

# TWENTYNINETEEN VICTORIAN

## LEARN LOCAL AWARDS

FRIDAY 23 AUGUST 2019  
MURAL HALL, MELBOURNE



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## CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the Adult, Community and Further Education Board, it is my pleasure to welcome you all to the 2019 Victorian Learn Local Awards.

The Awards have a proud history of celebrating the significant contribution the Learn Local sector makes to individuals, communities and industry across Victoria through the delivery of pre-accredited training and programs.

Tonight, we come together to recognise the achievements of our learners and hear their inspiring stories, as well as to commend the commitment and hard work of our Learn Local providers including leaders, trainers and volunteers.

Our 2019 finalists are a fantastic example of the support, dedication and passion that is at the core of the Learn Local sector. Congratulations to all finalists, you should be proud of this accomplishment.

In its stewardship role of the sector, the Board is proud of our Learn Local providers and the pivotal role they play in increasing the educational, social and economic participation of adults across the state.

Our providers are the lifeblood of their communities and offer Victorians the opportunity to improve their lives through re-engaging in a positive learning experience and gaining the confidence and skills they need to take their next steps, whether it is further study, employment, upskilling or changing careers.

On behalf of the Board, thank you to our Learn Local providers for another fantastic year. What you do makes a great impact, please keep up your remarkable work. To our partners, thank you for your support and collaboration, which we hope will only strengthen in the future.

To our learners, you are the reason we exist. Congratulations on your achievements, we are proud of you and wish you every success in your continued learning or work pathway.

Tonight is another illustration of why the future of the Learn Local sector looks so bright.

**Maria Peters**  
Chairperson, ACFE Board



# MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 2019 Learn Local Awards.

Tonight, we will recognise learners, teachers and education providers from across Victoria for their work transforming lives through community education.

The awards, presented by the Adult, Community and Further Education Board, recognise the contribution of more than 300 Learn Local organisations offering pre-accredited training in Victoria.

This year's finalists include learners who have harnessed the power of Adult Community Education to turn their lives around by gaining skills and getting jobs, as well as teachers who have helped so many students succeed.

This year's awards come at a time of renewed energy, focus and spirit of collaboration in this sector. The recently held Adult Community Education Summit invited the sector to collectively work together with this government to address the key challenges facing our communities.

Learn Locals are a crucial part of the post-secondary education and training system, and work at the grassroots of our communities.

They break down generational disadvantage and play a strong preventative role in ensuring people in the workforce have the skills to retain employment.

Learn Locals help people to really shine and flourish.

Congratulations to all our finalists and award winners.

**The Hon. Gayle Tierney MP**  
Minister for Training and Skills  
Minister for Higher Education

## THE RO ALLEN AWARD RECOGNISING PRE-ACCREDITED LEARNER EXCELLENCE FINALISTS

This award recognises the achievements of people aged between 25 and 65 years participating in ACFE Board-funded pre-accredited programs at Learn Local providers across Victoria.

The Ro Allen Award acknowledges a learner who has established pathways for themselves into further education, employment or volunteer roles as a result of their participation in an ACFE Board-funded pre-accredited program.

For each of the finalists in this award category, the Learn Local experience has been significant and life changing, and shows what can be achieved by participating in a pre-accredited program.

The winning learner demonstrates a commitment to continuing their learning journey and is actively developing new skills and enhancing their knowledge.

The winner of this award receives a trophy and \$5,000 in prize money. The two finalists each receive a framed certificate and \$1,000.



**HAMIDA ABDI**

### KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Escaping civil war in Somalia served to make Hamida Abdi more determined to achieve in her new life in Australia. After completing pre-accredited courses in English and work skills through Kensington Neighbourhood House, she achieved language and numeracy skills that allowed her to engage confidently in all aspects of daily life, as well as job training.

Hamida has been an inspiration to fellow students because she has been unafraid to have a go at whatever activities would move her forward, and embraces mistakes as a way to learn. What makes her efforts even more exemplary is that she has six young children aged 5 to 13 years.

Hamida continues to forge educational and employment pathways that will allow her to achieve her goal of working in Aged Care and has commenced a Certificate III in Individual Support. Hamida embraces life and her community and selflessly and regularly volunteers for community groups.



**CHRISTOPHER  
HALLEY**

**WAVERLEY ADULT LITERACY  
PROGRAM INC.**

Christopher Halley is an outstanding young Indigenous man whose beginnings were fraught with challenge. As a child, Christopher struggled with literacy and attended a special school. Due to family difficulties he had very little support.

