



Worktrainers News

Autumn Edition 2009

Wangaratta is a 5 star provider



The proud
Wangaratta Team

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The much awaited Disability Employment Network (DEN) Star Ratings (The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relation's performance measure) for 2008 were released in early March and Worktrainers were rewarded for our continued commitment to our clients and communities.

Whilst all Worktrainers sites that provide DEN services were recognised with excellent results, it was our Wangaratta team who had most reason to celebrate after achieving the coveted 5 star rating (ranking them in the top 4% of providers and also the only provider in country Victoria to achieve 5 stars.)

Our Shepparton, Echuca and Seymour offices were hot on their heels, each achieving 4½ stars, which ranked them in the top 15% of providers in Australia.

Vaughan O'Sullivan, Wangaratta's Site Manager said he was proud of the achievement and congratulated all his staff on their hard work and commitment. Vaughan commented that the excellent star rating reflects the work done with local jobseekers and employers and the success that we have been having in assisting our jobseekers find and maintain work.

Worktrainers has been providing disability

employment services to the communities we live and operate in for nearly 20 years, and the results show that the commitment and passion of the organisation to our work has not waned over time.

For our Wangaratta site, the challenge is on to maintain the excellence, and Vaughan stated that he and his team will work hard to further develop and deepen the relationships that Worktrainers has in the region. They will also continue to identify new opportunities that provide employment opportunities for our valued clients, so important to maintaining that 5 Star Rating.

GinJar employs a mature age apprentice chef

Did you know:

In a recent jobseeker survey* **90%** of the respondents stated that Worktrainers had helped them find or maintain work and **94%** stated that they would recommend our services to others!

* Worktrainers Jobseeker Satisfaction Survey 2009

Vera Lukasz has not let her mature age stop her from starting an apprenticeship as a Chef.

Working as a Chef was a long life dream of Vera's but she had never considered that anyone would take her on as an apprentice at her age.

Worktrainers have helped mature age Vera Lukasz achieve her employment goals by assisting her to obtain an apprenticeship as a Chef at the GinJar Restaurant at the Parklake Country Comfort in Shepparton.

Holli Kool from Worktrainers helped Vera find her job and said Vera has ongoing physical limitations and approached Worktrainers to assist and support her to find employment.

"Vera had completed Year 12 and has a Certificate 2 in Kitchen Operations, her

Responsible Serving of Alcohol and Food Handlers Certificates which made her a great candidate for a Chef apprenticeship."

"Vera had commenced but not completed a Chef Apprenticeship and a Certificate IV in Hospitality previously," said Holli.

Holli marketed Vera to local businesses in her areas of interest and Vera was successful in obtaining employment in a customer service role at a local bakery.

"This position ceased after several months as the bakery closed, but it gave Vera increased work skills, knowledge and confidence."

In October 2008, Holli gave Vera's resume to her Worktrainers colleague Chris Giblin and he spoke to the Parklake Country Comfort about a Housekeeping role.

Holli said Vera was unsuccessful for this position but Jordan Rosmulder from the Country Comfort was impressed by her attitude and experience and he offered her a position in the kitchen.

Chris Giblin from Worktrainers said the Country Comfort have employed a number of jobseekers with disabilities and medical conditions and have been very supportive of Worktrainers Disability Employment Network program.

"The Country Comfort focuses on a person's ability and Worktrainers have assisted Country Comfort to access such Government initiatives as Workplace Modifications and the Supported Wage System to ensure that our clients can complete duties to the best of their abilities," said Mr Giblin.

"Vera had to have an operation on her knee in December and with 6 weeks off work to recuperate, The Country Comfort were most accommodating of her needs and she recommenced work in late January," said Holli.

Vera greatly appreciates the assistance that she has received from everyone and it proves that physical barriers and age don't have to mean you can't achieve your employment goals.



Holli and Vera

It has been sixteen months since Worktrainers began providing Disability Employment Services in Bendigo and Castlemaine. Throughout this time Worktrainers has achieved excellent results by assisting people with disabilities into work, and then by supporting them to maintain sustainable employment.

