

SWLLEN Network News

Spring–Summer Edition 2008

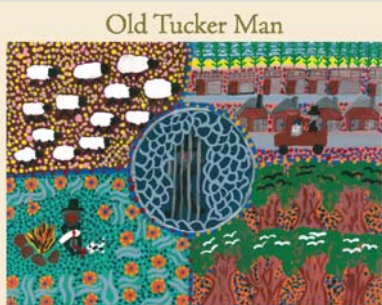


Welcome from the CEO

The following pages feature some of the activities that the SWLLEN and Local Community Partnerships have been undertaking over the past few months. These include opportunities for young people to learn about the different career options available in the south west, which have been held at an unprecedented level. Feedback from students has indicated that ambitions for the future are being successfully ignited! Our work also continues with a variety of initiatives to assist young people who are not employed or in education and training. There have also been new opportunities for young people to have a greater level of involvement in creating the types of communities they want to live in. I hope you enjoy your read! *Toni Hancock*

Old Tucker Man

'Old Tucker Man' is an oral story that has been written down and illustrated by first-time author, Debbie Austin. It tells a story about a Kirrae Whurrong man doing his best to feed his family after the impact of white settlement. This is an important book that signals that there can be a brighter future and hope for the preservation of local Indigenous cultures. The book deepens our understanding of the adversity experienced in south-west Victoria as a result of the clash of cultures that occurred with white settlement of traditional Aboriginal lands. Copies of 'Old Tucker Man' are



by Debbie Austin

available from Collins Book Sellers, Liebig St. Warrnambool, or ask your local book store to order it in. (ISBN 9780975770856)

REPORT CONFIRMS REGIONAL DISADVANTAGE FOR STUDENTS

A recently released report confirms that students from rural and regional Victoria are at least twice as disadvantaged when it comes to taking up their tertiary offers compared to their metropolitan counterparts.

The report, commissioned through a partnership of 14 Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLEN's) and the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria (YACVic), found that the rate of deferral of a university placement for regional Victorian school completers in 2007 was more than twice the rate of deferral of Melbourne metropolitan school completers, ie. 15.7% compared to 6.4% respectively. In south-west Victoria, the figure varied between schools with some schools reporting up to 40% deferment.

The report is part of a longitudinal study carried out by the Centre for Post-Compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning at the University of Melbourne. It provides information on school completers during the first 12 months after leaving school gathered from 897 respondents.

The distance to tertiary institutions for regional students and the associated costs of supporting students while they study appear to be a serious deterrent to placement take-up. "The LLEN's and YACVic have been concerned for some time that the impact of the drought, coupled with high petrol prices, rental market increases and other higher costs of living are discouraging young people from taking up their tertiary offers," said YACVic CEO, Georgie Ferrari.

Toni Hancock, CEO of the SWLLEN, commenting on the study said, "It has allowed us to explore the issue in depth and only really confirms what we already know - young people in rural and regional areas are (*continued on Page 2*)

SWLLEN Aim

To facilitate and support collaborative partnerships with stakeholders to improve education, training and employment outcomes for young people in the South West region.



Continued from Page 1

disadvantaged when it comes to having good access to higher education.”

According to Ms Ferrari, “There are, however, some positive findings in the study’s interim report with seven out of ten students taking up a university placement in the second year after completing school.” A re-contact of the cohort in 2009 as part of the study will confirm whether the important transitions to university have been successful in the longer term. For a copy of the report, see www.swllen.net.au.

On Track Connect

Each year the SWLLEN talks to every young person who is not in education, training or full-time employment, identified by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).

This initiative called ‘On Track Connect’ seeks to place these young people in touch with the relevant service to assist them. This year we spoke to many young people about their experiences and aspirations, and why they thought they had not yet made a successful transition. As part of a new approach being trialled, we extended the program guidelines to allow a young person to have multiple referrals to relevant agencies to assist with transition issues, and to encourage people to contact us if they require further assistance.

Assessment of the trialled approach identified some interesting findings. According to Toni Hancock, CEO of SWLLEN, “These young people have not failed, we have failed them. They have left school without the facilities required to take the next step towards further education or employment. Through no individual’s fault, these young people are unemployed or underemployed and they require support and assistance that is not currently available. On the face of it, it really requires people to revisit our ‘Barwon South West Youth Commitment Charter’ and asks us all to enact our Commitment to young people.”

