

## **TASTING LIFE IN THE WORKFORCE**

Students from the Portland region are getting a taste of life in the workforce and the chance to secure \$500 scholarships by participating in the Portland Aluminium Future Leaders of Industry Scholarship Program.

The project is an Alcoa Victorian Operations initiative that aims to attract, develop and retain employees and provide opportunities to assist and encourage local students to consider local career opportunities.

South West LLEN's Local Community Partnership (LCP) is co-ordinating this year's program for year 10 and 11 students which LCP Manager Paul Attack described as a good way to introduce young people to different workplaces and the opportunities that exist in local industry. "It identifies opportunities in the local community for young people to engage in employment, education and training, which in the long-term will help the industries and community develop and retain local staff," Mr Attack said.

The program started at Portland Aluminium in 2005 and has now grown to include partner businesses Wannan Water, Keppel Prince, Port of Portland, Portland District Health, Pacific Hydro, HATCH Engineering Alliance and Glenelg Shire Council. This year it will offer 22 scholarships and help recipients to experience various aspects of industry to enable them to gain first hand knowledge of how industry operates.

In 2009, 22 students in Years 10 and 11 at Portland and District Secondary School will be awarded scholarships of \$500 to be held in trust by the recipients' schools and used to assist with school-related expenses.

Students have been involved in occupational areas such as resource management, engineering, drug counselling, nursing, psychology, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, aged care, environmental issues, public relations, local laws, business management, accountancy, architecture, fabrication, fitting and turning and radiography.

The program runs over two months and started with a breakfast launch for scholarship recipients, their business mentors, general business representatives and parents. The second day focused on Leadership Skills with students engaging in a bike ride that draws on their abilities to problem solve, work as a team, respond to challenges and resolve conflict situations. They then undertake a Mentoring Day, Career Forum and Personal Skill Develop program, a presentation workshop before formally graduating from the program.



## ***FIGHT CONTINUES FOR YOUTH UNI SUPPORT***

The campaign to have the Federal Government do more to support rural and regional students who have to leave home to attend higher education has received strong backing from a State inquiry.

The Education and Training Committee's Final Report on its Inquiry into Geographical Differences in the Rate in which Victorian Students Participate in Higher Education found that economic barriers were the main reason why fewer regional students attend university.

The report recommends all university students who are required to relocate to undertake tertiary studies be eligible to receive Youth Allowance and calls on the Victorian Government to advocate to the Federal Government to ensure there is greater financial support for students.

South West LLEN lodged a submission to the inquiry and welcomed the findings and recommendations. Chief Executive Officer Toni Hancock said the report confirmed that rural and regional students were not getting fair access to higher education.

"We have known for a long time that students in rural and regional areas do not have the same access to tertiary education because of the costs associated with living away from home – now it's time for the Government to face up to this issue and address it," she said.

"The report also backs up what we have been saying about the Federal Government's changes to the eligibility criteria for Independent Youth Allowance being disastrous for rural and regional students."

The Committee slammed the proposed changes, saying this change will have a disastrous effect on young people in rural and regional areas.

# Rheanna sees the value of doing school/work splits



Rheanna Brooks can notice the difference in her self-confidence and abilities since commencing to her work placement program. "I wasn't sure of myself with the staff at first but now I'm far more relaxed," Rheanna said of her placement at the Banana Splits Childcare Centre in Camperdown.

"I have actually learned more about dealing with children. I have watched them as they develop their own personal skills. For example, it is really exciting to see them improve their co-ordination, their ability to communicate and even their toilet training.

"From week to week, you'll notice the change – they're different, they'll have moved to a new level."

Rheanna began her placement at Banana Splits as an Structured Workplace Learning student but she has now taken up a school-based traineeship. She hopes this will take her into a full-time career in childcare.

Duties performed by Rheanna during her one-day-a-week placement (plus holidays and, sometimes after-school) include setting up activities, putting babies to bed and assisting with snacks and lunches.

The Year 11 Cobden Technical School VCAL student enjoys the different age-groups although she admits to a slight preference for the babies. "Coloring, pasting and working with play dough when I'm with the older children is still great fun though," she added.

