



Highlands LLEN began 2015 with a new focus and ongoing enthusiasm for working towards our vision that 'All youth in our communities are successfully engaged in education, training and employment'. This year we have a core team of four full-time staff plus a number of part-time and casual staff employed in project work. We have a spacious office due to staff departures and Youth Connections having ceased. The space occupied by the Career Hub on the ground floor has become staff offices for Link Up.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on 27 May and we have welcomed four new members to the Committee of Management: Michelle Whyte – Adult Community Education Organisations; Janine Lamb – Other Education/Training Organisations; Jim Dannock – Employers and John Dainutis – Other Community/Co-Opted Associations. We wish to thank departing members: Helen Powers, Tamsin Rositer and Wendy Baker for their contribution to the Highlands LLEN – Wendy has served seven years with our COM. The Highlands LLEN also presented its Annual Report at the AGM.

In 2015, Highlands LLEN is managing a number of projects: Primary Aspirations, City Kids Experiencing Country Life, On Track Connect (providing assistance to school leavers following the contact with them to collect destination data for the On Track survey) and youth surveys for the Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership. We have welcomed project workers to our team to assist with these additional projects. We have also appointed a new book keeper, Eliza Munro and appointed Elizabeth Pearson as a School-based Office Administration Trainee.

The Highlands LLEN is excited about a number of initiatives developing across our community. The proposed new Tech School brings to Ballarat a new education facility that will 'connect students to their futures'. Students will come from their home school to undertake a learning experience in the new Tech School. We are a member of a working party for the Central Highlands Children and Youth Area partnership with a focus at improving school attendance and engagement for youth. We were very pleased that the Work and Learning Centre, 'Next Steps' was re-funded in the Victorian May budget. HLEN will continue to chair the local advisory panel and support the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre with this valuable initiative that supports job seekers to find employment. We are still uncertain about the future of the Workplace Learning Coordinator Program but are hopeful a similar model will be funded by the State Government for 2016 and onwards.

**Jannine Bennett**  
Executive Officer | Highlands LLEN

## Primary Aspirations

The Highlands LLEN has received funding from Regional Development Victoria for a project to build aspirations of primary schools student in grades 5 and 6. This year, students from Beaufort Primary School have visited Gasons, a manufacturing business in Ararat. The Company is a family owned business and has extensive buildings on its 3.24ha (8 acre) site. Gason is a significant regional employer and students who attended this excursion were able to learn about the various careers that are available in manufacturing. Feedback from staff at Gasons was that: "All of the kids were really well behaved and very inquisitive. It was an absolute pleasure to have them come through and see what we do". Prior to the excursion, students met Zac Biggins who is an apprentice who came back to his old Primary School to talk about his journey from studying VET in Schools Engineering, to competing in the Worldskills competitions and



then being employed as an apprentice with Ceramet Pty. Ltd.

Excursions are also being organised for Sebastopol Primary School who will visit SEM Fire and Rescue Pty Ltd. that specialises in the design, manufacture and service of special purpose vehicles for the Australian and export markets. Students will also visit a food manufacturing business later in the year. Teachers are telling us that these experiences are helping their students to consider a wider range of career options.

## Ticket to Work

The Ticket to Work partnership is aimed at improving the employment and education outcomes of young people with a disability. The partnership involves local organisations and agencies who work together to provide students with workplace preparation, work experience, career development and School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs). The organisations bring their various skills and expertise together to collectively address youth disability employment and transition issues in our local community.

We are currently working with 14 students from both Government and Catholic secondary schools within Ballarat and Bacchus Marsh. At present, two students are undertaking an SBAT, with a further 10 students who have participated in work experience. A number of these placements are ongoing, with the view to converting to SBATs in the not too distant future.

These young people are passionate and extremely enthusiastic. The feedback received from host employers has been very positive. If you are a student, or carer for a student, or an employer who would like to give a student an opportunity for work experience, please contact Lisa Howlett on **5336 5018** or [lisa@highlandslen.org](mailto:lisa@highlandslen.org)

### Contact Highlands LLEN

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## City Kids Experiencing Country Life

Minister for Regional Development and Agriculture Jaala Pulford visited students from Westgarth Primary School on camp at Cave Hill Creek near Beaufort during May 2015. The children were participating in the Government's City Kids Experiencing Country Life program. The initiative provides metropolitan Years 5 and 6 students with a chance to experience rural life and develop an understanding of the historical and contemporary role of regional and rural communities in Victoria. Subsidises are provided through the Victorian Government's Regional Growth Fund. The common theme whilst students are on camp is farming and food production. Students also learn about the diverse career opportunities in these areas. Highlands LLEN provides logistical and educational support for the schools and camps.

