



INDUSTRY INFO

DECEMBER 2007 / JANUARY 2008

www.theapprenticeshipfactory.com.au

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE APPRENTICESHIP
FACTORY WILL CLOSE AT 1:00PM ON FRIDAY
21ST DECEMBER 2007 AND WILL RE-OPEN AT
8:30AM ON WEDNESDAY 2ND JANUARY 2008**

Merry Christmas 2007

The Apprenticeship Factory has undergone a number of changes throughout this year with increased numbers awarded to our Youth Pathways Program, additional funding received to employ a dedicated Indigenous Field Officer, and our Local Community Partnerships team planning and organising a number of events including a Culinary Challenge and a Solar Car Competition involving a number of Schools and excited students. And last, but by no means least, our WestPac in-store Seymour has maintained a Top 10 rating nationally.

2007 also saw the departure of our CEO whom after 14 years of dedication to this company decided it was time to take a leap into the world outside of Group Training and into the many new challenges that partners such a decision. To Don we praise his dedication and service to our company, and acknowledge that our company would not be where it is today if not for him.

To The Apprenticeship Factory team I thank you for your continued support, your innovative ideas and eagerness to maintain such high standards when operating in such an environmentally challenged market.

To you and your Families I wish you a Happy, Joyous and Safe Christmas.

To our Apprentices, Trainees and Hosts we wish you a Wonderful Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year and look forward to working with you in 2008.

I hope each and every one of you take this opportunity to celebrate with family and friends, but most importantly to take a break from your busy schedules.

& remember...

Be the change you want to see in the world

(Ghandi)

Bridie Gildea
Acting CEO – The Apprenticeship Factory

Christmas Payroll Schedule 2007/2008

Payroll schedules for the Christmas/New Year period will be different from the normal pay period for all apprentice/trainees.

Details are listed below:

Time Sheet – Week ending	Date Time Sheets due to The Apprenticeship Factory (fax 5822 5499)	Date paid into bank
Tuesday 18th December 2007	Wednesday 19th December 2007	Friday 21st December 2007
Tuesday 25th December 2007	Wednesday 19th December 2007	Friday 21st December 2007

If we do not receive your timesheets by Wednesday 19th December 2007 unfortunately you will not be paid until staff return on Wednesday 2nd January 2008.

If you are planning on taking extended leave around this time can you please ensure you fill in the date paid section on your timesheet. If this is not filled out your timesheets will be processed when the week ending falls due.

Any variations between the hours worked and the hours paid for the above week ending dates will require a separate time sheet with the appropriate dates and amended hours. This time sheet will be processed when staff return on Wednesday 2nd January 2008. Please ensure any amended time sheets are faxed through to our office for processing ASAP.

We will maintain limited staffing between Christmas and New Year, however we will be unable to process any pay's during this period.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Should you require any further assistance regarding this matter, please contact Gayle Smith in the Payroll Department on ph: (03) 5822 4555, or your Field Officer.

Youth Pathways – Camp Aspire

The Apprenticeship Factory's Youth Pathways team recently ran a two day "Camp Aspire" at Waranga Holiday Camp for 23 young people who are at risk of leaving school without completing year 12. The participants came from all over the region including Yea, Rochester, Rushworth, Seymour, Alexandra, Kyabram, Yarrawonga, Mooroopna and Shepparton.

The camp was facilitated by Mark (Dobbo) Dobson, a full time performance consultant, 4 of his staff and 4 Youth Pathways' staff and focused on building the participant's confidence, getting support from mentors and influential people, setting personal goals, breaking self doubt and destructive habits and understanding who to take advice from and who to avoid. Each session was followed by a fun and useful activity and small group discussion.

The kids described the camp as awesome, life changing, and a great way to make new friend. We are looking forward to running a similar program next year.



New Field Officers

The Apprenticeship Factory would like to introduce our newest Field Officer Garry Walters, Lindsay Jennings and Sara Horn.

Garry Walters is assigned to our Bendigo office and is the contact for all employers and job seekers in that region. Garry's appointment coincided with our move to our new Bendigo office which is now located at 2 Myers Street in Bendigo.

Garry has a background in the building industry and has recently delivered VET courses in Building and Construction to Secondary Students in the Bendigo area.

Garry can be contacted on ph: (03)5443 9677 or 0417 359 004.



The Apprenticeship Factory has secured funding for a program to assist with placement of local Indigenous Youth into traineeships and apprenticeships in the Shepparton and surrounding areas.

