

QUARTERLY NEWS

APRIL – JUNE 2025



National Joblink



In this edition

- > Trainees Shine
- > Springfest
- > "sleep out" fundraiser
- > Christmas BBQ
- > CTA Success
- > Movember
- > Participant Stories
- > Staff Profiles

Trainees Shine in Hospitality

On April 28, National Joblink (Cairns) welcomed five trainees into a six-month traineeship under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work Initiative, supported by the Department of Trade, Employment and Training (DTET). This program aimed to provide hands-on experience and build employability skills within the hospitality industry.

Fast forward to now, and the results speak for themselves—four out of five trainees successfully transitioned into employment in hospitality! This achievement reflects not only their hard work and determination but also the incredible support from our dedicated team: Jodi Howe (Program Coordinator), Laurie Barrett (Mentor), and Wes Daniel (Chef), whose guidance made this journey possible.

Each trainee entered the program with unique challenges and personal goals. Through persistence and commitment, they completed their First Aid training, earned a Certificate I in Hospitality, and gained practical experience that opened doors to new opportunities. Watching their transformation—from uncertain beginnings to confident individuals ready to embrace their future—has been truly inspiring.

Here's where they are now:

- 2 participants are now employed two days per week with Bama Services.
- Another has started with two shifts per week at Guyala and Caffiend Cafes in Cairns and has increased to five shifts weekly.
- And another has joined our Wild Thyme Restaurant team on a casual basis, supporting catering and festive events.

We couldn't be prouder of our trainees and look forward to seeing their continued growth in the hospitality sector.



All the staff at National Joblink wish you a safe and happy holidays – we look forward to continuing our support in 2026!



GOOD NEWS STORIES

NJL Joins Springfest for a day of community, culture and connection – Launceston, Tas

On Saturday, 18 October, the Kanamaluka Collective hosted its annual Springfest celebration, bringing together local communities and families for a fun filled day of connection and community awareness. The event took place at Launceston's beautiful Heritage Forest Park, and NJL was proud to be part of the day alongside other local community organisations. We even donated a special accommodation package at the Tarkine Wilderness Lodge as a prize!

Bianca and Liisa were there representing NJL with plenty of Parent Pathways merchandise and goodies to give away.

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It was a wonderful community event and a fantastic opportunity to connect with parents and families in a vibrant, welcoming setting.



NJL supporting “sleep out” fundraiser – NW Tas

Don College VET Community Services Certificate II students were presented with two Backpack Beds by National Joblink's John Braslin, recognising their initiative to support fellow students experiencing homelessness. The donation was part of National Joblink's broader support, which also included a \$200 contribution to the group's “sleep out” fundraiser.

The group's “sleep out” fundraiser successfully raised money for emergency bedding in the form of Backpack Beds which are lightweight, fire-retardant, water and windproof sleeping solutions that include a full-body mosquito net.



Each bed weighs just 3kg and is designed for portability and protection.

Following the fundraiser, the students proudly placed the beds with the College's support team, including the Social Worker, Support Workers, Nurse, Chaplain, and Psychologist, ensuring they're readily available to assist students in crisis and help connect them with tailored support services.

GOOD NEWS STORIES

A Day of Fun and Connection at the Gladstone TTW Christmas BBQ

The Gladstone Transition to Work (TTW) team hosted a Christmas BBQ at East Shores Parklands last Friday, bringing together participants for a day of fun. The event featured a series of games and friendly competition between mentors and participants, resulting in many light hearted moments as well as supporting to develop employability skills of our participants, needing to effectively communicate and work in teams.

Donna, our talented BBQ coordinator, prepared an exceptional spread. Participants expressed their appreciation for the event, sharing that they had a wonderful time and would love to see more outdoor activities in the future.



CTA Success Story: Confidence, Growth & Employment

After 30 years away from the workforce and facing significant challenges with mental health and social anxiety, one participant took a brave step by joining our Career Transition Assistance (CTA) program.

