

Board of Directors



Welcome back to another new and exciting year. I would like to say a special welcome to all our new participants that have joined our program over the last quarter.

Since our last SteppingStone Newsletter I am pleased to say that STEPS was successful in a tender for the National Disability Co-ordination Program.

What is the National Disability Co-ordination Officer Program (NDCO)?

STEPS Community Services, has been awarded two NDCO Contracts with the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

National Disability Co-ordination Officers will be based at:

Caloundra – covering Queensland Statistical Boundaries of: Central West, Darling Downs, Moreton, South West, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba; and

Townsville – These areas will cover Queensland's Statistical Boundaries of: Cairns, Far North, Mackay, North, North West, Thuringowa, Townsville Queensland Statistical Boundaries.

NDCO is designed to assist people with a disability access and participate in post-school education & training, and then subsequent employment. NDCO offers information, co-ordination and referral services.

How can NDCO assist?

People with a disability & their families

- Information and advice on post-school options, supports and services
- Assistance to understand the transition to further study and employment
- Link with others to help plan for and make a successful transition
- Advice or referral to government and community supports.

Education & Training Providers

- Advice and support to ensure institution is appropriately equipped
- Advice and support to attract and retaining students with a disability.

Employment or Support Agencies

- Advice and support for encouraging and assisting employers who are interested in or have employed people with a disability.

The Head Office of Community Services is located at:

Shop 2/8 Otranto Avenue or
PO Box 1804
CALOUNDRA QLD 4551
Telephone: (07) 5437 2064
Fax: (07) 5438 2249
Email: ndco@steps.net

I would like to remind all our participants that you can contact James Drake, your Participant Representative to the Board of Directors, if you would like to express any concerns, issues or ideas regarding STEPS Employment. James is happy to help and provide assistance wherever possible.

You can reach James by calling 0407 694 941.

Carmel Crouch
President

"We're with you every step of the way!"

Disability Service Standards

STEPS must provide a service that meets the 12 Disability Service Standards. Let's learn more about Standards 7 & 8.

Standard 7: Complaints & Disputes

"Getting something done about a complaint" - STEPS Disability Qld Inc. has to:

- Enable our participants to raise and resolve any complaints or disputes he or she may have regarding STEPS service.

If you make a complaint STEPS should...

- Listen to you
- Be happy to help you
- Help you to explain what the problem is
- Try to fix your problem
- Tell you about other people or places you can talk to about your complaint

STEPS must keep your complaint private.

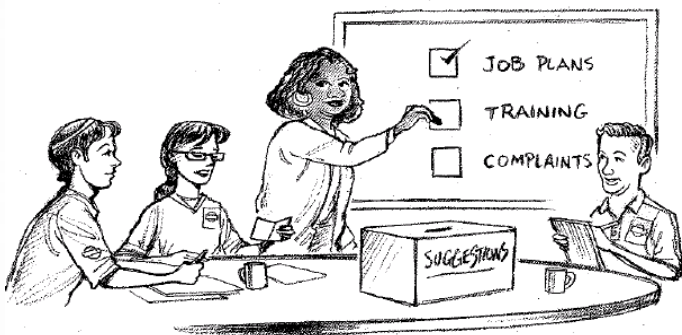
Standard 8: Service Management

"Running the service well" - STEPS Disability Qld Inc. has to:

- Adopt sound management practices which maximise outcomes for our participants

STEPS Disability Qld Inc. should help you to:

- Be up to date with the best ways of working with you
- Use money from the Australian Government in the best way
- Keep making the service better
- Have a business plan for running the service in the best way



General Manager Employment



I want to talk to you today about bridging the gap between unemployment and the ultimate job. It is assumed that getting a job soon is a high priority and therefore the job objective may, in this case represent a job that is available immediately ie "A

Bridge Job". It may not be your ideal long term job objective, but rather a position that will bridge the gap between unemployment and the ultimate job that you want.

- Try and decide what job you hope to do in a few years time, when your life is more stable. This may be something that is available right now, or it may take several steps to get there.
- Imagine a series of job goals, starting with the job you would like to have in a couple of years time, then work your way backward to your most immediate job objective.
- Assuming that this bridge job may be an entry-level position, it is important that your resume should appear appropriate for that job.

It is important to understand that an available job can get you some immediate income and at the same time provide solid work experience to put on your resume later, when you apply for that better job. You need to appreciate that the bridge job is a critical tool for getting the job you ultimately want rather than a compromise.