Adulthood brought the determination to escape the cycle of poor prospects; Christopher sought a great future for himself. Although the education system had let him down in the past, he summoned the courage to enrol in a pre-accredited basic literacy course, and a public speaking course. Every Tuesday evening he'd travel from Werribee to Chadstone by train to the Waverley Adult Literacy Program.

Christopher completed the General Certificate of Education in 2018 and has embarked on further education, including an online real estate agent's course. He's been promised employment upon completion but his ultimate goal is to open his own real estate business. His teachers have no doubt that he will achieve whatever he sets out to do.



**CHITHRIKA  
SENANAYAKE**

**WELLSPRINGS FOR WOMEN**

After migrating from Sri Lanka, Chithrika put her best foot forward and enthusiastically took charge of her education pathways. Demoralised by being unable to get a job as a teacher's aide, she decided to volunteer supporting English classes at Wellsprings for Women. She then enrolled in the Creative Enterprising Women (CEW) course where she saw an opportunity to build her own business.

She enthusiastically took charge of her education pathways, however none of this was simple due to her husband's health problems, and having two daughters to care for. She developed a sound set of goals, worked on her self-belief, and created a strategy. Within a year she had laid the foundations for her new business as a mobile reflexology practitioner, and completed an online non-accredited Diploma in Reflexology. She is now a student Alumni at Wellsprings, supporting the CEW class in a volunteer role.

Chithrika's vision is to earn enough to run her household, save for a house deposit and complete further studies. Now she's building her client base in aged care facilities and wellbeing centres.

# VICTORIAN LEARN LOCAL YOUNG PRE-ACCREDITED LEARNER AWARD FINALISTS

This award recognises the achievements of learners, aged between 18 and 24 years, participating in ACFE Board-funded pre-accredited programs at Learn Local providers across Victoria.

The Victorian Learn Local Young Pre-accredited Learner Award is awarded to a learner who has established pathways for themselves into further education, employment or volunteer roles as a result of their participation in the pre-accredited program.

The winning learner demonstrates a high level of engagement with their learning and is actively developing new skills and enhancing their knowledge. The winning learner is a role model for other people of what can be achieved by participating in a pre-accredited program.

The winner of this award receives a trophy and \$5,000 in prize money. The two finalists each receive a framed certificate and \$1,000.



## GIPPSLAND EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TRAINING

When Jack finally found his calling, he made stupendous personal and professional strides into a career. Jack was identified as a person at risk of disengagement from his community. He'd been unemployed since leaving high school and had several barriers to overcome. A four-week pre-accredited course called Kick Start Your Career in Customer Service: Call Centre Operations, changed his life.

Initially, Jack's class attendance was inconsistent. Through mentoring and honest communications, he was shown the benefits of gaining employment and he became fully committed to learning employability, digital technology, literacy and customer service skills. He made friends and experienced the joy of being a valued contributor.

Jack was one of four people out of 10 course participants who successfully gained full-time employment. Now he has a 12-month plan to grow in his current role, embrace his new-found security and lead his family to see a better life through employment.

**RORY MADDEN****KEW NEIGHBOURHOOD  
LEARNING CENTRE INC.**

Disability is no barrier to Rory's eagerness to achieve and learn, so much so that he's commenced further studies in transition education at Swinburne TAFE and looks forward to future learning opportunities.

He began his educational and skills-based training at Kew Neighbourhood Learning Centre in 2018 studying pre-accredited tasters in horticulture and carpentry. Rory achieved a range of skills and knowledge of industry and training requirements in every aspect of the work environment, from OH&S assessments, to planning and sequencing tasks and equipment maintenance.

As a result, his confidence, interpersonal skills, verbal communications, public speaking, and literacy and numeracy skills have flourished.

Rory has a great work ethic, enjoys the satisfaction of successfully achieving a task, and in so doing, he impressed his tutors with his efforts. During the community work aspect of the horticulture program he provided gardening services for local elderly people. Rory planted himself happily into the role of helping others.

**NEDAD HUSIC****YOUTHNOW**

Nedad's success in achieving literacy, communication and team-work skills have been electric. Not only has he become an ambassador for the benefits of Learn Local pre-accredited training, but he secured his goal of becoming an electrician by the end of the course.

When Nedad presented to commence training at YouthNow Bize Centre, his English language skills were adequate but he was unprepared for the Australian workplace. Through a combination of his persistence and love of learning, and YouthNow training, he overcame a lack of confidence, becoming an active contributor in team activities, improving his literacy, and achieving a high level of competence in employability skills, including tailoring applications for jobs.

