



DISCO Beat!

October – November
Edition 2013

'Partnering schools, linking with business, supporting youth'

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DISCO appreciates the support provided by the Commonwealth and Queensland State Governments



Australian Government
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Thinking Outside the Box

Over recent months DISCO, which operates under a contract based funding model, has faced what many have called the 'perfect storm' with forward funding either eliminated, substantially reduced or our sector is undergoing a 'review' with no clear timeline on how or if additional funding may be made available. The Queensland Government commenced a review of youth services and funding late last year and this will see a radical shake up and require many agencies like ours to consider how or if they can exist in the future. Many agencies are in discussions with other organisations about merging or radically changing their business model. Additional uncertainty with a new Federal government has meant that our medium term funding for projects like Youth Connections is uncertain beyond the end of 2014. The recent decision by the Federal government to disband the office for the Not-for-Profit sector and wind up the Social Inclusion Unit sends an ominous message about how the non government sector is viewed by the Abbott government.

To assist DISCO to have a long-term future within our community it has become necessary for the DISCO Board to consider other partnerships with key stakeholders including corporate partners and look to other Non Government organisations for strategic and business opportunities. This is an ongoing and developing area for our organisation. It represents an exciting new way for us to secure our future whilst at the same time looking at new ways of undertaking our business to provide additional support to youth.

On a positive note the organisation is excited to have signed a small contract with the Queensland Government which will allow DISCO to deliver support to young

people in Toowoomba and Dalby from the beginning of next year. Our new Community Learning program will see 40 young men and women in receipt of specific training to assist them in their quest to be prepared for employment or give them the confidence and support to assist them to re-engage in learning. This program will be delivered in Toowoomba and Dalby and commence in mid January next year. For more information on the Jobs through Education & Training program (JET) contact Le-Anne in our Dalby office on 46622147 or Kym in our Toowoomba office on 46329065.

I want to acknowledge our President Neil Davy supported by his executive (Marilyn Jackson – Treasurer and John Skerman – Vice President) as well as a number of Ordinary Members who have completed another year supporting the strategic goals and aspirations of the business. DISCO's Annual General Meeting will be held on the 11th of November and I look forward to working with the new team from the beginning of next year.

I want to thank my team for their support in 2013 in what has been a challenging year and acknowledge those who have moved on including: Nilisa Allen, Amanda Lacey and Casey Martyn (Maternity Leave). I also want to welcome Toni Jeavons the new Team Leader for the Roma office and Leonard Manuel the Youth Training Program Coordinator based at our Dalby office.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our staff, volunteers, school and employer partners as well as our community stakeholders, a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2014.

Mike Paton- CEO

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Visit our Website

www.disco.org.au

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Visit our page

www.facebook.com/discoaustralia

The second Youth Training Program for 2013 commenced on the 29th of July 2013 with Leonard Manuel in the role of Youth Training Program Coordinator. Leonard is being ably supported by Janah O'Shea. Participants once again attended Camp Warrawee for three days of team building activities to help build a rapport between clients and staff. Since returning from camp the Youth Training Program clients have participated in the following activities:

- Healthy Lifestyles: Cooking, Gym, Health and Hygiene
- Personal Development: Stress Control, Anger Management, Cyber Bullying, Goal Setting & Mindfulness
- Career Development: Career Interest Testing, Dressing for Success, Resume Writing & Cover Letters
- Construction Workshops – Garden Edging and Bird Boxes
- Automotive Workshops – Servicing Engines
- Business Workshops – Using General Office Equipment, Work Place Health & Safety, Communication & Function Planning
- Retail Workshops – Cash Handling, Communication, Spreadsheets & Creating Budgets
- Industry Tours: Black Truck & Ag, Simplicity Airseeders, Golden West Employment and the Defense Force
- ESSI money – Budgeting
- Drug and Alcohol presentations with ATOD's and ADFQ
- Tree of Life program with Lifeline

The clients that have proved they are ready for the work force are currently in the process of arranging work experiences blocks with local employers.

The Dalby office was approached a number of months ago to facilitate some career sessions for a Trade Camp that was being hosted at the DSHS Bunya Campus by TAFE and DETE. Leonard Manuel and Leisa Finch conducted these career sessions from Sunday 22nd of September through to Thursday the 26th of September supporting participants to complete: career interest testing, resumes, cover letters, interview preparation, appropriate use of the internet and cyber bullying.