Take some time to evaluate and document the skills you are going to need to get that ultimate job. Each of your bridging jobs can add to your skills and they are a critically valuable step on your path to achieving your long-term goal.

John Conway
General Manager Employment

"We're with you every step of the way!"

Quality Assurance

It certainly has been a busy time at STEPS Employment! It has included staff attending recent internal staff development training; changing our internal database where we keep your information from GEMMA to DENMAX; and updating our documentation to display the name change of our funding body ie Department of Employment & Workplace Relations (DEWR) is now called Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR). It is surprising the number of forms that have to be changed.

On some of our forms you may have seen the word 'Advocate'. The meaning of this word is that someone you may wish to nominate who will look after your best interest, including speaking or writing in your favour. At any time during your time with STEPS you can request an advocate.

As per DEEWR contractual requirement we must verify all employment hours for our participants who are working. If you are unsure of this requirement please talk to your consultant and together develop a plan that works for you and STEPS.

During different stages on the STEPS programme you will be asked to complete survey forms. 36 surveys/feedback forms were received during October – December 2007. All branches receive a copy of these forms and it allows all staff to see what we do well and how we can improve. It is always encouraging to receive compliments on a job well done. But it is just as important that we hear from the people who are using our service and see the things we can improve on. It allows us to look at our systems and ask how can we make it better?

Even though not many attended our Caloundra Participant Information Session, it was great to catch up with some of our 'older' participants on the programme. 'Older' meaning they all have been on the programme for a very long time! James Drake your Participant Representative attended.

Remember, we are here to work with you to achieve your employment goal.

Kris Hobbs
BEU Advisor

Aitkenvale

STEPS Townsville would like to welcome Janet Glynn–Armstrong to our team. Janet commenced late last year and comes to us with many years of experience within the disability industry. I am sure you will join us in welcoming Janet to STEPS. We are very excited to have Janet on board.

With this commencement Kylie has taken on the Employment Sales Consultant role, effectively reverse marketing the skills and abilities of our participants to employers within the Townsville and Thuringowa area.

Kylie has successfully built new relationships with employers and is using the Work Experience Program as a major tool in being able to demonstrate to employers the potential of our participants. To date we have gained success in placing participants in the hospitality and retail industries.

Kylie has landed a major player in the Nursery / Horticulture industry and is looking for participants who want a career in a Nursery to participate in a work experience trial which if successful will lead to fulltime employment. If you are interested in obtaining work in this area and are willing to complete a trial period, call Kylie in the office now on (07) 4727 2617 to discuss this opportunity, or call Kylie to discuss the possibility of her approaching a particular industry on your behalf to complete a similar arrangement.

"We're with you every step of the way!"

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new participants to STEPS and look forward to assisting you into the workforce in 2008.

Lee-Anne Whalley
Branch Manager

Alice Springs

Hello from Alice Springs! Welcome back from Christmas and the New Year break.

Congratulations to everyone over December who reached employment milestones of 4 weeks, 13 weeks and 26 weeks. Well Done!

Alice Springs Employment Support Consultants have been making regular visits out to some of the communities around Central Australia over the past few months. Ntaria Community (also known as Hermannsburg) is about 120km West of Alice Springs. There, we have made contact with three participants who are all keen to get themselves into employment.

One of those participants, Marcus Wheeler, has just become a fully ordained Lutheran Pastor. STEPS Employment Alice Springs congratulates Marcus and we look forward to helping you reach your employment goals in your chosen vocation.

The team in Alice Springs looks forward to working with all our clients in helping them gain suitable employment to make this year very rewarding for all.

Katrina Whan
Branch Manager

Bowen

The rain is still coming down in the Bowen/Ayr & Collinsville regions, but this has not put off the fantastic work by the STEPS participants. The Bowen Team would like to congratulate our participants who have gained and sustained work since the last newsletter. Here are some of the areas which they are working in; retail, landscaping and accounting.

STEPS Employment Bowen would like to say farewell to Marilyn Bickel who has left to be with her family in Hervey Bay, all the very best Marilyn. We wish a very warm welcome to Greg Martin who is our Employment Sales Consultant. Greg has been able to secure many positions for a number of participants.

Do you want to get your learners drivers permit? Speak with your Employment Consultant if you are interested in coaching classes for Learner Driver's Licence to gain skills to help you pass the Queensland Transport written road rules test.

