

COEN'S WINNING FORMULA

Participants on Coen's CDEP program are going from strength to strength and according to newly appointed Program Coordinator, Temira Dewis, this is thanks to a combination of the great team they now have and the renewed enthusiasm of the local community.

A born and bred Coen local, Temira completed her schooling at Mount St Bernard's College before taking on a traineeship with the Department of Housing. Since then life has been pretty busy - getting married, having two sons, completing 3 Diplomas, a university degree in Arts and starting her second in Commerce.

On starting with CDEP in January Temira said, "The biggest challenge was that local community members didn't relate to Centrelink and there was friction within the community that caused disengagement. Plus, outsiders of the community were negative, said it wouldn't work and I wouldn't be able to make a difference."

Temira enlisted the support of Elaine Liddy, a CDEP participant herself and another Coen local, as the CDEP Team Leader. Her presence made it comfortable for those participants who had disengaged to come back into the program and continue with their work experience training.

"With 2 local people coordinating the program, they feel we can address their concerns and they trust us", said Temira. Within 3 days participants who had left the program again made contact with the system. When asked how they did it Temira said, "We spoke to community members and encouraged them to make a difference and be passionate about making it happen. Now they have pride in their community."

Since commencing in January, Temira and Elaine have started 20 people and successfully exited 18 participants into fulltime employment within the local community, where previously there has been very little opportunity. But the real success according to Temira is that these people are now seeing real changes in their lives and are leading the rest of their community by example.

The newest edition to the Coen CDEP team is Lucretia Creek as Community Development Officer whose appointment will mean even more support for participants and projects.

Like the others in her team, Lucretia is also a local Coen girl who has achieved quite a lot in her 21 years.

(Left) Temira Dewis, Coordinator and (Right) Lucretia Creek, Community Development Officer form part of the "winning formula" of Coen's CDEP.



While employed as a Community Officer for Cape York Digital Network for 3 years Lucretia helped train local community people how to use computers. During this time she also completed a Business Diploma as well as Certificate IV in Assessment and Training and is currently studying for a Commerce degree.

Lucretia admits, "In my first job I loved getting out and helping the community so when the CDEP job came up I saw it as an opportunity to get even more involved in my community." "I really want to help the Coen community grow and support the great work Temira has achieved - our young people are more motivated now with 3 applying for university, 3 studying at TAFE, 2 have joined a Sydney dance company and another is on a green army traineeship as a local ranger".

Lucretia is very driven when it comes to helping people make a difference in their lives. When she finished school she applied for government funding to run a youth camp which was designed to assist local high school students to feel empowered and motivated and be confident enough to speak out and express themselves. The project was so successful, when a report was presented at the local Council AGM, Lucretia was granted a second lot of funding to continue the program.

Lucretia believes a lack of confidence is a major challenge for many when it comes to completing training and applying for jobs. She wants them to know that they can. Many of those she refers to are young people who she went to school with and she is very passionate about being a mentor and motivator for them.

With the combined positive attitudes, passion and determination of these two local girls, the Coen community has got themselves a winning formula.



Indigenous JOB CONNECTIONS

NEWSLETTER

FOR A QUIET ACHIEVER, MARIA'S A STRONG COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR

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Maria Richards has come a very long way from her not-so-positive experiences as a young school girl to now being a Director on the CDEP Board.

Spending time talking to Maria is inspiring - she is a lady who is extremely passionate about her culture, her family and her people and she believes if you want something in life, whether it's a car or an education, then you have work for it.

As is the case with so many other people, Maria looks back on her school days with not so fond memories saying, "I didn't learn anything and at the time I felt the teachers didn't seem to be worried by this. I didn't learn to read or write very well."

It was an upsetting news story about elderly Indigenous people not being properly cared for that made her decide something had to be done to help them, and she wanted to be involved. Maria knew she would have to get extra skills if she was going to do this.

Being a CDEP participant Maria used the program as a stepping stone to a better education, job and life. She was given the opportunity to train for a Certificate II in Community Services Work and it was this training that got Maria employed with Mareeba Garden Settlement. She has since completed a Certificate III in Aged Care Work and is now a fulltime Assistant in Nursing at the Mareeba retirement village.

Maria now proudly admits, "I have never felt so fulfilled in anything as I do now. I find everything about my job so rewarding so it is easy for me to go to work every day and want to give my absolute best."

Although Maria admits, it wasn't an easy road - she knew she couldn't read or write very well and at first thought of every excuse not to do the training. But she worked up the courage to ask for help and found then that everything fell into place - she found when people saw that she wanted to work hard and do well they were so positive towards her.

