Training Matters


Featuring:
Skillaroos announced
Sustainability in action
Training Providers Forum

Building the workforce to meet the economic and community needs of Western Australia
In this edition…

*Training Matters* introduces our Western Australian Skillaroos, who are bound for Brazil and the ultimate destination in their WorldSkills competition journey.

We feature new facilities which enhance training around our vast State. This includes Central Institute of Technology’s new GreenSkills Centre, which will become a model of sustainability.

*Training Matters* also reports on the launch of the Gascoyne Regional Workforce Development Plan, and Polytechnic West’s new Aboriginal Training Centre.

We talk to Don Burnett about workforce development in the Goldfields-Esperance region and lecturer Rob Franklin on his retirement from a long career teaching wall and ceiling fixing.

Find out more about traineeships offered to young Aboriginal people by the Public Sector Commission, and scholarships for women in non-traditional trades.

Enjoy this edition of *Training Matters*.

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Skillaroos announced

Training has stepped up a gear for two young Western Australians selected to take on the world’s best in the biggest international skills and trade competition in August.

Department of Training and Workforce Development Director General Ruth Shean congratulated Sharlene Kidd and Joseph Pauley on their selection in the Australian Skillaroos team, joining 23 young people from around Australia to take part in the 43rd WorldSkills International Competition in Brazil.

Sharlene will take part in the painting and decorating competition, while Joseph will vie for honours in the industrial mechanic millwright category.

“These talented young competitors are the best in the country in their respective trades and are positive career role models for other young people,” Dr Shean said. “They also highlight the many valuable career opportunities available in the vocational education and training sector and the rewards these careers can bring.

“WorldSkills symbolises the peak of excellence in vocational education and training. This is a great opportunity for Sharlene and Joseph, as the competition will challenge them to achieve their best and be recognised for their ability on an international stage.”

Sharlene’s and Joseph’s path to Brazil followed their success in regional and national competitions over the last two years. Joining the Australian skills training squad, they cemented their position in the national team after winning gold medals at the inaugural WorldSkills Oceania Competition held recently in New Zealand.

This year’s international event will involve more than 1200 competitors from 59 countries, taking part in 50 skill categories.

WA Skillaroos have won medals at each of the last two international events: Tayron Scagnetti won a silver medal for jewellery in 2013, and Alexis Scott brought home bronze in 2011 for hairdressing. This could be the year to complete the set with a gold medal.
New facilities help develop regions

New facilities for learning and accommodation will help the development of the regional workforce in both the north and south of Western Australia.

A new state of the art facility has been officially opened at Challenger Institute of Technology’s Peel campus that will change the way training in the community services and health care sector is delivered in the region.

Training and Workforce Development Minister Liza Harvey said the purpose-built centre would help meet the increasing demand for skilled community services workers in the region.

“The community services and health care industry is one of WA’s biggest employers and the demand for skilled workers is expected to increase,” she said.

Population projections for Peel show that the number of people over the age of 70 will increase from 14 per cent, as it is now, to about 20 per cent by 2026.

“This highlights the importance of having a suitably trained and skilled local workforce that will be able to care for those people in this age group.”

With a $6 million investment from the State Government’s Royalties for Regions program, through the Skills Training Initiative, the centre will cater for up to 400 students each year in the areas of nursing, aged care, children’s services, community services, disability services and education.

Turning to the State’s north, a new accommodation facility was opened in Port Hedland in February.

The 14 furnished and self-contained apartments are only five minutes’ drive from the Pilbara Institute campus and are available for students, staff and people who are in Port Hedland on Institute business.

Campus Operations Manager Mick Stewart said there had always been a demand for accommodation in Hedland.

“We need to ensure that all students have the same opportunities to access training, no matter where they live in the region,” he said.

“It alleviates the stress on students to find accommodation themselves, allowing them to focus on their training. Some students stay for up to two weeks, and we have lecturers who also use the units regularly.

“We also have a live-in caretaker and a small fee is charged.”

The new townhouses are fully furnished, complete with washing machines, dishwashers and air-conditioning, and two are set up for disabled access.
In the State’s south, Great Southern Institute of Technology (GSIT) recently opened a new Health Sciences and Community Services block at its Albany campus.

With about a quarter of all GSIT students studying in the areas of health sciences and community services, the new facility will allow the Institute to respond to growth in regional demand in these key industry sectors.

Funded by Royalties for Regions at a cost of $5.76 million, the block comprises facilities for simulated learning, laboratories, tutorial rooms, offices and storage space. These are used to deliver a wide scope of courses including nursing, aged care, allied health, fitness, first aid, dental assisting, massage, youth work, education support, community and children’s services.

GSIT Managing Director Lidia Rozlapa said skills shortages in the Great Southern, particularly in aged care, were acute.

“Establishing quality training facilities for health, community services and children’s services will contribute to increasing the number of regional graduates with high-level qualifications,” she said. “It will also strengthen the capacity of the region to meet projected growth in demand for employees with these qualifications.”

“We need to ensure that all students have the same opportunities to access training, no matter where they live in the region.”

Pilbara Institute Managing Director Marlene Boundy at the South Hedland student accommodation facility.
CET trains the bright sparks

The National Electrical and Communications Association – College of Electrical Training (CET) trains more than half of all electrical apprentices in Western Australia.