The findings of the trial recommend that a number of actions be taken by the DEECD, local service providers, schools and individuals, and provide tips for us all on how we can change what we do to support young people who could be falling through the gaps. Look out for the final report which will be posted on www.swllen.net.au.

**New Update for SWLLEN Website**

The SWLLEN website has undergone a makeover since our last newsletter. You will now find copies of current and past SWLLEN and Regional Industry Career Advisers (RICA) newsletters, interesting reports and resources such as On-Track data and Student Destination Reports, as well as updates on current LCP activities in all SWLLEN LCP regions. If you would like a direct link from our website to yours, please contact Sophie Lynch on reception@swllen.net.au or ph 5561 0047. You can access the new-look website at www.swllen.net.au.

YOUTH COMMITMENT — Have You Signed on?

If you are a member of the SWLLEN, you have already made a commitment to young people. By signing onto the **South West Youth Commitment** you can make a further pledge to help the region’s youth find the right direction in life and get the support they need to remain in education, training or meaningful employment.

The **South West Youth Commitment** aims to empower individuals and businesses to ask, “What can I do to help?” when they see a young person who is “at risk” of not continuing in full-time education, training or employment, or who is already disengaged. The initiative provides useful resources to assist you to refer a young person “at risk” to an appropriate service. See www.swllen.net.au/youth-commitment for more details.





CALVES CREATE INTEREST!

Students from across the south west region were fortunate to be supported by the Strzelecki Lions Club to participate in a program that introduced them to the dairy industry and all its career options. As part of the project, local farmers loaned calves to schools to give students the opportunity to care for them for three weeks, creating a hands-on learning experience. During that time, the students fed and monitored the calves while completing relevant assignment work encompassing tasks in statistics, maths, science, communication and information technology.

Photo above: Camperdown College Year 7 students, Jarrod Esh, Emma Hallyburton and Hannah McIlveen, with Science Teacher, Fiona Crowle. Photo reproduced with permission from the Corangamite Extra and photographer Chamon Vogels.

Ministerial 'Young People Direct' Committee

Young People Direct is a new Victorian Government initiative involving the appointment of 16 young people from across Victoria to establish a committee to advise the Minister for Youth Affairs on youth-related issues.

Tracey Richardson who is undertaking Year 11 at Colac Secondary College and is currently an elected representative on the Colac Otway Shire Youth Council, has been awarded a place on the committee. Tracey is passionate about ensuring all young people have the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations and dreams. "I live in the Colac Otway Shire which is a community where the percentage of people that go on to higher education is way below the state average and I believe this community doesn't have to be like this."

In taking up her new position, Tracey will provide insight into the views of rural and regional young people. Congratulations on your appointment, Tracey! (see photo on right)

First 100 days of an Apprenticeship

According to the National Centre for Vocational Research, around 30% of apprenticeships are terminated in the first six months and the majority of these are terminated in the first 100 days.

A report recently prepared by the Australian Industry Group titled, "A Guide to Managing the First 100 Days of an Apprenticeship", has explored the motivators and inhibitors to the successful recruitment, induction and retention of young apprentices.

The report highlights the need to better prepare employers, and to assist industry and the community (including schools) to better prepare new apprentices for the world of work. It also recommends building on and extending existing resources to better prepare applicants.

The report provides practical strategies for employers to improve outcomes when employing apprentices. The termination of an apprenticeship within 100 days may cut the losses of both parties, but it is in the best interests of employers and apprentices to avoid a situation that calls for an apprenticeship to be terminated.

In late July, the Warrnambool Local Community Partnership (LCP) in association with the Regional Industry Career Adviser held a business breakfast to promote the findings of the report.

Portland LCP will be holding a School & Industry Leaders breakfast on **October 15th 2008**. The breakfast will feature a presentation on how to successfully retain apprentices within their first 100 days of employment linking to the Australian Industry Group report. For copies of the report, see www.swllen.net.au.

Photo: Mayor Cr. Chris Smith, Tracey Richardson and Kerri Bauer, Barwon West LCP Facilitator



Summit Members Told: “You don’t need permission... just partners!”

Student delegates left the recent Corangamite Youth Summit feeling empowered and equipped to search for partners to help them implement their initiatives.