Lindsay Jennings, who has been with our Youth Pathways team in Seymour for the past 12 months will move across into a role as Field Officer operating from our Shepparton Office. Lindsay has a background working with Indigenous Youth at Kee where he facilitated a building project. Lindsay is a qualified builder and is passionate about assisting young people with their entry into their working career.

Lindsay can be contacted on (03) 5832 3374 or 0417 359 680.



Our final new Field Officer to introduce is Sara Horn. Sara will be operating out of our Shepparton office.

Sara holds a formal qualification in Training & Assessment has been with The Apprenticeship Factory for 18 months. Sara's background is in the business/administration field and she will be focused on Traineeships in the Shepparton region. Recently Sara has been assisting Kate Leith in our Benalla office and managed our Bendigo caseload while Garry Walters was in training for his new role.

Sara can be contacted on (03) 5832 3302 or 0417 359 871.



Mental Health Website

The Australian Government has launched a comprehensive website that provides up-to-date information on mental health and wellbeing, including information on the Government's mental health programs. The new site www.mentalhealth.gov.au is a one-stop shop of all Government programs that is aimed at reforming and improving our mental health care system.

Recruitment Pains

A national survey of almost 4800 hiring managers conducted by recruitment firm Hudson, found that more than one in two employers nationally say their recruitment costs have increased by up to 50 per cent as a result of the talent shortage; 56 per cent say the shortage is having an impact on their ability to recruit quality staff; and over 25 per cent say the average time it takes to recruit a new employee has increased by more than 6 weeks.

Seymour – Solar Car Challenge

The inaugural Goulburn River Solar Car Challenge was held recently in Seymour and was an educational partnership between local industry and schools. The project was a great opportunity for schools & industry within our region to be involved in an innovative and engaging project for students.

On the day there were 4 teams participating, two teams from Broadford Secondary College, Euroa Secondary College and Beechworth Secondary College.

The day was overcast which presented a challenge to the solar powered vehicles. To all of the schools credit they worked out solutions and managed to complete the 1 hour race. Schools from the district and neighbouring Local Community Partnerships also came to view the race, travelling from Benalla, Echuca, Bendigo & Shepparton.

Overall the day was a fantastic success which was due not only to LCP staff, RICA and sponsors but most importantly to the effort and commitment put in by the students, teachers & industry mentors. The winning team on the day, Broadford Secondary College Team 1, went on to represent the region at the Industry to Bridge Solar car Challenge in Wodonga on Friday 30th November. They performed well but due to damage to the car had to eventually withdraw. They will be back in 2008, bigger and better for the experience they gained in this year's challenge.

The 2008 Solar Car Challenge will be on again in 2008 with up to 6 other teams wanting to participate next year.



World Skills

The Apprenticeship Factory sends their best wishes to Painting & Decorating Apprentice Jason Brew, who is hosted by Geoff Black in Seymour. Jason recently competed in World Skills and is still waiting to find out if he is successful in progressing to the next level. Good luck Jason!!



Westpac Award

The Apprenticeship Factory's Seymour office incorporates an in-store Westpac bank. Recently our team there won an achievement award for Sales Excellence. Congratulations to all of our staff who are involved with the in-store. Well Done!

(photo left to right: Catherine Cole, Sue Inness, Carole Mann & Carmen Fifield – The Apprenticeship Factory, Seymour)



Gillard Puts Employers on Notice Over WorkChoices

In her first speech in government, Ms Gillard took "the opportunity to extend the hand of co-operation to all of the employer organisations who took part in the debate over WorkChoices".

Labor respected everybody's democratic right to argue their case "but the democratic judges have now made their decision", she said. "It's time for Labor to get on with the task of implementing the mandate that has been conferred upon us."

She said that since the election there had been debate about what would become of Labor's commitments to abolish WorkChoices.

"Let me be very clear: the workplace relations policy Labor announced before the election is the policy Labor will deliver in government," she said.

"So we have a clear mandate from the Australian people to get rid of WorkChoices and replace it with a fair, balanced and productive workplace relations system."

This would involve abolishing AWAs, but respecting existing contractual arrangements; providing 10 national employment standards; creating a fast and simple unfair dismissal system; simplifying and modernising some 4300 awards; limiting the ability to take protected industrial action to bargaining periods; retaining existing right-of-entry provisions; and creating a new independent umpire.

Source: The Age 4/12/07

Our Future Worries

Governance, terrorism, sex? No, Australian children are most worried about their parents and friends dying or getting sick; and the environment.

These were the top ranked of almost 2000 responses to ABC TV's *Behind the News* study where it asked children "What do you and other children your age worry about?"

Other major worries identified include concerns about school, peer and family relationships and body image.