On completion, Nedad independently secured an electrical apprenticeship with a local employer (Certificate III), and his past trainer marvelled at how far he'd progressed with his communication and public speaking skills during the 11 months of working with him.

## VICTORIAN LEARN LOCAL PRACTITIONER AWARD FINALISTS

The impact of Learn Local practitioners is often much greater than their role as teacher, trainer or administrator. To so many of their learners they become a mentor, an inspiration or a friend.

The Victorian Learn Local Practitioner Award recognises the outstanding contribution that all Learn Local practitioners make to support learners in achieving outcomes.

It is awarded to an individual who demonstrates a commitment to the Learn Local sector and an ability to engage people in learning. The practitioner has strategies and techniques in place that enable them to provide or support quality training to meet different learner needs and establish pathways for them to further education and/or employment (paid or unpaid).

The winning practitioner is a role model for colleagues and exemplifies the dedication of Learn Local practitioners.

The winner of this award receives a trophy and \$5,000 in prize money. The two finalists each receive a framed certificate and \$1,000.



**NINA BEKKER**

### CIRE SERVICES

Nina is described by her colleagues as the heart and soul of the pre-accredited training department at Cire Services. She's driven huge expansion in training delivery with enrolments, and numbers of pre-accredited training hours delivered have doubled over three years.

Making learning relevant is one of Nina's keys to success and she fervently believes in the capacity of learners to be empowered. If it's relevant to cook a stockpile of meals for someone doing it tough, she does that too. She sets the tone for her staff to strive for the best outcomes by being flexible and truly engaged in students' learning journeys and challenges.

Nina's tireless efforts have netted many new partnerships and facilitated the continuing development of tailored programs to previously poorly served groups. She was the primary driver behind the development of the Women's Warehouse Essentials program for long-term unemployed women. The results were outstanding with 70 per cent of participants achieving some form of paid employment.



**LOUISA VALE**

**MANNA GUM  
COMMUNITY HOUSE**

The special element of Louisa’s modus operandi as an adult education teacher is her ability to build relationships with every client. Her sincere care contributes to the welcoming environment that is fundamental to the culture of the Manna Gum Community House.

Louisa’s dedication to delivering quality Learn Local programs has provided the backbone for program diversification and unprecedented growth – Manna Gum’s Adult, Community and Further Education course student contact hours increased from 500 in 2017 to 1,455 in 2019.

A program Louisa’s most proud of is ‘Toora BubHub’, a project in Toora (population 600). The tailored pre-accredited course successfully engages mostly socially isolated mothers, giving them the confidence and skills to progress in life. The training explores everything from parenting to finance, with a strong emphasis on intergenerational literacy.

Louisa’s teaching skill, her deep understanding of the difficulties her students face, and strong community connections enable her to provide effective support to clients with complex needs.



**JOSIE ROSE**

**NOWEYUNG LTD**

Many previously disadvantaged people across Gippsland have felt the benefit of Josie’s dedication to improving their wellbeing and life success. Josie created pre-accredited programs that provided equity in access to vocational and employability training in a region of high unemployment. Success was further ensured by targeting regional industries that were experiencing skill shortages, one being the rapidly expanding health sector. One of her significant contributions was to the award-winning pre-employment program, Kick-start your Career in the Health Sector, which was subsequently adopted by other Learn Locals across Victoria.

Ensuring 21st Century industry advances were addressed, she wrote curriculum and learning tools to deliver next generation technology courses focusing on drones and virtual reality, as well as making significant contributions to the state-wide delivery of digital literacy programs for disadvantaged learners. Josie’s contributions impact across Australia and she was instrumental in assisting a government agreement to have all Victorian Learn Local pre-accredited programs recognised by the Commonwealth.

## VICTORIAN LEARN LOCAL VOLUNTEER TEAM AWARD FINALISTS

This award will go to a group of volunteers that work in a Learn Local provider that is currently registered with the ACFE Board. It will be awarded to a group of up to 10 people who have worked together on a common project, demonstrating that effective or shared effort can achieve greater outcomes.

The team must have had some involvement with at least one ACFE Board-funded program or project that was delivered at the Learn Local provider between July 2018 and June 2019. There can be volunteers from other organisations on the team but at least two of the members must be from the Learn Local provider.

The winner of this award category will also be put forward by the ACFE Board for consideration as part of the 2019 Victorian Premier's Volunteer Champions Awards — Teamwork category.

The winning team of this award receives a trophy and \$5,000 in prize money. The two finalist teams each receive a framed certificate and \$1,000.



