS STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY FAMILIES AND EDUCATION PROVIDERS.



The Service Crew were keen to find a supportive partner in the WLC for the region. A new client, Tabcorp Park Melton, a unique sporting and community hub with a range of entertainment, were looking to boost its hospitality staff numbers for the upcoming spring carnival season and future events.

The Service Crew, working with YouthNow, were able to meet the demands of their client. Approximately 25 students from government and independent schools, parents and teachers attended to hear first-hand about the SBAT opportunities at Tabcorp Park. A session facilitated by the WLC.

The most positive feature of the SBAT program was the workplace learning component. Students would be required to work during the business' busiest times which would occur outside of school hours (approximately 13 hours a week). Students could work weekends and nights, and even through-out the holiday period. The Service Crew confirmed that each individual's needs were considered when drawing up the roster. Students enrolled in the SBAT would complete a Certificate III in Hospitality Operations and gain an additional VCAL or VCE subject. YouthNow attended the information night and helped to answer questions and provide follow up support in the days that followed to schools.

YouthNow were also able to provide an advocacy role in which the needs of some of the students needed to be highlighted and discussed in a sensitive manner. Previous interviews held at West Waters, had turned away a local boy with learning difficulties. The Special school he attended were initially unsupportive of being involved in a "new round" of opportunities from an organisation that had made the student feel "less" than the others presenting for the same job. They were reluctant to apply and set the student up for another "let down." At that meeting, YouthNow made it quite clear that all students who could do the job would be given a chance at this next opportunity. A discreet call to The Service Crew discussed the school's feedback and brought to mind the very real benefits of employing students with a strong need to succeed and prove their worth. The student's capabilities were further backed by the school who just wanted the student to at least have a chance.

Through its effective intervention and strong partnerships, YouthNow was able to ensure the placements were open to a diverse cohort. Of the 13 who secured the SBAT opportunity at Tabcorp Park Melton, at least 25% had special needs and at least two came from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background (CALD). A large number of students were interviewed and 13 were finally selected from the following local schools: Mowbray College (Independent), Kurunjang Secondary College, Caroline Springs College, Melton Special School (Government) and the Distance Education Centre.

The program is highly successful. According to the Director of The Service Crew, since the program started only one student has dropped out due to other priorities. The Director believes the critical keys here are; a thorough induction for the students, one on one mentoring and regular communication between the Crew and the students regarding their roster and training. Most of the correspondence is done by texting/sms which is quick and cost effective for both parties.

The Service Crew was nominated by Caroline Springs College for YouthNow's Employer Champion Awards. 2011. The event recognises quality workplace learning employers through-out the western metropolitan region. YouthNow coordinates the WLC program for 3 regions which includes 6 distinct council areas. The Service Crew took on a phenomenal 15 students from Caroline Springs College for School based traineeships in 2011. The school cited the following reasons for the nomination: the student induction was very comprehensive, occurring during the Summer Holidays which allowed students to get to know the business and gain confidence in their abilities and duties. The placement allowed their students to develop knowledge of the hospitality industry, their local community and the real world. Some students have gone on to take up employment with this host employer. Melton College nominated Tabcorp Park as its Employer Champion for the SBAT opportunities it presented.

The success of The Service Crew model encourages education providers and families to look for varied means of accessing real vocational pathways for its students.



Rachel Collins (nee Williams) Careers and Transition Leading Teacher, Caroline Springs College with Boris Duka, Director of The Service Crew at The Employer Champion Awards, 5.12.11

Student Work Placement Log Book

AS PART OF A SENIOR SECONDARY CERTIFICATE, STUDENTS CAN UNDERTAKE A VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) CERTIFICATE WHICH GIVES THE STUDENT A MIX OF HANDS ON 'APPLIED LEARNING' AND THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE IN AN INDUSTRY OF INTEREST. FOR EXAMPLE, A VET CERTIFICATE IN HOSPITALITY OR A VET CERTIFICATE IN AUTOMOTIVE. THIS CERTIFICATE IS A NATIONALLY RECOGNISED QUALIFICATION. IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED, SOMETIMES MANDATED, THAT STUDENTS STUDYING A VET CERTIFICATE UNDERTAKE A STRUCTURED WORKPLACE LEARNING (SWL) PLACEMENT WITH A HOST EMPLOYER FROM THEIR INDUSTRY OF STUDY. SWL IS AKIN TO WORK EXPERIENCE OTHER THAN IT IS MORE HANDS-ON. DURING THIS WORK PLACEMENT, STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO DEMONSTRATE IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT COMPETENCY IN SKILLS ACQUIRED DURING THEIR SCHOOL BASED TRAINING WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THEIR ASSESSMENT.

A need for a standardised Log Book for students from across the Campaspe Cohuna regions to use during their SWL placement was indicated by both VET teachers, trainers and employers. VET teachers and trainers had expressed a need for consistency in the paper work students were presenting to employers during their work placements, an effective method of gathering evidence of competencies displayed by students' during their work placements for assessment purposes, and a means of obtaining structured feedback from the employer on the students' performance and overall employability skills.

Employers had similarly requested increased structure to work place learning processes.

The Log Book was to also serve as an instrument to better prepare students for their SWL experience, to guide students through and increase their engagement in the work placement experience, and to increase student knowledge and personal development of Employability Skills (communication, team work, problem solving, self management, planning and organising, technology, learning and initiative and enterprise).

An initial draft of the Log Book was developed in consultation with schools, other education and training providers and employers and was piloted in May 2011. Further refinements were made and a professional print of the Log Book was distributed to schools and other education and training providers in August 2011.

The Log Book was presented to the Victorian Network of Workplace Learning Coordinators and was met by considerable enthusiasm. Further amendments were made to the Log Book. In February 2012, five thousand copies of the Log Book were distributed amongst seven regions.

Outcomes:

VET Teachers/Trainers:

have a standardised Log Book that will be used throughout the Campaspe Cohuna region (potentially throughout the State) which will provide them with structured feedback on students' work performance, evidence of competencies displayed in the work place, and valuable feedback on employability skills. Deficits in technical skills and/or employability skills may become apparent and may inform curriculum.

Employers:

have consistency in workplace learning documentation and be more clear on their role in hosting a student for a placement. The Log Book provides a mechanism for comprehensive reporting on a student throughout their work placement, and will form an effective communication medium between employer and VET teachers and trainers.

Schools and other education and training providers:

are supplied with professionally printed Log Books free of charge which creates substantial budgetary savings. The Log Book may also assist with Australian Quality Framework audit requirements.

VET:

The Log Book raises the professional profile of VET amongst employers and provides clarification of employer involvement in structured workplace learning. Greater employer involvement and engagement in the student's workplace learning experience facilitates an increased understanding and support of structured work place learning, and make apparent the mutual benefits to both business and students in quality workplace learning. Increased work placement opportunities will be realised.



Students:

have a user friendly resource that is easy to fill in and provides simple activities and information that will enhance their workplace learning experience. The Log Book assists the student in providing evidence of skill competencies and provides a powerful instrument for use in an interview for employment or further training opportunities.

The Log Book was presented to the Victorian Network of Workplace Learning Coordinators and was met by considerable enthusiasm.

Workplace Learning Coordinator Program:

The Victorian State Wide Network has access to this resource. The Log Book contributes to a cohesive and collaborative WLC program approach to state wide work placements and employer engagement. The Log Book also ensures work placements are of a high quality for both employer and student.

Ashleigh's Melbourne Business Visit

THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATOR PROGRAM (WLC PROGRAM) IS A JOINT INITIATIVE OF THE VICTORIAN STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS. THE PROGRAM IDENTIFIES, FACILITATES AND COORDINATES INDUSTRY SPECIFIC LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. THIS IS ACHIEVED BY CONNECTING INDUSTRY AND EDUCATION PROVIDERS TOGETHER AND OFFERING SECONDARY STUDENTS A MEANINGFUL WORKPLACE LEARNING EXPERIENCE IN AN ADULT LABOUR ENVIRONMENT.

The Inner Melbourne VET cluster's (IMVC) WLC Program provides a significant connection by linking the energy and potential of local young people from all walks of life with employers, industry and the community. The program also promotes quality work education in regional skill shortage areas by supporting industry to meet their skill development needs and showcasing their business' expertise. This experience enhances student engagement and wellbeing while streamlining the transition from formal schooling to the students' chosen career pathway. From an employer perspective, this program enables them to meaningfully connect with young people, addressing corporate responsibility by giving back to the community and engaging with their future labour market.

These placements are undertaken by students undertaking Vocational Educational Training in schools (VETiS). VETiS seeks to enhance secondary school students' employability and life skills by providing nationally accredited training, workplace learning opportunities and other applied learning skills to students whilst they complete their Secondary qualification. Typically, an employer hosts a young person between the ages of 15-19 years old in the workplace for a week or one day per week over a period of time. During the placement, the student is expected to assist with allocated tasks and activities under employer supervision and is to be inducted as any new employee would be working for the company.

As part of Ashleigh's Vocational Educational Training (VET) Certificate II in Business course, she undertook 40 hours of work placement at Melbourne Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCVB) in Melbourne's Southbank precinct. MCVB is a not-for-profit organisation that markets Melbourne and Victoria domestically and internationally as a premier destination for meetings, corporate events, expos, conferences, incentive travel programs and exhibitions. The business events industry is the highest yielding sector of the tourism industry in Victoria. In securing business events for Victoria, MCVB identifies and bids for the right to host business events (meetings, incentive travel

programs, conventions and corporate events) and builds strong relationships with a range of partners to promote Melbourne and to bid for national and international business events to be staged in Victoria.

The IMVC's WLC Program Project Officer facilitated this work placement opportunity by sourcing the employer and working cooperatively and creatively with this business to deliver a satisfying result for both the student and employer stakeholders.

Ashleigh rated her work placement at MCVB very highly as she believes she was given a real feel for the business with plenty of variety in regard to office administration tasks. Ashleigh felt very welcomed and included by all staff. Some activities that Ashleigh was involved in during her placement included: event site inspections, preparing client invoices, information technology (IT) tasks using computer programs like Excel and Outlook Express. Her employer found that Ashleigh showed initiative and attention to detail while sorting out files and calculating employees expenses. This led to more complex tasks as the week went on including reception work, which entailed answering telephone calls, taking messages and making visitors welcome as they arrived for meetings.

Business events management in Melbourne is big business! Ashleigh had the perfect chance to learn from the best and this one week placement provided her with the chance to put into practice the industry specific skills taught in her business administration classes.

"I developed heaps of new skills that included reception work, placing invoices onto the computer and using different programs on the computer that I wasn't particularly familiar with. Reception work was interesting and I learnt how to transfer through calls to a certain person when someone called. By doing reception work, I became more confident and this was another skill I gained," says Ashleigh.



Endless Opportunities

"The tasks I most enjoyed were the site and venue inspections. This was something different and it gave me a chance to get out of the office and experience something new."

Ashleigh returned to Avila College after her school holiday work placement, full of confidence and praise for her employer. Ashleigh was so impressed with her time she told her fellow students. More students have since applied for work placement opportunities at MCVB.

For further information, please contact Janine Livingston on 9686 2354 or jlivingston@imvc.com.au.



Engineering a Future Workforce for AF Gason

AF GASON IS A LEADER IN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT MANUFACTURING AND DISTRIBUTION THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA, MANUFACTURING A WIDE RANGE OF AGRICULTURAL FARM MACHINERY FOR BROAD ACRE FARMERS AND SOLID FUEL AND GAS HEATERS. FOUNDED IN 1947, AF GASON HAS DEVELOPED INTO A STRONG LOCAL FAMILY OWNED COMPANY WITH MANY KEY PERSONNEL WHO HOLD SENIOR POSITIONS HAVING COMMENCED EMPLOYMENT WITH THE COMPANY AS APPRENTICES. WHILE GASON ARE EXTREMELY PROUD OF THIS REPUTATION THIS HAS CREATED A NEW ISSUE FOR GASON IN THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT.



At a recent planning meeting to explore training provision in the region Gason presented the following summary of some of their issues: "Gasons currently have 120 employees in Ararat. 37% of this workforce are aged over 55 and are facing retirement and exit from the workforce. It is a highly skilled workforce that Gason have invested considerable time and resources in developing. Despite the commitment to training, Gasons are experiencing a 35% dropout rate of apprentices. There are also issues with employability skills and poor attendance. Gasons identified that they were prepared to continue to offer training, support and mentoring but that they were experiencing difficulty attracting people, particularly young people and creating and maintaining viable pathways." Gason also spoke of the need to boost their local profile with younger people and their willingness to participate in career development programs.

The Central Grampians LLEN has a long standing relationship with Gasons and had experienced great success in engaging with this employer for programs such as Careers Month. Gasons are eager to be seen as a prominent local employer and have actively looked for opportunities to be linked with schools and the community.

The WLC learnt of the current issues facing Gason and were eager to engage with them. A meeting was established with HR Manager Alan Bright to explore Gason's relationship to Workplace Learning and past pitfalls and successes. Though Gason had previously explored School Based Apprentice/Trainee (SBAT) as an option they had been unable to find suitable students and experienced problems in maintaining the relationship with the schools.

Recognising their current plight and realising that change needed to occur; Alan made a commitment to Workplace Learning. The WLC explored with Alan how pathways to Gasons may be staged through Work Experience and SWL. They discussed the alignment of Gason's internal training with VET offered in a school setting. This discussion led to further planning within the management team.