The findings show that there is little difference in what rural children worried about as opposed to those living in cities and towns, while younger children expressed more concern about the environment than those of high school age.

Training Meets Our Needs: National Student Survey

Australia's vocational education and training (VET) system continues to meet the needs of students according to the latest results from the annual *Student Outcomes Survey*.

Almost 89% of graduates were satisfied with the overall quality of their training in 2006 with satisfaction levels rising over the last three years. Furthermore, 93% of graduates would recommend their training to others and 92% would recommend to others where they undertook their training.

The survey also provides an indication of the avenues graduates take after completing training. Nearly 31% of graduates went on to further study after training, 6% went on to study at university, 17% at TAFE and 7% at a private provider or other registered provider.

This year's survey was completed by over 45 000 graduates who completed their training in 2006 at either a publicly funded or privately funded registered training organisation.

Apprentice Wages Too Low For Comfort

A recent national study has highlighted the financial difficulty facing apprentices with wage levels for many first year apprentices below the poverty line and barely above the level of unemployment benefits.

The report, *Living Standards of Apprentices*, released by Group Training Australia compare the earning of apprentices across a range of industries with a variety of community benchmarks.

"At the time of national skills shortages, and with a need for more young people to take up a trade, it is disturbing that many apprentices wages, particularly in the first and second year, remain below a standard generally acceptable to the community", said Chief Executive Officer of Group Training Australia (GTA), Jim Barron.

Some of the findings from the report were:

- Based on the Indicative Budget Standards, the modest but adequate living standard is unattainable for first year apprentices unless they receive large allowances as part of their award.
- Allowances can substantially augment income in some industries. For example in the Melbourne construction industry, allowances can boost income by up to 50%. However, these allowances tend to be confined to the construction industry and for the remainder of apprentices, they barely cover outlays on tools and special travel.
- Even when mandatory allowances are taken into account, 40 or the 42 award categories of first year apprentices studied in the report have disposable income below the poverty line.
- School leaver who engage directly in paid work are paid a junior wages, typically \$40-\$70 a week higher than a first year apprentice.

The reports lead author, Professor Michael Bittman, said that most apprentices only survive the early years through a mixture of handouts from parents, working overtime wherever possible, working in the cash economy or taking a second job.

Jim Barron said that the level of earning explains, in part, the extraordinary drop-out rate among apprentices, which is as high as 40%.

"If Australia is serious about creating a future generation of skilled tradespeople, it must ensure that wages paid to apprentices, particularly those in the first and second years, provide adequate financial encouragement and support", Mr Barron said.

GTA will use the report to help inform its national consultants and in preparation of its submission to the Australian Fair Pay Commission for its upcoming review into junior and training wages.

Falls Prevention in Construction Industry - Campaign

Workplace health and safety regulators across Australia and New Zealand are joining forces to target falls prevention in the construction industry, particularly small and medium-sized projects. Site inspections will be carried out in February and March next year.

Falls prevention is a priority focus area for Australia's workplace safety authorities as they are the single-biggest cause of workplace deaths in the construction industry.

"You don't have to fall from a great height to be killed, end up in a wheel chair or with brain damage," Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities* (HWSA) chair, John Watson, said.

"There have been deaths from falls considerably less than two metres. Frequently it is the employer themselves."

"By announcing the campaign now, we expect all building trades which work at height to review their work procedures and, if necessary, introduce safer systems of work before inspectors visit."

Builders, renderers, plumbers, electricians, roof tilers and other trades are at risk of serious injury if fall prevention measures are not taken.

"In the past three years there have been eight deaths and 1,070 compensated injuries due to falls from height in Victoria's construction sector.

"Don't assume that because you're never had an injury you're working safely. It might just mean you've been lucky," Mr Watson said.

All health and safety regulators produce publications and guidance material which is available in printed form or as electronic documents on their websites. They can also be contacted for general falls prevention advice.

Victorian safety information is available online at www.worksafe.vic.gov.au or by calling the advisory service on 1800 136 089.

Christmas Chatter

Christmas is forever, not for just one day,
for loving, sharing, giving, are not to put away
like bells and lights and tinsel, in some box upon a shelf.
The good you do for others is good you do yourself...
~**Norman Wesley Brooks, "Let Every Day Be Christmas,"**

May the spirit of Christmas bring you peace,
The gladness of Christmas give you hope,
The warmth of Christmas grant you love.
~**Author Unknown**

Christmas begins about the first of December with an office party and ends when you finally realize what you spent, around April fifteenth of the next year.
~**P.J. O'Rourke, Modern Manners**

...remember this December, that love weighs more than gold!