### WELLSPRINGS FOR WOMEN

A group of volunteer fairy godmothers came to life to support refugee mothers doing the Wellsprings for Women program that aims to create pathways to employment – a course that would barely be possible without a childminding service.

The Wellsprings Child Minding Champions worked collaboratively to establish the most effective service, taking into account considerable challenges, including the low levels of English and literacy of both mothers and children.

Catering for children aged 0-5 years, they sourced toys and materials and established systems to record the children's progress. Some volunteers trained in the Mother Goose playgroup techniques that assists in language development, motor skills and preparation for kindergarten and school.

Within days children learn songs and actions – thus building their language skills, in a dedicated childminding room under the same roof as where their mothers take classes. Volunteer enthusiasm and creativity produced a program that kids love so their mothers can feel confident to participate in classes.



## WOMEN CONNECT HOTSPOT OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

### PHILLIP ISLAND COMMUNITY & LEARNING CENTRE

Thanks to volunteers at The Women Connect Hotspot Office, located in Phillip Island, previously isolated women are thriving because they're being engaged in the endeavours of creating small businesses, or embarking on further education.

Phillip Island is largely a tourist destination, so it has significant employment challenges, especially for women experiencing social and economic disadvantage. Small business ventures suit many of the hotspot clients. The core volunteer team of 10 professional women run a dynamic, inspiring environment. Volunteers may be called upon for simple tasks such as applying for online police checks or birth certificates, or for training advice and business mentoring in everything from employability skills, small business training and IT, to digital marketing and social media. No job is too big or small.

As a result, their clients develop increased confidence in areas that would previously be overwhelming, and feel nurtured to stay on track with their personal and professional goals.



## ZOE SUPPORT AUSTRALIA

Zoe Support provides young mothers with a wraparound support service to assist them to re-engage in education, while fostering mother-child interrelationships. Without the childcare volunteers, these mothers would be less likely to attend classes, learn new skills, build social networks and participate in programs that promote positive parenting and enhance social inclusion.

During 2018, Zoe Support Australia ran seven pre-accredited courses for young mothers (3,000 contact hours). This volume would be unachievable without volunteers because of the high demand across the four in-venue family day care centres.

Under the supervision of early childhood educators, these devoted volunteers manage an active environment for children of all ages and create a welcoming community for young mums who have often felt disenfranchised. Their genuine care for these young families builds relationships and transforms Zoe Support from an organisation into a family where children enjoy a safe environment close by mum – playing, learning and developing socially.

# LEARN LOCAL LEGENDS

One of the most remarkable aspects of this sector is the diversity of Learn Local providers. While all Learn Local providers are passionate about their commitment to adult learning, the eight ACFE Regional Councils have each selected a provider within their region as an outstanding regional contributor to improving participation in training by one or more of the ACFE Board's priority learner cohorts.

This acknowledgement is awarded to providers that are considered to have appropriate growth in participation by one or more of the Board's priority learner cohorts in ACFE Board-funded programs or projects; evidence of innovative approaches to engaging one or more of these priority learner cohorts; and collaboration and knowledge sharing with other Learn Local providers.

There are eight Learn Local Legends across Victoria and each Legend receives a framed certificate and \$1,000 in prize money.



## ACCESS AUSTRALIA GROUP (ACCESS SKILLS TRAINING)

Nominated by ACFE Loddon Mallee Regional Council

Access Skills Training (AST) is a Learn Local RTO that operates a number of social enterprises including Peppergreen Farm, a renowned tourist destination which comprises an extremely successful catering enterprise, a café, a market garden and a retail outlet that attracts hundreds of visitors. Through the Farm, AST delivers pre-accredited pathway programs for horticulture, hospitality and industry.

Peppergreen Farm Access Skills Training delivers VET in schools and VCAL options to government and independent schools across Victoria and also delivers fee-for-service vocational and English language programs to industry (primarily Community Services) in SE Asia. AST partners with Learn Local organisations across the region and has an extensive network of community and industry partners.

AST has a high rate of successful student transitions into accredited training and employment, and exiting students are given great support to continue their career journey.

## ALBURY WODONGA VOLUNTEER RESOURCE BUREAU

Nominated by ACFE Hume Regional Council

The Albury Wodonga Volunteer Resource Bureau maintains stakeholder relationships and supports the communities in the cross border towns of Albury and Wodonga through the establishment of strong partnerships with Wodonga TAFE, other Learn Locals, schools and community organisations.