Rheanna smiles as she recounts being called "Sianna" and being asked about Santa Claus and Easter Bunny. "That put me on the spot," she said.

## KOORI HISTORY INTRODUCED IN SCHOOLS



Local Koori history is being introduced to Warrnambool schools as part of a new pilot program. Teachers have taken part in cross-cultural awareness training to help them prepare for the innovative project constructed in collaboration with local indigenous people to create a respectful and accurate unit of work for students.

The program will be trialled later this year in Year 9 at Warrnambool College but it is hoped it will be extended to all local schools in 2010. South West LLEN secured funding for the pilot program in conjunction with Warrnambool College.

Program co-ordinator Yvonne Kane said there was little local Koori history incorporated in existing school curriculum. "We hope this

program will improve awareness and understanding of the importance of that part of our history," she said. Ms Kane said the program would help Koori students feel more valued at school while other students would learn many "untold stories" and better understand the important role that Koori history played in southwest Victoria.

South West LLEN Executive Officer Toni Hancock said it was a credit to all participants that they could come together to gain a better understanding of local Koori history.

"This program recognises the importance of Koori history to our region and will hopefully lead to a better and deeper understanding within the broader community," she said.

"It needs to be incorporated into the education process for all young people."

### **South West LLEN Aim:**

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

# FILLING POTHoles IN JOB SEARCH

What does playing with polystyrene balls and marbles have to do with learning about career pathways in local government?

A number of bemused students from three Corangamite schools can now answer that question. Organised by Hopkins LCP facilitators Kelvin White and Robyn Vale, the Local Government Careers Day at Glenormiston College August 5 involved Year 9 students from Mercy Regional College, Year 8 and 9 students from Camperdown College, and Year 8, 9 and 10 students from Derrinallum College.

In total 130 students spent six 15-minute sessions learning about six different jobs in local government, the roles performed in those jobs, and the pathways to get there. The students were split across 16 different local government areas, everything from finance to environment to outdoor works and from building inspection to community services and engineering. Corangamite Shire very generously provided the services of their staff to deliver the presentations.

Derrinallum College teacher Jenny Olszak said that the day was particularly successful in prompting the students to step out of their comfort zones. "Sometimes a student has a definite plan for the future, sometimes they don't – either way, exposing them to information presented succinctly, giving them a taste of areas they might not have thought about, makes the event worthwhile," she said.

That view was supported by comments from students. Jaala, from Mercy Regional College, nominated the session on town planning as her favourite for the day: "I didn't even know it existed until today, when I found out what you do." Similarly Jake, from Camperdown College, said: "I learnt a lot of different things that I wouldn't have looked at".

Careers teacher at Camperdown College Wendy Errey was impressed by the diversity of presentations from the Corangamite Shire staff. "Getting tastes from so many areas helps them to better plan their futures," she said.

The Corangamite Shire employees involved the students in their presentations: favourite sessions included the administration typing test; a role play conducted by the finance presenter; the Engineers' laser; a chance to write a Corangamite Shire Lolly Distribution Policy (in Organisational Development); and of course, a lesson in the physics of filling potholes - with polystyrene balls and marbles!



## *LCPs set to build on solid foundations*

In 2009 we welcome Mike Green (Barwon West) and Robyn Vale (Hopkins) to the Local Community Partnerships (LCP) team. Mike is replacing Lorraine Bennett who left at the end of 2008, to undertake a working holiday in Great Britain. While reporting on staff changes, Alistair McCosh who has been the Regional Industry Careers Advisor for the Warrnambool, Hopkins and Glenelg LCP regions, has moved to Deakin University as the Senior Project Manager for the 'Deakin at Your Doorstep' program. Alistair has been replaced by Graeme Poynton.

