



Annual Report
2007-2008



It's all about you.

Our vision

To enhance our community by empowering people to maximise their potential.

Foundation values

Trust, honesty, integrity

Respect for and recognition of individual needs

Valuing individuals – their worth as individuals and their contribution

Valuing opportunity for growth, development and support

Determination and commitment



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Our mission

STEPS will exercise self-determination and ensure continued success and rejuvenation through service, research, development and expansion.

STEPS will provide high quality services that are founded on our vision, mission and values, ensuring ethical and professional behaviours.

STEPS will create an organisational environment that seeks and encourages innovation and continuous improvement.

STEPS will strive to be the organisation of choice for all Stakeholders through a caring commitment to our values.

As an employer, **STEPS** will provide staff with a secure environment that is stimulating and challenging, embracing open communication and professional development.

Board of Management



President Carmel Crouch



Secretary Christine Jones



Treasurer Helen Ferguson

Adelaide's slice of life

For Adelaide, working at Sister's Organic Café is like baking your cake and eating it too.

The view of the Maroochy River from the balcony is refreshing, staff are helpful, and Adelaide's doing what she loves – working with food.

"I would love to work every day at Sisters", said Adelaide who currently works three half-days a week, after initially starting with a job trial. Her tasks include assisting the chef with recipes, kitchen preparation, washing up, taking food to tables and occasionally chatting with regulars.

Adelaide's fondness of Sister's is shared by her father, Russell, who is thrilled with the positive changes that part-time work and a range of other lifestyle choices have made to his 18-year-old daughter.

Through the discipline of work – around the home and at Sister's – a fitness plan, and the social interaction with her work mates, the world is now seeing the real Adelaide.

Somewhere between one in 10,000 and 20,000 people are born with William's Syndrome, a genetic condition first identified in the early 1950s.

The condition throws up many challenges for Adelaide, who after leaving Year 12 in a Special Education Unit gained a Certificate II in Hospitality. With the help from others including STEPS Employment Adelaide is now achieving many personal goals, and with her own personal trainer and free weekends, she's the envy of her workmates.

"Adelaide has more ability to be responsible around the home, and she's become more articulate," said Russell.

"Before she'd try to describe something and be all over the place. Now she can think, and articulate what she wants to say. That's only happened since she's been working."

Daryl, a chef at Sister's, works with Adelaide regularly. He said he believes his responsibilities extend beyond guiding her around tasks needed in the kitchen.

"It's more than teaching Adelaide to be a kitchen-hand and waitress. For me it's showing her how to communicate with people and have work relationships – something she'll need later down the line.

"When Adelaide is at work, everyone gels together – there's a lot more consideration. There's extra effort needed to help her eventually go on to be an independent worker – that's the big motivation for me."

Andrew, the STEPS Employment Consultant who continues to support Adelaide, said his great challenge when working on-site is resisting the amazing array of delights on display.

"The team at Sister's Organic Café are great! They are giving Adelaide the opportunity to grow, both in her work life and as a person as well."



President's report



As I sit down to write this report on the 2008 year a number of achievements come to mind and I am reminded of the advances and challenges STEPS has overcome over the last 12 months. Just as important as achievement, is the way that we reach our goals.

Our CEO, Gary Hooper, continues to guide our expanding team from strength to strength, rallying behind management and staff to ensure that they never lose sight of STEPS' core values.

The vision and mission of STEPS is prominently displayed in all our offices as a source of reference and inspiration.

I have heard both the vision and mission statements quoted many times at various STEPS meetings, along with regular mention of the strategic plan. I am proud to be part of an organisation that truly believes in, and acts out, its purpose.

On behalf my fellow members on the Board of Directors I would like to thank the entire team at STEPS for their tireless commitment to our service, and ensuring that STEPS Disability Qld Inc continues to enhance our community by empowering people to maximise their potential.

I would especially like to acknowledge the dedication of my fellow Board Members of whom it is a privilege to work along side. Each member has readily accepted the responsibilities of being part of STEPS in addition to being operational business owners in their own right.

However it is with great sadness and the deepest of respect that I must announce the retirement from the Board of Shelly Wabersinke after 13 years and Ron Studdock after five years, both of whom have helped shape the direction that STEPS has taken to become the successful and flourishing organisation it is today.

Looking ahead to 2009 brings with it an enormous sense of triumph when I stop to consider that STEPS will be celebrating it's 20th year of commitment to helping people with disabilities.

It all began in 1989 with a small group of concerned parents from the Sunshine Coast who recognised the need for a variety of employment options for their children and other young people with an intellectual disability.

They applied for and received funding to establish a supported employment agency which commenced operations in 1990 and the rest, as they say, is history.



CEO report



The challenging financial year of 2006-2007 is now well behind us. Due to a steady flow of uncapped referrals and increased outcomes, the 2007-2008 years have become our finest years for a variety of reasons.

Outstandingly, STEPS reported a record surplus, reaching almost \$800,000. This amount is equivalent to STEPS entire income for the year 2000 - a fact that vividly illustrates the organisation's growth over the last eight years. Growth in staffing and client numbers are also noteworthy. During the same period, staff numbers have increased from 18 to 108 and client numbers in employment alone from 120 to almost 1200.

The finalisation of our fourth merger, this time with Impact Employment in Townsville, has positioned the organisation as one of the largest providers in North Queensland, now offering both capped and uncapped programs.

The strategic plan was reviewed and now confirms the general direction of the organisation, highlighting long-term key result areas in growth, diversification, strengthening of administration systems through the Business Excellence Framework, and a greater emphasis on staff development and customer service. I am grateful for the time our Board and staff volunteered for this process.

The Board's approval of the full introduction of a new corporate structure represented one of the first steps toward implementing the strategic plan.

A Senior Management Team is now in place, with Managers and General Managers covering the Employment, Community Services and Corporate divisions. A Business Development Manager is included in the team to facilitate growth and diversification within the organisation.

Community Services experienced dramatic growth, with the success of the NDCO (National Disability Coordination Officer) tender in two Queensland regions, and the handover of Capability Concepts' in-house respite, in-home care and advocacy programs in Gin Gin. Along with the Supported Wage and Workplace Modification programs, a strong base for growth is now in place.