Initially nervous about being in a group setting, they found reassurance through their child's positive experience in the Transition to Work program offered at the same site, and the supportive environment at NJL. From the very first call, we built trust and confidence together, making that first day possible.

Through CTA's nurturing group environment, they explored their employment journey in a safe space. By week two, they applied for a cleaning role and landed an interview! We tailored the program to their needs, adding an interview skills session just before their big day—boosting their confidence.

The result? Their first paid job in nearly 30 years, plus additional hours and training opportunities that will open even more doors for their future.

November Day at Berserker – Promoting Mental Health and Connection



Recently National Joblink Berserker, hosted a November Day event, bringing together 14 participants for an engaging and impactful day.

Guest speakers from Headspace and the Walk and Talk Collective joined us to share insights on the importance of positive social connections, mental health awareness, and practical strategies for maintaining wellbeing.

The day was filled with meaningful conversations, strong engagement, and valuable connections to support services. A big thank you to the entire Berserker and Rocky City team for coming together to make this event a success!

PARTICIPANT STORIES

Alex – Transition to Work, Launceston



When Alex joined National Joblink and the Transition to Work (TtW) program in November 2024, he was shy, nervous, and unsure of what his future might look like. Through determination, support, and a clear vision for the life he wanted to build, Alex has transformed his life – building his confidence, skills, and opportunities over the past 12 months.

Upon joining TtW, Alex had recently completed Year 12 but had no previous work experience. Despite this, he quickly identified that he wanted to pursue a career in customer service and hospitality, setting himself the goals of gaining his Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) and getting his driver's licence. With the help of his mentor, he achieved both by preparing for and sitting the driving tests, attending goal-setting sessions, and following through with everything he set out to do.

One of Alex's biggest strengths has been his commitment. He regularly attends games group—both in person and on Discord—and is well known by mentors for his excellent attendance. Even though the journey takes him 45 minutes by bus, Alex travels in two hours early so he can have breakfast downstairs and start his day in a positive routine.

Through his participation in TtW Alex has now almost fully completed his Certificate II in Hospitality, with only a couple of weeks left to go. To help with this, every Thursday Alex travels to the Mowbray Golf Club where he continues to develop these practical skills. Alex has also taken part in the Transition to Work Enterprise Learning Project - Bunnings BBQ, where he has gained hands-on experience in food preparation, customer service, money handling, teamwork, and Work, Health and Safety procedures.

Alex's long-term goal is to work in a bar, where he hopes to increase his service skills further and eventually learn to make cocktails and serve beverages. His enthusiasm for building experience in the industry is clear to everyone who works with him.

A major milestone came when Alex attended a local career expo dressed in professional interview clothing. There, he impressed the managers from McDonald's so much that he was offered a job on the spot! TtW further supported him through onboarding and assisted by purchasing new work boots to help him start strong.

Today, Alex is in his second week of training at McDonald's—and he couldn't be prouder. He's already sharing with everyone at NJL how much he's enjoying the work and how quickly he's mastering cooking nuggets and chips.

Alex's journey is a testament to what dedication, support, and self-belief can achieve. From anxious beginnings to workplace success, he continues to grow, learn, and prove to himself what he's capable of. His future in the hospitality industry looks incredibly bright!

PARTICIPANT STORIES



Kat – Parent Pathways, Gladstone

Our amazing Parent Pathways participant, Kat, has made significant progress despite the challenges she has faced. Her journey from experiencing anxiety and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder to pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts while homeschooling her children is truly inspirational.

The support from her Parent Pathways Mentor Michelle with referrals to Women's Health and GP as well as assisting Kat to obtain her work uniforms, text books and study materials for her course, driving lessons and transport assistance through the Parent Pathways Individual Fund seem to have played a crucial role in her development, helping her gain confidence, find employment, and continue her education.