The past year has been busy for all LCPs especially in the area of Careers Transition Support, which was recognised in the Department of Education, Employment and Work Placement (DEEWR) report, "the LCP has been active in all service regions with a good range of activities". Activities ranged from PD for teachers, to expos for students and parents, activities promoting career opportunities in health and local government, visits to industry, promotion of pathway planning and Career Education Lighthouse School projects to name a few. An important aspect of many of these projects is that they have become embedded in the school curriculum, which is essential if the work of the Career Advice Australia (CAA) initiative is to have an impact, a legacy, beyond the life time of the program. Another pleasing aspect to the work of the LCP in 2008 was the strengthening of relationships with industry, also recognised in the DEEWR feedback report

Activities planned for the remainder of 2009 will build on the foundations laid over the past three years. strengthening the support for schools, parents and employers in the provision of structured workplace learning; extending the number and range of careers and transition activities and adopt a school projects, many of which will be described in the individual LCP region reports. The activities and projects planned for LCP regions not only aim to achieve the objectives of the CAA initiative, but also foster greater engagement with parents, business and equity groups. Already a suite of information sessions have been held in the Hopkins area for parents; career expos are planned in a number of LCP regions which target both young people and their parents, and are held in the evening to encourage greater parent attendance; strengthening our relationship with business through the partnership with the Beacon Foundation; while a partnership with the Greater Geelong LCP means an Adopt A School project will be delivered across south west Victoria.

## MONIVAE STUDENTS KEEP UP A WINNING TRADITION

Monivae College students Jason Tully and Megan Irving have been announced as winners of the prestigious Australian Vocational Student prize. The Australian Vocational Student Prize is the vocational equivalent of the academic Australian Student Prize. It recognises Year 12 students who demonstrate exceptional skills, commitment and achievement whilst studying a VET program as either an Australian School-based Apprentice or in a VET in Schools course. Each winner receives \$2000.

In the ASBA section, Megan Irving was one of 30 Victorian students to receive the award for her outstanding efforts as a school-based Certificate II Business apprentice at RMIT. Jason Tully was one of 48 Victorian winners in the VETiS section in recognition of his exceptional skills in the Certificate III in Multimedia. Both students are currently working in the local area further developing their vocational talents with their respective employers.

This is the third year in a row that Monivae College has had recipients in each of the two categories to recognise the 500 most outstanding VET students. In fact since the inception of these highly prestigious awards in 2005, Monivae students have been successful each year, a remarkable feat that few if any other schools could match.

Over this time, award recipients have come from a wide range of vocational areas, multimedia, hospitality, building & construction, retail operations, beauty therapy and business. This is testimony to the excellent range of outstanding vocational programs that the school offers.

### STEVEN'S SUCCESSFUL PATHWAY

Steven Aldridge, a Year 11 VCAL student at Heywood & District Secondary College, is taking a fast track towards his chosen career.

In 2008, Steven did a week's work experience at Kalari Transport in the Portland depot. As a result of that experience and the positive impression that Steven created with his supervisors in the diesel mechanical area, he was encouraged to return during his VCAL program.

His supervisor spoke to Steven's mother and complimented her on Steven's work ethic and attitude to learning while in the workplace. In 2009, Steven returned to Kalari to do further work in the diesel mechanical field. Steven was assigned to different mechanics on a weekly basis - depending on the jobs that had to be carried out.

This allowed him to gain a growing knowledge and varied set of experiences over that time. He helped in the servicing of trucks and trailers, learning new skills that included fitting brake boosters, air bags and different bushes.

Steven said that he felt welcomed from his first day and found all the Kalari staff friendly and supportive.

Evaluation feedback to his school co-ordinator Mrs Kerrie Smith indicated his high level of understanding of the skills required within his field. Particular reference was made to his motivation, commitment to set tasks, the ability to work with others, and showing initiative when carrying out work. His supervisor was also impressed by the fact that Steven requested to come in during his school holidays and gain additional opportunities for learning.

As a result, Steven has been offered a School Based Apprenticeship which he has accepted. "I really like the environment at Kalari and the way that you are treated by the staff," he said.

Congratulations Steven for your endeavours and success, as well as to your school co-ordinator Mrs Smith and Heywood & District Secondary College for the quality of their students.



Bryce Finlayson (left) takes some tips from Ian Vagg.

### **BRYCE IS INSPIRED BY PLACEMENT**

"It's been great. It's good to get out into the workforce and still go to school."

That's the view of Cobden Technical School's Bryce Finlayson about his involvement in the VCAL program and his experience in the workforce.