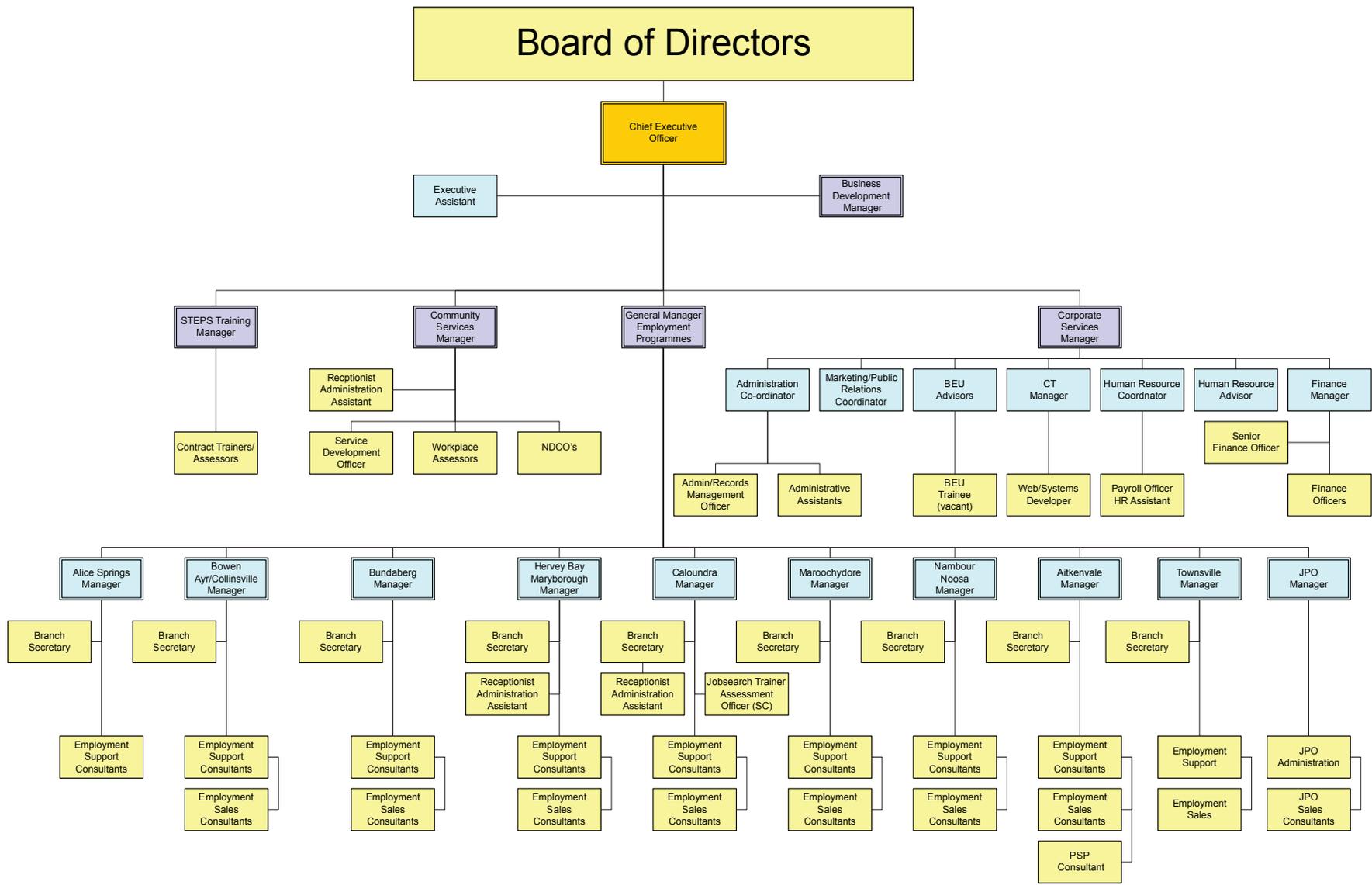
Based on the strategic plan's direction, STEPS Training consolidated and re-focused on accredited training, seeking to take advantage of the new Federal Government's plans for the skilling of Australia through the productivity program. STEPS Training will maintain its good reputation in professional development courses and encourage mutually-beneficial partnerships.

The organisation is now being examined to strengthen corporate governance, to define the roles of Board members, CEO and senior staff, and to maintain the current practice of keeping operational matters at staff level and strategic matters at Board level.

To assist in this process, the Board has begun the TAGS (The Australian Governance system) program in writing its corporate policies.

I would like to once again thank the Board for their support during the year, and particularly the President Carmel Crouch for being a sounding board as we weave our way through our "new world". I would also like to thank the staff who continue to adapt very quickly to our new environment.

STEPS Disability Qld Inc



Community
Services
report



Community Services report



The STEPS Community Service team

Where opportunity meets aspirations

Late in 2007, STEPS Community Service (SCS) became a new division of STEPS Disability Inc. This new division is built on the strategic vision to drive a new future for STEPS by providing a comprehensive range of community services and products.

It is intended that Community Services will extend STEPS excellent services and strengthen the organisation's reputation as a respected provider of services throughout Australia.

By developing quality disability and community care programs STEPS Community Services will help build better communities through the inclusion of people with a disability and other disadvantaged groups.

By the first quarter of 2008, Community Services had established its administration and management capability, an important prerequisite for future growth. Recruitment of 12 employees each with specific skills and knowledge also took place.

Quick progress in a range of areas came as a result of a collaborative development with all departments within STEPS - meeting legislation requirements, financial management, ICT needs and marketing and promotional materials. Only through



Barbara Davidson, Manager of STEPS Community Services

STEPS' capacity to provide strategic leadership and operational structure in a responsive and timely response was this made possible.

Five separate disability programs under the SCS umbrella are now in progress, working across Queensland from offices in Caloundra, Bundaberg and Townsville.

Program description and geographical boundaries

NDCO

The National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) works toward the Australia-wide referral, coordination and referral program to deliver support services for people with disabilities that are, or will be attending, university, TAFE or other training organisations. It seeks to achieve this by building links with services so that they have assistance at all levels.

NDCO Region 20:

Covering Moreton (including the Lockyer Valley), Toowoomba, Darling Downs, South-West Queensland, Sunshine Coast, Central-West statistical boundaries.

NDCO Region 22:

Covering Mackay, Whitsundays, Burdekin, Townsville, Hinchinbrook, Cassowary Coast, Cairns, Cape York, Tablelands, Charters Towers, Mt Isa and North-West Queensland, including the Gulf.

Workplace Modification Scheme

The **Workplace Modification Scheme** funds SCS assessors to determine what physical or environmental workplace adjustments, or specific items of equipment, will reduce restrictions and barriers to employment for workers with a disability.

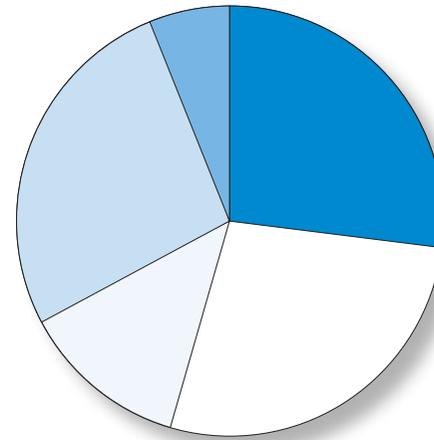
Supported Wage Scheme

The **Supported Wage Scheme** funds assessors to determine productivity of a worker in a specific workplace by measuring that worker's productivity against a co-worker who is skilled to do the same job, in the same workplace. This process decides on formal and legally binding, minimum productivity rates and wages. STEPS Assessors cover Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Disability Support Services

Disability Support Services provide in-home respite and community access support covering Gin Gin and North Burnett.

STEPS Community Service's Commonwealth and State contracts, with an annual gross income of \$440,000



- NDCO Region 20
- NDCO Region 22
- Workplace Modifications
- Supported Wage
- Disability Support Services



This workplace modification carried out at a business in Gympie brought a smile to Robert, who could continue working

STEPS moved the already functioning Workplace Assessor service into SCS division with a directive to expand and increase service to metropolitan and regional Queensland. The assessors provide three separate services to employers, jobseeker/workers and employment service providers.

These are Workplace Modifications, Supported Wage and Infirm Workers Permit Productivity Based Wage Assessments. Funded by Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) these services are currently deemed as under utilised by the employment industry.