General Manager Carl Copeland said CET had increased its apprenticeship enrolment numbers each year since it was established in 1996.

“In 2004 we had 500 students,” he said. “We now have 2 000 enrolled, and expect to train more than 6 500 metropolitan and regional students by the end of the year.

“This includes about 4 700 electricians and contractors who undertake post trade training. We are also proud to say that our completion rates are well above the Australian average at 96 per cent.”

CET provides training for language, literacy and numeracy as well as for electrical pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships. Post trade training is also provided for electrical and telecommunications workers across three main industry sectors – domestic, commercial, and industrial.

“We have campuses in Jandakot and Joondalup,” Mr Copeland said. “Joondalup is fairly new, having opened in 2013 and it is the first dedicated electrical blended training centre of its kind in WA.

“The majority of the campus is made up of 10 blended learning laboratories, three workshops and an auditorium.

“We also cater for regional students, who can complete the theory component of their training online through the Joondalup campus. They then carry out the practical work and competency assessment in the Joondalup workshops.”

CET develops resources in house and has a strong focus on providing electrical training using traditional face to face and blended learning techniques with qualified, passionate and dedicated staff. The style of training enables apprentices and contractors to problem solve and learn by experience, rather than being a passive recipient of information.

Mr Copeland said CET was one of only two training providers in WA to deliver training under the Managing Apprentice Progression (MAP) pilot program.

“The MAP program tracks the progress of individual apprentices against the electrical trade qualification (Certificate III in Electrotechnology Technician),” he said.

“Rather than moving forward as a classroom group, each individual in this program can move ahead or consolidate their training based on their own situation.

“Each apprentice is supported toward completing their electrical trade apprenticeship. The program truly represents a shared responsibility with government, industry, employers, training providers and apprentices all working together.”

Training delivery is an ever-changing process and Mr Copeland said training providers needed to adapt readily.

“We are committed to providing flexible learning options,” he said. “We also take rolling enrolments. This means students can commence training as soon as they are employed as an apprentice.”

Mr Copeland said CET’s mission was to promote student success by encouraging them to take ownership of their training goals.

“We encourage respect, loyalty, excellence and integrity,” he said.

CET has been recognised many times in the annual WA Training Awards. In 2010, it was named the WA Small Training Provider of the Year. In 2013, it was a finalist in the WA Large Training Provider of the Year category before taking top honours in this category the following year.
Scholarship program for women in non-traditional trades

A new scholarship program to encourage women into trade and industry areas with low female participation has completed its first intake.

More than 150 applications were received from women aged between 18 and 59, with more than a third of the responses coming from regional areas. Some of the more popular industries included construction, electrical and finance and administration.

Training and Workforce Development Minister Liza Harvey said the State Government had committed $1.2 million over four years for the program.

“These scholarships provide new opportunities for women to carry out training in a range of trade and industry areas where women make up less than 25 per cent of the total workforce,” she said.

“These are occupations that are considered non-traditional, and it is these roles in which women can make a big difference.”

Up to 400 scholarships, to the value of $3,000 each, will be available over four years to women over the age of 18 who have left school and undertake training at Certificate III level or above in specified qualifications.

Eligible women undertaking an employment based training pathway such as an apprenticeship or traineeship will receive $1,000, with $2,000 provided as an incentive for employers to assist with training costs. Those who undertake their training via an institutional pathway will receive $3,000 to assist with costs.

“Scholarship funds can be used towards costs associated with training, including learning resources, mentoring, and fees,” she said. “The scholarship can also be used to address specific barriers such as transport costs and childcare.

“These trades can be rewarding career options, and women working in these areas can become role models for other women considering a career in these non-traditional trades.”

Scholarship recipients for the 2015 round will be notified of their success by the end of June.

Visit dtwd.wa.gov.au for more information or to register interest for the 2016 round of applications.

*L-R: Sarah Jayne Flatters (electrician), Lorraine Hull (carpenter), Training and Workforce Development Minister Liza Harvey and Lesanne O’Neill (apprentice electrician).*
Industry profile – Don Burnett

As Chief Executive Officer of the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Don Burnett manages one of the most diverse local government council areas of Western Australia, and also one of the largest, covering 95,000 square kilometres.

After nine years, Mr Burnett is moving on, but his service as CEO of Kalgoorlie-Boulder together with 10 as the CEO of the Town of Northam have given him a broad depth of experience in the needs of regional communities.

“Large regional centres need to be self-sufficient,” Mr Burnett said. “They need to be adept at providing a variety of services that the metropolitan councils may not have to consider, such as running an airport or a sewerage system, or a large commercial portfolio.”

Other aspects specific to the Kalgoorlie-Boulder region are the boom or bust cycles in the mining industry and fluctuations in the associated commodity prices.

“As the region is dependent on gold and nickel rather than grains or iron ore, its economy can be opposite to that of the State’s,” Mr Burnett said. “When Kalgoorlie-Boulder’s resources are up, the rest of the State’s may be down. This has a flow-on effect on the workforce.”

Workforce planning can help even out these peaks and troughs and this has been addressed by the Kalgoorlie and Esperance Regional Workforce Development Alliance, one of nine such alliances in regional Western Australia.

Mr Burnett has been a member of the alliance since it was formed in 2008.

“Most of the members are either in the training field or a Government service area,” he said. “I believe local government is key to delivering some of the outcomes the regional alliance is trying to achieve.