It was great to see Minister Pulford taking an interest in this program, the kids, their understanding of food production and life in Regional Victoria. The students asked a range of questions and the Minister answered with humour and honesty! Tim Chandler from Cave Hill Creek welcomed the Ministers' visit. "We have enjoyed showing the Minister in person the benefits of this practical and educational camp program" he said.

City Kids experience Country Life camps in the Ballarat region occur at Cave Hill Creek (Beaufort) and Log Cabin Camp (Creswick). Donegan's Farm also provides an interactive animal experience for students.



## Get into Games

Friday May 15 saw Ballarat students 'level up' their pathways at the annual Get into Games (GiG) expo.

A partnership between Ballarat ICT, Federation University, City of Ballarat, Highlands LLEN and local schools, GiG attracted more than 250 students from 16 schools to interact with the newest technology, industry people and university and TAFE teachers and students.

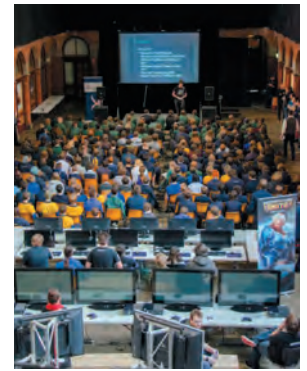
As is now standard, the students were welcomed and wowed by Tony Reed, CEO of Game Development Association of Australia. Tony took students on an amazing journey through the growth of the games industry (which is now bigger than the box office) and the opportunities to work in Australia or around the world.

This year's guest speaker focus was 'A day in the life of a development team' as the expo organisers wanted to highlight the different skill sets and actions needed to bring together a game. There were talks on design, art, tech and production followed by an interactive Q&A session with the speakers.

Federation University presented information on local pathway options for students through TAFE and University in game production, marketing and distribution.

The most notable highlight for most attendees (especially teachers) was the ability to try out multiple Virtual Reality simulators that took students on a journey through the Jurassic era, down a rollercoaster or into outer space.

GiG is an annual event. If you may be interested in attending, please keep an eye on [ballaratgig.com](http://ballaratgig.com)



## Health Service Assistance Placements



Structured Workplace Learning placements are a compulsory requirement for students studying a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance as a VETiS program, with 80 hours required over the two year program delivery.

The difficulties in sourcing placements for over 40 students in this industry, in a regional area, are numerous, even with Ballarat having two major hospitals. Local resources are already stretched to capacity in providing placements for University students that are studying Nursing as well as medical students, who require placements as part of their study.

Through the building of sustainable relationships, Highlands LLEN staff have been able to source a range of placements. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Havilah House in Maryborough, Ballarat Health Services Planning Activity Groups and Aged Care facilities in Ballarat, Djerriwarrh Health Services in Bacchus Marsh and Ballarat Day Procedure Centre for their support to provide placements.

Feedback from students has been exceptional. Whilst some elements of placements have been quite confronting for them, they have all loved the opportunity and exposure they have obtained. It has also provided them with confirmation of their chosen career path as well as clarifying the areas they do not wish to work in, which is just as beneficial.

## Multicultural Youth Led Employment Forum leads to jobs!



The Highlands LLEN was very pleased to join with Centre for Multicultural Youth to play a support role to the first annual Youth Led Employer Forum on April 10.

The forum was attended by 20 young people who were looking to build the skills, tools and confidence to find their very first job. They were able to hear what local employers expect from young people in the workplace, gain tips from other young people for finding work, and participate in interactive workshops – including learning how to make a great coffee!

Special guest employers included Gary Morris from the Unicorn Café, Raj Saha from Coles Supermarket, Richard Alexander from McDonalds, and Brad Palmer from The Forge.

The Employment Forum exceeded all expectations and has led to three young people picking up part time work with the guest employers and two young people going out on a work trial in the coming weeks.

The Highlands LLEN would like to acknowledge Alister Webb and Duer Yoa who undertook a huge amount of work to get the program together and delivered on the day.

# What's happening with Highlands LLEN VETiS Cluster?

WOW, can't believe the year is nearly half over and of course the VETiS Cluster has been busy creating VET in School opportunities for young people within our region.

February was a hectic time for the VETiS Cluster as 5 new VETiS program providers were inducted into the Cluster. One new provider was The Gordon, they provide VCE VET Animal Studies located at Ballarat High School. This class commenced with over 40 students and the students have enjoyed having animals in their classroom nearly every week. In 2015 over 600 students commenced 20 different VETiS Cluster programs.

During May the Cluster Music Technical Production and Music Performance students volunteered their time to help Big Brothers Big Sisters re-launch a youth mentoring program. The students performed at the event as well as conducted the lighting, the sound and coordinated stage movements. The students also hung out with well-known comedians Sammy J, Geraldine Hickey and Dave Callan. The VETiS Cluster Coordinator Stacey Gill was overwhelmed by the students' support at this huge event!