Maria has very much lived her life this same way - she is taking responsibility for herself and her family and does not expect others to have to contribute to making things happen for them. It is this same way of thinking she is trying to get across to others in her community.

- Maria visited the parents of kids who weren't going to school regularly and spoke to them about how important it was for them to be at school so they have the opportunity of a good education.

- She saw CDEP participants in the street who weren't regularly attending their training and spoke to them about going back to training and "start climbing the tree instead of sitting under it" so they could make a future for themselves and their families.

- Her family needed a car so they took out a loan and made regular repayments until it was paid off.

- Maria understands that challenges for Indigenous youth in their immediate social circles can be a problem - Maria's family have opened their home and cared for many youth with different needs, hoping to show them a better way to live and be responsible for their lives.

In her own subtle way Maria has been passionately supporting and mentoring the people of her local community and through her own example is trying to bring purpose to their lives.



Maria's family is her life and her grandson makes up a very big part of that.



Indigenous JOB CONNECTIONS

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MT GARNET'S CDEP PARTICIPANTS EMBRACE TRAINING

QITE, the supplier of training for Job Services Australia (JSA) recently delivered training to participants of Mt Garnett's CDEP program to help provide them real job opportunities.

The program ran for 12 weeks with participants undergoing training for Blue Cards, first aid, a chainsaw course as well as numeracy and literacy. Fourteen CDEP participants commenced the course with 12 participants fully completing their training.

As a result of this training, the 12 who qualified now have the opportunity to secure work on stations, with Ravenshoe Sawmill as well as Tablelands Regional Council.

David Sexton, CDEP Field Officer explained, "A need was identified when Council had jobs available but there wasn't anyone locally with the proper training who could fill them at that time. So the aim of this training was to get our people trained and ready to go for when jobs do become available. In the interim they are carrying out jobs such as mowing of Council yards and are also doing art preparations."

David mentioned they are expecting more jobs to become available during the dry season which should bring good outcomes for those trained and ready for work.

David said, "This training has introduced a lot of positivity into the CDEP program with participant numbers increasing. It's been great for those that went through it and now others want to do it too. It is something they can look forward to."

He added, "It is great for us too because we get excited about being able to create more training because we know that will lead to more meaningful jobs for those who do the training and this will assist us with getting even more funding so we can offer even more training opportunities."



Participants of Mt Garnett's recent training program have plenty to smile about.



Art pieces are being prepared by training participants.



TRACEY PROVIDES GOOD BALANCE

Tracey Bru, IJC's Finance and Payroll Manager has been with the organisation since January 2008 and says, "I've been here for ages and I love it." Not only does Tracey make sure the books balance and everyone is paid, she has many hidden talents that have seen her multi-skill and also support the CDEP Field Officers.

When asked how she manages all that she humbly replies, "Oh, I guess I'm just a bit of a Jill of all trades really."



TAMMY FOLLOWS HER PASSION AND JOINS THE CDEP TEAM

Tammy Clarke is a born and bred Darwin local, a wife and mother of two sons aged 17 and 6 years. She is also CDEP's new Administration Officer, however Tammy is not really that 'new' to the organisation.

Tammy started with IJC in September 2009 as Community Support Services Coordinator where she provided community support for Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander community members, linking them with other support service providers such as family planning, the Links program and also assisted with Centrelink issues.

Although she loves getting involved at the coal face, Tammy thinks her real strengths lie in administration and keeping things organised - Tammy's new position will allow her to bring both of these skills together while supporting CDEP's Field Officers - David Sexton, Josh Patterson and Temira Dewis.

Tammy said, "I am really looking forward to learning more about the role CDEP plays in the community, especially helping people train and move into secure employment."

AN IMPRESSIVE INITIATIVE - "GO WORK & SAFETY"

Chris Martin, CEO of IJC had a great idea - he wanted to help CDEP participants who become trained and get jobs to be able to start those jobs with good quality, safe work wear.

He put a simple advertisement in the newspaper to try and find someone with the right equipment to help him make this great idea a very real possibility. Troy Drasdo of Natural Art Australia, a high profile screen printer with over 20 years' experience answered this ad.

GO kicked off business as a preferred supplier to Employment Services Queensland (ESQ) and now outfits workers throughout Queensland. ESQ look after almost 20,000 unemployed clients. As these people get trained and move into the workforce, GO are there to outfit them. ESQ has 30 offices throughout Queensland, as well as partner relationships with Challenge Employment, Skill Centred and CEA, providing great opportunities for GO to service a substantial section of the market and importantly, help look after newly trained participants entering the workforce.

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