“When the alliance was formed it was a different world. Our main focus then was on attracting and retaining workers. It is now in a consolidation phase, but as our industries are cyclical, change will occur again – it is an ongoing process.

“Local government’s perspective is different to that of a training organisation’s. Their point of view is to make sure there are good, liveable communities for people to live and train in, which in turn strengthens the community’s ability to attract and retain workers.

“At the moment businesses in the region have time to reset. Skilled employees are being retained and those who were employed in the boom may have to go back and reskill if they want to keep their jobs.

“Businesses have had breathing space to look at where people are going and reassess skill sets, and there is more enthusiasm about training to upskill!”

The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder also has a comprehensive trainee program and takes on between 10 and 15 new trainees and apprentices each year.

“Sometimes traineeships are created around their area of interest, or to help them with a cadetship, or support university studies,” Mr Burnett said.

“It is important to invest in our young people. We need to keep the younger ones around as once they leave it is hard to get them back. Retaining them in the workforce helps to build a better community.

“To become a strong regional city it needs to have less peaks and troughs in its economy. This means looking at strategies to diversify the workforce when there is a downturn in mining. Tourism and education are prime candidates for that. Diversification is the key to smoothing out the boom/bust times.”

Don Burnett, Chief Executive Officer of the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.
The Aboriginal Training and Employment (ATE) Program is delivered by not for profit organisations in areas that can’t readily access the services of Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres. These include communities in the Pilbara, Great Southern, Peel and Wheatbelt.

Since it began, the program has assisted an average of 800 clients per year with education, training and employment.

Procurement Strategy Director Geoff Holden said the program helped Aboriginal communities and organisations to develop locally based training and employment initiatives.

“The ATE Program is having a clear and positive impact on Aboriginal communities and individuals,” he said. “It provides meaningful learning and training opportunities that can help people find a job.”

ATE contractors include Bloodwood Tree (Pilbara); Southern Aboriginal Corporation (Great Southern); SMYL Community Services (Peel); and Directions Workforce Solutions (Wheatbelt).

“The first service agreements with the contractors were signed in 2011,” Geoff said.

“These were evaluated in 2013 and feedback from both stakeholders and clients about their services was positive. “The same organisations were recontracted as preferred providers in 2014.”

Program providers can design and deliver services to suit the needs of individual clients and their local community.

Services provided by ATE contractors include resume writing, mentoring, computer and interview skills. They also help clients with driver training (which includes gaining a learner’s permit) and numeracy and literacy, as well as work experience placement.

The Department works closely with service providers to continually improve and strengthen this successful program.

Initiatives such as the ATE Program are helping to boost the employability skills of Aboriginal people.

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Foundation for success

The Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation is a not for profit organisation dedicated to enriching the lives of young Aboriginal people. It provides them with opportunities for further education and training and ultimately, employment.

The Foundation’s first education project, Gumala Mirnuwarni (Coming Together to Learn), was established in Karratha in Western Australia in 1997. Some 18 years later, the project has been successfully replicated in 28 communities across Australia. So far in 2015, about 1100 Aboriginal students have enrolled in one of the Foundation’s 33 programs.

General Manager Projects, Douglas Mitchell, said the Foundation ran two programs for primary school aged children. These include Maths and Science Centres of Excellence (for students who demonstrate an aptitude for mathematics and science), and Learning Club, which enhances school attendance and helps children gain a solid educational foundation.

“Our secondary program, Follow the Dream/Partnerships for Success, provides after school tuition and individual mentoring support and case management,” Mr Mitchell said.

“This enables Aboriginal high school students who are selected to participate in the program to complete Year 12, enter tertiary studies or undertake other post school training or employment.”

The program is led by a full time program coordinator, who is based at a dedicated enrichment or learning centre. Each student has an individual education plan integrated with their learning journey and career planning.

“This program has led to an increase in the number of Aboriginal students achieving entry to university or other tertiary institutions; improved school retention rates; improved literacy and numeracy levels; and opportunities for training that leads to employment,” Mr Mitchell said. “Since it was established, more than 730 students in the secondary program have graduated Year 12.”

To support these programs, the Foundation employs 14 staff, together with 115 tutors. It also co-funds and/or co-manages an additional 25 secondary program coordinators.

“We provide industry and community engagement, governance, project/financial management, administration and communication for our programs,” Mr Mitchell said.

“We also have access to a knowledge base that has accumulated over the past 20 years, through more than 30 projects involving at least 40 government, industry and Aboriginal partner organisations.

“The Foundation and its staff are focussed on enhancing the learning journey of Aboriginal people and linking education, training and employment outcomes.”

Staff take part in a range of professional learning activities and are encouraged to develop and share their professional knowledge.

“Program coordinators have opportunities to meet each other and participate in professional development via their host schools, as well as at other workshops and conferences,” Mr Mitchell said. “We also establish reciprocal partnerships with other organisations, including large corporations, government agencies and community based groups.

“Our long term goal for staff development is to equip program coordinators and project managers to be competitive in subsequent, higher level roles, potentially as heads of department, deputy principals and ultimately principals of schools. In turn, this outlook helps strengthen the sustainability of the Foundation’s programs.”
A group of 17 trainees from Broome, Port Hedland, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Northam and Bunbury are due to complete the Regional Aboriginal Traineeship Program in Certificate III in Government.