In 2013 the VETiS Cluster introduced VETiS Aviation and the first intake graduated at the end of 2014. Two students from this program (Joshua Foord from Ballarat Grammar and Owen Brown from Ballarat Christian College) have continued with their Aviation studies. Joshua has gained a pilot cadetship with REX regional airlines based in Albury and Owen has gained an aircraft mechanic apprenticeship with Field Air based at the Ballarat Airport.



The VETiS Cluster is now planning for 2016 and busily organising the program booklet with the VET in Schools programs available next year. The VCE VET Allied Health program will be introduced next year in partnership with Mercy Health Training Institute from Melbourne. The VCE VET Allied Health program will focus on the allied health sector of the health industry e.g. Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Psychology, Speech Therapy just to name a few.

The 2016 program booklet will be available online to secondary schools from the commencement of third term. VETiS Cluster applications open on the 13th of July and close the 28th of August 2015.

If you have questions for the VETiS Cluster don't hesitate to call Stacey on **5336 5017**.

## Highlands LLEN VETiS Cluster Program Teacher Profile



### Shona Maloney

#### VETiS Program you teach?

First and Second Years Hospitality (Kitchen Operations)

**Where is the program delivered?** Ballarat High School

#### How long have you been teaching VETiS?

Nine amazing years

**What is your industry background?** Qualified Chef of 21 years, travelled, lived & worked all around Australia. Received my Secondary School teaching qualifications in 2011 as well as my Diploma in Hospitality Management in 2012.

#### What do you enjoy about teaching VETiS?

Everything! I adore food and especially love sharing my passion and knowledge with like-minded students. Food makes my world go round & is what gets me out of bed every day.

#### What's your favourite VETiS unit of competency that you like teaching?

I love teaching the 'Basic Methods of Cookery' unit. This is the first of the practical units for 1st year students and allows me the opportunity to witness those students that have the twinkle in their eye for their love of cooking. Teaching students the basic methods of cooking properly from the ground up, helps set them up with good habits for their future cooking careers.

#### Tell us an interesting situation that has occurred while teaching VETiS?

There have been many laughs and interesting stories to share whilst teaching VETiS. Watching the journey students undertake during the two year program is extremely rewarding and enjoyable. Some students have a disastrous start. From having a student 'gas' their eyes, to dropping a knife through their shoe and various other OH&S scary moments. To then watch those students create and prepare a three course meal that is restaurant worthy. The growth these students make puts a smile on my face every day.

#### What would you like to see changed in your VETiS program?

I would like to set up and run an in-house café/restaurant here at Ballarat High School in the future. I have created seven functions that the VET students plan and prepare themselves over the course of the year. These range from a three course sit down dinner for 110 people to appetisers/canapés style function called 'Jazz before Dark' ran and performed entirely by students.

#### What your biggest success story while teaching VETiS program?

There is not one big success story, there is many success stories. I keep in touch with many of my past students, in particular the students that have gone on to apprenticeships. I love hearing from past students letting me know about completing their apprenticeships. One of my past students went on to complete her apprenticeship and is now employed at Rockpool as the dessert chef working alongside Neil Perry.

## Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership

The Highlands LLEN is undertaking interviews with local young people to gain their real life stories about living in their community and the stresses experienced with their peers, their school or family life, interacting with government agencies or generally just being young.

The interviews form an important part of the work being undertaken by the Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership. The Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership has recently been set up to improve the way government agencies and community organisations work together to support young people in this community.

This initiative is a critical first step in establishing a new way of working aimed at more effectively joining up social services in Victoria to support better outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

To date, the Highlands LLEN has undertaken interviews with 11 young people. These individual stories highlight how easily things can go wrong for a young person but also how amazingly resilient they can be in the face of very difficult circumstances.

The young people have raised issues such as the impact of being removed from their home by Child Protection; being bullied and having rumours spread about them; being caught up in drug addiction; and, breaking the law through boredom.

The interviews have been very powerful and Highlands LLEN staff have felt trusted by the young people who have shared their stories. A first report outlining the key findings of the interviews will be presented to the Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership Steering Committee (which includes senior managers in government) at the end of June. This will assist the Committee to decide what action needs to be taken to support young people in our community and help them achieve the life they want to live.



## Youth profile Elizabeth Pearson

### Tell me about yourself

I'm 19 years old and am born and raised in Ballarat. I'm a coffee addict and my favourite food is Pad Thai.

**Tell me about school.** I attended Phoenix P-12 Community College up until mid-year 11, and then dropped out to work full time at a hardware store. After a year and a half of that I decided I wanted to get my high school certificate so I could have more opportunities and qualifications. I enrolled at Federation College to do my VCAL year 12 and it's been the best thing I have ever done.

**Tell me about your work.** I work at Highlands LLEN as an administration assistant, it's a school based apprenticeship. Some tasks I assist in are answering phones, typing up transcripts and minutes. I also assist with data entry, the organisation and preparation of meetings and all sorts of office tasks.