Though Gasons initially felt they could place two SBAT students, they decided to advertise one SBAT

vacancy along with 3 full time apprentices in Certificate III Engineering/Fabrication Systems. The recent flooding and locusts had created a downturn in the agricultural sector and Gason decided to err on the side of caution rather than taking on more than they could initially handle.

At the conclusion of the year Gason held an information session for prospective apprentices. The WLC attended this session and encouraged schools to send young people along. At the conclusion of the session application forms were collected. Gason has subsequently completed further testing of these applicants and at the time of writing were waiting to conclude the process of appointment after the annual Christmas Shutdown period.

The success factors for the WLC work with Gason are:

- An individualised approach. Identifying what has and has not worked in the past and working to develop ongoing solutions
- Developing an integrated approach to workplace learning. Staging participation from industry tours and talks in schools to work experience then SWL and SBAT onto full apprenticeships.
- Promoting the value of the Trade. Giving Gason an opportunity to showcase their business to prospective employees.
- Support to promote the business and make contact with key local connections and key school personnel
- Providing opportunities for feedback and discussion.
- Following up the support and discussion with action

Work with Gason will continue in 2011. There will be Work experience and potential SWL placements also to follow. This will ensure Gason has access to a broad range of students for the opportunities that will emerge over the coming years. With the assistance of the Workplace Learning Coordination program Gason have been able to get back on track to finding and maintaining their future workforce.

Central Ranges LLEN Region – Mitchell/Murrindindi Shire

THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS PROGRAM WITHIN THE MITCHELL & MURRINDINDI SHIRES HAS HAD STRONG FOCUS ON ALLIED HEALTH IN 2011. THIS AREA HAS HAD STRONG VOCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH AND TOGETHER WITH INDUSTRY SUPPORT AND THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATOR (WLC) WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAILOR A TRAINING PACKAGE WITH A RESISTED TRAINING ORGANISATION (RTO) MERCY HEALTH TRAINING INSTITUTE (MHTI) LOOKING AT LOCAL INDUSTRY NEEDS BY FORMING A VET IN SCHOOLS (VETIS) HEALTH INDUSTRY GROUP, EDUCATING MANAGEMENT ALONG WITH STAFF WITHIN A VARIETY OF HEALTH SETTINGS TO PROVIDE QUALITY WORK PLACEMENTS. THIS HAS RESULTED IN AN INCREASE IN THE CAPACITY OF HEALTH VENUES/ FACILITIES HAS ALSO BEEN ABLE TO SUPPORT QUALITY WORKPLACE LEARNING WITHIN THEIR VENUES WITH CLOSE PARTNERSHIPS FORMED WITH INDUSTRY, WLC & RTO.



February 2011 the first VETis Health meeting was facilitated by the WLC at Seymour Health who had previously arranged to provide a meeting space from this group to meet. Around the table sat the WLC, the Central Ranges Local Learning & Employment Network (CRLLEN) VETis Cluster Coordinator, MHTI Program Coordinator, staff from 6 Hospitals within the region and surrounds along with staff from Aged Care Facilities and Community Health agencies. From this meeting along with prior consultation, all involved with supporting the VETis Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance course and the 20 students were clear on structure, purpose, roles and responsibilities, expectations and limitations, and were provided with resources from the RTO and WLC to take back to the workplace. Industry indicated issues and concerns with the course/ other RTO's and with providing students with Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) placements as placement for this course is mandatory with each student needing 10 days each. This was assured to industry as part of the WLC's

WLC is approached via school with interested students. Students names are provided to industry and a meeting is held or informal interview. The process can also work where a particular student is interested, school approaches WLC to arrange placement availability/date/requirements etc with industry and then school is advised of outcome.

role that the WLC could provide a coordinated placement approach with health facilities availability throughout the year and pass on information to school. This meaning that industry provide dates, WLC passes information onto school, schools pass on information to students and then WLC is approached via school with interested students. Students names are provided to industry and a meeting is held or an informal interview. The process can also work where a particular student is interested, school approaches WLC to arrange placement availability/date/requirements etc with industry and then school is advised of outcome. Industry loved the idea of having a key contact for work placements for all school students to coordinate placements, have support with issues/ concerns.

Seymour Health offered a room within the Hospital as a venue for the training to commence, from this we (the Health Group) worked together to set out Hospital and RTO expectations/ needs and community support. WLC developed information flyers for all the Health venues, wrote article for local papers to generate community interest and every three months Seymour Health asked for an update on the course to be advertised in their Community Wrap Around section that they put in the local paper. The WLC E-Newsletter features an ongoing article about "students in the workplace - What's the difference??" to education industry, employers, parents, schools and the local community along with promoting the WLC program through school newsletters and CRLLEN website.

Increasing Placements in the Health Industry Sector in “Aged Care”

THE ISSUE: THE AIM OF THIS PROJECT WAS FOR THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS PROGRAM IN THE FRANKSTON/MORNINGTON PENINSULA REGION TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN WORK PLACEMENTS IN COMMUNITY SERVICES AND/OR HEALTH INDUSTRY.



The Health & Community Services sector is one of the major employment sectors in the Frankston/Mornington Peninsula region, offering many career types across a broad range of areas. There is currently a shortage of skilled workers in this field so opportunities for ongoing employment are plentiful.

The WLC Program has identified that given the Mornington Peninsula Shire's ageing population (26% of the population were 60+ years old at the time of the 2006 census and this is continuing to rise), the provision of services relating to positive ageing is expected to be a growth investment area in respect to infrastructure and facilities and also opportunities for employment. The local Health & Community Services sector grew by over 1,000 jobs in 2001-2006.

Actions:

The Village Glen is a renowned retirement village located in the Southern Peninsula housing over 900 residents. Additional to the housing is a 5 Star golf clubhouse, 9 hole par 3 golf course, Restaurant, Fully equipped library, Hairdressing salon, Craft Workshop, Swimming pool, and Gymnasium. Also owned by the same Company is an aged care facility, Ti-Tree Lodge, which includes (low-high) care housing 42 patients. In affiliation with the Retirement Village and located next door is Brickendon Lodge Aged Care (60 residents in low care).

The General Manager of The Village Glen Retirement Village, located in Rosebud (Peter Nilsson), made contact with the WLC Program & the Frankston/Mornington Peninsula LLEN, wanting to expand his relationship with the community and to embark on further opportunities to engage local young people into the Aged Care work force. A meeting was arranged to determine how a relationship could be formed to introduce student workplace learning into each of these business areas. Even though previously Brickendon Lodge has accepted some work experience students prior to this meeting there had been no formal process for maintaining or accessing a broad range of opportunities for students.

In addition to our discussions regarding workplace learning for student's, an opportunity was presented to introduce and include Monash University and Chisholm Institute representatives to discuss the options available for training future and existing staff.

A wide range of discussion touched on:

- Linking the different Health professionals together via placements and or projects
- Likely graduate positions in the new and existing facility
- Possible Monash University access to the Retirement Village Association's Annual Conference
- The idea of a forum to draw together the various players in Aged Care including providers and education institutions.

Successful Outcomes:

Several meetings with Peter including other members of his management team from Ti Tree Lodge have taken place and it was decided to advertise 3 school based apprenticeships for 2012, in Aged Care, Hospitality & Business Administration. Applications have been accepted and interviews are scheduled to take place in February 2012. The company has also expressed an interest in offering students numerous quality work experience and structured workplace learning opportunities within all three locations as an option for students who are seeking to determine which area of interest they are passionate about and to increase the likelihood of a strong vocational pathway.

This program is designed to provide young people with the chance to commence a two year school based traineeship with Ti-Tree Lodge. The traineeships are intended to expose students to the

broad range of career opportunities in this industry, as Ti Tree Lodge and its affiliated businesses has embarked on a commitment to up-skilling and training which provide strong pathways to employment.

Next steps:

Discussions are now taking place with Chisholm Institute to determine how to streamline training modules within the Certificate III & IV level and to match the company's requirements where possible. Another full-group meeting will convene in early 2012 to assess progress.

A new facility for Ti Tree Lodge is currently being built and is due to open in April 2013. It will be capable of accommodating 167 people with various accommodation and health care needs. The new facility will have a workforce in excess of 200 people from disciplines including front of house services, lifestyle and hospitality, engineering and maintenance, sales and marketing, financial and accounting services, health care services including nursing, physiotherapy, and business administration. This will create a substantial increase for training and employment opportunities in the Health industry in the Southern Peninsula area. Access to this new facility will be available to students who often experience public transport obstacles and who often feel isolated compared to other areas of our region.

The WLC and the Frankston/Mornington Peninsula Local Learning & Employment Network have made great efforts to nurture and maintain this relationship through continued support, follow-up visitation, and student preparedness.

For further information please contact:

jling@skillsplus.com.au (03) 9781 3388

The General Manager of The Village Glen Retirement Village, located in Rosebud (Peter Nilsson), made contact with the WLC Program & the Frankston/Mornington Peninsula LLEN, wanting to expand his relationship with the community and to embark on further opportunities to engage local young people into the Aged Care work force.

Stand Out from the Crowd with VETiS

THE ST VINCENTS DE PAUL DAY THERAPY CENTRE – BOX HILL OPENED IN 1985 AS A COMMUNITY BASED AGED CARE REHABILITATION FACILITY THAT PROVIDES A PROGRAM OF CARE IN REHABILITATION AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES - INCLUDING PHYSIOTHERAPY, NURSING, OCCUPATIONAL SPEECH THERAPY, PODIATRY AND ALLIED HEALTH ASSISTANTS HELPING CLIENTS TO MAINTAIN INDEPENDENCE IN ALL ASPECTS OF DAILY LIVING.

St Vincent's De Paul Day Therapy Centre was recruited to the WLC program through the IMVC as a host employer in July 2011 to provide quality work placement experiences for students in Allied Health. After reviewing the impact of the WLC Program with the IMVC Project Officer at the end of 2011, a strategy was determined to help make the placements more structured. This would provide an increase in the quality of the structured workplace learning experience for the student and increase the value of these placements to the Centre. This was achieved through support from the IMVC Project Officer and further resources and training provided by the Centre.

Since then, St Vincent's De Paul Day Therapy Centre has proven its commitment to the program by adding Community Services and Hospitality (back of house) to the scope of industry placements available to Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) students through the WLC program in 2012. Further to this, IMVC are now in discussions with St Vincent's De Paul's affiliated therapy centres to have IMVC present the WLC Program to them, assess its suitability to these centres and explore additional placement opportunities in this industry.

At the commencement of 2012, IMVC WLC staff conducted a school based information session for VETiS students enrolled in Allied Health, to outline the benefits of undertaking work placements. The information session showcased the application process and built the schools' capacity to help students' source quality work placements.

Thilan Madawalage was one of those students. He is a high achieving Year 12 student at Melbourne High School with a desire to pursue a career in Medicine. Thilan originally attended an IMVC VETiS information session at the end of 2011 and subsequently enrolled in the Certificate III in Allied Health Studies course to further support his learning and planned application for a Degree in Medicine. Thilan saw the opportunity to participate in a work placement as a chance to expand his skill base.

Thilan received the employer details through the IMVC and arranged to meet the employer. Once this meeting had taken place, Thilan was accepted into

the sought after placement. He found his induction at the Centre very interactive and helped him prepare for what to expect during his placement. Thilan commented that the staff were very welcoming, prepared, able to pass down their knowledge effectively. He also commented that he learnt so much and had a very rewarding experience. He was also exposed and contributed to all the therapies offered to the clients and particularly enjoyed working with the Speech Pathologist.

Dianne Groenwald, Thilan's supervisor and the resident Occupational Therapist at the Centre during the work placement stated that Thilan's aptitude and abilities far exceeded her expectations. Thilan exceeded these expectations to the point that she asked him to assist with cognitive activities for clients almost immediately. She also commented that Thilan worked well within a team and asked just the right questions. Thilan demonstrated an increase in his skills and knowledge everyday across all the therapies offered in the centre. Dianne stated that she would have Thilan back anytime.

He is a high achieving Year 12 student at Melbourne High School with a desire to pursue a career in Medicine. Thilan originally attended an IMVC VETiS information session at the end of 2011 and subsequently enrolled in the Certificate III in Allied Health Studies course to further support his learning and planned application for a Degree in Medicine.

For Thilan his work placement at St Vincent's De Paul Day Therapy Centre helped him access the tools required to understand the health needs of elderly people and contribute to their care. Thilan listed this as his major learning achievement and the most personally gratifying. Thilan feels empowered because he now knows what to expect working in the health industry. He now also has the confidence to know what he needs to do, to further his career in this industry. His placement experience has clarified any doubts he had about committing to a career in medicine and strongly recommends a placement with St Vincent's De Paul Day Therapy Centre to all his fellow Allied Health VETiS students.



Endless Opportunities



*Image shown is not Thilan Madawalage

For further information, please contact Janine Livingston on 9686 2354 or jlivingston@imvc.com.au.

WLC Opening Industry Doors for Indigenous Students

THE INSPIRING YOUNG INDIGENOUS PEOPLE EVENTS, WHICH FORM PART OF A SUITE OF INSPIRATIONAL EXPERIENCES, HISTORICALLY HAVE FOCUSED ON BRINGING TOGETHER INDIGENOUS STUDENTS, SCHOOL STAFF AND INDIGENOUS EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS WITHIN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TO TALK ABOUT CAREER PATHWAYS, THE WORLD OF WORK AND THEIR JOURNEY FROM SCHOOL TO WORK.

This new relationship now has the ability to 'value add', to an already successful program for improving outcomes for young indigenous students, by utilising these events for procuring ongoing commitments with employers in the form of work placement opportunities.