PSC Principal Consultant Aboriginal Employment Tracey Cullen said this year’s candidates were outstanding.

“We expect at least 95 per cent completion,” she said. “Subject to work performance, many will be eligible to take on job roles within government. Short term contracts or permanent positions could be on offer once they complete their qualification.”

PSC’s Aboriginal traineeship program is an employment-based initiative that provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 24 years of age and under, with an opportunity to develop public administration skills and competencies.

The 12-month traineeship is fully funded by the Commission with regional positions funded through Royalties for Regions. On completion, trainees receive a nationally recognised qualification.

PSC also offers mentoring, coaching and support services to agencies and their trainees through the Aboriginal Employment Unit. The Commission engaged a local registered training organisation, Aspire Performance Training, to deliver and assess trainees’ core skills in each unit of competency.

“This employment initiative is in line with the Council of Australian Government’s objective to halve the gap in employment outcomes between Aboriginal and other Australians by 2018,” Tracey said.

“The Western Australian public sector has committed to 3.2 per cent Aboriginal employment by 2015 and this program contributes to that target.”

Potential candidates register for the traineeships via the JobsWA website and then undergo a competitive interview process. Public sector agencies apply to host successful candidates for the duration of the traineeship.

“Trainees complete a nationally recognised qualification with their host and finish their traineeship with a high possibility of securing ongoing employment in the sector,” Tracey said.

“They are eligible to apply for entry level positions in any public sector entity. “However, if their host agencies are in a position to offer employment at the end of the traineeship, many stay on. This is a major benefit considering the amount of time and effort put into their training.”

The latest trainees enrolled in an annually-run Public Sector Commission (PSC) program are about to graduate.

Patrina McMasters completed a traineeship in Certificate III in Government in 2014 with the Department of Child Protection and Family Support in Kalgoorlie. She has since gained a position with the Department as a customer service officer.

After completing her traineeship with South Hedland-based host agency WA Country Health Service, Sarrisha Bin Saad secured ongoing employment with the Department of Housing, also in South Hedland.
Training council catch up

The Resources Industry Training Council (RITC) advises on vocational education and training (VET) needs for the oil and gas, mining and downstream process manufacturing industries. Training Matters spoke to Manager Nigel Haywood for an update on their current issues and priorities.

TM: What makes your Training Council unique?

RITC:
The RITC is a joint venture between the Chamber of Minerals and Energy and the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association. It is embedded in industry, which gives us direct support from both organisations and ready access to industry intelligence.

The rapid expansion of the resources sector and its associated workforce development challenges has placed stress on the skilled labour market and characterised our training council. According to the ABS, there were 44,400 people working in the mining industry in February 2005, and in August 2012 we peaked at 122,800.

TM: What has changed in the three years since your first profile in TM?

RITC:
The greatest change has been the shift from construction to operations in the resources industry and the resulting workforce needs. This transition has been exacerbated by volatile commodity prices and resources companies are now focused on remaining internationally competitive while still boosting productivity and efficiencies.

TM: What are your current priorities?

RITC:
Our focus is on flexible and responsive training solutions and we work with industry to facilitate greater collaboration, promote workforce initiatives and drive projects which address challenges faced by industry. This means finding new models and practices to maximise and broaden skills and drive productivity.

TM: What issues make an impact on your industries?

RITC:
Volatile commodity prices are having an impact on the number of people employed across the sector. While there has been media focus about job losses, it is important to note where the industry stands in terms of employment. ABS figures from the February 2015 quarter show there were 90,800 people working in the mining industry. This figure highlights the fact that despite the recent drop, the sector has in fact doubled its workforce over the past 10 years.

The high cost of operating a business in WA has challenged expansion in recent times. Companies are now focused on remaining competitive and reducing costs and State Government initiatives targeting this have been welcomed by industry.

TM: Do you have any new or upcoming projects or programs?

RITC:
We are exploring the issue of verification of competency, particularly in its application for contractors going into company facilities within the oil and gas industry. The project examines the need for verification of competency processes and will gauge possible areas of collaboration for a unified approach to the issue. This could result in improved consistency, lower costs and greater productivity.

The Drilling Industry Project identifies opportunities to improve existing drilling qualifications. The operating environment for the drilling industry is particularly tight, and in such a situation ensuring employees are as productive as possible is one key to remaining competitive.
His career in the industry started in 1963, when Rob’s two elder brothers were living and working in Canberra. “They were both ceiling fixers and I went over there to work with them,” Rob said. “It was a five year apprenticeship in those days. For three years I did one day a week at TAFE and the last two years I was full time on site.”

Rob learnt the trade, did his national service and then came back to WA. “I got my start in lecturing in 1977, when my father-in-law, who was a plasterer, bumped into a lecturer he knew who was looking for someone who could teach ceiling fixing,” he said. “I went in for an interview and got the job.”

“I started lecturing at Leederville College. We outgrew that site and went into an annex on Hutton Street in Osborne Park. By 1996 we had also outgrown that, so we moved into a new building at Balga, now a campus of Polytechnic West.”

Wall and ceiling fixers install ceilings and cornices and work on metal stud walls. They work on new houses, renovations and commercial buildings.

Rob said workers in the trade also installed fire rated wall and ceiling systems, facades and suspended ceilings. “There have been many changes over the years as new products have been developed,” he said. “There are a lot more suspended ceilings these days, and we have to hide more and more computer cabling behind ceilings and walls.”