STEPS' Workplace Assessor, Brian Kerr, and STEPS Community Services Manager Barbara Davidson

Strategies for growth and development of the STEPS workplace assessors will be achieved through:

- Employer and community awareness campaign
- Comprehensive media branding
- Excellent customer service "word of mouth"
- Employer and Disability Employment Network consultation
- Increasing assessors' regional listings.

SCS has, and will continue, to allocate resources for the promotion of these schemes, with a view to increase public awareness.

Workplace modifications can reduce restrictions and barriers to employment. They can greatly benefit people with a disability and employers, resulting in:

- finding a job
- keeping a job
- improving productivity
- making the impossible, possible.

SCS's successful NDCO tender resulted in being allocated two regions of the national program, which combined, cover 70% of Queensland.

In keeping with current federal government objectives of social inclusion and skilling for the future, the program aims to increase the number of people with a disability accessing higher education, specifically a Certificate III qualification or above.

Initially, SCS's two NDCOs tackled the challenge of profiling education, training and service providers, building relationships, and proving that they could make a difference to the fragmented communication between providers. The large geographical area is a constant consideration to strategies.

Since January 2008 the NDCO's have made a significant impact in identifying and meeting with key stakeholders within the Regional Disability Networks, universities, TAFE, councils, Disability and Education state government departments.

Using this information, the NDCO team developed a comprehensive website, with the end-user firmly in focus. The website provides information about the NDCO program, news, events, tools for career pathway development, an innovative "search for service" facility and much more.

The site has become an important communication medium and also an instrument used in TAFE's course delivery, and by DEEWR itself. Other NDCOs have endorsed the website as the "high benchmark" for the NDCO program.

The NDCO's activity progressed into running events called "Tertiary Taste Testers" where students, prospective students with a disability, and their families could learn more about services available at institutions.

Collaborative working parties were also formed to address key barriers to participation, for example, the reasons for a high rate of students with mental health conditions dropping out during the first five weeks of enrolment.

STEPPING into community partnerships

SCS forms community partnerships to build the best opportunities for people with a disability and extend quality service.

Partnerships include:

- Telstra Country Wide
- Regional Councils - Sunshine Coast, Bundaberg, Mackay
- Regional Disability Networks
- COAG Mental Health action plan working group
- Education Queensland
- USQ, CQU, JCU (universities)
- Humanware
- Chinchilla Group Training Group
- JinJinburra Aboriginal community
- Wandiny Home and Community (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service)
- Community Radio 96.3 FM
- Sunshine Coast Daily
- Education Queensland, TAFE

Gin Gin Disability Support Services

In the first half of 2008 SCS established its foundational operations, undertook research to understand and grow existing programs, and to provide strategic and operational support to new programs.

Building a public profile and image from scratch was considered a priority, and a key to sustained growth. Through establishing new community partnerships, networking, marketing and promotion, results are beginning to emerge.

After 12 months of planning and negotiation, SCS acquired a Disability Support Services operating from Gin Gin delivering services to Kolan and North Burnett Region. The small, established service first approached STEPS a larger organisation with a similar value base.

This acquisition required STEPS to become an approved Disability Services Queensland (DSQ) non-government service provider, and gave SCS opportunity to grow state-funded services. Compliance with DSQ Quality Assurance Standards required substantial development, but SCS looks forward to meeting its new clientele with excitement and enthusiasm.



Gin Gin staff



New support plan development tools will ensure SCS capture the individual attributes, talents, interest, priorities and support needs of our clients from the start of service delivery.

Due to the absence of suitable professional office space in Gin Gin, the search continues for a headquarters from which to provide administrative and technical support for the service. Currently, the plan is to find a residence located in a commercial zone on the main street of Gin Gin.

SCS management visited similar high performing services in other parts of the country to gain business intelligence and develop SCS's unique programs.

For example, STEPS Post School Service is ready to be delivered to school leaver who do not have access to vocational training or employment options. The program provides skill training, community connections and participation in community projects.

Training report





Shelly Campbell, Manager, STEPS Training

The future looks bright for STEPS Training. Over the last 12 months the organisation's registered training organisation (RTO) has built a solid foundation of systems and resources.

These assets equip us to respond quickly to trends and opportunities, for example those afforded by the new Labour Government's push to close the 'skills gap' and increase participation in the workforce.

STEPS Training successfully extended its scope of registration across a diverse range of industry and qualification levels in line with our overarching strategy to move back to an accredited training focus. This expansion will support our ability to match the industry demand skills gaps with high quality, nationally recognised skills training.

Further expansion into complimentary industries is a priority, as shown in the STEPS Training Business Plan. Our ability to match industry demand will be further enhanced by engaging in an active research and development function, as well as networking and consultation with employers and industry through strong community integration across all STEPS regions in Queensland and Northern Territory.

Identifying and acting on opportunities is the key.

Our scope of registration now includes:

Qualifications

CHC20102	Certificate II in Community Services Support Work
CHC20202	Certificate II in Community Services Work
CHC20302	Certificate II in Community Services (First Point of Contact)
CHC30102	Certificate III in Aged Care Work
CHC30202	Certificate III in Home and Community Care
CHC30302	Certificate III in Disability Work
CHC30802	Certificate III in Community Services Work
CHC40102	Certificate IV in Aged Care Work
CHC40302	Certificate IV in Disability Work
CHC40502	Certificate IV in Employment Services
CHC40902	Certificate IV in Community Services Work
CHC41602	Certificate IV in Community Services (Lifestyle and Leisure)
SIT20207	Certificate II in Hospitality

Accredited courses

30369QLD	Course in Adult Literacy and Numeracy
30625QLD	Certificate I in Work Readiness
30719QLD	Course in Adult Literacy and Numeracy
39099QLD	Course in Skills for the Future
39150QLD	Course in Vocational Literacy
39151QLD	Course in Vocational Literacy 1
39152QLD	Course in Vocational Literacy 2
39153QLD	Course in Vocational Literacy 3
39154QLD	Course in Vocational Literacy 4
39160QLD	Course in Vocational Numeracy
39161QLD	Course in Vocational Numeracy 1
39162QLD	Course in Vocational Numeracy 2
39163QLD	Course in Vocational Numeracy 3
39164QLD	Course in Vocational Numeracy 4
39170QLD	Course in Pre-Training Assessment
39171QLD	Course in Pre-Training Assessment
39180QLD	Course in Vocational Literacy
39181QLD	Course in Vocational Numeracy

Job seeker training

The 'Get that Job' program, was trialled over the last 12 months, part of STEPS Training's commitment to the continued social and vocational development of job seekers registered with STEPS Employment.

The program is designed to assist job seekers identify career goals, learning pathways, develop effective job search skills and apply these in close consultation with trainers, employment support and employment sales consultants.

Positive feedback from many job seekers who successfully finished the program is complimented by a high percentage of graduates gaining secure employment. Congratulations to all participants and staff who have helped make the program a success.

STEPS Training secured funding for the delivery of the TAKE AIM II program on the Sunshine Coast. This program seeks to enhance the vocational and life skills of 20 job seekers with a goal of maximising opportunities for sustainable job



placements in housekeeping. With the support of local accommodation providers, participants will be given the opportunity to experience working in the industry and practice their skills first hand.

STEPS Training will continue to research and apply for funding opportunities and develop innovative jobseeker programs to assist job seekers up-skill and move into employment.