The Inspiring Young Indigenous People Events is not a new partnership, but one that was brokered by the Gippsland East LLEN four years ago and came out of a need identified by schools regarding the lack of opportunities that students had to interact with the world of work outside of their immediate family/ community.

The key partners within this partnership brokered by the Gippsland east LLEN are – The Smith Family, Gippsland East Et Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative, Clontarf Sporting Academy, three local Secondary Colleges, and more recently the Workplace Learning Coordinator Program. Each of these partners has brought particular skills and resources to the table:

- Workplace Learning Coordinators Program has the key responsibility of bringing inspiring employees and employers to the table and obtaining work placements for student attendees
- The Smith Family has strong relationships with Koorie students and their families through a number of their programs including their scholarship program
- Gippsland East Et Gippsland Aboriginal Co-op (GECAC) provided funding and Key note speakers for these events
- Clontarf Sporting Academy work and support Indigenous male students to stay engaged and re engaged in education and is located at one of the larger secondary colleges within the area
- Secondary Colleges identified, coordinated and supported students
- Gippsland East LLEN continued to broker the partnership

The Inspiring Young Indigenous People Events focused on providing a forum for interaction between and students with minimal follow up and no future commitment from employers to offer opportunities for Indigenous students.

A key component of the previous Inspiring Young Indigenous People Events was that all invited employers were Indigenous, thus limiting the opportunities for students to engage with a larger diversity of guests from a broader variety of industries.

In most instances guests did not have the authority to make the decision around offering work placement opportunities to students; this was also raised by the Workplace Learning Coordination as an issue that needed to be addressed so that the best possible outcomes were obtained for these students.

With the introduction of the Workplace Learning Coordination program to this partnership the program was evaluated and new strategies introduced. A percentage of the guests will be targeted to commit not only to being involved in Inspiring Young Indigenous People Events but also offer students work placements opportunities within their organisation.

The partnership was well aware that there would be a balancing act regarding this new direction. Considerations that would need to be taken in to account were:

- The careers where students displayed interest not aligning with the organisations that were willing to offer quality work placements
- The low number of Indigenous students in year levels being available to take up work placement offers
- Employers that are willing, to not only work with the schools around the needs of the students but have a workplace environment that is culturally sensitive to indigenous people.

Another vital component to the Inspiring Young Indigenous People Events is that the WLC stated to build the capacity of organisations by working with businesses who have a commitment to support students to undertake a quality work placement, have a workplace environment philosophy that is supportive of young Koorie students and have a willingness to share their organisation journey with other organisations regarding Koorie students work placements.



Conversations are starting with identified organisations and individuals within these organisations, who have the skills and aptitude to act as 'champions'. Exploring their willingness to provide informal 'buddying support' to other organisations that have expressed an interest in offering an Indigenous student a quality work placement as a way of increasing their indigenous work force.

This 'buddy support' philosophy has started to be implemented through the Bairnsdale Regional Health Service – 'Close the Gap' Human Resource Consultant and her desire to be linked with the East Gippsland Water Board who have a comprehensive engagement model regarding supporting young indigenous students through work placement and onto employment.

This partnership will continue to grow and prosper with new members in 2012 being the East Gippsland Shire Council and the Community College East Gippsland. The next steps for the Workplace Learning Coordination program regarding the Inspiring Young Koorie Events is to work more closely with the schools Koorie student support team to identify gaps in students 'work readiness skills' and scope how schools may increase students capacity in this area. Additional work will be done to identify businesses that will become part of this overall strategy to engage Koorie students in quality work placements.

Case Study Which Demonstrates Quality Workplace Learning Outcomes



VERY EARLY ON IN THE YEAR OUR WLC CREATED A MAIL MERGE IN WHICH BUSINESSES WERE SENT A LETTER ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND ALSO A REGISTRATION OF INTEREST FORM FOR THE BUSINESSES TO RETURN TO THE LOCAL WLC PROVIDER.

The business in the case study, Quadrant Securities Financial Planning in Portland, returned the registration form to the local WLC asking for more information. The local WLC then met with the business and discussed not only their current needs but also the expectations, roles and responsibilities of hosting a Structured Work Placement (SWL). After meeting with the employer on several occasions and having some very in depth discussions Quadrant Securities decided that they would like the WLC to approach the schools and get applications from interested students for a SWL in the business administration industry.

The local WLC then approached all of the local schools with the SWL opportunity. Students were asked to apply for the position with a Letter of application and a resume. During the communications with the schools regarding the position, one Career Advisor in particular had a student in mind. The student in question not only suited what Quadrant Securities was looking for but had already commenced a Certificate IV in Business through an online company without seeking advice from the Careers Advisor and was really struggling to complete it. The student had not only enrolled but had also paid full price to complete the course online, a very expensive and stressful situation for the student to be in. The career advisor thought that a placement in business could assist the student with completing the course by providing some work experience that related directly to the course.

After the closing date for applications the WLC then visited the business to discuss the applications received. During these discussions we spoke about the student's workdays, which are set out by the schools, which students applications showed the most interest and also which students were already completing some form of study that would relate back to the workplace, it was then decided to interview three of the students, one of them being the student discussed above. After interviews Quadrant Securities decided that they would like to take two of the students for a placement, both on different days, including the student that was completing the Certificate IV.

The student has now been working at the business for 10 weeks (10 days) and during this time our local WLC has been able to keep in contact with both the business and education provider, they are very happy with the student and also her work ethic, they have been so impressed that when a current

employee goes on maternity leave, which by chance begins around the same time school finishes, the student will be offered a more permanent position and a chance to complete all of her studies. The careers advisor has also expressed the success of the placement, the student is less stressed, more motivated and working through her studies in a more confident manner.

Critical issues

The business had expressed an interest in taking two students for a SWL placement on different days. However, the two students had the same set work days. The WLC contacted both of the student's schools and informed them of the issue and tried to come up with a solution of one of the students changing their work days to suit the business needs. Due to timetabling and also the student's current curriculum neither school were very keen to let this occur. The WLC let the schools know that one of the students will miss out if they do not try and be more flexible. The WLC also discussed this with the business and they were somewhat disappointed but also understood the circumstances.

In the end one of the schools had decided that the student could attend the workplace on a different day. However, the other student had decided to remain in VCE and not transfer to VCAL so they gave up the opportunity. Therefore the school did not need to change work placement day and the business was also happy with the result.

Role of the WLC in developing relationships

Throughout the case in question the WLC was able to not only build a new relationship with a business that had never used students in the workplace before, but also build on relationships with the careers advisors. This was done by providing the business with important information that enabled them to begin some strategic planning with their employees without it making a huge impact on their finances and current staffing. It was also done by assisting the careers advisors in placing a student into a work environment that was going to support the student's current interest and also studies, therefore, improving their confidence in the WLC program.

Challenges and/or successes

One challenge included the students having the same workdays and the schools not really wanting to change this. However, the end result was a

success with one student getting the placement and the other continuing with VCE.

Another challenge that came about more recently with this case was when one of the other students that had applied attended the workplace with their parent and the SWL arrangement form wanting to start their work placement. The WLC had already contacted the students that were not successful in gaining the position; however this student and their parent were determined. Quadrant Securities contacted me to ask why this had occurred and they were in a state of confusion. After the WLC discussed the incident with the business and also the school in question had a chat with the student, it was all just a mix up of communication and all were made aware of the end result.

Outcomes achieved

The outcomes achieved were basically a positive SWL placement for a student with real possibilities of continued work after school finishes and also a chance for the student to make some real progress with their Certificate IV in Business.

Another outcome was the introduction of the WLC program to a new business that had never utilised students in the workplace in the past.

For the WLC this one case enabled us to achieve at least three of the KPIs used to assess our performance.

Any learning or benefits

For the WLC it was learning and beneficial case, it showed the local WLC that any student and any business could and would take part in a positive work placement. It did also teach us that some schools are more flexible when it comes to set work days.

Overall, it was a very positive experience for all involved. A student who really needed a supportive and encouraging work placement in the business industry found that, a business that needed to begin implementing strategic planning for upcoming staffing issues was able to come up with a solution that was cost effective and also great for business and current staff. The business contact has even described having a student in the workplace as like having a 'breath of fresh air' into the workplace. The local WLC was able to work hard in providing this for both parties involved, really showing us why we do what we do and why we love doing it.

Stepping into the World of Work

FOR GREG FREE, WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATOR AT CVGT AUSTRALIA, THE CHANCE TO WORK WITH STUDENTS AS THEY TAKE THEIR FIRST TENTATIVE STEPS IN TO THE WORLD OF WORK, IS A CHALLENGE, BUT MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, A JOY. "WE HAVE ENTHUSIASTIC EMPLOYERS WE WORK WELL WITH," GREG SAYS. "ONE OF THESE IS MYER BENDIGO, WHO HAS EMBRACED THE WORK EXPERIENCE ETHOS AND MADE IT THEIR OWN."



"After the selection process, Lauren was so enthusiastic she breezed through the Myer induction program, which is an on-line service consisting of four modules."

With 21 secondary colleges in the region, and their year 10, 11 and 12 students all looking to find work experience placements, the city's businesses would be overwhelmed without a bit of organisation. Greg works collectively with schools on a calendar for the Bendigo Regional Careers Association (BRCA), putting together a time-table for schools to be allocated particular weeks of the year to undertake work experience with employers.

"As part of my role, I have to look after the employers and work in with them so that everyone gets the best from the experience," Greg says. "Mark Forster, the operations manager at Myer, has suggested some innovative ways to approach the work experience process and we took that on board.

"CVGT Australia gets the students to write a formal request; we then sort through these, offer a formal interview as though they were applying for a job, and then give them feedback at the end of the process. Both CVGT Australia and the host company, in this case Myer, ends up with students who really want to work in the retail industry," Greg explains.

"From their first day on the job at Myer, they are given a different department each day to work in, and then on their last day they can choose a

department that they most liked throughout the work experience. "This way the student has the chance to prove their worth and maybe go on to casual work at peak times, if not, find long-term employment with the company. Everyone wins." And this is the process that Lauren Downey from Girton undertook.

"After the selection process, Lauren was so enthusiastic she breezed through the Myer induction program, which is an on-line service consisting of four modules. "Next came the 'uniform' white shirt, black shoes and a spic and span appearance, and she was set," Greg says. And after a visit during the week, to see how everything is going, both the employer and student have a chat to Greg, to make sure the process is as good as it can be.

Myer Bendigo, a great supporter of the work experience program, is presently offering up to three positions a week for any school student, and is only too happy to provide this wonderful experience to the youth of Bendigo.

Health Placements in the Goulburn Murray

HEALTH PLACEMENTS HAVE BEEN AN ONGOING ISSUE IN THIS REGION FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS GIVEN THAT DEMAND EXCEEDS SUPPLY OF PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR REGION. UNFORTUNATELY MANY HEALTH PROVIDERS IN THE REGION HAVE HAD TO REDUCE THEIR PLACEMENT OFFERINGS IN CLINICAL SETTINGS DUE TO PRIORITY PLACEMENT SCHEDULES. THE FOLLOWING ARE SHORT SNAP SHOTS OF THE PROGRAMS THE WLC IS INVOLVED IN TO INCREASE HEALTH PLACEMENTS AND SCHOOL BASED APPRENTICE/TRAINEE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HEALTH INDUSTRY.

The WLC's relationship with the Goulburn Valley Health Hospital has allowed the WLC program to track all clinical and non-clinical placements within the hospital. The hospital is currently doing all it can to assist with clinical placements as this area is high in demand with University students, Tafe students and Allied health students all seeking placement who all receive preference scheduling over high school students. The hospital is more than accommodating to assist further with students wanting to do various non-clinical placements within their organisation, and we have already seen an increase in students taking up non-clinical placement options.

Goulburn Murray Local Learning and Employment Network and Campaspe Cohuna Local Learning and Employment Network WLC's have collectively organised a "careers in Natural Health Forum" that was held at Natremed in Shepparton on the 8th August 2012. This session was aimed at providing students with alternative career pathways in health, looking outside the traditional hospital setting. The day was hosted by Natremed; however included guest speakers from the Chinese medicine and acupuncture clinic in Shepparton. Three registered training organisation's (RTO) provided their pathway information for students, and networking time was allowed at the end of the session for students to mingle with industry representatives and collect RTO information.

Feedback forms and evaluations from the day highlighted the importance to ensure this forum was an annual event, as both students and employers enjoyed the day. We would like to see the forum next year incorporate the major health providers, small clinics, alternative health, natural medicine and Chinese medicine, along with information and possibly representatives from various RTO's.

Health placement demands will increase again for 2013 as another secondary school in this region will be participating in a certificate III in Allied health. Those student placements will be sourced by the three WLC's across the three regions where the students will be completing their placements.

The Goulburn Murray WLC works closely with Strategies 4 Excellence who is a group training company who will be providing Certificate III across several health areas for 2013; Allied health, Health assistance, Business health administration and Health support services Cooking/Horticulture, student will commence induction into their certificates prior to the end of 2012, and officially start their SBAT from the commencement of the 2013 school period. This program allows students to be engaged in school, training and employment for the completion of the certificate, networking opportunities and future employment are extra benefits. The program has seen a successful completion rate for 2012 (above 90%), along with several outcomes for year 12 students including, full time work and higher certificate/diploma training in their fields.