The Corangamite Youth Summit, sponsored by Corangamite Shire Council, was the culmination of a series of smaller forums conducted at Timboon, Cobden, Mercy, Hampden, Camperdown, Terang and Derrinallum secondary schools over the previous six weeks, in which more than 100 students provided opinions and suggestions for discussion topics.

Michael O’Meara, who facilitated the National Youth 2020 Summit, took 20 young people through an intensive day of self-discovery. The students explored the possible establishment of a Corangamite Shire youth centre, the provision of future youth forums and ways to improve communication through the use of websites, local radio stations and newspapers. Other issues included public transport, entertainment options and the need to educate young people about physical and emotional health issues

Recommendations are currently being drawn up by Summit representatives to be presented to Corangamite Shire Council.

Through the forum, students recognised their capacity to ‘make a difference’, not only in their own lives but also within their local communities. “The Summit showed that I should speak out and say what I want to be changed,” said one participant.

Local Community Partnerships Facilitator, Kelvin White, was impressed by the energy and the positive attitude of the young people. “The students came up with constructive ideas that were not held back by any negative or cynical thinking,” he said. “As Michael told them, they don’t need permission to get things done . . . but they do need partners!”

If you have the potential to partner with Corangamite youth on any of these issues, please contact Kelvin White on ph. 5595 1700 or email kelvin@swllen.net.au.



Photo above (left to right): Courtney Mathew (Terang), Caitlin Browning (Cobden) and James Lenehan (Mercy) preparing a presentation at the Corangamite Youth Summit.

‘HEALTHY’ SPEED DATING!

It looked like a game of ‘musical chairs’ as 30 students from Heywood, Bayview and Portland Colleges engaged in “speed learning” information sessions with young professionals employed in physiotherapy, nursing, IT services, accident and emergency, drug and alcohol, nutrition and psychiatry.

Glenelg Local Community Partnership in partnership with Portland District Health, and under the guidance of Nurse and Education Representative, Gaynor deBoer, helped a small group of students to ‘get the good oil’ on health careers. Throughout the day, they handled blood pressure machines, took heart readings, operated theatre instruments on dummies, felt muscles and tendons, identified bones, and discussed scenarios related to drug and alcohol issues affecting teenagers and families.

Students were inspired by the personal career journeys of the presenters, who explained how they got into their current roles, what they liked about it and where it could take them in the future. The short 10–15 minute sessions, hands-on approach and interaction with professionals really appealed to the students who provided feedback including comments, ‘It really opened my eyes to the possibilities,’ ‘It has stoked me’, ‘The info was sic’. Thanks to Portland District Health, and Gaynor deBoer and her team.





Photo: Health Promotions Officer, Lyn Price (left), with Melissa Carr, Chelsea Morrison, Physiotherapist Jason Hill and Rebecca Georgeson. Photograph courtesy of the Mortlake Dispatch.

Corangamite “Careers Info. . . At Call” Evenings

Nearly 400 students and parents from eight schools attended two extremely well-supported “Careers Info . . .at Call” evenings in Mortlake and Cobden during July and August respectively.

Both events featured more than 35 presenters who provided information about careers in fifteen different industries. This is the first time the concept has been used in the Hopkins area. Students and parents were able to select three different 30-minute sessions during the two hours of the evening. Recent and current trainees, graduates and apprentices were available to talk about their workplace experiences.

Portland Westvic Careers Expo

“Have a go!” was the catch cry as students were invited to connect copper piping together so that water would flow from a tap, or to lay a row of bricks using a steady hand. While it looked easy, many students found the hands-on tasks challenging and rewarding, and very different to their normal school method of learning.

Others fancied themselves as panel beaters and used the latest technology to remove dents and restore a car bonnet to its former glory. Many students delved into the offerings of Timber Communities Australia, explored career pathways with Parks Victoria, Rural Ambulance service and the Army Reserves, amongst others.

In all, 250 Year 10 students from Heywood, Bayview and Portland Colleges investigated the range of career pathways showcased by the 32 exhibitors and gained personal insight into a wide range of career fields that suited their interests.