Professional development training

It is clear that the STEPS Training brand continues to be a household name within the Disability Employment Network around Australia.

A sustained level of requests for in-house professional development training delivery continues.

Opportunities to strengthen our position as a leader in the delivery of quality DEN-specific training will be presented by positioning STEPS Training to respond to the expected changes over the next 12 months.

Industry training partnerships

The long-term success of STEPS Training is dependant on strong relationships with stakeholders. One of these key stakeholders is 'industry'.

STEPS Training is currently working with STEPS Employment in the development of a workplace specific training program that aims to develop and recognise the skills and knowledge of our marketing and sales consultants.

Successful implementation of this project will provide the platform on which STEPS Training will build the 'partnership' component of business growth with the aim of becoming a 'training provider of choice'.

Employment
report





Employment report



John Conway, General Manager, STEPS Employment

More importantly we are supplying quality programs, services and job opportunities. At the heart of this work we see the potential of many people realised, to live more full and meaningful lives through employment.

Empowering people to maximise their potential

STEPS Employment Division has gone from strength to strength through assisting a record number of jobseekers with a disability into employment. In addition, the Personal Support Program has assisted participants with non-vocational barriers to realise their aspirations.

Many Australians with a disability who want to work still experience difficulties finding suitable employment, while at the same time a large number of employers struggle to find people with suitable skills. As a result training and assistance have become crucial for the welfare of individuals.

In this context there is a great deal of opportunity for STEPS Employment to assist people with disabilities to realise their aspirations, so that they can participate in the labour market and enjoy the same degree of self determination as the broader community.

The past year has been one of significant growth for STEPS Employment Services Division from both an operational and leadership perspective.

Once again substantial changes in government policy and funding has created extra costs, adjustments and replanning to the division, but the challenges are being met.

We have substantially expanded our service capacity and continue to enhance our community by providing support to a greater number of individuals and employers.

Joanne's building a shining future

If needed, you can check your hair by looking in the stainless steel doors at Kawana Shoppingtown KFC.

The regular shine, and pristine condition of the shop inside and out, is courtesy of Joanne, a determined young lady who's going places.

Joanne came to STEPS Employment with a broad range of training under her belt and some firm personal goals, including world travel.

"I'm working toward a holiday in Europe," said Joanne. "My best friend really wants to go to Italy and a few other countries. So we've just got to wait until we save the money."

After graduating from Year 12 and earning qualifications in Horticulture, Information Technology and Child Care, personal issues threw Joanne's life and career plans into a tail spin.

With help, Joanne tackled the challenges and began rebuilding, regaining the resolve to reach for her goals.

She faithfully attended job search sessions at STEPS' office until the opportunity arose at KFC. Management were so impressed by Joanne's work ethic at the job trial, they responded with a 'definite' when asked if they wanted to employ her part-time.

"Joanne is very dedicated to her job," said Emelia, Manager of the KFC Kawana. "She is reliable, punctual and usually very thorough with her cleaning."

"She completed all tasks each week including any additional tasks allocated by the manager on duty."

STEPS Employment Consultant, Jerome, supported Joanne in the initial stages, getting her familiar with the chemicals required for the job, and giving her moral support.

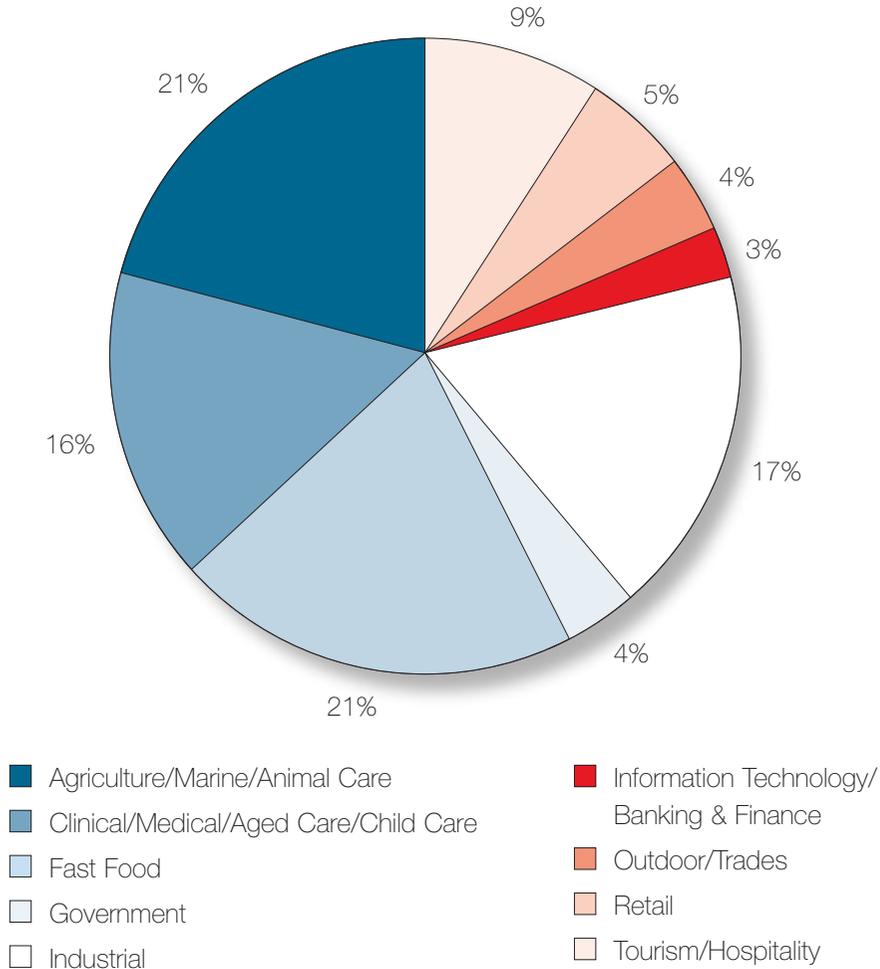
"Since Joanne started, her checklist has grown, such is the quality of her work," said Jerome.

"Her first goal was to gain employment. She's done that, and her future goal is to get work in her chosen field of retail and of course to travel to Italy with friends."



Job placement by industry

The graph demonstrates the range of industry sectors where participants have been placed into work.