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Natural Health Forum, held 8 August 2012, at Natremed, Shepparton

Structured Workplace Learning initiative in ICT

A QUALITY STRUCTURED WORKPLACE LEARNING (SWL) PLACEMENT SHOULD ENABLE STUDENTS TO MASTER SPECIFIC SKILLS THAT ARE RELEVANT TO THE PARTICULAR INDUSTRY AREA IN WHICH THEY ARE COMPLETING THEIR VET CERTIFICATE. PLACEMENTS WHERE STUDENTS CAN ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE AND DEMONSTRATE THEIR PROFICIENCY INCREASES THE LEVEL OF ENJOYMENT AND SATISFACTION OF THE STUDENT AND CREATES A POSITIVE IMPRESSION ON THE EMPLOYER.



One sector that presents significant challenges to quality SWL is the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) industry. The Highlands region and specifically Ballarat, has a thriving ICT sector with the creation of a technology park at the Mt Helen campus of the University of Ballarat which includes the headquarters of IBM, the State Revenue Office, Rural Ambulance Victoria and many other ICT based businesses. Ballarat also has an ICT Cluster which strives to attract new businesses and promote the region as a base to set up operations. Jointly they employ many thousands of people in ICT positions. However, due to the somewhat unique nature of the industry, the concept of placing students where they will be given appropriate tasks has always been difficult and has a number of barriers. These include the confidential nature of their business and privacy laws of many larger organisations precludes student placement, smaller one person operations do not have human resources to support students and the work offered in the typical computer sales/repair shop is usually repetitive, boring and does not meet the criteria of the students course outcomes.

In response to these issues, the WLCP undertook a project to seek out industry partners that could provide a better SWL experience for VET ICT students. Telstra Countrywide was identified and interested in developing a range of community based programs that assisted their customers in making better use of technology such as the internet and email applications. After some discussions with the VET Cluster ICT teacher, a concept was agreed upon whereby students would provide tuition to older members of the community in improving their understanding and usage of the internet and email over 3 weekly, 2 hour sessions. The VET Cluster was identified as the appropriate model to deliver the training as the VET ICT class was made up of students from a range of local and regional schools, and was delivered in a school setting able to cope with an additional 20 people in the class.

In developing roles and responsibilities it was agreed that Telstra would create a workbook for participants use in class and as a reference guide. An induction course for students was also developed to assist their understanding of participant needs and how the training sessions should be conducted in regard to the depth of knowledge required, the pace of training and the retention of skills learnt. The WLC was responsible for marketing the program through local media community events sections, senior citizens clubs and local government agencies, and provide "meet and greet" hospitality at the school for session one. The VET Cluster IT teacher acted as the roaming overseer and troubleshooter during each class. Telstra also provided certificates of achievement for both students and participants, presented at the conclusion of the final class.

Additional opportunities were identified for VET Hospitality students, with afternoon tea prepared and served to participants. This provided students practice for both front and back of house service to meet their course requirements. VET Music Performance students providing entertainment during the afternoon tea allowed another group of students to meet their own course outcomes. Students were able to perform both solo and in small groups.

By using an innovative approach, significant student outcomes were achieved over and above those gained from a conventional work placement. One of the more surprising outcomes, but strongly commented on after each session, was the social interaction that occurred between students and participants. Stereotypes of what each group might

be like prior to the course were completely broken down, replaced by a strong awareness and respect of each other's talents and abilities. For some students it was the first time they had had significant interaction with a senior person. For seniors, the image of young people as portrayed so often in the media was totally changed.

Additionally, students gained vocational knowledge by using the skills taught as part of the VET course to teach or provide to others, reinforcing their own comprehension and understanding. Workplace "soft skills" such as communication, patience, tolerance, understanding and focusing on others were improved. The participants gained knowledge by learning with one to one mentors, at a pace they could manage in a stress free environment.

Through the collaboration and goodwill of forming and sustaining relationships between schools, industry and community organisations, the concept used in this case study has been extended. This has seen the range of programs expand to offer training for seniors in iPhone applications, social media and mobile phone operation.

This clearly demonstrates the importance of identifying a need, developing local partnerships, creating programs to suit specific cohorts and always looking for ways to change and add value.

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SBATS Galore

IN MARCH OF 2012, SHARON SMITH, THE HUME WHITTLESEA WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATOR FOR THE CITY OF HUME, WAS CONTACTED BY THE HUME WHITTLESEA LLEN (LOCAL LEARNING & EMPLOYMENT NETWORK) TO ASSIST WITH AN EXCITING NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS IN THE HUME WHITTLESEA REGION.

The LLEN had been contacted by Inspirational Industry Solutions, a RTO who was working in partnership with A-Gesture, a not for profit organisation, who were hoping to recruit students into career pathways in Transport and Logistics. This is a key growth industry in the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne and a major skill shortage area in the region. In response to this opportunity, the LLEN contacted Hume Whittlesea Workplace Learning (HWWL), in order to make it all happen.

A-Gesture is a not for profit organisation that is committed to making a difference by working with Second Bite, another not for profit organisation, sourcing fresh nutritious food that would otherwise go to waste and redistributing it to people who are homeless, living in disadvantaged circumstances or experiencing food security issues within the community. A-Gesture also offers work experience and life skills for both unemployed individuals and secondary students to gain proficiency in warehousing and food logistics. Students engage in a hands-on learning program within a supportive environment. This prepares students to become job ready while still attending school.

Not only does A-Gesture provide students with the opportunity to gain practical warehouse experience, they also learn to give back to the community by sorting and distributing surplus food that would otherwise be wasted. This produce is distributed back to local charities within the Wyndham, Brimbank, Hume and Whittlesea municipalities.

In the last two years they have supplied over 200,000 kilograms of food to agencies who assist people in need. This represents 3125 shopping trolleys full of fresh food.

The Second Bite organisation started two years ago and now has more than 300 committed volunteers, sourced mainly from Rotary clubs. It organises collections from markets around Melbourne which average more than 60 tonnes of fresh food per month. This is enough for 1.4 million nutritious meals supplied by more than 100 recipient organisations. This has made a real difference to the lives of many people struggling to make ends meet. There are now plans to extend the program to Dandenong and Geelong and for an expansion of the Victoria Market program.

The problem that confronted A-Gesture and Inspirational Industry Solutions was that of turning a good idea into a reality. And this is where Hume Whittlesea Workplace Learning (HWWL) came in.

In her capacity as Workplace Learning Coordinator, Sharon Smith met with the employer and RTO and negotiated a model and a set of procedures that would enable schools and their students to easily access the program.

Sharon encouraged the employer and the RTO to use the SBAT (School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship) model. This provides the students with high quality, nationally accredited training, as well as genuine paid employment, in a key regional skills shortage area.

Sharon then contacted schools in the region, explaining the program and the model to the Careers Teachers, VET and VCAL Coordinators. The next step was for Sharon to arrange for the RTO to present the program at Hume Central Secondary, Penola Catholic and Hume Valley schools, making sure that it coincided with events that parents would also be attending.

The schools were then asked to forward to HWWL any expressions of interest they may have from students.

The response was phenomenal. Overall, there were 25 applications, all of whom were accepted into the program.

A key reason for the success of the whole endeavour was the fact that the RTO, with the support of A-Gesture, whole heartedly encouraged students from all cohorts. Of the 25 students who commenced SBATs in March, eleven have disabilities, eight are Newly Arrived and/or Refugees, and six are identified as students at risk of not completing secondary school.

However the implementation of this program was not without its challenges. As the program was approaching its start date, A-Gesture relocated to a different warehouse, one situated in Sunshine. This would create substantial difficulties for many students to attend the workplace. This would be particularly true for the students from Hume Valley School, whose students, although high-functioning, all have disabilities.

In response to this challenge, the Workplace Learning Coordinator was able to work with the employer and the RTO to brainstorm and analyse possible solutions. To address this issue, the employer agreed to provide a bus with driver, which relays students from the schools to the warehouse in Sunshine and then back to the schools before 5pm. This proved to be hugely popular with students

and parents alike. Public transport is always being cited as the primary reason for students being unable to attend potential work placements; and the provision of the bus demonstrates the genuine commitment of the employer to the program; and to maximise the chances of success for all students, whether recognised as disability, newly arrived/ refugee, at risk or mainstream.

This project has demonstrated a number of learnings and critical success factors.

Firstly, the importance and the benefit of the close working relationship and ongoing collaboration and communication with the LLEN.

Secondly, the value of the WLC as a central point of contact for employers, schools and training providers.

Thirdly, the key role of the WLC in building the capacity of employers, businesses, industry, and education and training providers to deliver quality programs for the benefit of students. This is demonstrated by the fact the program is currently being significantly expanded, with other Hume City schools coming on board in the second half of 2012.

And fourthly, the fact that a quality program can be made accessible to all students, including those with disabilities and other complex needs.

Essentially this program allows streamlined collaboration and communication between employers, schools, teachers and students. In the words of a teacher from Hume Valley School where a dozen students with special needs have commenced their SBATs: "it's the best thing to happen for our students in a long time, we have had so much positive feedback from parents".

Students undertake SBATs as part of the Hume Whittlesea Workplace Learning – A-Gesture program. The students received nationally accredited training; paid employment; and are able to make a difference in the lives of some of the most disadvantaged people in the western and northern suburbs of Melbourne.

Hume Whittlesea Workplace Learning is funded by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. It is a partnership between Kangan Institute (City of Hume) and RMIT Northern Partnerships Unit (City of Whittlesea).



Jaden on Point for a Successful Career

PREVIOUSLY IN 2011, IT WAS IDENTIFIED THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR THE MONTAGUE CONTINUING EDUCATION CENTRE (CEC) IN THE INNER EASTERN REGION, TO CONNECT WITH EMPLOYERS IN THE AREA, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE STRUCTURED WORKPLACE LEARNING AND SCHOOL BASED APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS FOR THEIR STUDENTS TO ASSIST THEM IN TRANSITIONING FROM EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT.



Montague CEC is a Government Secondary School for students with mild intellectual disabilities. These students often find the transition from education to employment difficult and require additional support during this stage of their life.

IMVC have been working closely with the Principal (Geraldine Charles) of Montague CEC to facilitate SWL placements for students that are "work ready". An important part of the process has been to work closely with Geraldine to build the students' knowledge of employer's expectations in the workplace. It has also been important to understand the individual student's capabilities and strengths, in order to locate employers in the local area that are equipped to mentor and guide these students in a positive and quality experience in their workplaces.

In the case of Jaden Bell, Geraldine explained to IMVC's Workplace Learning Project Officer, Jaden's strengths, capabilities and passions. Jaden who is mildly intellectually disabled also has been diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome and requires systems and structures to be in place in order for him to achieve his goals. All of this information was taken on board as well as the outcomes required by the school. It was emphasised that Jaden's passion was cooking and that this would be a perfect segue for him to think about a placement within the hospitality industry.

Once this information was understood, IMVC utilised a reverse marketing strategy to connect with the employers. After several phone calls and meetings with different hospitality employers in the region, The Point Restaurant in Albert Park were excited to accept Jaden as a SWL placement. This placement was made easier due to The Point having a pre-existing relationship with IMVC, as we have placed a number of students in SWL placements with The Point in the last two years.

Essential to the success of these placements has been an ongoing sustainable relationship with the employer. The WLC Program Project Officer connects with The Point on a regular basis to offer assistance and support where needed in the facilitation of placements. Verbal feedback is sought by the Project Officer from the employer pre and post placement. This builds the relationship and allows the WLC Program another way of connecting successfully with industry. It was the strength of this relationship which produced the pathway into introducing Jaden Bell to the employer. Originally The Point came on board with the WLC Program to assist in the local skills shortage within the industry. The Point Restaurant is on picturesque Albert Park Lake. Awarded best steak restaurant 2011 and awarded two chef's hats by The Age Good Food Guide, The Point showcases Australia's finest cuisine and is a well-respected restaurant in Melbourne.

Executive chef Justin Wise, who is also one of Melbourne's celebrity television chefs, was more than happy to participate in placing Jaden. The WLC Program facilitated a meeting between Jaden,



Endless Opportunities

Geraldine and Justin, to discuss Jaden's strengths, as well as areas he would possibly need the support of others within the workplace. Due to Jaden's Asperger Syndrome, particular support mechanisms were discussed and established. A plan was cemented, with Jaden commencing his five day SWL placement in April 2012.

Pertinent to IMVC's WLC Program processes is the ongoing employer support during a SWL placement. The employer is contacted on the first day of placement to ensure both student and employer are settling into the placement with an offer from the project officer to be the first point of contact if any issues arise. Finally, on the last day of placement in keeping with WLC Program protocol, verbal feedback is sought from the employer about the outcome of the placement, and where appropriate a possible future option for the young person in either an SBAT or part-time employment are discussed.

The Point, Restaurant Albert Park, expressed how impressed they were with Jaden and have offered him a School Based Apprenticeship (SBAT). The Point have a willingness to assist young people in their pursuit of a career in the hospitality industry along with, their commitment to a business model to be leaders, with a vision to assist in community needs and social awareness. Jaden Bell will commence his SBAT at The Point, Restaurant, Albert Park, in July 2012. This will give Jaden a great opportunity to transition successfully from education to employment and will prevent him from becoming a statistic in Australia's disabled unemployed workforce.

For further information, please contact Janine Livingston on 9686 2354 or jlivingston@imvc.com.au.

The way of the Future for the Inner North School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

PREVIOUSLY IN 2011, IT WAS IDENTIFIED THROUGH DISCUSSIONS WITH THE INNER NORTHERN LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK (INLLEN), THAT WHILST THIS REGION HEAVILY SUPPORT THE VICTORIAN CERTIFICATE OF APPLIED LEARNING (VCAL) AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SCHOOLS (VETIS), THERE IS A LOW UPTAKE OF SCHOOL BASED APPRENTICESHIPS OR TRAINEESHIPS (SBAT) WITHIN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE REGION. IN THE INLLEN REGION IN 2011, THERE WERE 1430 ENROLMENTS IN VCAL, WITH ONLY 4% OF THESE STUDENTS UNDERTAKING AN SBAT AS PART OF THE CERTIFICATE.