Worktrainers prides itself on the effectiveness of being able to correctly identify a "good match" between their jobseekers and employers. This has been proven by the amount of jobseekers that now have sustainable employment.

"We design an individually based approach for each of our clients. We focus on people's abilities rather than disabilities," Site Manager of Bendigo, Luke Bennett says.

"We conduct assessments of both the employer and the job seeker's needs and ensure that these are suitably matched. After employment has been obtained, we remain in the picture to offer ongoing support to both our client and employer."



Worktrainers aim to make the employment process as streamlined and hassle free as possible for both the employer and employee.

This also includes being able to offer workplace modifications for employees with special needs and assisting in the acquirement

of licenses, protective clothing, or anything that may be required to fulfil the job role.

The program offered through

Worktrainers adds value to the local community by supporting people with disabilities to get back into the workforce, developing innovative projects and increasing long lasting partnerships with local businesses.

For more information on the services offered by Worktrainers in Bendigo, Castlemaine and Kyneton, please call 03 5443 0377.

Source: Bendigo Advisor

Worktrainers welcomes two new Board members

Worktrainers is a non profit company and is overseen by a Board of Directors. Our Board consists of 7 volunteers from across North East Victoria and our CEO Jim O'Connor who all share a commitment to assist all people facing barriers to employment.

We recently welcomed two new members to the Board, who have very different professional

backgrounds, Andrew Prentice and Christine Riches. Andrew resides on his family orchard property near Shepparton and is a third generation Orchardist. He is a well know and respected member of the Goulburn Valley community and a former member of the SPC-Ardmona Board. Christine Riches lives near the snow fields in the Alpine Shire, holds an MBA and currently works as a Business

Consultant. Her most recent project involved working with the North East Division of General Practice.

Both members bring with them a wealth of experience and knowledge which will compliment those contributions provided by from our existing Board Members - Karen Kilgour(Chair), Alan Guest -Smith (Vice-Chair), Martin Hull, Tom Garrett and Stephen Rodgers.

The final word with Vaughan O'Sullivan



Vaughan is the Site Manager in our Wangaratta Office and he has the final word ...

Do you like living and working in the North East?

I love it. You cannot beat the familiarity of country life and the more relaxed pace and life style it affords a family.

When did you start with Worktrainers?

1st December 2008

Why do you like working for Worktrainers?

I enjoy the support and 'openness' of the organisation and its efforts to ensure it delivers a professional and inclusive service to our clients.

What has been the highlight of your time at Worktrainers?

It would have to be the release of the DEN star ratings and recognition of the hard work by the staff in Wangaratta.

What do you look forward to in the future for The Worktrainers Group?

I am looking forward to Worktrainers increasing its presence and community profile in Wangaratta and the surrounding areas by continuing to deliver quality services and engaging the community that we serve.

What do you believe to be some of the challenges facing the North East community?

The biggest challenge facing the area at the moment is resisting the effects of the downturn being felt nationally at the moment. To date, the employment security and business sustainability in the area has been steady, however as the downturn continues, the ability for business to continue this way will become more difficult.

What's your best memory of living in the North East?

There is no "one best memory" but rather many that involve all the community activities and functions that the area has that encourages us to 'get out and enjoy ourselves'. Such as The Beechworth Golden Horseshoe Festival over the Easter weekend, The Jazz festival in Wangaratta and the festivals in Bright and Myrtleford.

What would people be surprised to know about you?

When I was young, I was asked "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Now only being young, the best job I knew was to be a "tourist on a motorbike" and it is still an aspiration!

Three words to describe yourself?

Loyal, willing and humorous.

13 sites across North East Victoria

Benalla
03 5762 6065

Bendigo
03 5443 0377

Bright
03 5755 1033

Castlemaine
03 5472 2011

Cobram
03 5871 2716

Echuca
03 5480 6422

Mansfield
03 5775 2800

Myrtleford
03 5752 2320

Shepparton
03 5831 2511

Seymour
03 5792 2333

Wangaratta
03 5721 2222

Wodonga
02 6056 6101

Yarrowonga
03 5744 2960

Freecall
1800 802 277