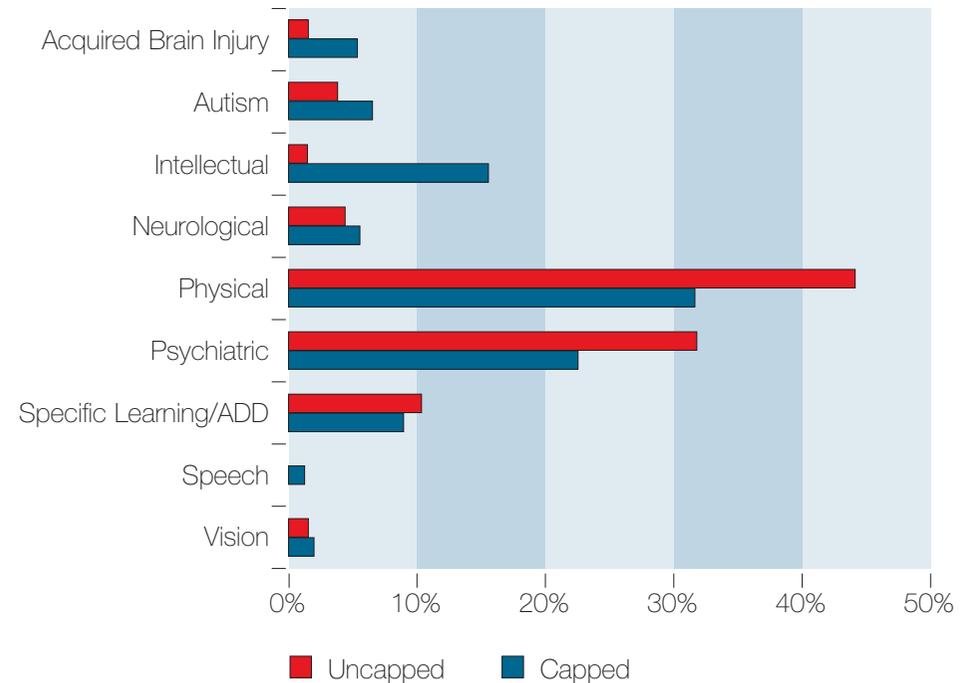


Work Capacity

Work capacity for the purpose of eligibility and streaming into STEPS Disability Employment Network program is determined by Job Capacity Assessment (JCA) conducted by a JCA provider. Once eligibility to STEPS Employment is determined, job seekers are referred into one of two streams:

- **capped** - a stream which provides services to job seekers who have an assessed work capacity of eight or more hours per week who require either long-term support in the workplace and/or are unable to work at award wages.
- **uncapped** - a stream that provides services to job seekers who require part-time work only, an assessed work capacity of 15 to 29 hours per week, and an ability to work at award wages and to become independent in the workplace within two years.

STEPS Employment Participants by Disability %



Our people

In order to achieve our goals STEPS Employment is continuing to develop new strategies and improve upon our service delivery.

As part of this process, significant resources have been invested into staff training conferences held in November 2007 and February 2008. Practical training and strategies to improve performance were the main focus of the conferences. However the secondary objective was to bring back a disability focus with staff and management.

At individual branches, staff attended a variety of training courses including specific mental health training to increase their skills base and better assist and support both participants and their employers.

Likewise, staff across the Employment division contributed to the successful implementation of a new third party software program, DENMAX. This system delivers major reductions in the administration burden, and provides more detailed and timely reporting, analysis and management reports.

STEPS Employment Division staff have worked hard to achieve great results and I thank them for their commitment.

Quality Assurance and Business Excellence

In an audit conducted by Focus Integrated Services, STEPS Employment Division was confirmed to be meeting or exceeding all of the Disability Service Standards.

The author noted:

"STEPS presented as an organisation of high professional standards committed to the achievement of merit based employment outcomes targeted to the individual preferences of the client base. A sound procedural system has been established against the 12 service standards that enables the achievement and maintenance of a quality service outcome. Feedback from participants was extremely positive across all sites and demonstrates the commitment of all staff in providing excellent quality outcomes and customer satisfaction".

Although we take pride in this excellent report, STEPS Employment continues to make minor administrative improvements to systems and processes as part of our commitment to business excellence. Through the SIR process we constantly strive to further identify areas where improvements can be made.

Strategic accomplishments

It is a pleasure at the end of another financial year to report on a successful year both financially and in our performance measures.

STAR Ratings contract to date (June 08) are being compiled and are due to be released in August. Our most recent Health Checks indicate that we continue to make steady progress. Our goal is to be an organisation with an average "4 Star rating" by June 2009.

Our capped program grew by over 45 places; predominately through our Alice Springs office which received additional places from DEEWR as part of the intervention in the Northern Territory. Caloundra, Maroochydore,

Bundaberg and Bowen also received small allocations of additional clients.

Our uncapped program passed the 300 participant milestone and continues to grow. Performance in the uncapped stream is very strong with all offices above the national average in securing 26 week outcomes for our participants.

The Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) approved the merger of STEPS with Impact Employment Service in Townsville. Management and staff at Impact remain very positive about the change, and transition issues progressed smoothly due to the level of cooperation between the two organisations.

Future developments

The Federal Budget announcements and the discussion paper on “The Future of Employment Services in Australia” brought both positive and challenging news.

The Government extended DEN and Volunteer Rehabilitation Services (VRS) contracts until 28th February 2010 to allow further consideration of the disability employment service's future, including the outcomes of the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy.

This presents an excellent opportunity for STEPS to strengthen its position to tender in 2010 through performance improvement.

Merger and partnership possibilities with like-minded providers continue to be explored through a consultative approach. It is expected that, in the lead up to the Disability Employment Services tenders in late 2009, the market will contract providing opportunities for further growth.

We are expecting the release of the tender for the new Employment Service in August 2008. The new Employment Services model (to replace Job Network) will replace seven contracts with one universal employment service comprising four streams of assistance. Providers will be encouraged to help jobseekers

develop an individualised plan including a mix of vocational and non-vocational activities with a focus on developing skills needed by employers.

This presents a real opportunity for the Employment division to tender for mainstream employment services.

In closing

Our work is not possible without the support of many people, employment managers and staff, Corporate Services, divisional managers and staff, and of course, our hard working Board.

We thank everyone who has made a contribution to our success. We would also like to express our thanks to DEEWR, employers and our business partners.

Next year marks the 20th year of delivering successful services helping people with disabilities achieve their goals and aspirations. In the year ahead we look forward to continuing the delivery of services to our existing clients, and the opportunities that will unfold.

CASE STUDY

Who needs a forklift when you've got Heath?



NCP Bathroom Centres have been in business for 55 years and employ over 100. But they have to work pretty hard to keep up with Heath.

Store Manager, Dave Cherry, admits to being hesitant at first, but he has no regrets now.

“We hired Heath as a truck driver and storeman. He's a real gentle giant, everyone likes him, and we always get good reports from our customers,” David said.

“He has become a good asset for us, allowing us to get through more deliveries and expand our business.”

And Heath wouldn't want to be anywhere else: “I like making the deliveries best and chatting to the other truck drivers.”

Dave was very pleased with the backup-service they got from STEPS.

“STEPS came in and supervised with the training and it was a great help. Heath is trustworthy, reliable – and always there. We wouldn't hesitate to recommend.”

STEPS
Business
Development
and Corporate
Services



Business Development report



Stuart Coward, STEPS Business Development Manager

Like most business sectors of today, STEPS operates in an environment of change. Innovation and diversification are needed in order to flourish and build for the future.

The Business Development Division of STEPS Disability Qld Inc exists to ensure the organisation continues to operate from a sustainable base. A broader base ensures greater stability.

Business Development supports all existing divisions of the organisation with a view to growth and maximising potential of existing operations. It also seeks and investigates new business and growth opportunities.

The strategic objectives of the Business Development's division are:

- Identifying industry needs and trends,
- Identifying opportunities for business improvement,
- Generating leads to establish new business opportunities,
- Assessing potential opportunities and determining their feasibility.

Looking back at the history of STEPS, growth and development is a continuing theme. So too is a strong grip on core values and vision. There is every confidence that these attributes, so firmly established in the organisation, will continue.

National and even international operations are desirable and entirely feasible. Consider that in less than 20 years a small group of people with a regional focus has grown into an organisation with branches throughout the state of Queensland, and the Northern Territory.