For the last 15 years of his career, Rob travelled far and wide to assess country students, from Kununurra in the north, Kalgoorlie in the east, south to Esperance and Albany and all points in between.

“This was part of the Remote Area Teaching Services program, or RATS,” Rob said. “We did all the theory work by correspondence. It was posted back and forth, then I would go out and assess students on the job, taking the paperwork with me for their next set of modules.”

“These apprentices were all working on site full time and it was a bit hard tracking them down sometimes – especially when they were in outlying areas away from the main regional centres. I had three or four areas to cover two to three times a year, so I was away from home a fair bit.”

“I also did a lot of work with recognition of prior learning (RPL). About 90 per cent of the people I put through RPL were from the country.”

When asked what the most satisfying part of his job was, Rob said it would take a long time before he could finish telling the reasons why. “I loved teaching the kids and passing on knowledge,” he said. “It was a gratifying job and I really enjoyed doing it.”

Polytechnic West Construction Trades Head of Programs Enzo Multari said Rob was one of their longest serving lecturers. “Two of our present lecturers are former students of Rob’s,” he said. “He certainly put his stamp on the trade in WA.”

Retired lecturer Rob Franklin occasionally crosses paths with his former students – which is not surprising considering he spent almost 38 years teaching wall and ceiling fixing.
Sustainability in action

Central Institute of Technology’s GreenSkills building was designed to be the very embodiment of sustainable technology.

Opened earlier this year, the building is completely self-sufficient in both energy and water use. It is also the first public building in Western Australia to be awarded a 6 star green rating from the Green Building Council of Australia for education design, which represents world leadership in environmentally sustainable design.

Every aspect of the $17 million project, jointly funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments, has been designed on sustainability principles. This includes its architecture, engineering, construction and landscaping.

Central Institute’s Engineering, Resources, Construction Executive Director Dr Peter Ebell said the building was essentially a laboratory for sustainability training.

“It is a multi-purpose learning space for students, schools, industry and the wider public to learn about sustainable practices,” he said.

Among the first users of the facility are students studying the Diploma of Environmental Monitoring and Technology. Other qualifications benefiting from the new facility include Certificate IV and Diploma of Building Construction and Diploma of Building Design.

“Since the building opened we have held a special day to promote biology, environmental or earth science careers to secondary school students, and accommodated specialist interest and industry groups from Perth’s green community and Building Information Modelling user groups,” Dr Ebell said.

“A feature of this building is the sense of being inside a living laboratory. Sections of the structure have been ‘peeled back’ for training purposes, and students can see actual infrastructure in these areas, such as the black-water treatment plant.

“Cable trays, both overhead and underfloor, which carry electrical, control and communications cables for the various lighting, ventilation and control functions within the building are also on view.”

Roof and façade mounted solar panels provide a peak output of 80 kilowatts of renewable energy. This provides all of the building’s energy requirements and the surplus is fed back to the main campus.
“Rain water is collected in 128,000 litre tanks, and waste water is used in the subterranean irrigation in the campus's gardens,” Dr Ebell said. “The building does not discharge into the city's sewerage system. It is completely self-contained.”

Walls in the 12 teaching spaces throughout the building have been coated with non-toxic paint, which acts as either a projector screen or giant whiteboard, encouraging collaboration between students and staff.

Dr Ebell said there were about 100 students in the building on most days, and numbers would increase as more classrooms came online.

“Being able to see alternative ways of energy generation and resource conservation gives students a sense of sustainability in action,” he said. “For them, working in this building satisfies their longer term vision for the environment.”

The facility was one of the first in WA to be constructed using Building Information Modelling (BIM) which allows an extension of the three primary spatial dimensions of width, height and depth with time and cost.

“The BIM laboratory was designed as a collaborative learning space,” Dr Ebell said.

“Classes have access to the various stages of the actual BIM models used to design and construct the building so they can relate what they see on the computer screen to the building and its features.”

Lecturer Martine Cason, who teaches in the BIM lab, said she loved working in the new building.

“The facilities are excellent—and very accessible,” she said. “It is a light and bright space to work in and it certainly helps when students can actually see some of the systems they are learning about.

“There are break out areas for students to interact on every level, and the rooftop garden is not only a pleasant space to have lunch, it also helps to insulate the roof.”

^ Diploma of Building and Construction Technology Learning Portfolio Manager David Zanich near the ‘peeled back’ sections in the foyer of the GreenSkills Centre.

^ Building Design and Construction Technology student Jayden Torre and Lecturer Martine Cason test out one of the breakout niches in the GreenSkills Centre.
International work experience for Julia and Harley

Two young Western Australians are thrilled to have been selected to take part in the 2015 Big Brother Movement (BBM) Skilled Futures Program and are now preparing to go to the United Kingdom to follow their dreams.

Julia Wood and Harley Clements

Julia Wood will leave for Wales in July for a two week leadership course and international work experience. Julia said the program was a fantastic opportunity to further her skills and career, and would expose her to resources and individuals she would otherwise not have had the chance to meet.

Employment in my chosen industry is often found through networking, so building as many relationships as I can with designers, manufacturers, suppliers and companies is extremely important,” she said.