Le-Anne Callaghan - Office Manager

Youth Support Co-Ordinator Update

The YSC team has been very busy this term preparing to facilitate a number of projects over the September school holidays. As a part of Project 11, DISCO, in conjunction with the Toowoomba Youth Service and Toowoomba Regional Council, held a Street Art workshop and a Gridiron Boot Camp throughout the September holidays. The Street Art workshop was facilitated by Ian McCallum, a local street artist from 'Kontraband'. This involved teaching the young people the different techniques of spray painting; measuring and calculating what materials are needed, as well as discussing the legalities of Graffiti Art. Those attending had an awesome time and finished off an entire wall at the James St DISCO office as well as many canvases. The Gridiron Boot Camp was facilitated by a local fitness instructor and former Australian Gridiron representative, John O'Dwyer. The project delivered skills in how to enjoy exercise and self-develop fitness programs without the need for expensive gym equipment. Young people additionally learned the mechanics of throwing a Gridiron ball, Gridiron rules and had fun playing a touch Gridiron game.

The 'Your Region, Your Eyes' photography competition has also begun again this year. The time for entries has closed and the photographs are currently displayed at Metro Café in Toowoomba. This year we have received over 60 entries and there are many wonderful images representing this great city and its surrounds. The exhibition and voting was opened to the public from the 14th to the 20th of October between 2pm and 5pm every day. Thank you all for the wonderful support!

It was with great sadness that we said goodbye to Nilisa Allen recently after many years of service with DISCO. Nilisa has done a wonderful job leading the team since last year and brought her own unique flare to the work the YSC's have done in the past. Nilisa will be sorely missed by everyone at DISCO and the associated organisations she worked with. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

Leisa Finch- Team Leader



Our young people in the Youth Connections Program have been very busy. They have attended workshops dealing with the affects of drugs and alcohol, sexual health and mental health. The young people visited KOBi house and this was an informative and fun day for all involved. We had the pleasure of a past client coming back to speak with the current group who shared her story including their current success in securing employment. All of our clients who have attended the Alternative Learning Facility have completed the Safety Sense Certificate which is an online training course provided by the Queensland Government. They had the opportunity to attend the FOGS expo and they participated well in all activities provided to them on the day. A celebration for the current Youth Connections group will be on Wednesday the 13th of November. From our current group to date we have had two young people return to school and three young people have secured employment. The remaining clients have goals of returning to school next year.

We have started a new program called The Chill Zone. This program has been successful this semester with young people attending on Tuesdays and engaging in activities with staff such as art, cooking and sport. This program is targeted at young people who have been disengaged from school for more than 3 months. The program also aims to have young people engaging in a program that keeps them busy and away from Toowoomba city for a day.

We would like to thank the following schools for allowing us to support their students by providing opportunities for us to provide one on one support or group work this year:

- Toowoomba State High School Mount Lofty Campus
- Toowoomba State High School Wilsonton Campus
- St Saviours' Secondary College
- Pittsworth State High School

If you would like more information about the programs running at our Alternative Learning Facility please contact Kym Baills or Carissa Kennedy at the James Street office on 4632 9065.

Kym Baills – Office Manager



Activities & Events!

Toowoomba		
Your Region Your Eyes Presentation	Metro Cafe	30 th October 4pm
James Street Graduation	Metro Cafe	13 th November 11.30am
Community Learning Program	James St	20 th January 2014
Youth Connections	James St	20 th January 2014
Dalby		
Graduation	Dalby RSL	20 th November 6.30pm
Community Learning Program	Cunningham St	20 th January 2014
Youth Connections	Cunningham St	20 th January 2014

To learn more about these events you can contact the
Toowoomba office on (07) 4638 3088,
Dalby office on (07) 4662 2147 or
Roma office on (07) 4622 3311

Roma Wrap

Our newly appointed Roma Office Team Leader, Toni Jeavons, has quickly built strong relationships with local stakeholders and is delivering youth focused activities to clients across the Roma region. Toni and I joined other Youth Connections staff members visiting the Brisbane Youth Correctional facility at Wacol in September, ensuring improved collaboration to better offer holistic support for young people in the justice system.