By providing Multicultural Settlement Services to assist newly arrived migrants and refugees, the Bureau is able to break down cultural barriers and deliver pre-accredited training in pathways to volunteering and work. Their very successful Capacity and Innovation Fund project, "Kitchen in the Hood", is taking training out into the community in a very innovative and practical way.

While an example of a relatively small Learn Local organisation, it is certainly a dynamic one.



## BACCHUS MARSH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Nominated by ACFE Grampians Regional Council

The Bacchus Marsh Community College provides education, community development and support services for vulnerable community members including low-income learners, migrants, unemployed, people with disabilities and people with drug and alcohol issues. Training offered includes certificates in early childhood education and care, individual support, floristry, and horticulture.

The College works closely with other Learn Local providers in the region to share information and as an RTO is able to partner to deliver accredited programs. Partnerships include one with Melton Specialist School to deliver the Certificate II in Horticulture through traineeships to their clients; with Moorabool Shire Council for a range of activities and grant submissions; and with the Australian College of Higher Education as the RTO to deliver a VCAL program.

## CARRINGBUSH ADULT EDUCATION CENTRE

Nominated by ACFE North Western Metropolitan Regional Council

Carringbush Adult Education Centre is a Learn Local RTO specialising in language and literacy programs. It has a strong relationship with Melbourne Polytechnic and AMES to deliver federally-funded Adult Migrant English programs. Carringbush also delivers the Reconnect program, Family Learning Partnership and Commonwealth-funded programs in partnership with other Learn Local organisations.

A member of the Learn Local Quality partnership program of 10 Learn Locals across the metropolitan area, Carringbush delivers quality pre-accredited programs primarily to the culturally and linguistically diverse community. The Centre also develops professional learning tools and English as an Additional Language training videos for the sector and furthers the reach and extent of their offerings through successful Capacity and Innovation Fund projects.

## CIRE SERVICES

Nominated by ACFE Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council

Cire Services has demonstrated the leadership and capability to deliver innovative programs both in urban and outreach settings. They excel at partnering with other Learn Locals to create great pathways for learners and engage with industry to identify employer workforce needs to assist the creation of job pathways.

Learner needs are identified and contextualised, ensuring program delivery meets their needs, while the provision of appropriate advice and wrap-around services optimises students' ability to succeed.



## CLOVERDALE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Nominated by ACFE  
Barwon South Western  
Regional Council

Cloverdale Community Centre works in partnership with Foundation 61, a residential rehabilitation centre located on the outskirts of Geelong, to deliver pre-accredited courses aimed at addressing the residents' education needs.

The pre-accredited courses are co-designed to provide employability and vocational skills that value-add to other programs provided by Foundation 61 and provide a pathway into accredited vocational education and training.

Pre-accredited courses conducted in partnership with Foundation 61 include Become Job Ready, Introduction to Metalwork, Communication 101, Introduction to Horticulture and Introduction to Kitchen Operations. Courses are tailored to engage and address the needs of people experiencing drug and alcohol issues and are innovatively designed to engage the local community in education and provide a pathway into an accredited course.

## PAYNESVILLE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

Nominated by ACFE  
Gippsland Regional  
Council

Paynesville Neighbourhood Centre (PNC) has engaged priority cohort learners in Paynesville and Bairnsdale over many years including in agribusiness, construction, and employment skills pre-accredited training pathways.

They commenced formal delivery from their 'Aspire Precinct' in Bairnsdale in 2018. This precinct is delivering hands-on training to learners in the building and retail areas.

PNC has developed strong engagement with learners using social media and has supported Learn Local organisations in East Gippsland, Wellington and South Gippsland. PNC has engaged in a number of Strengthening Pathways for Adult Learners in Gippsland Community of Practice meetings over the past few years. They have mentored other Gippsland Learn Local organisations to implement the New Horizons project developed by the Centre.

## WELLSPRINGS FOR WOMEN

Nominated by ACFE  
Southern Metropolitan  
Regional Council

Wellsprings for Women (based in Greater Dandenong) has significantly increased delivery of pre-accredited programs and enrolments over the past two years.

They are contracted for 15,240 student contact hours in 2019 (13,072 in 2018) as well

as having Learner Engagement A-Frame Program funding to deliver programs. Courses offered include Introduction to Community Services, the Enterprising CALD Women Education Program and Education for all Learning Abilities.

Wellsprings also delivers in the City of Casey. They have very strong links with local support networks and work collaboratively with other providers and Chisholm TAFE. They participated on the Steering Committee for the Purse / SARA project (financial literacy for women) recognising that many of their learners were in need of financial literacy training.

