



2014
Victorian
Learn
Local

AWARDS

Adult, Community and Further Education Board

Congratulations to all of the finalists for the 2014 Victorian Learn Local Awards!

Outstanding Pre-accredited Learner

Wendy Dyckhoff	Dallas Neighbourhood House	<p>Wendy is an advocate for the Forgotten Australians. Separated from her family at a young age, she spent years living in institutions where she was abused. She did not develop confident, eloquent speech, as she was taught to remain silent. As an adult, she could have sat and dwelt on the wrongs that she had suffered, but instead she decided to make a difference, by helping others who had been through similar experiences. She arrived at Dallas Neighbourhood House, seeking help with the gaps in her education. Here she undertook a computer class that taught her how to use email, to access the internet and to create documents. Her self-confidence and communication skills improved and assisted in her tireless work for other Forgotten Australians. Using her newly acquired computer skills, Wendy has helped other Forgotten Australians to find their personal records and reunited them with family they never knew they had. These skills also gave Wendy the confidence to enrol in an accredited course at Kangan Institute and she is continuing to provide a 'voice' for those who have silently suffered.</p>
Angela Saenz	Wellsprings for Women	<p>When Angela Saenz moved from Argentina to Australia she says she 'felt like my tongue had been cut out'. Unable to speak English, she felt powerless and unable to work as a volunteer in her chosen field, the community sector. Angela undertook the Learn Local pre-accredited course, <i>English for Migrant Women</i> at Wellsprings for Women Inc. in Dandenong. The Wellsprings staff and volunteers have found her to be an engaged and dedicated learner. Through improving her written and spoken English, Angela has been able to support more people in her voluntary work. She has also found paid employment, working as a cleaner, and now feels like a productive member of her local community.</p>
Lisa Stimson	LINK Neighbourhood House	<p>Lisa Stimson has come a long way since she began attending Women in Ag at LINK in 2010. Married to a farmer, but not coming from a farming background herself, Lisa found that most farming conversations went straight over her head. Women in Ag has given Lisa the opportunity to gain the knowledge needed for to open the channels of conversation with her husband around farming and improve their business. Women in Ag is the first formal education Lisa has engaged in since completing Year 12 in 2003. She is now able to</p>

		contribute to the business by learning more about farming practices and running the farm office. Since beginning the course, Lisa's confidence has increased, her organisational and communication skills have improved markedly and through Women in Ag, Lisa has built a network of professional and social contacts she can draw on for further information and knowledge. She has also gained the confidence to enrol in and successfully complete a Diploma in Agribusiness Management.
Outstanding Practitioner		
Maria Cox	YouthNow	At YouthNow, Maria teaches educationally disadvantaged learners from Melbourne's western suburbs. Many of these students have mental health issues, suffer from drug or alcohol addiction, have family issues or are experiencing chronic unemployment. Maria successfully motivates and transforms the lives of these young people who are unsure of their worth to the world. She recognises that they have various preferred learning styles and she incorporates that into her teaching methods, using praise and encouragement. For some learners, even getting out of bed and coming to class is a major achievement and it is testament to the respect the students have for Maria that they continue to come back. YouthNow provides a local solution for many pre-sentence young people by re-engaging them in learning or employment. Maria works with these young men and women to help them prove to the courts that they are committed to staying out of prison. Her work at YouthNow contributes to the documented decrease in recidivism in the western suburbs. Through her work, Maria provides a safety net for many young people, providing them with the support, education and attention they require to begin to make a positive contribution to the community.
Rani Pillai	Keysborough Learning Centre	Rani arrived in Australia from India with her husband seven years ago. Although she had worked as a teacher at a Polytechnic College in India, Rani was lonely and feeling unsure of herself when she approached Keysborough Learning Centre (KLC) to enquire about volunteer work. In order to teach at the centre, Rani needed to undertake a variety of qualifications which included: a Certificate IV in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), a Diploma in VET and a Vocational Graduate Certificate in TESOL. By her own admission, Rani's learning journey has been enormous. She remains committed to providing training that is both innovative and engaging in the Learn Local environment. She has been instrumental in introducing e-learning into the classroom and her enthusiasm for digital literacy provision has ensured KLC's students have reaped the benefit. Rani is patient, well prepared and very caring of all her students. She adapts her teaching style to suit individual students and shows her empathy for the diversity of their backgrounds and their reasons for seeking further education.
Tony Senese	Prahran Community and Learning Centre	Tony's ability to adapt and connect to all his learners is admirable. Students often arrive at the centre with a negative perception of education or are scarred by their past experiences. Tony engages, encourages and supports students, helping them to move into further study. He strives to engage his learners to continue their education from pre-accredited to accredited learning. An accomplished artist, Tony was working on