In order to address this situation, the Inner Melbourne VET Cluster (IMVC) alongside the INLLEN, undertook the SBAT's on TAP program. This program has been designed to show case SBATs by bringing students, employers and Group Training Organisations (GTO) together in one place.

Prior to the SBATs on TAP event, feedback was sought from local employers in Skill Shortage areas as to the possibility of the employing a SBAT student from a local education provider. Employers small and large all indicated that they could see the benefit in employing a SBAT student as part of their recruitment strategies into their skill shortage industries. Employers from Industries such as Engineering, Childcare, Business Administration, Sport & Recreation and Automotive companies were all engaged for feedback prior to the facilitation of this event.

Also prior to the event the WLC Program project officers and the LLEN Project Officers, visited Education Providers in the region that traditionally have a large number of VCAL or VETIS students. These visits assisted to build the capacity of the education providers by providing information on SBATs and answering questions around the logistics of having students in their facilities undertake a SBAT as part of their VCAL or VETIS program.

The event was held central to the region, at the Darebin Arts Centre. Employers and GTO's were asked to attend with the prospect of meeting a young person that was interested in their Industry and was seeking an opportunity to be employed as a SBAT student. Employers and GTO's were advised that they need to have "real jobs" available on the day, so that students were able to set up times to bring their resume's and be interviewed if they showed interest in the position available.

On the day of the event, there were 10 employers from 8 industries in attendance with 50 positions available for students to apply for on the day. Ten Education Providers attended with over 50 students on the day. The Event consisted of several guest speakers including Darren Hawke (Silverglo) and Joe Villani (Bayford Group), covering various topics.

Students were also given the opportunity to approach all of the employers in attendance and to discuss possible opportunities in their workplaces and industries. Employers found this to be greatly beneficial as it also gave them the opportunity to gauge perceptions that young people have of their Industries and why they struggle to engage the younger population into the industry.

As an example of how successful this event was, let us focus on one student who came along on the day and obtained an SBAT in Business Administration.

Bree-Anna is a Year 12 student, with a physical disability from Glenroy Special School. Bree is currently undertaking her Certificate III in Business Administration as part of her VCAL program. As part of this program Bree undertook a Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) placement in 2011 as a medical receptionist in her local area that was facilitated by IMVC as part of the WLC Program. Bree enjoyed her SWL placement last year so much that she was determined to find a suitable SBAT in the area of Business Administration.

The SBATs on TAP event was a perfect opportunity for Bree to locate a suitable employer in the local region for her SBAT goal. Bree approached several employers on the day and immediately struck a chord with David Redfern from VICSEG New Futures. David was advertising an opportunity in their Coburg office for a Trainee Receptionist/ Administration Assistant. VICSEG New Futures provide training and ongoing support to refugees in the Northern and Western Suburbs. An appointment was planned for an interview prior to Bree leaving to return to school that day.

The following week, Bree attended the interview and was successfully appointed to the position!

Ebony, Bree's supervisor said, "We love having Bree here, she is friendly and helpful to both staff and our clients. She is a joy to work with." Bree currently works on the front reception desk meeting and greeting clients, answering general enquires about the programs on offer and other general administration tasks as requested.



Endless Opportunities

Bree enjoys her position at VICSEG New Futures; she works two days a week and is currently completing her Certificate III in Business Administration. When asked what she liked the most about her job, she said, "Love the job, the people she works with and the independence of having her own money." Bree hopes to transition into a Full-time Traineeship in 2013.

For further information, please contact Janine Livingston on 9686 2354 or jlivingston@imvc.com.au.



Partnering to Place Students with Disabilities

OVER THE PAST FOURTEEN YEARS YOUTHNOW HAS SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOPED, MAINTAINED AND EVALUATED THOUSANDS OF WORKPLACE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR VET AND VCAL STUDENTS. IT IS ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY. SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE WLC PROGRAM, YOUTHNOW HAS PLACED OVER 200 YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY ACROSS MELBOURNE'S WEST.

Since January 2012, YouthNow has found 74 quality placements for students with disability from Government, Catholic, Independent Schools and non school organisations such as Wesley City Mission. Partnerships with Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley education and training providers have been especially strong and highlight the success of the WLC partnerships which support students with disability.

Capacity

Over fourteen years, YouthNow has developed a wide network of employers providing a range of opportunities for students with disability. Students with disabilities often attend school in a different Local Government Area to where their home is. For example a student living in Hoppers Crossing may be attending Western Autistic's Base Room at Niddrie campus, Essendon Keilor College. Our access to businesses across 6 local government areas (LGAs) allows YouthNow to identify the most geographically suitable workplace as well as the most appropriate vocationally for these students. Our positive relationships with existing employers allow us to broaden the experiences and "expand the horizons" of these students.

Western Autistic School has worked with YouthNow since 2006. It is an example of a special school that has partnered with YouthNow and built capacity to deliver an excellent work experience program. The teachers are particularly good in their approach to work readiness and students are well prepared for their work experience. Students are actively encouraged to select their work placement opportunity by logging into the YouthNow website and applying online for a business they are interested in.

Teachers from special settings have the option to bring their students to the YouthNow office to complete the online process. A visit to the offices of YouthNow encourages confidence in student travel skills, meeting new people and being in a new "work" environment. Whilst students exercise their IT skills and communicate with their peers, YouthNow staff converse with teachers and learn more about the students' strengths and weaknesses.

Informed Choice

A powerful element of the YouthNow WLC database, not found on other metropolitan WLC websites, is the inclusion of the businesses address. Encouraging the use of GOOGLE MAPS students can quickly determine if the business is close to home, school and/or public transport. Each opportunity also lists "typical duties", appropriate clothing, hours of work, whether to bring lunch or buy it, travel options and OHS issues. All are covered by reading the information given on the website. This provides the teacher and student with information to plan ahead for the work placement, something which is particularly important to students with disabilities.

Catholic schools such as Ave Maria, St Columbas and St Bernard's College provide student profiles for students with disabilities to assist with work placement arrangements. The profiles highlight student strengths and weaknesses as relevant to the work environment and are completed by school staff. The Catholic Education Office runs the Senior Pathways & Transitions (SPT) program for these students which "introduce them to the world of work, raises awareness of post compulsory school options and encourages them to investigate job and education and training options through mentored structured work placement". YouthNow as the WLC plays a critical role in the facilitation of quality work placements. As part of the SPT program, Catholic schools complete their work placement applications at the offices of YouthNow providing a supportive and integral component of their transition program. Notably students from this program have gone on to win regional awards and successfully complete SBATS.

"It has been a pleasure building a relationship and partnership with YouthNow. Communication has been phenomenal. All workers who have been involved have shown a high level of professionalism, empathy towards participants and understanding."

Kelly Ardonis, Pathways to Employment Program Leader, Disability Support Services, North West Wesley City Mission



Dylan Eldridge on Work Experience at Victoria Inn, Williamstown

Outcomes, Community Support & Recognition

To date 74 students with disabilities across the Metro west have been able to access quality placements in a manner that suits their abilities and reinforces their studies. Students from Western Autistic and the SPT program have returned to YouthNow to share their experiences and their success stories. The support given to the WLC program by large well known companies such as Bunnings, Kmart, Coles and Myers is outstanding.

Summary

In Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley, education and training providers attract students from a wide area across Melbourne's North West. With its extensive database, on-line application system and emphasis on quality placements YouthNow is increasing the number of students accessing the WLC program and increasing the range of local placements able to cater for diverse needs. Strong partnerships with special schools, disability agencies and nonschool education providers have ensured that students with disability do not miss out.

Set Your Heart on a Career in Accounting

THE ISSUE: YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE MURRAY MALLEE LLEN (MMLLEN) REGION OF VICTORIA'S NORTH HAVE EXPERIENCED A LIMITED NUMBER OF VOCATIONAL PATHWAY OPTIONS IN TERMS OF THEIR POST SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. ALTHOUGH THE REGION HAS ESTABLISHED SOME EXCELLENT VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS INTO TRADE-RELATED COURSES, THERE ARE VERY FEW VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS THAT LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT IN THE PROFESSIONAL SECTORS, SUCH AS FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING. THE REGIONAL LOCATION OF THE MMLLEN ALSO MEANS YOUNG PEOPLE FACE INCREASED TRANSPORT AND FINANCIAL COSTS IF THEY WISH TO EXPLORE FUTURE PATHWAYS BEYOND THE IMMEDIATE REGION. MANY YOUNG PEOPLE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO OVERCOME THESE BARRIERS AND CONSEQUENTLY EXPERIENCE DIMINISHED ASPIRATIONS FOR THEIR EMPLOYMENT AND FURTHER EDUCATION.

The MMLLEN had identified in its environmental scan that the accounting sector was experiencing chronic skill shortages in the region, and noted the significant potential for creating new vocational pathways for students in the financial services sector. Many employers in the financial services sector observed that, despite this shortage in the region's financial sector workforce, they had very limited communication with schools. Discussions with a member of the Careers Teachers network also revealed that schools considered financial institutions to have a 'closed door' policy in relation to young people undertaking workplace learning because of concerns for their clients' confidentiality.

Actions

The MMLLEN was able to use its membership on the regional industry references groups and employers' networks to begin discussing the potential for creating vocational and employment pathways from local schools into the region's financial services sector. The MMLLEN liaised with accounting and financial institutions to make them aware of the existing opportunities for assistance in addressing their issues. Directors of the region's accounting firms and financial institutions were invited to attend a forum to discuss ideas and strategies. Positive responses were received from 80% of firms, with many others coming on board after follow up contact from the MMLLEN.

The MMLLEN facilitated the forum and discussion was centred on existing recruitment strategies of accounting firms, relationships with education providers (including secondary schools in the regions) and what was and was not working. Many of the financial sector participants expressed difficulty working with schools to recruit cadets. Further conversations identified that the only communication the firms had with schools was when they, the firms themselves, were looking to recruit. It was also confirmed that requests from

schools for assistance with workplace learning experiences had been denied due to 'client confidentiality'.

Work needed to be done to establish relationships amongst the accounting firms themselves. There were many comments made about the competitive nature of their industry sector and some firms were apprehensive about working together. Despite these issues, the partners were happy to form a committee to investigate initiatives to promote their industry and the opportunities for future employment pathways.

The MMLLEN developed a proposed Action Plan with a number of strategies to promote the industry sector to young people in schools. Some of the strategies suggested were presentations to regional schools, a work experience program and school based traineeships in Certificate III Financial Services. The MMLLEN was able to facilitate a partnership with Swan Hill Incorporated who funded the development of professional marketing resources and a media campaign that aligned with the Swan Hill, Heart of the Murray campaign. The Institute of Chartered Accountants and CPA Australia provided an abundance of resources for program participants.

The program comprises road show presentations (by company partners & staff) to 7 secondary schools where students are invited to apply for a one week highly structured work experience program. There are currently nine financial institutions participating.

Successful Outcomes

The WLC was able to build on the MMLLEN networks and relationships and diligently communicate regularly with individuals and report progress to stakeholders. The WLC continues in the facilitation role and will support the partnership until it becomes fully sustainable.



Since the programs' inception in 2009, over 600 students have attended road show presentations. Over 80 students have participated in workplace learning experiences. Eight school based trainees have been signed.

An evaluation is undertaken each year and past program participants are tracked. Eleven students are completing university studies in accounting or combining full time employment with further tertiary studies.



Financial institution partners and staff, students and teachers all come together on the final day of the program. The students participate in a tour of the CBD visiting 8-10 businesses then attend the 'accountants luncheon' to celebrate the week's events and share their experiences.

Key Components that are Significant in The Workplace Learning Service

THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATOR (WLC) HAD BEEN ENGAGING WITH A LOCAL EDUCATION PROVIDER ON A REGULAR BASIS. DURING ONE OF THESE DISCUSSIONS A PARTICULAR KOORIE STUDENT'S NAME WAS MENTIONED. THE EDUCATION PROVIDER CAREER STAFF MEMBER EXPLAINED THAT THIS KOORIE STUDENT WAS IN GRAVE DANGER OF DISENGAGING FROM HIS EDUCATION. THE WLC AND THE CAREER STAFF MEMBER DISCUSSED POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR A WORKPLACE LEARNING PLACEMENT THAT MAY BENEFIT THIS STUDENT AND THE SCHOOL. THE WLC WAS ADVISED THIS STUDENT WAS STUDYING CERTIFICATE II IN ENGINEERING WHICH HE ENJOYED AND HE WAS IN YEAR 10.



His attendance was of a reasonable level and he was respectful towards staff and other students. The WLC wanted further information to source a suitable individualised placement for this Koorie student. The WLC contacted the education provider's Indigenous support staff to discuss this student in more detail.

The Indigenous support staff member advised the WLC that this student had great potential but was struggling academically and was not seeing the reason for various school subjects being linked to life outside school. The Indigenous support staff felt that this student would need a supportive employer initially but one that would give a bit of encouragement to the student to try things after a settling in period.