# VICTORIAN LEARN LOCAL PRE-ACCREDITED PATHWAY PROGRAM AWARD FINALISTS

Learn Local providers are the cornerstone of adult education in the community. They join people with their communities and provide a forum for the sharing of information, experience and knowledge. They work with local councils, support services and job agencies, and create an environment that is welcoming to all.

This Award recognises the capacity of Learn Local programs to engage learners and create pathways to further education, training or employment. The winning Learn Local program will be awarded to a pre-accredited or foundation program that demonstrates the creation of pathways for individuals to engage successfully with learning and employment (paid or volunteer) as a result of their participation in the program. The winning program demonstrates the calibre of programs that the Learn Local sector delivers and is an exemplar of an approach to program development, design and/or delivery that reflects the particular pedagogy and approaches that characterise the work of the Learn Local sector.

The winner of this award receives a trophy and \$10,000 in prize money. The two finalists each receive a framed certificate and \$1,000.



## WELLSPRINGS FOR WOMEN

Creative Enterprising Women provides a unique intensive pre-accredited training program for women who have experienced barriers to employment and education such as mothers re-entering the workforce and those experiencing poverty, family violence and mental health issues. It's situated in the City of Greater Dandenong, which is rich with cultural and linguistic diversity.

The program has two main pathways: one for in-depth and specialised business programs in the local community, and the other to support women to start micro-enterprise businesses. Much of the first term is spent working through blockages, as well as building strengths and skills; where there are complex issues, other support systems are sought. The highly flexible approach addresses each individual's needs.

What a difference this program is making. CEW helped one woman complete a food handling course and open a Vietnamese food truck. Of the 18 women who completed the course, 16 went on to further study, employment or volunteering.



### KEW NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRE INC.

Refocusing their model of engaging learners aged 18 to 25 with disabilities, the Learn to Work program, run through the Kew Neighbourhood Learning Centre, took the classroom into the work environment. As a result, these normally reticent, socially awkward young people became empowered.

A unique suite of pre-accredited courses was built by discovering each student's learning style, and applying new strategies to the fields of study including horticulture, customer service, carpentry and recreation.

Central to course delivery was establishing paths that built skills and confidence through allowing the learner to determine their next steps. To achieve this, they also worked with students' families, local businesses and higher education institutes.

Over the 18-month life of the program, there was a dramatic uplift in their literacy and numeracy skills and they developed the confidence to articulate their needs regarding employment or study opportunities. These new skills also improved their interpersonal competencies to enrich their lives generally.



### KYNETON COMMUNITY HOUSE (KYNETON COMMUNITY & LEARNING CENTRE INC.)

The Skills for Life program is run by Kyneton Community House for disengaged people between the ages of 17-25. It doesn't discriminate – if a person shows interest, they facilitate that interest across two streams – hospitality or agriculture.

The course is designed to capture the interest of non-traditional learners, help them understand their potential and rewire their thinking. Students begin by outlining their hopes, then individual learning plans are devised. They proceed at their own pace without judgement or testing requirements.

Great trainers and strong partnerships with Kyneton enterprises – The Social Foundry (hospitality stream) and This Farm Needs a Farmer (agriculture stream), have netted outstanding results. Around 75 per cent of participants have progressed from a place of hardship and despair to further education, employment, volunteering or re-entry to Year 12.

This success specifically impacts the student's wellbeing. The facilitators report that watching the students flourish and take control of their own lives has been an absolute joy.

## VICTORIAN LEARN LOCAL COLLABORATION AWARD FINALISTS

The Victorian Learn Local Collaboration Award recognises a collaboration between a Learn Local provider and other sectors that has resulted in improved pathways from pre-accredited training to accredited training.

The approach taken by both parties to the collaboration has resulted in them working together to achieve a shared goal and in some instances they may have had to change the way they usually work to ensure the success of the collaboration. There will be achievements and training impacts that have been made as a result of the collaboration. The sustainability of the collaboration is evident from the plans that are in place for the future as well as an indication of how the collaboration could be replicated or adopted in other settings.

The winning collaboration demonstrates how Learn Local providers and other sectors can work together to improve pathway opportunities for learners.

The winner of this award receives a trophy and \$10,000 in prize money (to be shared by both parties). The two finalists each receive a framed certificate and \$1,000 (to be shared by both parties).



### **CENTRE FOR ADULT EDUCATION & YOORALLA**

Able partners Yooralla, and the Centre for Adult Education (CAE), shared a vision to improve employment opportunities for people with disability.

Initial evidence-based research, and Yooralla's internal consultation with clients, revealed that literacy and numeracy were key issues, and that the lack of cohesion between available services often resulted in activities that merely filled the day rather than enabling clients to meet an end goal.