CAREER-BITES IN THE SOUTH WEST:

LEARNING ABOUT DIFFERENT CAREERS

COLAC OTWAY’S “IT’S YOUR FUTURE” EXPO

Scheduled for Thursday October 23rd 2008 at COPACC, the “It’s Your Future” Expo will allow students, parents and teachers to explore potential careers, industries, a variety of services, and some of the other questions and dilemmas that arise when a young person is beginning their journey towards independence. The expo will also include a presentation of Vince Callahan’s “My Future – what does it really cost” from 4.00-5.00pm (known previously as “Can My Wallet Afford It”). The presentation will highlight university costs, scholarships, CSP, accommodation and more.

HAMILTON TRY-A-CAREER DAY

The Hamilton Try-A-Career day held during September was an innovative way for all Year 9s from around the region to experience hands-on learning about a range of occupations including fashion, building, hospitality, forestry and sport, to name a few. Students used the opportunity to gain practical industry experience by trying a range of different real-life employment activities.

WARRNAMBOOL TRY-A -CAREER EXPO

Over 450 students attended the Warrnambool Try-A-Career Expo, where students were given the opportunity to have a hands-on experience of bricklaying, hairdressing, electronics, automotive or catering, to name a few. They also had the opportunity to speak to employers from across the region.

A major hit with the students was the DECA Driver Training Simulator which gave the students a first-hand opportunity to see what it is like to sit behind the wheel of a B-Double Semi.





AKD Softwood's John Hayden wanted in the Principal's Office!

Chief Executive Officer of AKD Softwoods, John Hayden, spent the day with Richard Cooper, Principal of Colac Secondary College as part of the state-wide *Principal for a Day* initiative. Colac Secondary College

and AKD Softwoods have been in partnership this term implementing a Year 9 program which provides students with some knowledge and understanding of the forestry and timber industry. Mr. Cooper acknowledged the importance of the links with businesses and industry and said, "There were mutual and many benefits to be gained by such partnerships. We have a number of industries competing on an international scale here locally, and we recognise the value they bring to our students and the school community."

If you are interested in taking part in either *Principal for a Day* or *Executive for a Day* in 2009, please contact the LCP office closest to you (contacts listed below).

EVENTS CALENDAR

October

- October 16th - LLEN Chairs Meeting, Melbourne
- October 16th - South West Regional Youth Affairs Network (SWRYAN)
- October 17th - Portland SILF Breakfast "First 100 days of an Apprenticeship" at Portland Reception Centre
- October 23rd - "It's Your Future" Expo in Colac at COPACC. Includes Vince Callahan's "My Future – what does it really cost" information session at 4.00pm
- October 28th - SWLLEN Board Meeting, Warrnambool

November

- November 13th - Youth Transitions Policy Briefing, Melbourne
- November 14th - LLEN Executive Officers Network meeting
- November 25th - SWLLEN Administration and Compliance committee, Warrnambool

For further information on any of the articles or events featured in this publication, please contact the relevant office below:

- Barwon West (Colac Otway) – Kerri Bauer & Lorraine Bennett – Ph 5231 6952
- Hopkins (Corangamite) – Kelvin White – Ph 5595 1700
- Warrnambool – Sue Krepp & Paul Atack – Ph 5561 0047
- Glenelg (Hamilton) – Leigh Toddun – Ph 5571 9302
- Glenelg (Portland) – Rudi de Zoete – Spiero – Ph 5523 7058

SWLLEN Board

James Dennis—Chair
Victorian Farmers Federation

David Mathison—Deputy Chair
DM Truck Centre

Peter Macdonald – Treasurer
Otway Community College

Anne Waters
Warrnambool City Council

Barrie Baker

Chani Hawksworth

Georgina Ryder
ACFE Barwon South West Region

Greg Allison
Dept of Education & Early Childhood Development

Jane Maine
Hawkesdale P-12

Joe Piper
SWTAFE

Leah Braeside
Centrelink

Leanne Atkinson
South West Trades & Labour Council

Marie Bird
Janah Administration (KFC)

Matthew Farrow
MEGT Australia

Mike Holland
Colac Secondary College

Peter Dryden

Philip Morison
Emmanuel College

Tom Lindsey
Regional Innovation



174B Timor Street PO Box 1060 Warrnambool VIC 3280

Phone: 5561 0047 Fax: 5561 0048 E-mail: reception@swllen.net.au
www.swllen.net.au