The WLC data base was utilised with four employers matching the student's training, placement and personal needs. The WLC spoke with the most suitable supportive employer to explain this student's circumstances and current placement needs. The employer was supportive of a placement with this Koorie student and wanted to meet the student. The WLC arranged with the education provider for the student to attend to meet the employer prior to the placement beginning. The WLC followed up the initial student – employer meeting with the employer and education provider to seek feedback: it was very positive. The student completed the placement with the supportive engineering employer and the feedback with regard to the student was very positive. The employer indicated that the student's employability skills were great and his hands-on skills improved greatly over the week placement.

The employer advised he had discussions with the student about what subjects he was studying and what role they have in employment in the engineering field. The employer felt that the student had grasped the needs that employers have, not only in regard to hands-on physical action skills but also the methodologies required. The employer's

direct supervisor also spoke to the WLC about what he felt was the limited practical skills that the student had presented with initially. The WLC advised he would pass this information on to the Education provider to feed back to the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) completing the training for this student. The employer's direct supervisor was surprised but happy that this information would be able to be discussed in an open manner.

The student completed the placement with the supportive engineering employer and the feedback with regard to the student was very positive. The employer indicated that the student's employability skills were great and his hands-on skills improved greatly over the week placement.

The WLC passed this information and the direct supervisor's contact details onto the Education provider to give to the RTO organisation. The WLC then followed up with the Education provider who advised that the RTO Trainer and the employer's direct supervisor had an engaging discussion which was very positive. The WLC followed up with the employer's direct supervisor who was very happy with the response he had received from the RTO. The WLC has learnt from this placement that taking further steps to speak to individual support staff within education providers can greatly benefit the quality of a placement. The WLC program will benefit from this placement as it has shown that a quality placement, based on information from, understanding and support of all parties involved can provide a great benefit to the student and employer.

Healthy future for the North Central

HEALTH PROVIDERS IN THE NORTH CENTRAL LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK (NCLLEN) REGION ARE FINDING IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO STAFF THEIR FACILITIES. THEIR WORKFORCES ARE AGEING, AND THE RURAL LOCATION OF THESE FACILITIES ALSO CREATES SUBSTANTIAL ISSUES IN ATTRACTING AND RETAINING STAFF.

In addition, after the floods of 2011, the Charlton Campus of the East Wimmera Health Service closed and will reopen in early 2014. Many staff have accepted redundancies or moved, so the re-staffing process will present significant challenges in a small rural community. According to the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research, in a report prepared for the NCLLEN (January 2010), Health Care and Social Assistance was the 4th biggest (of 19) youth employer by industry in our region. This indicates the strong potential for employment opportunities for students who can attain relevant industry qualifications. Previously this qualification has not been available locally.



With a shortage of health professionals, an increase in positions for assistants to these professionals is likely. This change will translate into more employment of assistant type roles. A Certificate III in Health Services Assistance is an emerging program to facilitate training for these support positions. The opportunity for young people to be trained without leaving their communities is a bonus, as some would prefer not to relocate.

As well as catering for this section of the workforce, the Cert III is an ideal introduction to a broad range of employment opportunities including those in the Nursing and Allied Health professions. The WLC has facilitated discussions and meetings with the three local health providers to promote student placements with the intention of forming an industry reference group. Previously not all providers were positive about the prospect of work placements with school students, considering the task too challenging. With group discussions and research conducted by the WLC promoting best practice examples, even those providers are now keen to be involved. These meetings have taken considerable negotiating and facilitating to draw together all parties.

Through targeted consultation the WLC has been able to allay some of the concerns with the provision of work placements. Some providers are even considering hosting training sessions as part of the Certificate III program. The advice of the WLC has been enlisted by the providers to suggest strategies to attract young people, and workplace training has been suggested as a tool to improve the recruitment and retention of employees.

VET Health is a new subject, and so requires additional promotion to schools, students and parents. The WLC coordinated a visit to the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE (BRIT) facility for Cluster Principals. At this session, managers described the program and demonstrated the capabilities of the Health Lab. Principals left this session enthused about offering the new program.

The WLC, the leading Principal, and the DEECD Loddon Mallee Regional Youth Transitions Officer met with representatives of the BRIT School of Health to discuss options for delivery that would enhance the prospect of the course being accessible to young people from the north central region. At this stage the Certificate III in Health Services Assistance is the most beneficial to the students and health organisations. With a successful outcome students will be able to access training which will equip them to work within health organisations in roles which have previously been difficult to fill.



The advice of the WLC has been enlisted by the providers to suggest strategies to attract young people, and workplace training has been suggested as a tool to improve the recruitment and retention of employees.

In conjunction with the leading principal, a graphic designer and printers, the WLC has prepared a brochure to promote Health (along with other subjects offered in VET). This also includes information on the proposed North Central Trade Training Centre (NCTTC). It will be used for general awareness as well as targeting subject selection nights and parent evenings. The WLC has supported and co-facilitated the production of this brochure, a new marketing concept for this cluster of schools.

The WLC attends schools' subject selection evenings to promote the inclusion of Health as one of the VET options. Working with the Managed Individual Pathways Coordinators (MIPs) in each school, students will be supported through the subject selection process inclusive of the potential training and employment pathways available through VET Health.

An emerging challenge to our current work includes recent changes and funding cuts to TAFE institutions. The impact of this on our discussion with TAFE regarding the provision of this training is still unknown.

With the VET provision embedded, the outcome will be 15 young people placed into the Health industry for their Structured Workplace Learning, with the potential of future employment at its end.

How Large Organisations can Engage with Youth Through the WLC

HOW THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATOR (WLC) IS CHANGING BEHAVIOUR AND RECRUITMENT PRACTICES OF LARGE ORGANISATIONS IN ORDER TO ENGAGE WITH YOUTH IN THEIR REGIONS.

ALPINE HEALTH WAS ESTABLISHED IN NOVEMBER 1996 THROUGH THE AMALGAMATION OF THE THREE RURAL HOSPITALS, NURSING HOMES, HOSTELS AND ACCOMMODATION UNITS. IT IS A MULTI-PURPOSE SERVICE ACROSS THREE SITES IN THE ALPINE SHIRE TOWNS OF BRIGHT, MOUNT BEAUTY AND MYRTLEFORD.

AS THE REGIONS LOCAL HOSPITAL, THEY PROVIDE INTEGRATED ACUTE HEALTH, COMMUNITY HEALTH AND COMMUNITY AND AGED RESIDENTIAL SERVICES FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS OF THE ALPINE SHIRE. THIS ORGANISATION IS THE SINGLE LARGEST EMPLOYER IN THE ALPINE SHIRE.



Findings

Historically, students at education and training organisations aged between 15-19 years old have experienced difficulties in gaining school based engagement with Alpine Health. The most common barriers have been placement preferences from local University and TAFE students who require practical placements as a part of their tertiary qualifications. With the current skills shortage in the health industry across Victoria, the WLC has seen an opportunity to further promote youth to fill this void.

After thorough consultation with education and training organisations in the region, the WLC has been strongly marketing School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBAT's), Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) and Work Experience (W/E) as an alternative engagement with local students in each region.

Recently, the WLC had given a presentation and had very positive conversations with the HR manager at Alpine Health. Alpine Health agrees that they have an aging population in their local communities and this is reflected by an aging population in their workforce across all three hospitals in the Alpine Shire. They understand the risks of losing youth to other larger regional shires and would like to offer these youths some benefits and incentives to stay and grow in their region across all three facilities.

Summary

Alpine Health would now like to engage with young local students from education and training organisations. They envisage taking on students in three main operational areas at all their hospitals. These include Catering, Essential Services and Business. At this stage, they have the capacity to specifically look at SBAT's and W/E. SWL is something which they would like to investigate later, but not at the moment.

Conclusion

The HR manager is very happy about the function of the WLC and appreciates the coordination role it brings. They see the WLC as the integral linkage between education and training organisations and themselves. Once they create a position, Alpine health would prefer utilising the WLC as a central source to coordinate all placements.

Initially, Alpine Health is looking for three school based traineeships in Business, Essential Services and Catering at each of their campuses. They also envisage work experience complimenting these work placements. The WLC will now advertise these positions locally and work with the Alpine Health to foster ongoing relationships now and into the future.

Woolworths SWL Partnership

135+ STUDENTS COMPLETING CERTIFICATE II IN RETAIL ACROSS THE NMLLEN REGION.

FISHER'S IGA ACADEMY PROVIDING TRAINING AND SWL PLACEMENTS FOR 90 STUDENTS. LEAVING 45 STUDENTS REQUIRING PLACEMENTS.

APPROACHED TWO LOCAL WOOLWORTH STORES WITH VIEW TO CREATING ONGOING PROGRAM TO DELIVER BULK PLACEMENTS RATHER THAN APPROACH NUMEROUS SOLE TRADERS.



Any critical issues and connection to the WLC objectives and/or KPIs

Could not get local Woolworth store managers to buy in to develop an ongoing program.

They referred me to Head Office in Adelaide.

This was a real opportunity to align a VETIS Certificate program with local industry needs creating placements in areas of high priority to industry, and those likely to lead to strong outcomes for young people.

Woolworths have constructed a BIG W store in Mildura which employs 400 full time, part time and casual employees. Opportunities for ongoing employment and part-time placements will arise as the store consolidates in operations following its opening in early June 2012.

This Certificate II in Retail program allows for the creation of flexible work placements which meet the needs of local employers, education and training providers, and young people. It also provided a ready point of entry to employment opportunities.

Role of the WLC in developing the relationships

The NMLLEN WLC made a direct approach to the South Australian Woolworths Head Office and an outline of the program was presented. Subsequent meetings with Woolworths HR and Training Coordinators resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding being signed between Woolworths and the NMLLEN WLC program which ensured all parties were clear about their expectations of the purpose, roles and responsibilities for the 20 placements negotiated under the program.

The MOU outlined clearly a three step induction program which was to be undertaken by the all participating students. The program mirrors Woolworth's induction for all new employees. The WLC ensured that students comply with SWL agreement requirements by undertaking the relevant Safe@Work modules as stipulated prior to commencing the work placement.

The WLC ensured under the MOU that Woolworths managers and workplace supervisors mentored students providing additional information and advice to support links between the students' career education and / or pathways planning and their workplace learning placement with relevant advice about career opportunities in the Retail sector.

Challenges and/or successes

Challenges were about identifying the correct person and level of management within the Woolworths Company to present the concept .

Identifying what the program would look like took some time but through open and clear negotiations both sides were able to achieve a win – win situation.

Finalising the content and duration of the placements with Woolworths took in excess of 6 months from commencement in October 2011 to April 2012.

Determining who would take ownership of managing the process once the MOU had been signed was solved by meeting with the schools participating who appointed a central school manager.

Successes revolve around the development of a clearly documented SWL program involving two stores and Mildura Senior College, Irymple Secondary College and the Koorie VCAL Unit at SuniTAFE with the implementation of a streamlined process to place 20 students in a well managed SWL program.

This Certificate II in Retail program allows for the creation of flexible work placements which meet the needs of local employers, education and training providers, and young people. It also provided a ready point of entry to employment opportunities.

Outcomes achieved

A sustainable SWL program which delivers quality SWL opportunities to 20 Certificate II Retail students.

Opportunity for students to complete an industry standard induction program, undertake a quality workplace learning program with an industry mentor with the potential of being offered ongoing or part – time work in their chosen vocational pathway.

Placements created for students "at risk" of leaving school early and for new arrivals.

The provision of quality support provided by the WLC to establish and maintain workplace learning placements as required by education and training providers.

Any learning or benefits.

Allow yourself at least twice the time you think you need to get the job done. Never give up on a good idea. When working with a large company the size of Woolworths it takes time to identify the right person to whom to deliver the message.

Once you have identified the contact point within a large organisation a lot of work still has to happen between the corporate level and the local store shop floor.

Developing Quality Work Placements for Newly Arrived/Refugee Students

THE OUTER EASTERN LLEN (OELLEN) COVERS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF MAROONDAH, KNOX AND YARRA RANGES, A TOTAL OF 2,675 SQ KILOMETRES, INCORPORATING BOTH RURAL AND METROPOLITAN COMMUNITIES. THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES ACROSS THE REGION AND THE NUMBER OF ENGLISH, SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS MORE THAN DOUBLED TO 340 IN A SIX-MONTH PERIOD IN 2010. NUMBERS HAVE BEEN STEADILY INCREASING SINCE THEN AND THIS HAS PRESENTED SOME CHALLENGES FOR THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS AS MANY OF THESE YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE HAD DISRUPTED SCHOOLING AND LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD OF WORK. THIS WAS REINFORCED FOLLOWING 2011 WORK PLACEMENT OF REFUGEE STUDENTS, WITH MANY EMPLOYERS EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT THE REFUGEE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE NOT READY FOR WORK DUE TO THEIR GENERALLY LOW LITERACY LEVELS AND LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE AUSTRALIAN WORK CONTEXT.



The role of the Workplace Learning Coordinator

Building teacher and student capacity

In order to provide quality work placement for Refugee students, it was clear that these issues needed to be addressed and the Workplace Learning (WL) Coordinator with responsibility for this cohort consulted with the OELLEN Partnership Broker counterpart to discuss strategies. A meeting was convened with representatives from four local secondary colleges with significant numbers of Refugee students; the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne); Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) and the Outer Eastern LLEN. A work readiness program was developed. This included specific Occupational Health and Safety training organised by the WL Coordinator; participation in the FYA World of Work (WOW) program and work experience supported by the Workplace Learning Coordinator. To facilitate matching of the student with an appropriate work placement, the WL Coordinator visited teachers at the schools to ascertain the students' interests.