When she’s not working, Julia hopes to attend several events over the 12 months she plans to be away, including 2014 WorldSkills Australia National Competition gold medallists Julia Wood (Fashion Technology) and Harley Clements (Signage), who both trained with Polytechnic West, will leave for Wales in July to attend a two week leadership course followed by at least four weeks of work experience.

The BBM Skilled Futures Program represents an important partnership between WorldSkills Australia and BBM Youth Support. The program provides international pathways for up to 16 talented WorldSkills Australia competitors.

As well as leadership development, scholarship recipients are encouraged to seek work placement and gain international experience while they are overseas.

WorldSkills Australia WA State Manager Fiona Johnson said to be considered for the scholarship program, applicants had to put together an international work experience plan. In their plan, they had to outline the type of work they wanted to do as well as the reasons for selecting their chosen employer/company.

“Take up of the BBM Skilled Futures Program is conditional on participants showing they have an appropriate and achievable work experience plan in place,” she said.

Julia said the program was a fantastic opportunity to further her skills and career, and would expose her to resources and individuals she would otherwise not have had the chance to meet.

“Employment in my chosen industry is often found through networking, so building as many relationships as I can with designers, manufacturers, suppliers and companies is extremely important,” she said.

When she’s not working, Julia hopes to attend several events over the 12 months she plans to be away, including London Fashion Week, Berlin Fashion Week and Premier Vision Paris, while also visiting tanneries in Fez, Morocco.

Harley would like to further develop his skills by learning new fitting, manufacture and design concepts.

“I am curious to see what the design culture is like in the UK. I want to observe and compare, and see if there are techniques which can be applied in Perth,” he said.

For work experience, Harley has chosen three different signage companies which focus on vehicle wrapping and one which makes neon signs.

“Vehicle wrapping is something I am very passionate about, and I would also like to learn more about neon signage, something we don’t do a lot of in Perth,” Harley said.

“My long term goal is to start up my own sign shop. The more I learn now and the more experience I get, the better off I will be.”
Doors open at new Aboriginal Training Centre

The doors have opened at the new Aboriginal Training Centre at Polytechnic West’s Thornlie campus as part of the State Government’s commitment to training in Western Australia.

Training and Workforce Development Minister Liza Harvey said it was important Aboriginal students had the support they needed to feel confident entering the workforce.

“The Aboriginal Training Centre has been designed to provide a space where Aboriginal students will have the support of elders and customised training to maximise student engagement,” Mrs Harvey said.

The centre provides a friendly, culturally sensitive space for the Institute’s Aboriginal students to seek advice, support and assistance with their studies, and to help them continue on a training and employment pathway.

Polytechnic West Managing Director Jill Jamieson said the centre would also assist in the provision of cultural education training for staff to help them support Aboriginal students in their studies.

“For many students entering a large tertiary institute can be very daunting,” she said.

“We’ve aimed to create a welcoming space to provide Aboriginal students with a supportive environment that celebrates Aboriginal culture and maximises learning potential.

“The opening of the centre affirms Polytechnic West’s commitment to increasing access to training for Aboriginal people, and ensuring the training outcomes are in line with contemporary workforce requirements.

“We’ve already received some great feedback from students that visited the centre.”

Training and Workforce Development Minister Liza Harvey (right) with student Terrence Hedland at the opening of Polytechnic West’s new Aboriginal Training Centre.

^ Training and Workforce Development Minister Liza Harvey (right) with student Terrence Hedland at the opening of Polytechnic West’s new Aboriginal Training Centre.

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Skills West Expo 2015

Skills West Expo is Western Australia’s biggest career, education, training and employment event.

The annual careers expo will be held from 21 to 23 August at the Perth Convention Exhibition Centre and will host up to 100 exhibitors.

The expo provides the perfect occasion for organisations, employers and educational bodies to showcase their career, education and training opportunities to visitors.

A wide range of industries will be represented at the expo, including energy, hospitality, construction, healthcare, aviation, fitness, manufacturing, retail, ICT, education and training, financial and insurance services.

Thousands of high school students will attend during the three days, together with people looking to reskill and retrain.

Challenger Institute of Technology Marketing and Communications Manager Melina Kawecki said the Institute had been interacting with potential students at Skills West Expo every year since the inaugural event in 2010.

“Challenger has found it rewarding to present various training opportunities to expo visitors, especially those still in school,” she said.

“High school students often find that deciding what they want to do beyond school is overwhelming. At Challenger, we pride ourselves on being able to present school students with simple information on training and job outcomes, so they can better understand the options available to them and make a more informed decision about their future.”

Another regular exhibitor at Skills West Expo is Defence Force Recruiting (DFR), which invites visitors to view Australian Defence Force equipment and meet local heroes who serve their country and community with pride.

Regional Activity Coordinator WA Katie Bergs said the most enjoyable aspect for DFR staff at the expo was chatting with people, sharing stories, myth busting and challenging stereotypes.

“We can help interested students and jobseekers find a pathway that suits them,” she said. “There are more than 300 different jobs across the navy, army and air force, including 26 trades.

“We provide nationally recognised qualifications and a fantastic range of education and career options for jobs which are challenging, worthwhile and interesting.

“DFR connects the right people with the right jobs and our team is available to answer as many questions as you can think of asking.”

Skills West Expo is an initiative of The West Australian newspaper and Seven West Media, in partnership with the State Government.

^ Polytechnic West student work on display.

^ Challenger Institute of Technology’s stand at Skills West Expo 2014.