The Roma Youth Connections team has recently initiated the Maranoa Youth Support Network meeting to identify young people 'at risk' in the community and ensure they are supported effectively and efficiently.

Equine facilitated Groundwork Therapy was coordinated by Debbie Murphy, the Parent and Community Engagement Officer (PaCE) in the Roma office. The facilitator, Kylie Peters, combines her passion for horses with her profession as a psychologist working widely with young people, families and adults addressing a range of issues including family conflict, self-esteem and trauma. A cross section of Roma's Indigenous community attended the workshops over 2 days and all said they would absolutely love to be involved again in the future. The Roma team joins me in thanking all those who have supported our endeavours through the Youth Connection and PaCE Programs to support our local community and look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts with key stakeholders.

Leisa Finch- Roma Office Manager



Dr Dan's Top Ten Employment Tips to show your employer how focused you are!

- 1) **Communication** - All employers rate young people who can verbally and in writing demonstrate their competency as highly valuable in the workplace.
- 2) **Teamwork** - Businesses need each individual to recognize that their performance has to link with others. Do this and you'll do well.
- 3) **Problem Solving** - Employers want employees who can think up solutions to problems not just bring the problem to them.
- 4) **Initiative & Enterprise** - Your edge can always be your capacity to think outside the square and be committed to do something about it.
- 5) **Planning & Organising** - Your capacity to demonstrate solid planning and organizing will see you targeted for a bigger future with your employer.
- 6) **Self-management** - Discipline, maintaining standards in the environment in which you work shows your capacity to take on more responsibility.
- 7) **Learning** - Whether on the job or off it your capacity to keep learning will ensure your future will offer new and exciting opportunities.
- 8) **Technology** - Staying one step ahead of technology will ensure you have the capacity to move forward and embrace change and opportunity.
- 9) **Commitment & Passion** - Turning up for work is not enough as you need to show that you more than anyone your commitment to being successful.
- 10) **Aim for Perfection** - Employers recognize people who undertake their job with an outstanding focus toward the way they work and the quality of what they achieve. Can you do this?



Staff Profile- Carissa Kennedy

Hi, I am Carissa Kennedy and I am a Youth Support Officer positioned at the James Street Office working in the Youth Connections Program and the Youth Support Coordinator Program.

I was born in Cairns and then due to my Dad being relocated for work I moved to Roma where we lived for a few years. We finally ended up in Toowoomba, where I completed my schooling at Centenary Heights State High School graduating in 2007. At a young age, I always knew I wanted to get into this field of work as I enjoy helping people and have an empathic nature. In high school, I was a Peer Support Leader and Peer Mediator and this helped me decide that I would like to work with youth.

In 2008, I commenced studying a Diploma of Community Welfare graduating in 2010. While studying, I wanted to get into the field of working with youth so I decided to undertake work experience at DISCO. This is where my passion grew stronger and I knew this was the profession that I wanted to work in. At the end of 2008, I started employment at DISCO where I was the Youth Support Coordinator Trainee and completed further studies in the area.

I attend Wilsonton State High School and Darling Downs Christian School on a fortnightly basis and enjoy catching up and supporting young people on a daily basis.

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

We can have facts without thinking but we cannot have thinking without facts.

John Dewey – 1859-1952

JOKE IN THE CORNER

Glenn took his dog to the veterinary clinic, and laid its limp body on the table. The doctor pulled out his stethoscope, listened to the dog's chest for a moment and then shook his head sadly. "I'm sorry, but your dog has passed away."

"What?" Glenn screamed. "You haven't even done any tests! I want another opinion."

The vet left the room and returned in a few moments with a Labrador Retriever. The Retriever sniffed the dog on the table carefully from head to toe. Finally, the Retriever shook its head and barked once (meaning "dead and gone")

The vet took the Labrador away and returned a few minutes later with a cat, which also sniffed carefully over the dog on the table before shaking its head and saying, "Meow" (meaning "he's gone").

After the cat jumped off the table, the vet handed Glenn a bill for \$600. The man shook the bill at the vet. "\$600!!!! Just to tell me my dog is dead?!!! That's outrageous!"

The vet explained. "If you had taken my word for it, the charge would have been \$50, but with the Lab work and the Cat scan... "