"This year has provided me with excellent experience." Bryce said.

The work placement program has also had benefits for Bryce's host, Commercial Motor Vehicles Cobden.

"It is good to be able to offer a workplace where the students can work for a while to find out whether it is the right career for them." Branch manager Ian Vagg said.

The experience has helped give direction to Bryce. "It's what I want to do," he added.

### EXPERIENCING JOB OPPORTUNITIES

More than 200 year 9 students from Warrnambool College visited local industries across the Warrnambool region during June. The purpose of the visit was to demonstrate to students the variety of pathways and opportunities that exist at a local level, as well as the occupations that are available. The students visited a variety of industries ranging from Local Government, retail, manufacturing, building and construction, hospitality, engineering and health.

Thank you to the employers who gave up their time and opened their businesses to show these students what is involved and what jobs are available within local industries.

Students held an afternoon tea at Warrnambool College on August 4 to thank employers for allowing them to participate. This event was organised by the RICA, LCP and Warrnambool College year 9 teachers.



**BACK ROW:** Paul Lovell (Bunnings), Emily Finlayson, Michael Mills, James Chittick, Nathan Krepp, Matthew White, Paul Hughes (Bunnings)

**MIDDLE ROW:** Sinead Medew, Ewen Codie-Smith, Sharni Milner

**FRONT ROW:** Thomas Toogood, Sue Krepp (LCP Facilitator), Roxann Clapp (Year 9 Phoenix Teacher), Kristy Ludeman

## **TRY A CAREER DAY TO RETURN IN 2009**

Many people have outdated images of the careers in trades and are not aware that these industries can be lucrative, long term, flexible, challenging and independent.

Many young people with potential interest in trades don't know where to start – and that's where Try-A-Career Day comes into play. The Try-A-Career Day is an innovative way for all Year 9 students to experience hands on learning in a range of occupations including a number of trades. Because Year 9 students will soon have to make important subject selections in their senior years of school, it is vital they have an idea of where they would like to head in the workforce. We aim to provide them with a realistic view of what their desired careers may involve in the real working world as well as available pathways.

Try-A-Career Day in 2009 on Friday, September 4 will see about 350 students from both the Glenelg and Southern Grampians regions try their hand at 14 different industry activities including nursing, agriculture, defence, childcare, automotive, hospitality and building.

Feedback from the pilot event last year was extremely positive and we hope for the second year to be even better!

*RIGHT: Hamilton Police developed a crime scene activity which was one of the most popular activities in 2008.*



## **TIMBOON MILKS IT**

If *Cows Create Careers* then the Timboon area will soon be overflowing with milk and cheese.

Timboon P-12 School has taken out senior first prize for the 2009

western Victorian Cows Create Careers project.

The junior award was won by Kaniva College.

The Timboon Moos team of Brenton De Jong, Jessica Sharp, Rhys Kensit, Emily Neal and Emma Wilkie (photographed above) was placed ahead of 16 competing schools

Each school was required to raise a calf for three weeks and to monitor its growth and progress while completing a specially-developed course on the dairy industry. The teams were also required to create posters, power point presentations and write letters to farmers.

Teams from Lavers Hill P-12 were placed second and third in the junior section for years seven and eight while Ballarat Grammar teams took out both placings in the senior section.

Local Community Partnerships (LCP) manager Paul Attack said the Cows Create Careers project was designed to promote to students the range of job opportunities in the dairy industry.

## **HEALTHY JOB OPTIONS**

In conjunction with the Western District Health Service (WDHS), the LCP coordinated a Careers in Health Day held on Thursday July 23 in which 50 students from all four Hamilton schools participated.

Attendees were able to get a realistic view of what physiotherapy, speech pathology, podiatry, social work, occupational therapy, divisional therapy, nursing, ambulance, dietetics and medical imaging occupations involve and experience their work environments first hand.

"It has opened our eyes to new possibilities," according to Monivae College student Alex Van Rijn. "We found that every presenter was highly engaging and able to answer any queries that we had.....we now feel much more comfortable in pursuing careers in allied health,"

The success of the initiative is heavily attributed to Chris McGennissen from WDHS. The partnership and cooperation from WDHS is sincerely appreciated and we look forward to the initiative becoming an annual event.