The program

The WOW five- day program not only provided the opportunity for students to take learning beyond the classroom but also to build capacity of the teachers' participating in the program. During the program students were set challenges within three contexts to explore the critical question "What does it take to succeed in the global world of life and work?" To explore this, students engaged in conversation with executives and employees from a range of government and non-government organisations, major companies and philanthropic trusts in the Melbourne Central Business District. They also participated in skills development workshops. The program provided students with the tools to understand themselves better through a process of teamwork, reflection and analysis. This assisted them in being more prepared for work placement and broadened their understanding of what it means to be effective in the changing world of work. Participating teachers were also able to take new ideas back to the classroom.

Building capacity of business, industry and employers

In addition to developing the teacher and student capacity, a further strategy was to increase the support to business and industry employers providing work placements for Refugee students. The Workplace Learning Coordinator allocated time to employers to ensure that the aims and objectives of the WLC program and strategies for communicating with refugee young people were clearly understood. Resources were supplied to further support them to participate in the program. The Coordinator also attended the first meeting between the employer and student to ensure that the expectations were clear for all parties.

Positive outcomes

Feedback from all stakeholders was extremely positive and a data base of employers sympathetic to the needs of refugee students has been established. Some work placements resulted in ongoing part-time employment and one School Based Apprenticeship which has been very well received by families. In addition to the individual evaluation from employers, the students are to meet early Term 3 in their two WOW groups to evaluate their experience.

Learning

Overall the program developed in response to the issue was very successful and the students experienced very positive work placements. In the future, it would be beneficial to receive information regarding the students' interests earlier to allow the WL Coordinator more time to source the best possible match for each student.

Work Placement Trading Day in Geelong

AS PART OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS PROGRAM (WLC) IN GEELONG IN 2010, THE GEELONG REGIONAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION COUNCIL INC CONDUCTED A "WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT TRADING DAY".



geelong
regional
vocational
education
council
inc

The Work Experience (WE) Trading Day is really a bidding process for work experience placements that have been sourced by the WLC at the commencement of the year. In 2011, the WE Trading day was held on 27th February at Deakin University. Placements available at that point in time were listed on an electronic spreadsheet visible to the approximately 30 teachers representing Geelong's government, Catholic and independent secondary schools who attended. The spreadsheet, distributed to schools approximately one week prior to the Trading Day, includes the type of work, the location of the placement opportunity and the dates the employer is available to host a student. Schools then bid for each placement and GRVEC allocates the placement to a school taking into account the progressive tally of placements gained, the proximity of the school to the work location and the alignment of the placement date with the school's designated work experience week/s.

358 placements were allocated at the WE Trading Day in 2011 so we decided to repeat a Trading Day in 2012, as it not only supports career teachers with work experience but encourages an early commitment to the experience for students. We encourage schools to only bid for placements that they know they can fill and placements not allocated are then listed on the web portal post Trading Day for schools to consider as the need arises. 279 places were allocated at the Trading Day in 2012. Peter McKenzie, the convenor of the Careers and VET Networks in Geelong, said the WE Trading Day, "is a really valuable service that allows career teachers to claim a substantial number of quality

Work Experience and Structured Workplace Learning placements in a variety of industry sectors at the start of the year with the full confidence that employers will have been briefed on their obligations. The centralised system for WE and SWL that GRVEC supplies is far superior from an employer's perspective because they do not have to deal with multiple contacts from a range of schools"

Given the success of the WE Trading or Auction Days in 2011 and 2012 we decided to develop and implement a similar auction process for Structured Workplace Learning in 2012. Unlike WE, students undertaking a SWL placement are enrolled in an accredited training program which focuses on the workplace or a specific industry (eg Certificate II in Automotive) or are undertaking the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL). These placements are about "doing" rather than the "observing" of work experience and the student can be in Years 10, 11 or 12.

The target audience for the SWL Auction Day is VCAL and VET teachers and we see the Auction Day as an opportunity to provide additional support to VCAL coordinators. In addition to the above we hope that encouraging VCAL and VET teachers to lock in placements early in the year will increase the numbers of students participating in SWL. In 2012, schools received the list of SWL placement opportunities a week prior to the event and we asked that the VCAL school representative attending the Auction Day liaise with their school's Work Related Skills teachers to ascertain the placement needs rather than bid indiscriminately. 135 placements were snapped up at the Auction Day.

Schools are required to follow the same process in terms of placement confirmation as applies for WE. Wayne Lynch, the Work Place Learning Coordinator at Oberon High School and BSW Region Youth Transition and Youth Commitment Policy Officer said "the SWL trading day was great, and certainly took the pressure off students and schools that would normally source these placements. I was able to secure several placements for our VCAL students that matched their interest area and were in close proximity to our school and their homes. Employers were certainly better informed as GRVEC had already made the initial contact and discussed expectations with them".

Workplace Learning Coordination is an important support being provided to schools; GRVEC's Trading Days for Work Experience and Structured Workplace Learning are quality processes enhancing student work placement experiences in the region. We look forward to increasing the take up of such work placements.

"Its a really valuable service that allows career teachers to claim a substantial number of quality Work Experience and Structured Workplace Learning placements in a variety of industry sectors at the start of the year with the full confidence that employers will have been briefed on their obligations. The centralised system for WE and SWL that GRVEC supplies is far superior from an employer's perspective because they do not have to deal with multiple contacts from a range of schools"

Health & Community Services School Based Apprenticeship & Traineeship (H&Cs SBAT) Program

THE HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES (H&CS) INDUSTRIES' WORKFORCE FORMS AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST EMPLOYER GROUP, ACCOUNTING FOR 11.4 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL WORKFORCE IN 2010.

Employment growth in the sector has rated higher than the average across all industries. Australia wide, the projected workforce growth in this industry in the next five years is 3.3 per cent per year, with 211,500 new jobs needed, creating many new prospects for young people in the industry.

Opportunities for work in this vital and growing industry are increasing, and are available across a wide variety of areas. Australia's ageing population will create a plethora of opportunities for employment going forward.

It is well established that young people who undertake vocational and tertiary education and training within the H&CS industry open themselves up to considerable employment opportunities. The H&CS SbAT program has been developed to give young people from the Southern region the opportunity to kick start their career in the industry with a recognised qualification and genuine work experience, whilst addressing the growing need for young, skilled workers to carry forward this industry expansion.

About the employers

A partnership network was formed between LLEN's (Local Learning and Employment Network) and WLC's (Workplace Learning Coordinators Program). The LLEN's engaged employers and government departments in the program whilst WLC's were involved in student engagement, marketing the program to schools and coordination of the placements for the program.

In the South East LLEN region, Southern Health and the Department of Human Services have taken on the program as employers.

Southern Health is the largest public health service in Victoria. Their services are available across over 40 locations in south east Melbourne.

They are dedicated to training the next generation of health professionals and see the H&CS SbAT program as a long term recruitment strategy to identify young industry leaders of the future.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) plans, funds and provides housing and community services for people in Victoria. The H&CS SbAT program is based in Disability Accommodation Services.

Target Group

This program aims to target students in Year 10 and 11 with an interest in the H&CS industry, allowing them to gain practical experience in the industry and enabling them to attain a Certificate III in Community Services Work whilst still completing secondary school. It will open student's eyes to potential career pathways and widen their career options in the sector.

For the South East LLEN's program, students are identified and recruited from secondary schools in the South East region including the City of Greater Dandenong, City of Casey and Cardinia Shire via the South East LLEN WLC and their local networks.

How it Works

The program provides a valuable opportunity for students to learn skills and knowledge while working towards a future career in the H&CS industry.

Students will combine one day of paid work per week with their respective employers and their training component will be delivered by Chisholm Institute. Training will take place on the job, with a number of additional days being hosted at Chisholm across the two year program.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative research and evaluation will be conducted with key stakeholders (students, employers, parents, schools and trainers) at multiple points throughout the two year program.

What work the students will be able to do

As part of the Southern Health program, students will have the opportunity to work across a range of Community Health Programs with nurses, allied health services and business support staff including:

- Child, youth and family
- Community development
- Health promotion
- Home and centre based aged care
- Reception and administration

As part of the DHS School Based Apprenticeship program, students will have the opportunity to:

- Support people with disabilities to undertake a range of activities ranging from household tasks, personal hygiene and mealtime assistance to recreational activities



- Use specific communication methods to interact with people with disabilities
- Encourage a person's participation and choice so that they can be involved in activities in their home and in the community

Occupations

As a result of completing this program and attaining a Certificate III in Community Services Work, some of the occupations students will have the option to move into are:

- Accommodation worker
- Counsellor
- Drug and alcohol worker
- Family support worker
- Youth worker
- Personal care worker
- Aged Care worker
- Home Care worker

Outcomes

The program provides many positive outcomes for the industry and local community including:

- Creating career pathway options to students in the H&CS industry
- Providing students with employment opportunities
- Developing young, reliable and efficient employees
- Supporting local businesses with employee resources
- Setting an example for other health and community services in the region to recognise the benefits of the program and follow suit
- Continued student engagement and connection with school

The H&CS SbAT program has demonstrated the benefits of increasing the capacity for future workforce development. In the South East LLEN's region, four students have now become new employees and are a positive example in addressing the need for young, skilled workers for the future.

A Collaborative Approach

AT THE END OF 2011 THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATOR EMAILED AND POSTED A SURVEY TO ALL SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTH GIPPSLAND AND BASS COAST REGION TO UNCOVER WHAT VET SUBJECT STUDENTS WERE INTERESTED IN UNDERTAKING IN 2012, AS PART OF THEIR VICTORIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (VCE) OR VICTORIAN CERTIFICATE OF APPLIED LEARNING (VCAL). A FEW STUDENTS FROM A CLUSTER OF SCHOOLS IN SOUTH GIPPSLAND EXPRESSED A KEEN INTEREST IN STUDYING SPORTS & RECREATION, PARTICULARLY THOSE STUDENTS WHO WERE CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN THEIR LOCAL SPORTING CLUBS.



Community
College
Gippsland

A lead teacher and the Workplace Learning Coordinator contacted various Registered Training Organisations (RTO) to discuss the options available to students in a remote region with limited access to public transport and no local RTO providers offering the chosen training. AFL SportsReady Ltd was selected as the preferred RTO as they could deliver flexible training that suited the schools and students in the region. AFL SportsReady Ltd were contacted and an information evening was set to inform schools, students and parents regarding the benefits and processes involved in an AFL SportsReady School Based Apprenticeship.

Schools involved together with AFL SportsReady and the Workplace Learning Coordinator sent a flyer home to interested students as well as advertising the Information evening in their school newsletters. The Information evening was held and attended by five different schools in the region. More than twenty students together with their parents attended the evening to discover what an AFL SportsReady School Based Apprenticeship involved.

As an AFL SportsReady Apprentice students would be employed by AFL SportsReady Ltd who would pay their wages, cover all WorkCover responsibilities, as well as all administration, RTO/TAFE fees and enrolment costs. Students would work one day a week and weekends/evenings where able with a host employer who would be responsible for the students mentoring and supervision. At the end of the Apprenticeship students would gain not only a Cert III in Sports and Recreation but also valuable experience working as a trainer and first aider for their local sporting club.

During the Information evening expressions of interest forms were completed by students and parents. The lead teacher followed up each of the interested students to complete an application and enrolment form. Various sporting facilities/clubs were contacted by the Workplace Learning Coordinator to become host employers for the students. Ten students from three different schools were signed up to undertake an AFL SportsReady School Based Apprenticeship within the region.

Apprenticeship students would gain not only a Cert III in Sports and Recreation but also valuable experience working as a trainer and first aider for their local sporting club.

Workplace Learning Coordinators Koorie Engagement Program

ONE OF THE KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS PROGRAM IS GENERATING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG KOORIE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN STRUCTURED WORKPLACE LEARNING AND SCHOOL BASED APPRENTICESHIPS. THIS PROJECT BROUGHT TOGETHER SCHOOLS, EMPLOYMENT PROVIDERS, TRAINING PROVIDERS AND KOORIE ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT OFFICERS TO CREATE PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOCAL KOORIE STUDENTS.



Partnership Members

- South West Institute of TAFE
- Brauer College
- Sports Development Pty Ltd
- Koorie Education Support Officer
- Clontarf Academy staff
- Et SWLLEN

Context and Goals

A decade ago very few Indigenous young people in the south-west region completed Year 11 or 12. This support program was part of an ongoing campaign to reverse that trend. By linking Koorie students to Structured Workplace Learning and School Based Apprenticeship opportunities and involving specialist Koorie support services, the program has made significant inroads.

The program set a goal of arranging four Structured Workplace Learning and three School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship placements for Koorie students. This was achieved with actual placements of six and four respectively.

In 2011 at least seven Indigenous students completed Year 12 in Warrnambool.

The Partnership's Approach

The partnership worked by harnessing the joint talents and knowledge of a variety of contributors. The needs of the Koorie student were given high priority. It was recognised that not all Koorie students wish to undertake school-based apprenticeships, but that option should be available to them if they did wish to pursue that choice.

Support and ongoing communication with the student was a vital component of the program.

The Workplace Learning co-ordinator has worked extensively with the Koorie community and has developed strong contacts over many years. The Workplace Learning Coordinator enlisted the services of Koorie Engagement Support Officers, school based personnel and Clontarf Academy staff, to harness resources to achieve successful outcomes.

The partnership broker sourced the support of a private business, Sports Development Pty Ltd, to become a host employer to arrange placements for local Koorie students.

