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Mike's Column

Demand for young people continues to rise as businesses struggle to meet their commitments with low skilled and semi-skilled workers from overseas still unavailable while the borders remain closed.

In my presentations to young people in grade 12 across a wide range of schools in term 4 this year, I have been pointing out that the opportunities for great jobs in 2022 is real and we are likely to continue to see increasing strong demand across many sectors into the first half of next year for school graduates.

There is clear evidence of this in the take up of apprenticeships across Australia with the National Centre for Vocational & Educational Research confirming recently that Queensland had recorded an increase of 20.4% in signups since March 2020 which compared favourably against the national figure which showed an increase of 20.7%. Businesses are recognising that the model has benefits and is linked to financial incentives which can be used to mentor and support the young person to get started in their business. The Boosting Apprenticeship Commencements Wage Subsidy supports businesses to take on new apprentices and trainees, to build a pipeline of skilled workers to support a sustained economic recovery.

Through this initiative, any business that engages an Australian Apprentice between 5 October 2020 and 31 March 2022 may be eligible for a subsidy of 50 per cent of wages paid to a new or recommencing apprentice or trainee. This covers a 12-month period from the date of commencement to a maximum of \$7,000 per quarter.

If you would like to learn more about how your business could benefit from a young person undertaking an apprenticeship, contacts DISCO's Employment Officer Nick Riddell-Gould on 0447 759528.

Recently I met with a business owner who explained to me the importance of looking after his staff and some of the innovative ways he is making his workplace more focused on 'value add' options for his team. He now provides each of his team with a day off every time their birthday falls on a workday. Not a bad present when you consider who really wants to work on their birthday? Not surprisingly, this business has an excellent staff retention rate. Does your business look at innovative ways to show your staff you care, that they are valued and appreciated? Certainly, something to think about!

Recently I finalised the organisations Annual Report which will be tabled at DISCO's Annual General Meeting in November. It is wonderful to reflect over the achievements of the organisation and be reminded of the work and support undertaken as we have assisted

many young people. This year, in excess of 3,000 young people connected with our organisation for help, assistance and guidance and I thank sincerely my wonderful team led by Operations Manager Kym Baills. I also must pay note to the Management Committee who have helped guide the strategic direction of DISCO as we have navigated a way forward in very unique and uncertain times.

Look out for the Annual Report which will be uploaded to our website and can be accessed at this link: [Annual Reports — DISCO | Downs Industry School's Co-Op Inc.](#)

Can I take this opportunity to acknowledge you and perhaps your organisation for supporting DISCO. If you are a young person, thank you for agreeing to allow us to help you, if you are a parent, guardian or grandparent thank you for trusting us to help your son or daughter.

My best wishes to everyone for a wonderful Christmas and a prosperous 2022. **Mike Paton**



Snell Street News

As the year is rapidly coming to an end, the Transition to Work (TTW) team at Snell Street have been working very diligently with our current clients supporting them through the rollercoaster that has been 2021.

The TTW program that is run from our Snell Street office offers assistance to young people between 15 – 24 years of age who are looking to gain further assistance in obtaining employment or exploring their study options. Our team of amazing case managers are here to help our young people obtain that dream job, start that dream course and help with all the other little things that may come along the way.

We have sadly said goodbye to two amazing staff members Madeleine (Maternity Leave) and Taleah as they move on to new adventures, however in their absence we have been able to welcome Zarah Jarvis and Shaelie Bee to the TTW team. Zarah has an amazing passion for youth work, and we cannot wait for her to flourish in her new role as a Youth Development Officer. Shaelie started out in the Dalby DISCO office, and we are now able to share her passion and commitment between both the Dalby and Toowoomba sites.

At DISCO we are always eager to ensure our staff are as up to date and upskilled as possible so they can support our young people through any crisis they may be facing. As a result, some staff from Snell Street have been able to participate in training to support young people who may be experiencing substance abuse issues. This training has proved to be invaluable and has assisted the team to best support their clients and expanded their knowledge and understanding on the topic.

At Snell Street we have been able to kickstart our Group Work sessions delivering one session per week supporting employability and personal development skills. In these sessions we can cover topics such as career interest, budgeting, literacy and numeracy and many other development sessions that appeal to our young people.

As the end of the year quickly approaches, our dedicated case managers will continue to offer the best support to Toowoomba youth.

If you or anyone you know would like to reach out to DISCO for additional support to obtain employment and or study, please contact our friendly team at Snell Street on (07) 4638 3088 and we would be delighted to be able to assist you!

Bianca Swanton

Transition to Work Co-ordinator – Snell Street

Staff Profile - Dana Sallway

Hi everyone!

My name is Dana, and I am one of the freshest additions to the DISCO team as the Youth Employment Support officer!