The design of Equal@Work placed learners into pre-accredited training with access to high quality job outcomes. Beginning with Skills for Life and Work, a six-week classroom-based pre-accredited course at CAE, students learnt employability skills and experienced 'tasters' of various industries. An eight-week job-seeking mentoring program ensued, then work experience. Considering the cycle end-to-end, employers were also assisted to implement workplace programs that supported diversity.

A marked improvement in employment outcomes not only gave participants economic independence, but also encouraged greater inclusion for disabled people across Victoria.



### KINGLAKE RANGES NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE & ELLIMATTA YOUTH INC.

Two small community groups joined forces with a passion to double their impact on the large numbers of unemployed and vulnerable youth in the Kinglake Ranges. Ellimatta Youth is an early intervention youth service and Kinglake Ranges Neighbourhood House (KRNH) is an established community hub and Learn Local provider.

Prior to their collaboration, many vulnerable people had fallen through the cracks of a system that could not cope. The Kinglake Ranges Employment and Enterprise Program took a more individualistic approach and offered uncapped support that was specific to the individual needs of people who live in a remote location and have varying abilities.

Many people sought out their services and are progressing to employment and/or study. In a small community, this creates a ripple effect for others to seek change. At the heart of this successful model is that the partners share similar objectives and work collaboratively to achieve sustainable outcomes.



### DIVERSITAT & DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

In the past, convicted offenders were not educated to make different lifestyle choices and would often return to their previous lifestyle. When the Department of Justice and Community Safety and Diversitat Training partnered up, they sowed the seeds of a life-success pathway for female offenders.

Key to this was the provision of skills that would help them transition into further training or employment. Diversitat Training translated their successful sewing and cooking classes for migrants and refugees into pre-accredited programs for offenders, offering sewing and fashion design, or cooking and hospitality.

Students experienced satisfaction in producing reusable shopping bags, or preparing meals, all of which were donated for community needs. Then the programs were extended to teach employability skills and horticulture.

The training helped them realise their self-worth and capabilities, and plan a future. Re-offending has been reduced and the women have a strong vision of the light at the end of the road.

# VICTORIAN LEARN LOCAL CREATING LOCAL SOLUTIONS AWARD FINALISTS

The ability to identify and respond to a particular education or training need within a community is a distinctive characteristic and strength of the Learn Local sector.

This award recognises the achievements of a Learn Local program or project that is creating solutions to local training needs. The program or project has been developed by a Learn Local provider in partnership with other organisations, business and industry or the community to provide these solutions.

The winning program or project demonstrates the use of different expertise, technology or program arrangements to create local solutions. This program or project will enable learning for its participants and will demonstrate how the Learn Local sector provides flexible, quality and tailored training that meets local needs.

The winner of this award receives a trophy and \$10,000 in prize money. The two finalists each receive a framed certificate and \$1,000.



## CIRE SERVICES

The Women's Warehouse Essentials program is a collaboration between Cire Services and Employment Plus that assists long-term unemployed women in the Yarra Valley back into the workforce.

With an ultimate focus on employment, the pre-accredited program takes a holistic approach and begins with examining why a woman struggles to find work. Strategies are sought to manage everything from work/life balance and personal finances, to legal concerns and stable housing, before moving on to employment skills. By empowering women across a range of issues, they become more capable of gaining and maintaining a job.

Attending to the 'soft' skills is ultimately what makes the program a success. Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and Women's Warehouse participants return as mentors even after they have secured employment. A core group of participants recently founded the First Impressions Clothing Library, which provides low-cost clothing for unemployed local women.



## GEST

When it comes to being responsive to the community, Gippsland Employment Skills Training (GEST) is making all the right calls. With approximately 15,000 people in the region being unemployed, the tremendous expansion of Latrobe Valley's call centre industry spelt opportunity.

GEST linked directly with local employers to co-design a four-week pre-accredited course which would incorporate work experience and ultimately, employment in customer service roles.

Kick Start Your Career in Customer Service; Call Centre Operations, adopted a tailored program for participants with diverse issues including generational unemployment. The program opened students' eyes to the value of having a job, income, and the resultant friendships. The first intake of 10 participants had a 90 per cent success rate with students either gaining employment or going on to further study.

The effective collaboration between GEST and industry partners sparked further industry interest and in 2018, Minister Gayle Tierney held an event at Aussie Broadband to acknowledge the initiative's success.