Benefits

- Six Koorie students in Structured Workplace Learning
- Four Koorie students in School Based Apprenticeships
- Seven Koorie students completing Year 12 in Warrnambool in 2011
- At least one Koorie student progressing to a university course, the first in the region for many years
- Ongoing and strengthened relationships established between schools, training providers, Koorie support officers and host employers
- More Koorie students are expected to undertake the placements in 2012
- Improved understanding of the needs of Koorie students within the general school environment
- Connections for potential jobs for Koorie students



If I had to do it all myself, it would have been too stressful. The coordinator helped me find the work placements and did all the organising and the paper work. They also helped with guidance whenever I needed it."

Indi Lowe, successful Koorie Year 12 student

Support from the Partnership Broker

The partnership broker used contacts and communication skills to bring together students, schools, and support officers, and enlisted the support of a private business, Sports Development Pty Ltd, to become a host employer to arrange placements for local Koorie students.

The Coordinator facilitated workplace experience for the students, forging partnerships with the host employer, training organisation (South West TAFE) and their school. The coordinator also handled all administrative aspects of the placement and in some cases helped students to secure scholarship support, including funding through the Wannik Education Strategy. The host employer in turn brokered placements for students at diverse workplaces, including a football/netball club and swimming academy.

The partnership broker's existing connections and ability to liaise between all parties helped facilitate a smooth program.

Next Steps

The program is now well established and can continue into the future.

The groundwork established by the partnership broker remains in place and can continue to support more students into school-based apprenticeships and structured workplace learning.

While the 2011 project particularly concentrated on Koorie students and employment within sporting fields, it can also be adapted to mainstream students. This has occurred in 2012.

Koorie students will continue to be offered the placement opportunities in future years.

Warracknabeal Employer Event

ON MONDAY 26TH OF MARCH 2012, AN EMPLOYER EVENT WAS HELD AT THE COMMERCIAL HOTEL IN WARRACKNABEAL IN ORDER TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF WORKPLACE LEARNING IN THE COMMUNITY, AND TO ALLOW EMPLOYERS TO MEET WITH THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATOR AND STAFF MEMBERS FROM WARRACKNABEAL SECONDARY COLLEGE IN A RELAXED AND INFORMAL SETTING. FEEDBACK FROM EMPLOYERS THAT ATTENDED THE EVENT WAS THAT THEY FELT THAT THEY OBTAINED VALUABLE INFORMATION ON THE NIGHT AND WERE EXTREMELY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO UNDERTAKE WORKPLACE LEARNING WITH THEIR BUSINESSES.



Background

Warracknabeal is situated approximately 58km North-East of Horsham, or 330km North-West of Melbourne and has a population of 2421 people. The local high school, Warracknabeal Secondary College, has 238 students in years 7 to 12. The main industry in the area is agriculture (dry land farming).

Planning the Event

As a result of discussions with members of staff at Warracknabeal Secondary College, it was decided that some sort of event should be held in order to thank employers who were supporting the school's students by offering work placements. This event would also provide a good opportunity to invite other employers in the town who had not been involved in student work placements so that they could be given information about the benefits of hosting a student for work placement, their responsibilities as a host employer, and the different types of work placement available.

To keep the event relaxed and informal the event was held at the Commercial Hotel in Warracknabeal, a business that was already hosting students for work placements in hospitality. Over 90 invitations were sent to both current and potential host employers. A representative from local group training company WORKCO was invited to attend the event and to talk about the services that WORKCO provide in relation to School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships.

The Event

The feedback from those that attended the event was overwhelmingly positive. There was a good mix of employers that are currently hosting or had hosted students in the past and new employers who had not hosted a student for work placement before. The event began at 6.30pm with a presentation from the Workplace Learning Coordinator which explained the different types of work placements available, the benefits to employers of hosting students for work placement and the

host employer's requirements and responsibilities. A staff member from Warracknabeal Secondary College spoke about the important role work placements play in the education and development of the students and the WORKCO representative spoke about the services that they provide.

Employers were then given an opportunity to speak with staff members from the school, the WLC and the WORKCO representative whilst enjoying some finger food. Those attending asked a number of questions about the types of activities that students can undertake on work placement. Some common issues surrounding work placement were discussed and current and past host employers were able to talk about their experiences.

The event finished at 7.30pm.

This event would also provide a good opportunity to invite other employers in the town who had not been involved in student work placements so that they could be given information about the benefits of hosting a student for work placement, their responsibilities as a host employer, and the different types of work placement available.

Outcomes

One of the main themes of conversation that emerged during discussions with the employers present and the school staff members was the concern about the shrinking population of the town and the best way for the school and the local businesses to support each other. One of the local business owners explained his difficulty in attracting and retaining quality employees. He said that many people did not understand what it was that his business did and were not aware of the career opportunities available within his business. Another business owner stated that it is difficult to maintain a successful business at a time when many people do their shopping in the larger regional centres, in cities or online.

A number of possible strategies to address these challenges were suggested. Industry tours were proposed in order to allow business owners to showcase their business and career opportunities to local students, and students could use work experience to gain a better understanding of the business and whether they felt it was a career path they would be interested in pursuing. It was also suggested that a campaign could be started using the local newspaper and the school newsletter to encourage people, particularly the families of students at the school, to support the local businesses that are supporting the school by offering work placements to students.

Since the event, a number of industry visits have been planned for term 3 and a number of businesses

have renewed their interest in offering work placements for local students. A campaign centred on encouraging local people to support businesses who host students for work placement is currently being developed by VCAL students at Warracknabeal College.

Several SWL placements with one of the businesses that attended the event have been arranged.

Plans for future Events

The outcomes of this event indicate that it was successful in meeting its objectives. Planning for future events across the region is underway, though a different format, venue or time may be considered to suit local needs.

Partnering to Place Refugee and Newly Arrived Students

SINCE THE INTRODUCTION OF THE WORKPLACE LEARNING COORDINATORS PROGRAM IN 2010, YOUTHNOW HAS SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED THE NUMBER OF REFUGEE AND NEWLY ARRIVED STUDENTS ACCESSING WORKPLACE LEARNING.



Background

Melbourne's Metropolitan West has experienced a rapid increase in new and emerging multicultural communities such as Karen, Iraqi and Afghan. These families have recently joined the African cohort of senior students at schools such as Laverton P-12, Werribee High Schools and Galvin Park.

Critical Issues

Previous experience (Local Community Partnership 2006 – 2009) had shown YouthNow that Year 10 ESL (English as a second language) students rarely completed a Work Experience program. Students were missing out on a critical opportunity to form ideas about their career pathway, select subjects for the following year and develop understanding of their community and its work environment. It was clear to YouthNow and some teachers that these students were missing out on the opportunities and learning that their English speaking peers took for granted.



In 2010, YouthNow met with the newly appointed DEECD ESL Careers and Pathways Coordinator, who was based at Hoppers Crossing Secondary College. In partnership we worked out an arrangement that would ensure work experience for 10 ESL students who had recently transferred from the Western English Language School to mainstream schools. This "pilot" program aimed at providing additional language support for students at the school to complete their on-line OHS learning and assisted them to complete "hard copy" work experience application forms. Every placement was set in a culturally sensitive manner and reflected a strong alignment with the student's career interests and appropriate vocational placement. At that time 5 out of the 10 placements were in the Community Services area.

Challenges

In 2011, YouthNow coordinated 130 ESL placements for six WynBay schools. At the ESL Coordinator's insistence, paper applications were once again utilised, despite the on-line system being available. Although all placements were completed, it was an inefficient method of placing students. Karen names are also very complex to the uninitiated with two or more parts to a first name and/or family name. Writing these down on a form can be confusing. Another issue was that students were encouraged to note their career interest on the paper form (Eg: childcare or nurse), and were not encouraged to consider the geographical location, tasks to be completed and the hours of placement offered by individual businesses listed on YouthNow's online database. This led to inefficiency and inappropriate placements. This year, YouthNow was more successful in assisting teachers to see the value in supporting students in the on line selection process.

School Support

Students at Galvin Park Secondary College were issued with net books, allowing refugee and newly arrived students to apply on line for workplace learning opportunities. They have been able to enter in their details with far more accuracy than with pen and paper. With a translator and several aides/teachers in the room to assist, students read about

were several facilitated for the VCAL students. These students included Karen students who presented their SWL experiences to a group of Karen families at an annual VCAL information evening. Translating on behalf of their VCAL colleagues, the students shared their experiences of VCAL and where they completed their workplacements. The importance of the WLC program and YouthNow was whole heartedly endorsed by the by the Principal.

Outcomes

In the past WLC focused on providing placements that the refugee students were familiar with and comfortable completing. However, as their English skills have developed and they become more familiar with their education, social and working environments these students are branching into a broader range of industries. Schools and Organisations working together ensure that local resources are utilised fully and to the mutual benefit of businesses and the community's social and economic growth.

YouthNow has successfully sourced a number of employers who are supportive of young people from a non English speaking background. We believe that although this is of direct benefit to the young people it also has a ripple effect on changing attitudes in the community.

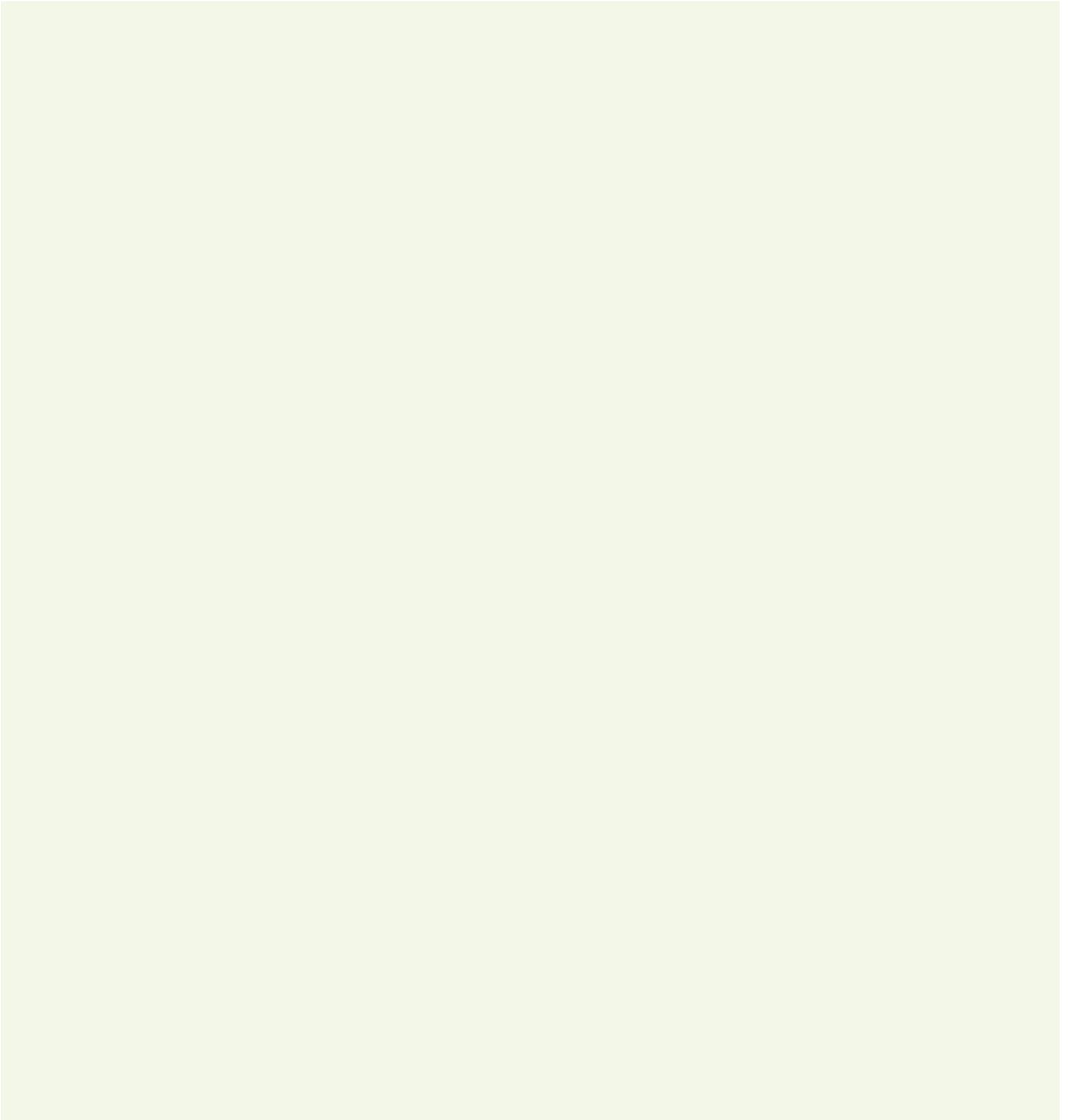
"Effective partnerships are based on mutual trust & respect, & these mutually beneficial relationships achieve outcomes that extend beyond what organisations can achieve in isolation".

Stakeholder Engagement Framework, p3 Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (October 2011)

the regular tasks, clothing, hours and OHS issues associated with various opportunities. Language and Literacy become enhanced with this activity. Google maps have also been utilised to locate interesting places of employment and determine their access via public transport. The staff at the school has been quick to follow up on any issues that have arisen and 41 Galvin Park students, mainly African and Karen, have already been directly supported by YouthNow's WLC program this year.

Workplacements for Laverton P-12 College have also been facilitated. Amongst the 59 placements arranged for the whole school community, there

The WLC program has also provided the opportunity for families to become more involved with their children's schools. This has been exhibited when students are given the chance to present their work placement reports to a meeting of parents. YouthNow is proud to be an ongoing partner with this community and its schools.



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