Kat's ambition to become an art teacher reflects not just her passion for the arts, but also a desire to positively influence others, particularly children, stating [“Parent Pathways is a really positive program that helps to support you when you have young kids”](#). It's wonderful to hear how Kat values the assistance that Parent Pathways has given her to gain employment at a local daycare centre and the impact it has had on her life - Well done Kat!



Skye – Transition to Work, Launceston

Skye joined Transition to Work (TtW) as a disengaged school leaver struggling with severe anxiety.

School had become overwhelming, and she felt unable to achieve her goals. Initially, Skye could only attend appointments with her mum present, but her TtW mentor quickly began building her confidence and independence.

Skye dreamed of working in childcare, but at just 15, age restrictions posed challenges. Most education providers required students to be 18 to enrol in a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. Determined to find a solution, Skye and her mentor discovered Asuria Training, which would accept her at 16. In preparation, Skye worked hard to improve her language, literacy, and numeracy skills to pass the entry test. Turning 16 marked a turning point. With TtW's support, Skye completed the Plates Plus course and earned her Learner's Permit—a huge step toward independence.

She now attends appointments on her own and is taking regular driving lessons to work toward her provisional licence. Soon after, Skye officially enrolled in the Certificate III course with Asuria Training, passing the entry test with flying colours. TtW also assisted her in obtaining a Working with Vulnerable People card, a key requirement for her studies.

Over the past year, Skye has shown incredible resilience. She is actively participating in her course, enjoying her learning journey, and has significantly reduced her social anxiety. National Joblink and TtW will continue to support Skye as she moves closer to achieving her career goals. We can't wait to celebrate her future successes!

MEET THE TEAM



Steve Martin –Marketing/Recruiting Officer Devonport Tas

Have always had a passion for serving community, especially young people, leading to joining NJL as a TTW mentor January 2024.

For over 25 years, volunteered with the NFP youth group Enormity Inc., mentoring young people and helping run activities such as concerts that featured bands like Spiderbait, Frenzl Rhomb and Jebediah, even some death metal, though prefer Eagles, ACDC & Bruce Springsteen. Also with young people helped organised Santa Runs, where participants dressed in Santa suits and ran 5km to raise funds for charity; assisted young people conduct a national appeal that collected 100,000 winter coats for people experiencing homelessness - equal to the number of Australians sleeping rough every night.

Commitment to community has also included serving as Mayor of Devonport, Senator for Tasmania, and volunteering as a firefighter for more than 30 years. Am married with two children and two teenage granddaughters (who act as 25yoa); plus am a sports junkie much to wife's annoyance!

Am still active on Devonport Council; volunteer with Toast for Kids Charity Inc and the Children's Book Council of Australia both nationally and statewide; and continue to live by the belief in Enormity's motto "today's young people are tomorrow's leaders".

Donna Flanagan – RTO Compliance Officer, Cairns QLD

Hi, I'm Donna, I've been part of NJL for the past 12 months. I've always enjoyed working in the compliance world, and before joining NJL I spent eight years in a compliance role with another RTO. Ensuring quality, accuracy and smooth processes is something I genuinely love, and I'm proud to support our team and learners through strong compliance practices.

I've lived in Far North Queensland for 36 years, the last 15 in beautiful Cairns. Family is a big part of my life, I have three children and seven wonderful grandkids who keep me busy and smiling.

At home, I'm surrounded by my much-loved pets. My 15-year-old poodle, Cooper, who comes to work with me every Monday, is deaf, almost blind, and is absolutely adored by staff, loves getting pats and exploring the training rooms. I also have two 14-year-old cats, Sheldon and Dexter, (yes they were named after TV characters) who complete my family.

In my spare time, I enjoy taking Coop on slow, peaceful walks, & occasionally walking on the Esplanade enjoying the sea air.

I also love spending time in my garden. These quiet moments help me recharge and stay grounded in both my personal and professional life.