## THE BRIDGE

The Moon Rabbit is a character in Asian folklore known for kindness and generosity. The Moon Rabbit Café in Preston has these values in spades. It's a social enterprise that assists neurodiverse adults (people with disabilities including poor mental health and autism) up to the age of 28, to learn hospitality skills. They are well prepared for employment and enjoyment.

The 20-week bespoke work-readiness program, delivered through The Bridge neighbourhood house, provides one-on-one support and practical training with a strong focus on the development of confidence, resilience and skills, including employability skills.

Rarely does a pre-accredited program capture the hearts of so many people who genuinely want to see the students succeed. Moon Rabbit café provides a high standard, competitive service and customers take a personal interest in the students. Without exception, every student has reported that the program has brought meaning to their lives and a better quality of life. This result is immeasurable.

# 2018 VICTORIAN LEARN LOCAL AWARD WINNERS AND LEGENDS

## 2018 AWARD WINNERS



### The Ro Allen Award: Recognising Pre-accredited Learner Excellence

David Hayes, Kew  
Neighbourhood  
Learning Centre



### Victorian Learn Local Young Pre-accredited Learner Award

Aymee Schofield,  
Noweyung Ltd



### Victorian Learn Local Pre-accredited Pathway Program Award

Prepare for Work -  
Service Stars, Kensington  
Neighbourhood House



### Victorian Learn Local Practitioner Award

Robyn Spandonide,  
Loddon Campaspe  
Multicultural Services



### Victorian Learn Local Creating Local Solutions Award

Kick-Start your Career in  
Health, Noweyung Ltd



### Victorian Learn Local Collaboration Award

Manningham Learns  
- A Strategic Alliance:  
Pines Learning, Park  
Orchards Community  
House and Learning  
Centre and Living and  
Learning @ Ajani

## 2018 LEARN LOCAL LEGENDS

### **Bendigo Neighbourhood Hub**

Nominated by ACFE Loddon Mallee Regional Council

### **Diversitat**

Nominated by ACFE Barwon South Western Regional Council

### **Glen Park Community Centre Inc.**

Nominated by ACFE Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council

### **Heyfield Community Resource Centre**

Nominated by ACFE Gippsland Regional Council

### **Nhill Neighbourhood House**

Nominated by ACFE Grampians Regional Council

### **Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE)**

Nominated by ACFE North Western Metropolitan Regional Council

### **Springvale Learning and Activities Centre (SLAC)**

Nominated by ACFE Southern Metropolitan Regional Council

### **Tatura Community House**

Nominated by ACFE Hume Regional Council

For the full list of previous Learn Local Award Winners please visit:

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



**TRACEY CURRO**

## MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Tracey Curro is a former *60 Minutes* reporter, and a Queensland University of Technology Outstanding Alumnus with over 20 years' experience as a journalist, producer and presenter. She has worked on all Australian commercial free to air television networks on nationally broadcast news, public affairs and magazine programmes. She travelled the world as a reporter for the popular science and technology series *Beyond 2000*, and then for *60 Minutes*, where she's best remembered for eliciting Pauline Hanson's famous 'please explain'.

Following a successful media career, Tracey joined SHK executive search, where she is now a Senior Partner specialising in corporate affairs and communications.

Tracey holds a Bachelor of Business – Communications from QUT. She is a Trustee of The Shrine of Remembrance, a Director of Ovarian Cancer Australia, and a member of the School Council of Lauriston Girls' School.

## ENTERTAINMENT

### Sweethearts

Tonight's entertainment is performed by members of the Sweethearts, an all-female soul band, made up of secondary students studying Certificate IV in Music Industry through the Sweethearts Foundation.

Sweethearts revive and enliven Soul, Funk & Blues with their trademark sass and tonight's acoustic line up is a snapshot of the 30-member band powerhouse. Sweethearts have just returned from their seventh festival tour across Europe where they performed onstage with Pee Wee Ellis, the composer of James Brown's Cold Sweat. The band continue to deliver refreshing live shows that garner the respect of musicians around the world.

[www.sweethearts.com.au](http://www.sweethearts.com.au)

## TABLE CENTREPIECES

### Diamond Valley Learning Centre

The table floral centrepieces for this evening have been created by students undertaking the Introduction to Floristry course with Trainer Jude McGrath at Diamond Valley Learning Centre (DVLC). The Floristry course is very popular at the Centre, with varied and beautiful arrangements made by students each week.

DVLC is a thriving hub in Greensborough where many people come to learn new skills, meet new people and complete courses that open exciting pathways for the future.

[www.dvlc.org.au](http://www.dvlc.org.au)

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