I come from a background in retail and whilst working full-time in supermarkets, I have been studying a Bachelor of Human Services at USQ doing a double major in Child and Family Studies and Counselling. I have always been drawn to youth work and have had a passion for it for the last 10 years. This ultimately motivated me to move back home to Toowoomba from Brisbane and to follow my dream of being a youth worker by enrolling in my course.

As I near the completion of my degree, in May-June next year, I took a leap of faith and commenced my job search journey to be able to do what makes my fire burn – supporting young people in need! I was lucky enough to have been given the opportunity to meet with Mike and Kym to discuss the role as a Youth Employment Support officer with DISCO and couldn't believe my luck to have been offered an interview and then the job!

Since then, I have met so many different young people across the Toowoomba, Gatton, and Dalby sites, alongside beginning outreach to the Oakey community. Every day is so different from the one before, and every young person has a different goal to the next. I thrive when a young person successfully obtains their first job, develops a clearer training or employment path that they are passionate about taking, and builds upon their confidence as we go out to meet employers about possible opportunities.

One can only imagine how blessed I am to have been given this opportunity and to know I am genuinely making a difference fulfills and motivates me every single day. I am even more lucky to be working closely with some of the most passionate and knowledgeable people in the industry who share a common goal as I do – to support, encourage and build upon the young people of tomorrow.

I look forward to the road ahead as I pursue my dream with DISCO and make a difference in the communities that need it most.

Dana Sallway

Youth Employment Support Program Officer



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GET TRAINED IN A CERTIFICATE COURSE

⇒ BSB30115 Certificate III in Business	⇒ SIT30116 Certificate III in Tourism
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⇒ BSB30415 Certificate III in Business Administration	⇒ CHC33015 Certificate III in Individual Support*
⇒ SIT30616 Certificate III in Hospitality*	⇒ ICT30519 Certificate III in Telecommunications Technology

*SIT30116 requires: 36 shifts of work placement. CHC33015 requires: 120 hours of work placement

Call us today on 1300 936 864!



James Street News

Wow! What a year it has been so far! Throughout the past couple of months, the James Street site has been busy, to say the least.

We are working with 17 young people in our current program and have just completed our 12 weeks post program support for our past 17 participants from the semester one group. This intensive post-program support has resulted in high levels of work and study outcomes for the group. Great job semester one!

From completing enormous amounts of accredited training to participating in several in house and external personal development and industry focus sessions, as well as many work readiness modules and activities, our semester two 2021 cohort are gaining the skills and experiences needed to be successful in the workforce.

One exciting event that has recently occurred at James Street was our very own Master Chef competition. The clients were all required to plan, budget, prepare, cook, and present a main meal and a dessert with a 'fine dining experience' in mind. The groups were judged on taste, creativity, budgeting, presentation and customer service. This experience was not only a huge amount of fun and allowed us all to all share in delicious food, it also taught the clients how to work effectively in a team, handle stressful situations and work under pressure in the hospitality industry, all whilst being creative and innovative in the kitchen. Congratulations to all the clients involved in this successful project and thank you to Peter, our special guest judge, for his thorough and comprehensive feedback on all the meals.

Tessa Gavin

James Street Site Manager / Get Set for Work Coordinator



Dalby Doings

Wow, where do I start!!! What a busy 2021 it has been.

Our semester two Get Set for Work program commenced on 26 July with 10 participants. We have six weeks until graduation, and we currently have nine participants. I think this is a huge effort from our GSFW team as obviously these young people feel very comfortable with them and keep returning. All participants are completing a *Certificate II in Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways* and only have three modules until completion. All participants will graduate with an individualised resume, cover letter and the skills and knowledge on how to impress their future employer during an interview. They have completed workshops in budgeting, cooking, industry tours, healthy relationships and so much more. It is wonderful to see the confidence in each young person develop since the beginning of the program.

We currently have 61 clients registered in our Transition to Work program from Dalby, Tara, Chinchilla and Miles and all areas in between. We are currently offering an outreach service to our Chinchilla clients and are based in the Chinchilla Family Support Centre. So far this year we have helped 70 young people engage with employment and/or education in these areas through this program alone. This is a huge effort from our Transition to Work team. They have also recommenced Group Work with participants to help increase their employability skills, job search skills and study groups after they had ceased due to the Covid pandemic.

We are currently in the process of registering all year 12 school leavers in our Southwest Queensland footprint, to follow up with them next year to ensure they have successfully transitioned from school into the workforce or on to further education.

If you know anyone between the ages 15 –24 who is currently not working, please ask them to contact our office on 4662 2147 to discuss how we can help them.