^ Defense Force Recruiting, an active supporter of Skills West Expo. Photo by LSIS Bradley Darvill.
Gascoyne plan released

Training and Workforce Development Minister Liza Harvey said the Gascoyne Workforce Development Plan 2015-2018, released in April, would be an important reference to help build, attract and retain skilled workers in the region.

“The plan identifies and explores many key issues that impact the region’s economy and workforce participation, while also outlining a series of priority actions to address these issues,” she said.

“It will be a ‘living’ document that adapts and changes to best support the opportunities for growth. There are some real opportunities to develop the local labour market to cultivate a skill base that can improve longer term regional development outcomes.”

The plan was developed by local stakeholders on the Gascoyne Workforce Development Alliance, which will also oversee the implementation of priority actions. It is the result of thorough research and consultation, with feedback from more than 100 participants at community forums throughout the region.

Mrs Harvey said the plan recognised the region’s diverse economy, with fishing, horticultural and pastoral industries, as well as tourism and mining being major contributors.

“There are many major investment projects underway that present further opportunities for the region, including the Gascoyne Food Bowl Initiative, expansion of the Exmouth boat harbour and the redevelopment of the Denham foreshore and jetty,” she said.

“Implementing strategies that lead to a more highly skilled and better qualified workforce will not only support these opportunities and promote economic development, but they will also help attract young people and families to the district and strengthen the region as a whole.”

New name for ApprentiCentre

ApprentiCentre has been renamed and is now the Department of Training and Workforce Development Apprenticeship Office.

This follows recent changes to Australia’s apprenticeship system. From 1 July 2015, the Commonwealth Government’s Australian Apprenticeship Support Network (AASN) will deliver services with a stronger focus on apprentice recruitment and job-matching. The AASN service will also offer advice and mentoring for employers and apprentices throughout the course of the apprenticeship.

To avoid duplicating the AASN services, the State Government, through the DTWD Apprenticeship Office, will focus on fulfilling the statutory functions of administration and regulation of apprenticeships in accordance with the Vocational Education and Training Act 1996 (WA) and associated regulations.

E: Apprenticeshipoffice@dtwd.wa.gov.au
W: dtwd.wa.gov.au/apprenticeshipoffice
P: 13 19 54
Future leaders in nation-first program

A new cohort of participants has enrolled in a nation-first management program which gives emerging Aboriginal leaders a distinct industry advantage.

Challenger Institute of Technology’s Certificate IV of Frontline Management - Aboriginal Leadership provides participants with the opportunity to learn a range of management strategies that can be implemented across all industries.

The program has been specifically designed for Aboriginal staff already working as, or aspiring to become supervisors or managers. The program assists participants to develop essential knowledge, skills and capabilities required to effectively lead individuals and teams, monitor operational performance and manage operational plans.

Designed in a way to enable full time employees to complete the program, the course is delivered over a six month period, which includes three one-week face to face blocks and online study.

Based at the Karratha Gas Plant, David’s role involves mentoring Woodside’s Aboriginal apprentices and trainees. David said he wished he had completed a course like this when he was younger.

“One day I would like to be in a position where I can guide and influence young Aboriginal people, particularly those at school to stay focussed and keep on the pathway to further education and training.”

Training blocks for the latest cohort of students will be held in Mandurah in June, August and October, covering leadership, workplace safety and managing performance.

Visit challenger.wa.edu.au to find out more.

For 58-year-old David Atkinson, of Karratha, the skills gained through completing the program have proved integral to his role of Human Resources Indigenous Training and Employment Advisor at Woodside.

The final block in the inaugural program finished late last year with a group of 19 participants graduating from the course.

“The course has made me think differently as a leader, to understand what I am doing and why I’m doing it.”

“The course has made me think differently as a leader, to understand what I am doing and why I’m doing it, which has proven particularly relevant in decision making and influencing others in the workplace.”

Visit challenger.wa.edu.au to find out more.

David Atkinson of Karratha gained valuable skills through the Certificate IV in Frontline Management – Aboriginal Leadership program.
Training Providers Forum 2015

Training Providers Forum held at Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre in May incorporated the themes of industry engagement, vocational currency and compliance.

The Forum has given vocational education and training (VET) professionals the opportunity to meet, interact and learn since 2002.

Organised by the Sector Capability team based at Prospect Place, the annual two-day conference and exhibition is Western Australia’s leading forum on training and workforce development, and showcases examples of innovation and good practice in the sector.

This year the Forum considered updates about reforms already implemented and those soon to come.

Training and Workforce Development Director General Ruth Shean said the 2015 theme topics proved highly relevant at a time of great change in the VET sector at State and national levels.

“Our goal is to increase training participation in WA”

The keynote speaker for this year’s forum was futurist and media commentator Chris Riddell, whose insights into consumer technology trends inspired many delegates to consider using technology in training.

The event’s second day included an interactive panel discussion on VET reform. Panel members included Australian Council for Private Education and Training WA Executive Officer Larry Davies, State Training Board Chair Jim Walker and Department of Training and Workforce Development Policy Planning and Innovation Executive Director Simon Walker.

Sector Capability Manager and co-organiser Janice Calcei said 33 workshops were held during the Forum, which gave attendees a wide variety to choose from.

“We had workshops on preparing for internal and external audits, Aboriginal school based training, updates on the VET sector, copyright in a digital environment and various issues related to the new standards,” Janice said.