To this end, the Business Development Division will establish, develop and maintain key relationships with existing and potential clients, partners, service providers and stakeholders nationally and internationally.

We will also continue to research and develop new business enterprises that will create employment for all of our Disability Employment Network clients, for example, the provision of contract cleaning services and other suitable employment creation strategies. Where possible synergies exist, partnerships with other businesses and providers will be explored to engineer employment.

All surplus funds will be re-injected back into the organisation to enable us to continue offering excellence in service and support, as well as growth and development for our client base.

The Business Development Division itself is growing, yet to reach the first anniversary of its launch at the time of writing. Since inception, projects undertaken include:

- Supporting of STEPS Training through promoting of existing programs to new markets and exploration of new program delivery opportunities
- Investigation of specific and targeted business opportunities within the growing aged-care sector
- Maintaining and developing the organisation's profile through local and national networking events, seeking to build new business relationships and opportunities.
- Assisting the Marketing/Public Relations arm of STEPS in developing and implementing marketing strategies
- Identifying merger and partnership opportunities

These are very exciting times for STEPS as we continue to grow and diversify, while at the same time becoming an employer of choice, and achieving business excellence.

Corporate Services report



Corporate Services Manager, Paula Payne

STEPS Corporate Services reflects the structural change of the organisation during 2007-2008.

This change involved the formalisation of the Corporate Services Division (CS) to strengthen the cohesion between the six corporate departments - Finance, Human Resources, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), Administration, Business Excellence Unit (BEU) and Marketing/PR.

As STEPS expands, Corporate Services seeks to manage the significant exchange of corporate knowledge, and provide greater corporate support to the operational divisions.

CS supports the delivery of STEPS' business functions and programs by providing cost effective, efficient and timely corporate services to all divisions:

- **HR:** human resource management, industrial relations, occupational health and safety, staff development, compensation and remuneration management.
- **Finance:** financial reporting, processing financial transactions, and management of STEPS revenue and investments
- **Administration:** property management, provision of general business services, records management, travel, fleet management and insurance

- **ICT:** information management and management of STEPS information technology infrastructure including systems maintenance, user support and IT equipment and stores
- **Marketing/Public Relations:** community relations, incident management, publications, education campaigns and media liaison and releases
- **BEU:** audits (internal and external), quality management, performance monitoring and systems development.

Through the recent time of change and expansion, CS has successfully supported the operational divisions in bringing various projects to fruition.

In addition to these accomplishments, CS has assisted in developing the overall strategic direction for the organisation and managed its human, financial, informational and physical resources.

Business Excellence Unit (BEU)

The Business Excellence Unit (BEU) was established in December 2007 through a restructure within the Corporate Services Division. The BEU was formed in response to the strategic plan and organisational focus on Business Excellence which is an integrated leadership and management system that embraces all facets of an organisation including, leadership, customer and market focus, strategy and planning, people, information and knowledge, process management (improvement and innovation), success and sustainability.

The role of Business Excellence Advisor was developed from the interrelated responsibilities contained in the positions of Quality Manager; Project Manager and Auditor/ Management Relief.

Three incumbent staff members became the three members of the BEU and brought with them 19 years of combined experience, knowledge and skills derived from various roles within STEPS Disability Qld Inc. including administration and finance, client services, employment services branch management; performance monitoring and measurement and quality management. In addition to this, the team also has tertiary qualifications in Training and Assessment and degrees in Learning Design and Social Science.

The BEU conducted the following internal audits:

- Eight Disability Service Standards (DSS) audits within eight branches of the STEPS Employment Division;
- Personal Support Programme (PSP);
- Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF); and
- A gap audit for Capability Concepts prior to merging.

The external audit for Employment Placement Services (DSS), completed in November 2007, found STEPS to be an organisation of high professional standards, maintaining quality service outcomes, with a sound procedural system established against the 12 DSS.

The auditors also noted extremely positive feedback from participants across all sites, that demonstrates the commitment of all staff in providing excellent quality outcomes and customer satisfaction.

Human Resources

Staff Statistics at a glance

Since 1 July 2007 the number of employees at STEPS Disability Qld (SDQ) increased by 14 from 80 to 94.

The 94 staff members are distributed as follows:

Division	Number of Staff
Business Development	1
Community Services	7
Corporate Services	21
Employment Services	63
Training Services	2

The 63 staff employed in the Employment Services Division are located at the following branches:

Branch	Number of Staff
Alice Springs	5
Bowen	6
Bundaberg	8
Caloundra	10
Hervey Bay	6
Maroochydore	8
Nambour	13
Aitkenvale	7

During the same period 43 staff left the organisation. These 43 staff include seven casual staff who did not continue in regular employment and five redundancies due to operational reasons and the closure of

STEPS Job Placement Organisation (JPO) following the decision by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to discontinue the Job Placement program.

In February 2008 the payroll function was transferred from the Finance Department to Human Resources.

Some of the major achievements of Human Resources in the past year include:

- Drafted a new Collective Agreement that was accepted by the majority of staff and lodged on 17 January 2008.
- Conducted a job analysis and redesigned position descriptions into a new format that uses Key Result Areas (KRA's) to describe the critical aspects of each role and provide the basis for setting annual performance goals in the Performance Management and Review Process.
- Provided training to all staff in the Performance Management and Development Policy and procedures (that encompasses performance planning, a progress review and an annual review) that replaced the Performance Management Program.

Marketing / Public Relations

The launch of the Community Services and Business Development Divisions, reinvigoration of STEPS Training, and a growing geographical base for Employment meant a greater need to communicate with the organisation's broadening customer base.

Improving relationships with employers – existing and new customers – was seen as a priority.

To achieve this improvement, STEPS launched a full-time marketing and public relations department at the start of 2008. The priority was, and continues to be, developing an integrated, multi-media approach to marketing and communications – a continuum from branding to sales support.

Researching the needs of stakeholders as a basis for developing a strategic marketing plan is another priority, as is establishing a set of reliable and accurate tools to measure the effectiveness of marketing strategies against business goals.

Employer engagement became a central theme through the coordination and production of new television commercials featuring employer testimonials.

The 12-month TV campaign began in early June in three regional areas – Sunshine Coast, Wide Bay and Townsville. Radio and newspaper advertising featured in Alice Springs and Bowen respectively.

The campaign's launch coincided with the release of a research report compiled from surveys conducted by employment staff throughout all branches. Responses from just over 300 employers were analysed, with recommendations for improving relationships tabled.

Two strong central themes are being promoted as the key to marketing STEPS and its services:

- Story-telling – communicating success stories from across the organisation through various media to relevant stakeholders;
- Association – developing professional, synergistic relationships with people of like-mind in our communities, and promoting these relationships.

These two themes were evident in several key marketing and public relations initiatives under development in 2008.

STEPS' new website, combining all divisions of the organisation and featuring a strong emphasis on success stories, was under development.

An employer breakfast on the Sunshine Coast featuring Brisbane Broncos coach Wayne Bennett as guest speaker was being planned.

An employer's breakfast was held in Caloundra earlier in the year, and all divisions and branches of STEPS attended numerous expos and events.

Through attending these and networking, many employment consultants continue to build strong strategic partnerships with disability, community and industry groups.

The key to increasing and improving business through marketing and public relations will be through a 'whole-of-organisation' approach to corporate communications, that is, all staff contributing to the marketing and promotion of STEPS.