## **CIVIL CONSTRUCTION**

A project is under way to introduce students in the Colac region to building, engineering and steel fabrication employment options.

Maria Zaluski, Regional Industry Career Advisor, in conjunction with LCP Facilitators Kerri Bauer and Mike Green, are behind the project. With Journey Management's involvement, students keen to know more about careers in manufacturing and industry are getting the chance to see first hand how things happen.

## AKD JOINS APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

Associated Kiln Driers (AKD), a Colac-based timber company for just on 50 years, are very keen to get involved with both apprenticeships and school based apprenticeships in 2010. Cathy Taylor, AKD's Human Resource spokesperson, stated that the company was excited about this opportunity for students in the Colac region in 2010. The company is also conducting a Year 9 program this year for students keen to learn more about the timber industry.

## MENTORS LEND A HELPING HAND

The Mentors for Our Students program has attracted and trained 34 mentors who are working with 38 students from Brauer College, Emmanuel College, Kings College and Warrnambool College.

The mentors underwent training over two consecutive evenings at the Australian Technical College. Mentors covered areas such as the basic program guidelines, safety issues, goal setting skills, resiliency, adolescence, conflict resolution skills, communication/relationship building skills and ways to encourage mentees through the career exploration/transition process. The mentors were given a tour of the ATC buildings and its facilities, which proved to be immensely educational. Each student in the mentor program has undergone an induction and orientation session as well as completing pre-program surveys.

## LIAM'S PLACEMENT LEADS TO WORK OFFER

Trinity College Year 10 student Liam Staker is boosting the city's hospitality industry after embarking on a Structured Workplace Learning Program.

Liam, who is studying hospitality through the VETis program is now working one day per week at Colac's Gravity Café Bar. He remains at school for the remaining four days.

Liam said studying hospitality opens a range of options for him and will hopefully open the door to a job. He plans to start out waiting and work towards becoming a chef.

The program has been welcomed by Liam's employer who is keen to encourage young people looking for a career in the hospitality industry. Gravity Café Bar owner Aaron Togni was so delighted with Liam's performance that he has offered him casual work after school hours. LCP Facilitator, Mike Green, is also delighted to hear of Liam's success. Part of Mike's role is to organise work placements for students as part of their assessment.

## BEC IS AN 'HAIR' APPARENT

Following her dream of being a hairdresser, Cobden Technical School's Bec Freeman enjoyed all aspects of her time at Timboon Hairitage.

"My placement with Sarah Umland taught me there is a lot more to hairdressing than everyone thinks," the Year 11 VCAL student said. "I have learnt how to colour, blow wave, style hair, wash hair as well as learn basic reception skills.

Bec also learnt a lot by observing her employer at work. "It gave me a good idea of how a professional hairdresser operates . . . and all the skills you need."

Sarah said the work placement program had many benefited for her as an employer. "Having Bec in the salon encouraged me to think about the best way to teach hairdressing skills . . . how to explain tasks clearly," she said. "I really enjoyed passing on skills and advice so that Bec could make more informed choices about her future."

"Bec was a very keen, willing and motivated student. Having her here on placement was a real pleasure. She helped my business run more efficiently and effectively.

Bec has now taken up another hairdressing position for the second part of the year at Hair Supreme in Camperdown. "While I loved it at Timboon, I thought I would accept the opportunity to broaden my experience even more, anything to put me in a better position to gain an apprenticeship next year," she said.

Picture: Sarah Umland of Timboon Hairitage discusses hair products with Bec Freeman.



## HANDS-ON TRAINING FOR STUDENTS

Seven hundred students from Warrnambool and district schools experienced two hands-on career sessions and a presenter session at the Sherwood Park campus of South West TAFE during June. Students had the opportunity to learn and practice skills from 16 trades or VET options with support from local tradespeople, vocational trainers and current apprentices. The Try a Career Day was organised by the Local Community Partnership, South West TAFE and RICA.

## SOUTH WEST LLEN Board 2009

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