**What do you hope to do in the future?** I hope to travel the world and have a full time job, hopefully in Administration.

### What are your hobbies?

I enjoy reading, cooking, cycling, going to live music events and spending time with friends.

### What are you passionate about?

I am passionate about being a positive role model to others and giving as much as you can back to your community and those in need.

### Message for other young people

If I had any message for young people it would be to stay in school. There are alternative types of schooling and so many school based apprenticeships/traineeships to choose from that it makes it easier to finish those last few years of secondary education. These days it's pretty hard to find full time work and it's very competitive. You really need the most qualifications you can get and having your year 12 really does make a difference.

## Building Ballarat Aspirations

The Highlands LLEN is working with the City of Ballarat to grow the career aspirations of our local young people by exposing them to the major investments going on in their town.

What started as a conversation around encouraging young people to prepare for the world of work is now a tool being used to develop local young people's aspirations, usually reserved for business people looking to invest or move to Ballarat.

The Ballarat City Projects and Future Jobs presentation highlights to young people what it is about their city that makes business people, and Governments want to invest and move to Ballarat.

The presentation combines upcoming and current major investments and projects with job analysis data and local further education pathways. For instance, Ballarat is known as an Information Communication and Technology centre. Did you know that Ballarat was winner of the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge in 2014; that the average wage in ICT is \$1050 per week; and that System Design has had over 40% growth to 1056 jobs and you can study it locally at Federation University?

The presentation as a whole outlines over \$150,000,000 investments in local projects including the new Eureka Stadium, the Railway Precinct and Ballarat West Employment Zone. The presentation links local projects to Ballarat's top growth (trending) industries being ICT, Health and Community Services, Education and Training, Building and Construction, Transport and Logistics, Tourism and Hospitality, Retail and Agribusiness. We have found teachers are as equally excited by the presentation as our regional students!

The Highlands LLEN team are available to share this presentation with your school, individual classes, community organisations, businesses etc. on request.



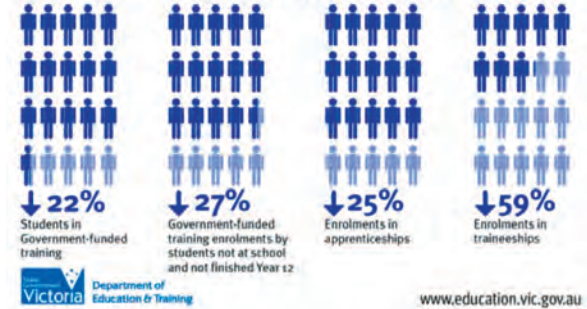
## Key Facts

Each year the LLENs across Victoria receive a data disc with information relevant to each LLEN. Positive news for Ballarat is the improvement to the year 12 or equivalent attainment rate for 19 year olds — an increase of almost 10% over a 4 year period. The Victorian rate for 2013 was 86.7% so Ballarat is still approximately 10% points below the state average.

Year	Rate
2009	67.5%
2010	63.2%
2011	70.7%
2012	73%
2013	77.2%

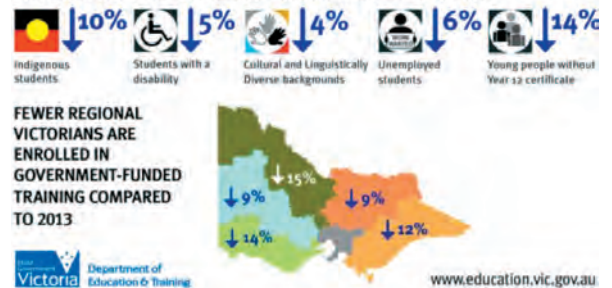
### 2014 Training Market Report

#### FEWER 15 TO 19 YEAR OLDS ARE IN TRAINING SINCE 2011



### 2014 Training Market Report

#### FEWER ENROLMENTS BY PEOPLE WHO FACE BARRIERS TO EDUCATION IN VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT-FUNDED TRAINING COMPARED TO 2013



#### FEWER REGIONAL VICTORIANS ARE ENROLLED IN GOVERNMENT-FUNDED TRAINING COMPARED TO 2013



## Apprentice numbers recover in December quarter

There has been a turnaround in the number of apprentices commencing, suggesting an end to the recent decline according to the latest figures from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).

The figures show that non-trade commencements increased by 5,300 to 31,700 in the December quarter, suggesting an end to the series of declines since June 2013. Trade commencements increased 1,600 to 21,500, ending the downturn since September 2013.

The NCVER report, Apprentices and trainees 2014 – early trend estimates, December quarter, provides seasonally adjusted and smoothed data at the national level.

### Trade and non-trade commencements, seasonally adjusted, September 2004 – December 2014.