Information & Communication Technology (ICT)

STEPS ICT support is provided in-house. It covers three essential operational areas: network/systems administration; systems/web development and help desk support.

In 2007–08 STEPS's ICT Organisational Plan was updated to identify the ICT support requirements.

During the year several ICT projects were undertaken, including:

- Replacing the existing client management software with DENMAX SAAS. Employment staff benefited from the productivity gains provided by its integration with EA3000.
- Designing and creating a new website for STEPS Community Services, NDCO programme. The resulting website (www.ndco.stepscs.net.au) has been exceptionally well received in peer reviews.
- In recognition of STEPS diversification our website (www.steps.net.au) has been completely rebuilt, and our domain email address changed from @stepsemployment.com.au to @steps.net.au.
- During the year ICT hardware was refreshed under the STEPS three-year replacement strategy, including servers, desktops and laptops. Through the generous donations of the Microsoft Unlimited Potential and Donortec programs we upgraded our Windows Server software and migrated our domain to Exchange 2007.
- In 2008-2009 we are undertaking a major network upgrade to IP MAN with our strategic partner Telstra. We will act as a reference site during the roll-out of Telstra's best of breed high definition videoconferencing solution in our major regional areas.

Finance report

STEPS Disability Qld Inc

ABN 77 168 213 648

Income Statement for the year ended 30 June 2008

	2008	2007
Revenue	7,597,672	5,324,444
Salaries & employee benefits expenses	4,284,012	3,758,314
Advertising & promotion expenses	44,128	80,988
Depreciation expenses	367,609	213,699
Other Expenses	<u>2,108,661</u>	<u>1,621,864</u>
Profit from activities before income tax expense	793,262	[350,421]
Income tax expense	-	-
Profit from activities after income tax expense	<u>793,262</u>	<u>[350,421]</u>

Finance report cont.

STEPS Disability Qld Inc

ABN 77 168 213 648

Statement of Financial Position as at 30th June 2008

	2008	2007
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	698,521	174,673
Receivables	329,241	159,783
Other	28,502	135,101
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,056,264	469,557
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Receivables	316,338	35,000
Property, Plant & Equipment	1,608,487	1,211,776
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	1,924,825	1,246,776
TOTAL ASSETS	2,891,089	1,716,333
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Payables	162,597	268,713
Interest-bearing liabilities	423,244	259,840
Current tax liabilities	195,103	148,027
Provisions	237,132	195,712
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,018,076	872,292
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Interest-bearing liabilities	710,031	418,892
Provisions	60,353	25,782
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	770,384	444,674
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,788,460	1,316,966
NET ASSETS	1,192,629	399,367
EQUITY		
Member's Equity	1,192,629	399,367
TOTAL EQUITY	1,192,629	399,367

A full financial report is produced as an appendix to this annual report and is available upon request from STEPS Corporate Office.

STEPS 2007 Disability Awards

The STEPS 2007 Disability Awards rewards the creativity, aptitude and dedication of people with a disability, their carers, educators, and the organisations and businesses who assist them. It was a night to celebrate their immeasurable contribution to our society and culture.

The Awesome Aussie nominees harnessed their drive and ambition to alter minds, attitudes and perceptions.

They have all made a real difference, standing by their commitments, transforming words into action and achieving outstanding results.

While applauding all nominees, STEPS will continue to work on behalf of all people with a disability, pushing the boundaries, networking with governments, employers and others, to identify the most effective ways of opening up opportunities and establishing further rewards for Awesome Aussies who take up the challenge to excel.

Since holding these awards two years ago there have been many changes to the expectations placed upon jobseekers with a disability. Where once it was a personal decision to obtain employment, for many it has become a requirement. In the face of these changes, many jobseekers continue to show courage and drive to succeed.

As the traditional labour market shrinks for many businesses, many have employed people with disability, and experienced first hand the real rewards that these staff can bring. STEPS thanks all participating employers for taking the time to understand the value of your employees, and for recognising their contribution to your successes.

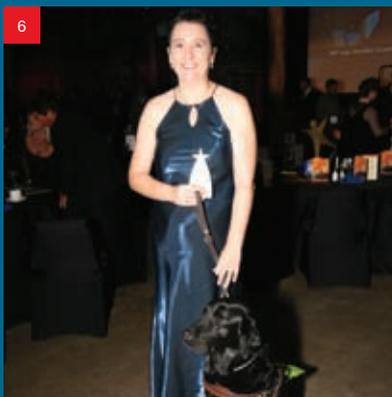
The sponsors of the STEPS awards allowed us to provide the vehicle to acknowledge and reward outstanding contribution and achievement.

To the many family members, carers and friends, your support ignites the will to achieve and your encouragement keeps the flame of ambition burning.

The Awesome Aussie finalists are a guiding light, who inspire us to move towards a more inclusive society.



Award Winners



- 1 Brett Hooper (left) winner of the Youth Achievement Award with Joe Odessa, winner of Manager/Supervisor of the Year Award
- 2 Ty Belnap, the Sports Person of the Year Award winner
- 3 Daniel Bateman, Employment Achievement of the Year Award winner
- 4 Matthew Yee, Artist of the Year award winner
- 5 STEPS' 2007 Disability Award winners
- 6 Josephine Chadwick, winner of the Roger Cox Personal Achievement Award

Our Major Sponsors were:

- Worldwide Online Printing
- Zinc 96.1FM
- Southern Cross Ten Queensland
- Brandmax Media and Marketing

Awards Absolute

Employment Achievement of the Year

- Finalist Raymond Bube from Simply Delicious Bakery
Winner Daniel Bateman The Bricos Group

Employer of the Year finalists

- Finalist Bundaberg Trolley Service
 Finalist Digeridoonas, Caloundra
Winner Simply Delicious Bakery, Kunda Park

Sportsperson of the Year

- Finalist Anthony Shing, Mount Coolom
 Finalist Jason Rosendahl,
 Finalist Peter Goodrich, Nambour
Winner Ty Belnap, Buddina

Artist of the Year

- Finalist Luke Fitzgerald, Maleny
Winner Matthew Yee, Golden Beach

Accessibility Award

- Winner Endeavour Industries, Kunda Park**

Media Coverage Award

Winner Jointly won by Southern Cross Ten Queensland and Brandmax Media & Marketing, Minyama

Manager or Supervisor of the Year Award

Finalist Joshua Money from HomeArt, Maroochydore

Finalist Chris Sales from Total Biz Solutions, Warana

Winner Joe Odessa, Joe's Garage, Noosaville

Educational Service Provider of the Year

Winner Wide Bay Institute of TAFE

Lifestyle Enhancement Award

Finalist Be Lifestyle Connections, Cooroy

Winner Rydges Oasis Resort, Caloundra

Apprentice or Trainee of the Year Award

Finalist Debra Viles

Winner Clinton Van Der Berg

Carer of the Year Award

Winner Sherrie Auld

Supportive Work Team of the Year Award

Finalist Dick Smith Electronics,

Finalist Vanilla Café, Noosaville

Finalist McDonald's, Currumundi

Finalist Erowal Blue Care Retirement

Finalist Village Maintenance Department, Maleny

Winner Nambour General Hospital's Human Resource Development Department, Nambour



Student Achievement Award

Finalist Patrick Gillett, Mooloolaba

Winner Leona Canniford, Ridgewood

Youth Achievement Award

Finalist Alex Somerville, Palmwoods

Finalist Joseph Maher, Coolum Beach

Winner Brett Hooper, Eumundi

The Roger Cox Personal Achievement Award

Finalist Shane Ratcliffe, Twin Waters

Finalist Belinda Wardlaw, Cooroy

Winner Josephine Chadwick,
Eumundi

Divisional List of Staff

Chief Executive Officer

Garry Hooper

Executive Assistant

Stephanie Byrne

Manager – Business Development

Stuart Coward

Employment Services

General Manager – Employment Services John Conway

Program Manager
Le Anne Cartwright

AITKENVALE

Branch Manager – Aitkenvale Lee-Anne Whalley

Kylie Budd
Janet Glynn-Armstrong
Heather Goldstein
Mark Jenkins
Phyllis Iker
Joanne Patroni