Well done to all our participants who are working! Congratulations on your achievements.

Greg Cummins
Branch Manager (Acting)

Bundaberg

One leg doesn't stop Colin... Losing a leg in a work accident seven years ago has not stopped Colin MacDonald from becoming a valuable employee at Eden Farms in Moore Park.

Colin admitted he had a difficult time adjusting after the accident as he was lacking in self confidence and motivation. Colin had not worked for seven years when he registered with STEPS Employment in Bundaberg.

"We're with you every step of the way!"



willing to provide an employment opportunity to someone with a disability. We have many eager, willing participants ready to make a positive contribution to any business. STEPS Employment welcomes calls from employers and can be contacted between 8.30am and 4.30pm on (07) 4150 1900.

Glynn Eiser
Branch Manager

Colin met with Derek Whitney, his STEPS Employment Consultant and they discussed what type of work Colin was seeking. Colin had previously worked in the farming and rural sectors for many years and was eager to return to farming work.

STEPS Employment approached Eden Farms in Bundaberg and Manager, Robert Harbottle, agreed to give Colin an opportunity to work in the maintenance crew.

Colin started at Eden farms in October 2007 and works fulltime as part of an eight man Maintenance Crew. Eden Farms Manager, Robert Harbottle says, "Colin's enthusiasm, skills and work ethic makes him a valued member of the Eden Farm team".

"Colin's prosthetic leg meant he sometimes couldn't move around the farm as quickly as others but he more than makes up for this by his effort in the maintenance tasks and by being able to drive the trucks and forklift. Colin has quickly become a very valuable, appreciated member of our team".

Derek Whitney of STEPS Employment would like more Rural employers to read about Colin's positive contribution to Eden Farms and share the success by offering employment to other enthusiastic STEPS participants.

We are pleased to offer ongoing support, wage incentives and other assistance to any business

Caloundra

Elaine Dornan, who is a former Caloundra Employment Consultant, runs GET THAT JOB training to all Sunshine Coast STEPS offices. To the participants who have finished the course will be receiving certificates within three weeks of finishing the work shop.

We would like to welcome Eva O'Reilly who started in January as an Employment Consultant for the Caloundra team. Eva did job shadowing during her first few weeks and has recently been given her own caseload. Eva is excited about meeting her participants and workers.

The Caloundra Team would like to congratulate all the participants that have been placed since the last newsletter. We have had 19 job placements for November to the end of December with 14 of those placed still in employment.

A big salute to Michael MacNamara one of STEPS Caloundra's recent success stories. Having decided that the open employment market wasn't for him, Michael decided that he would strike out on his own and start up his own garden services business.

As Michael didn't have a driver's licence, this meant he had to pushbike to his clients carrying

"We're with you every step of the way!"

all his equipment on his bike, around the hills of Caloundra this is no mean feat. Michael proceeded to build up his client base to a respectable 30 plus hours per month.

Whilst this was good exercise in winter it was impossible for him to carry on doing so once the heat of summer hit, so Michael came up with a brilliant solution - he identified an electronic scooter that was classed as a bicycle by QLD Transport and required no licence or registration he cashed in some savings and purchased the electric bike.

Since getting the bike he has increased his client base to 45 plus hours per month and he is looking forward to more clients coming on board.

The team at STEPS Caloundra are very proud of Michael and the initiative, determination and sheer hard work he has put into making a success of his business and the amount of return business he gets is testimony to his high service standard.

I would also like to remind that those of you who are having a difficult time in accessing our branch and find accessing the Maroochydore branch easier, just speak to your consultant as in certain cases it might be possible for you to receive your services from Maroochydore.

Also a reminder for some of our participants we have moved offices to 37 Bowman Rd Caloundra please contact us if you are having difficulties finding our new premises. We are still running Facilitated Job Search; on Monday to Wednesday between 9am to 12pm.

Steven Chand
Branch Manager

Hervey Bay

Congratulations to all of our participants who were successful in obtaining employment. Well done to Neil who is working full-time as a Refrigeration Sales Service Trades Assistant with Arctic Cold and guess what Neil gets to drive around in a company car. Neil has been with us for just under a year, so perseverance really does pay off. Neil

said he's loving his job and will never leave. Onya Neill!