Le-Anne Callaghan

Southwest Qld Area Manager/

Dalby Office Manager

Website Spotlight

This quarter we are featuring the website jobjumpstart.gov.au. This is a great site for any young person leaving school but still uncertain about their preferred career path. This site will provide you with the opportunity to explore your options and consider career possibilities. Learn more at Job Jumpstart and start planning for your future today!



Gatton Wrap

What a busy few months we have had and it does not seem to be slowing down!

We recently contacted the local high schools to book in the school leaver presentations which have commenced and will complete in the coming month.

We took part in the Lockyer Valley Community Wellbeing Day which was a free and fun event that 22 Individual services attended and involved place-based and outreaching services from across the community and health services sectors. We had a small stall and provided not only information but a fun game with DISCO merchandise to be won. We also attended the Faith Lutheran Careers Expo which had been postponed due to lockdowns earlier in the year.

Although Gatton was part of the LGA'S that continued to wear masks, we have been lucky enough to welcome some guest speakers just a little later than planned. We have had the defence force visit and Kaylee who is a Financial Information Services Officer from Services Australia, is running monthly sessions. We are soon to have Paul from Anglicare in to discuss his Youth in Charge program and talk about Alcohol and other drugs.

Get Set For Work had their mid semester trip which was held at Murphy's Creek Escape where all participants had a go at some Archery, the big swing and took a dip in the pond.

We have had the pleasure of having an Aurora Training Institute trainer visit Gatton every second Friday to assist our business students complete their certificates. We also had an RSA course delivered onsite with both TTW and GSFV clients taking part. We have a large group of students enrolled to complete First Aid and White cards in the coming weeks.

Sadly, we said goodbye to Brooke our Youth Development and Employee Engagement Officer. We wish her all the best for the future. I am certain we will find another great member to join our team in the near future.

Kim Stevens - Gatton Site Coordinator/Youth Development/Employment Engagement Officer

The YES Program

The Youth Employment Support (YES) Program targets young people between 15-24 years of age and supports their transition into the workforce or on to further education. The program offers a short-term intervention plan, with a duration of 6-8 weeks, for young job seekers who need extra support in their employment and/or educational endeavours.

My name is Dana, and I am the new YES officer at DISCO. I am passionate about young people's personal and professional growth and look forward to working with our clients across the region to achieve their goals.

The YES program provides young people with a range of services that aim to build upon their practical skills and their confidence. This is achieved through the support of resume and cover letter writing, interview preparation and job searching skills. Overall, the young people who participate and complete the YES program walk away with a range of highly developed skills that will assist them to achieve their desired career prospects. If you require further information, please contact me on 0457 871 530.

Dana Sallway – Youth Employment Support Officer

Quote of the Quarter

"People who succeed have momentum. The more they succeed, the more they want to succeed, and the more they find a way to succeed. Similarly, when someone is failing, the tendency is to get on a downward spiral that can even become a self-fulfilling prophecy."

— Tony Robbins

Joke in the Corner

A woman brings a very limp duck into a veterinary surgeon.

As she lays her beloved pet duck on the table, the vet puts his stethoscope to the bird's chest and listens carefully.

A moment later the vet shakes his head and says sadly, *"I'm really sorry mam, but your duck, Cuddles, has passed away."*

The woman becomes quite distressed and begins to cry.

"Are you sure?" she says with tears flooding from her eyes.

"Yes mam, I am sure" the vet responds. *"Your duck is definitely dead."*

"But how can you be so sure?" the woman protests. *"I mean, you haven't done any testing on him or anything have you? Perhaps he's just stunned or in a coma or something."*

The vet rolls his eyes, then turns around and leaves the room.

A few minutes later he returns with a black Labrador retriever.

As the duck's owner looks on in amazement, the Labrador stands on his hind legs, puts his front paws on the examination table and sniffs around the duck from top to bottom. He then looks up at the vet with sad eyes and shakes his head.

The vet pats the dog on the head and takes it out of the room.

A few minutes later the vet returns with a cat. The cat jumps on the table and delicately sniffs at the bird from its head to its feet. After a moment the cat looks up, shakes its head, meows softly and strolls out of the room.

The vet looks at the woman and says, *"Look mam I'm really sorry, but as I said before, this is most definitely a duck that is no longer of this world. Your duck is dead."*

The vet then turns to his computer terminal, hits a few keys and produces a bill, which he hands to the woman.

The duck's owner, still in shock, looks at the bill and sees it is \$150.

"\$150 just to tell me my duck is dead!" she shrieks with incredulity

The vet shrugs his shoulders and says, *"I'm sorry mam. If you'd taken my word for it, the bill would have been \$20. However with the Lab Report and the Cat Scan, it's now \$150."*



Australian Government



Queensland Government