ALICE SPRINGS

Branch Manager – Alice Springs Katrina Whan

Andrew Garoni
Joanne Lukehurst
Denise Murray
Mister Shaun

BOWEN

Branch Manager – Bowen Greg Cummins

Erae Connell
Julie Finch
Greg Martin
Anita Short
Sarah Thompson

BUNDABERG

Branch Manager – Bundaberg Glynn Eiser

Kathlene Brown
Matthew Chamberlin
Jennifer Goodchild
Simon Mills
Rebecca Sunnerdale
Evelyn Thompson

CALOUNDRA

Branch Manager – Caloundra Steven Chand

Maria Bowis
Sandra de Jersey
Greg Harris
Aimee Hollonds
Cristina Mihalache
Eva O'Reilly
Kelly Paton
Sharon West

HERVEY BAY / MARYBOROUGH

Branch Manager – Hervey Bay / Maryborough Martin Heneker

Sherrie Auld
Rachael Finn
Karen Goffinet
Ann Horridge
Lori Keevers
Jodi Logovik
Jerome Tueta-Nicholls

MAROOCHYDORE

Branch Manager – Maroochydore Trish Cameron

Siobhan Ablett
Scott Baker
Jacqueline Cartwright
Bradley Heir
Darren Hilliard
Shelly Nichols
Toni Usher

NAMBOUR

Branch Manager – Nambour Nikki de Jonge

Rhonda Casey
Rose Dale
Anne-Maree Dearden
Marlene Dearden
Elaine Doman
Yvonne Higgs
Hazel Innes
David Lindsay
Liza Scriven
Lee Shea
Andrew Spencer
Gleyn Warren
Kylie Watson

TOWNSVILLE

Branch Manager – Townsville Joanne Wittmaack

Linda Di Betta
Karen Easterbrook
Susan Marron
Megan Murray
Gail Naismith
Christine Sheriff
Morgan Wittmaack

Community Services

Manager – Community Services Barbara Davidson

Kim Anderson
Cynthia Cedergreen
Sharon Dulac
Ian Hulsman
Antonia James
Brian Kerr
Marilou Pech
Heather Robson
Deborah Rooskov
Gary Travers

Training Services

Manager – Training Services Shelly Campbell

Corporate Services

Manager – Corporate Services Paula Payne

Sheila Bhola
Helen Brooks
Jennifer Carter
Chris Eaton
Marja Forbes
Samantha Geeson
Kaitlin Hayes
Kris Hobbs
Isabel Hooper
Margaret Hooper
Narelle Jones
Sharon Manzone
Christina Nysschen
Helen Ray
Melissa Slaby
Stacey Spencer
Darren Trinder
Alison van Herberghen
Teisha Wernowski

Corporate & Executive Offices

Floor 2, 84 Sandalwood Lane
FOREST GLEN QLD 4556
PO Box 1184,
MAROOCHYDORE QLD 4558
Ph: (07) 5458 3000
Fax: (07) 5458 5033

Community Services

SUNSHINE COAST

Shop 2 Otranto House
8 Otranto Avenue
PO Box 1804
CALOUNDRA QLD
Ph: (07) 5437 2064
Fax: (07) 5438 2249

GIN GIN

21 Mulgrave Street
GIN GIN QLD 4671
Ph: (07) 4157 2884
Fax: (07) 4157 2883

TOWNSVILLE

Shop 7, 358 Flinders Street
PO Box 1604
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810

Training

Shop 29 Centenary Square
Currie Street
NAMBOUR QLD 4560
PO Box 1184,
MAROOCHYDORE QLD 4558
Ph: (07) 5453 8720
Fax: (07) 5453 8770

Employment Branches

AITKENVALE

Tenancy 4, Level 1
281-285 Ross River Road
PO Box 122
AITKENVALE QLD 4814
Ph: (07) 4727 2600
Fax: (07) 4727 2666

ALICE SPRING

Jock Nelson Centre
Shop 9 / 16 Hartley Street
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0870
PO BOX 79
ALICE SPRINGS NT 0871
Ph: (08) 8950 7600
Fax: (08) 8950 7650

AYR

139B Young Street
PO Box 587
AYR QLD 4807
Ph: (07) 4783 4811
Fax: (07) 4783 3800

BOWEN

Shop 4 / 36 Powell Street
PO Box 574
BOWEN QLD 4805
Ph: (07) 4727 2600
Fax: (07) 4727 2666

BUNDABERG

Shop 3 / 2 Bourbong Street
PO Box 2059
BUNDABERG QLD 4670
Ph: (07) 4150 1900
Fax: (07) 4150 1919

CALOUNDRA

37 Bowman Road
CALOUNDRA QLD 4551
PO Box 1184
MAROOCHYDORE QLD 4558
Ph: (07) 5438 5500
Fax: (07) 5438 5599

COLLINSVILLE

Shop 1, 45/47 Railway Road
COLLINSVILLE QLD 4804
PO Box 574
BOWEN QLD 4805

HERVEY BAY

2 / 17 Torquay Road
PO Box 3040
PIALBA QLD 4655
Ph: (07) 4194 3900
Fax: (07) 4194 1504

MAROOCHYDORE

78 Duporth Avenue
PO Box 1184
MAROOCHYDORE QLD 4558
Ph: (07) 5409 9000
Fax: (07) 5409 9090

MARYBOROUGH

Shop 1, 373 Kent Street
PO Box 597
MARYBOROUGH QLD 4650
Ph: (07) 4120 2800
Fax: (07) 4123 4600

NAMBOUR

Shop 29 Centenary Square
Currie Street
NAMBOUR QLD 4560
PO Box 1184
MAROOCHYDORE QLD 4558
Ph: (07) 5453 8700
Fax: (07) 5453 8770

NOOSA

Suite 2, 3 Lanyana Way
Noosa Fair Shopping Centre
NOOSA HEADS QLD 4567
PO Box 1184
MAROOCHYDORE QLD 4558
Ph: (07) 5447 2711
Fax: (07) 5474 9302

TOWNSVILLE

Shop 7, 358 Flinders Street
PO Box 1604
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810
Ph: (07) 4771 2840
Fax: (07) 4771 2974

Funding

STEPS would like to thank our funding bodies for their continued support.



Australian Government

**Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations**



Queensland Government

Department of Employment and Training



STEPS Disability QLD Inc.

PO Box 1184, Maroochydore Q 4558

Phone: (07) 5458 3000

Fax: (07) 5458 3033

Email: enquiries@steps.net.au

www.steps.net.au