A special good on you goes to Keith, who recently left school and his employer, the Carriers Arms Hotel in Maryborough. Keith was working as a Kitchen Hand but couldn't meet his employer's expectations. Keith's Employment Consultant then approached the Carriers Arms for a trial and after just one day Keith obtained paid work. Mark the head Chef stated that Keith has a position as a Kitchen Hand for as long as he wants. Mark had barriers himself as a teenager and has taken Keith under his wing. There are Employers out there that will give you a go it's finding the right match and not getting down when it doesn't work out the first time. Keep trying.

We are starting up our sausage sizzles as we know how much you have enjoyed them. Everyone agreed the beach is the go so make sure your available on the 20th March 12.00 noon at the Ron Burton memorial Park across the road from Gringo's Mexican Restaurant, The Esplanade Torquay. Give us a ring if you are having transport problems.

The Dream Building Formula

Decide what you want

Write it down or get your EC to write it down for you

Say it out loud three times a day

Set a date

Think of it often

Dream and imagine yourself doing it

Develop a plan of action get your EC to help you

Do three things everyday toward your goal

Stay positive

Act as though you have achieved it

Carla Blacklock
Branch Manager

"We're with you every step of the way!"

Maroochydore

Joanne Nissen commenced service with STEPS Employment in early January 2008. Joanne enrolled in "Get That Job" course and graduated with flying colours. While Joanne's first job choice was not cleaning, she jumped at the opportunity of a work trial at Kentucky Fried Chicken Kawana, as she lives just down the road!

After being successful at the work trial, Joanne commenced paid work, and in a short time, she had proved her skills and commitment to the point where KFC are looking at expanding her current duties. Joanne has started planning for the future and is now saving for a trip to Italy and a deposit for her first home.

Congratulations Joanne on your success and many thanks to KFC Kawana for your continued support.

Andrew Spencer
Branch Manager (Acting)

Nambour

It has been a very busy few months with lots of new participants coming onto the programme. I have met most of you, but to those I haven't met – welcome!!

We welcome Darren Hilliard to the Nambour team. He has taken the role of an Employment Support Consultant.

In the last 3 months, over 20 of our participants have commenced in either casual or part time employment. Congratulations to all of you, and please remember to speak to your employment support consultant if you need further assistance on the job. That is what we are here for – to

encourage, help and support you to get and keep a job.

Here are a few tips on jobsearching:

Another division of STEPS is our Job Placement Section, at the moment based in Nambour office. This is where employers lodge vacancies with us, and we match clients to those jobs. They cover the whole of the Sunshine Coast from Noosa to Caloundra and the Hinterland. If you have not already registered, speak to your employment support consultant to get you registered. Or you can come in to Nambour and register with Siobhan and Kelly on your own. They need a current resume so bring a copy, or you can get one from your support office.

You need to check the Australian Government Job search website for any suitable vacancies you would like to apply. Either contact your consultant or the person listed on the vacancy. You also need to access your personal page on a regular basis. This is where you can check if you have been matched to jobs, update your personal details and see when your next appointments are.

To perform both of these you need to go to:

www.jobsearch.gov.au

You will need your jobseeker number and PIN number that would have been issued when you registered with STEPS.

Good luck in your job search
See your consultant for any assistance

Trish Cameron
Branch Manager


"We're with you every step of the way!"

Office Locations

Far North Queensland


Aitkenvale

Level 1 281-285 Ross River Road, Aitkenvale

 (07) 4727 2600


Ayr (Outreach Branch)

139B Young Street

 (07) 4783 4811


Bowen

Shop 4/36 Powell Street, Bowen

 (07) 4786 9700

Collinsville (Outreach Branch)


Shop 1/45-47 Railway Road, Collinsville

 (07) 4785 5900

Northern Territory

Alice Springs


Shop 9/16 Hartley Street, Alice Springs

 (08) 8950 7600

Sunshine Coast Region


Caloundra

37 Bowman Road, Caloundra

 (07) 5438 5500


Maroochydore

78 Duporth Avenue, Maroochydore

 (07) 5409 9000

Nambour


Shop 29 Centenary Square, Nambour

 (07) 5453 8700

Wide Bay Region


Bundaberg

110 Targo Street, Bundaberg

 (07) 4150 1900


Hervey Bay

Suite 2 / 17 Torquay Street, Pialba

 (07) 4194 3900

Maryborough (Outreach Branch)

Shop 1/373 Kent Street, Maryborough

 (07) 4120 2800