“Delegates were also able to address professional development needs related to vocational currency by attending industry training council workshops and visiting their booths.

“The Training Accreditation Council’s sessions on common non-compliances and Greg Mitchell’s ‘Train like a champion’ and ‘The hook; total student engagement’ proved to be popular”

A number of workshop resources and presenter videos will be available from vetinfonet.dtwd.wa.gov.au/tpf, providing a valuable ongoing resource for the training sector.

^ Keynote speaker at the Training Providers Forum 2015, Chris Riddell.
Professional Development 2015

The Department of Training and Workforce Development offers vocational education and training practitioners a range of professional development opportunities. This includes various teaching, learning and assessment workshops, e-learning and general information sessions.

Workshops are offered either face to face or online with additional overview webinars available for many topics.

Upcoming workshops include:

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<td>Understanding the Australian VET system</td>
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<td>RPL as easy as 1234</td>
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<td>Designing assessment tools</td>
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Please visit event360.dtwd.wa.gov.au/event-calendar or email pd.sector.capability@dtwd.wa.gov.au for more information and to register for a workshop.

Branch facts – Training Resource Allocation

The Training Resource Allocation (TRA) branch is responsible for the purchase of training delivery services in accordance with the State’s priorities and the State Training Plan. This involves the planning, formation and management of service agreements and contracts with external stakeholders, including State and Private Training Providers.

Together with the Procurement Strategy branch, TRA is responsible for developing and managing the Department’s procurement processes to reflect the long term planning goals of Skilling WA – A Workforce Development Plan for WA, the State and Commonwealth priorities in the National Agreement on Skills and Workforce Development, the various National Partnership Agreements and the medium and short term targets in the State Training Plan.

Funding for State Training Providers (STPs) is allocated in accordance with Delivery and Performance Agreements which are negotiated between the Department and each STP. In contrast, the majority of procurements with private training providers is undertaken through competitive tender processes advertised through the Tenders WA website.
Encouraging women into trades

When you phone for a plumber, it’s more than likely that a bloke will turn up at the front door. And the same would probably happen if you phoned for an electrician or a builder. If a woman turned up instead, you might even be surprised – pleasantly surprised. And yet there are many women who have their sights set on establishing a career in these traditional trades and skill areas.

With this in mind, a few months ago, Minster Harvey launched a new scholarship program to encourage women into those trades which are still the province of men. As well as being Minster for Training and Workforce Development, Minister Harvey is Minister for Women’s Interests. A successful businesswoman herself, the Minister was keen to see women in Western Australia given every opportunity to shine in their business area of choice. It was with this goal that the Department of Training and Workforce Development worked with the Office of Women’s Interests to establish the scholarships which are designed to encourage women into trade and industry areas with low female participation.

The response has been extremely enthusiastic. We received more than 150 applications, with about a third of these coming from regional areas.

And it seems as if those women keenest to move into this men’s world are young women, with 40% of applicants aged between 20 and 29 years. Another enthusiastic group of applicants were those women seeking to re-enter the workforce or looking for a career change.

In trying to encourage women into trades, we targeted those work areas where women made up less than 25 per cent of the total workforce. Some examples may come as no surprise, such as roles in the construction, resources, aviation and automotive sectors. But other roles which you might not expect to be dominated by men are information and communications technology, business services and even property services.

The Government is providing 400 scholarships over four years, and female applicants can choose from 180 qualifications on offer.

Scholarship funds can be used to buy learning resources or put towards mentoring and fees. For women thinking of re-entering the workforce, the scholarships may assist with specific barriers such as transport costs and childcare.

You may recall Emma Stephenson, our WA Apprentice of the Year 2013. Emma is now a qualified electrician who works in the resources industry.

Emma is a member of TradeUp Australia, a volunteer-based organisation that encourages women to consider skilled trades as a viable career option. Emma is the coordinator of TradeUp’s ‘Inspire’ program, which promotes female tradespeople out and about in the community, visiting schools and talking to women about careers in a skilled trade.

Emma believes that making female tradespeople visible in our everyday lives will help change the overall perception of trades roles. She promotes skilled trades for all as a career choice that both men and women can pursue equally. Emma is a highly articulate ambassador for her skills area, and already a highly skilled and capable professional.

Another young woman who is likely to forge a highly successful career as a tradie is Sharlene Kidd. I first met Sharlene last year at the WorldSkills competition which was held in Perth in October 2014. Those of you who attended the competition may remember seeing Sharlene expertly painting to exact specifications over several days. Sharlene won the Australian gold medal for painting, and is now part of the Australian Skillaroos team which will take part in the 43rd WorldSkills International Competition in Brazil in August.

Emma and Charlene are just two of a growing and highly skilled group of Western Australian women who have joined the ranks of tradies in recent times. And it seems as if women in the trade ranks will be a growing team in the years ahead.

So, the next time you call for a plumber, engage a builder, book an electrician or meet the captain of your next international flight – and it’s a woman – ask them what set them out on this career path. You may well find that it was a scholarship that made them think twice – and led them to a prosperous career!

Dr Ruth Shean
Director General
Who says banks can’t be ethical?

For the second year running, Teachers Mutual Bank has been recognised as one of the World’s Most Ethical Companies. We are one of three honourees in the National Banks category and one of only two Australian companies honoured overall.