		<p>commission and on television sets, but he found studio work isolating. He felt he was doing a disservice if he didn't share his knowledge, especially with disadvantaged people. Tony has established an outstanding rapport with the staff and students at Prahran Community Learning Centre where he believes that every student is creative and unique. He has a clear understanding of what is required to teach art effectively; making it fun, inviting and encouraging his students to engage with the broader community, which in turn increases their confidence and connectedness. In the words of one of Tony's VCAL students, "We pay attention to him because he has respect for us... he is an all-round sick teacher, with a fresh Mohawk and goatee."</p>
<p>Outstanding Pathways Program</p>		
<p>Emerging Cultural Leaders</p>	<p>Footscray Community Arts Centre</p>	<p>Emerging Cultural Leaders is the only program of its kind in the arts and community sector. It was designed to engage with culturally and linguistically diverse learners, as well as those who are disabled, marginalised or disadvantaged. Among other skills on offer are arts management and administration, community engagement and community service. Emerging Cultural Leaders is developing the next generation of local community art and cultural development practitioners and cultural leaders. The program provides sector and industry development through integrated mentorships, knowledge sharing, networking and forum presentation opportunities. Learners go through a series of seminars delivered by industry professionals, with a focus on community art and cultural development. They learn the skills they need to succeed in building their own careers.</p>
<p>Re-engage Wyndham Program</p>	<p>Wyndham Community Education Centre</p>	<p>The Re-engage Wyndham Program targets 15 to 17 year olds enrolled at six government schools in Melbourne's west who are at risk of disengaging from formal education. The students are identified by their school as being 'at risk' and are referred to the program for intensive training and support to re-engage them in learning and successfully return them to school. Students are supported and encouraged to develop the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their education, career and life choices. They also undertake voluntary work placement and community work to help facilitate pathways and transitions.</p>
<p>Careers Now</p>	<p>YouthNow</p>	<p>Since August 2012, 150 participants have taken part in the Careers Now program, developed by YouthNow. The program was developed to meet the needs of unemployed youth in Melbourne's west. Based at one of Australia's largest youth services centres, the Visy Cares Hub in Sunshine, it provides an essential learning program for young people who are looking for work. A significant number of these young people are pre-sentence youth who desperately need additional support to gain learning skills that will help find them work and keep them out of prison. There can be a tendency to push young people into any training or job available. At YouthNow they are given time to explore their interests; develop their skills and choose a career path that will ensure a satisfying occupation. The introduction of the Careers Now program</p>

		at YouthNow has given vulnerable and at-risk youth a voice in their own learning. The program has resulted in a genuine drop in juvenile recidivism in Melbourne's west.
Excellence in Creating Local Solutions		
Macedon Ranges Training Needs Analysis	Kyneton Community and Learning Centre	The purpose of the Macedon Ranges Training Needs Analysis was to identify current local business training needs and market trends, so that relevant training could be provided by Learn Locals across the Macedon Ranges Shire. The need for the analysis was three-fold: student numbers in VET and ACFE programs had been declining in the region; the Shire's demographic and business profile was changing and no comprehensive analysis of the training trends and needs had been undertaken previously. The project involved Kyneton Community and Learning Centre and three other Learn Local providers: Macedon Ranges Further Education Centre; Woodend Neighbourhood House and Lancefield Neighbourhood House. The partnership provided an opportunity to work collaboratively, with the resulting study informing Government and community agency planning.
Wyndham Humanitarian Network	Wyndham Community and Education Centre	Established in 2005, the Wyndham Humanitarian Network has evolved over the years to become a dynamic, structured organisation, working towards creating local solutions. Over the past two years it has demonstrated real outcomes for the communities it supports, which include people from Myanmar, The Sudan and the Horn of Africa. It has been identified as a best practice model, known for its collegiate, professional and impactful humanitarian work. The City of Wyndham has seen the influx of large numbers of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers since 2005 and is the third-fastest growing Local Government Area in Australia. The Network caters to the needs of this diverse community, especially disadvantaged people. Given the trauma that many have suffered through displacement and loss, the task of re-building their lives in Australia depends on the successful delivery of programs that are personalised, culturally sensitive and adopt a 'whole-of-person' approach. Wyndham Community and Education Centre is able to identify the educational needs that are essential to settlement and integration.
Rural Blended Delivery Aged Care and HACC	Yarrawonga Neighbourhood House	Yarrawonga Neighbourhood House recognised that there was a growing skills shortage of aged care workers across the Hume region and that a large percentage of graduates from their Aged Care and Home and Community Care courses had been successful in obtaining employment. In an effort to provide more skilled aged care workers, they partnered with Moira Health Care and a number of community centres in the region to develop a sustainable model for a blended delivery that would increase opportunities for new learners who would otherwise be unable to access training. They identified a number of specific target groups isolated from traditional training delivery. They included women on farms wishing to work, people in the CALD communities in Cobram and district, and men in smaller rural communities. Working with this range of people allowed them to respond to the employment opportunities in the area including the demand for male aged care workers.

Innovation in Digital Literacy		
Buchan Neighbourhood House Digital Literacy	Buchan Neighbourhood House	The Digital Literacy program at Buchan Neighbourhood House is aimed at reducing the digital divide in the rural area of East Gippsland. The remote townships in the area are affected by their distance from essential services and limited access to public transport. Increasing the digital literacy of staff and learners gives the community better access to these services and improves educational opportunities. In developing this program, Buchan Neighbourhood House has widened its networks, developed strategic partnerships with businesses and added to the professional competence of the region by increasing the local digital literacy.
Business Basics for Women	CAE	Business Basics for Women was designed for women who want to explore basic business skills and build confidence in a digital culture. It offers digital literacy and basic business skill development to women who have faced barriers to learning. Since it was piloted in 2013, 25 learners have participated in the program. This is an introductory business course, specifically for women, that focuses on creating online or home-based businesses that can be operated by women who are juggling other responsibilities. Many of the women who undertake the course have been out of paid work or formal education for a long period of time and have limited digital literacy skills or lack the confidence to access and use technology. Several participants of the program have gone on to establish their own online business, while others have enrolled in further training or are applying the skills in their current jobs.
Digital Shed	Traralgon Neighbourhood Learning House	Digital Shed is a one-on-one service, provided by local secondary students to other members of their community. The project responds to the individual needs of community members and provides a benefit for secondary students who may have become disengaged at school. The students are mentored by Federation University students and local designers who help them to improve their technology skills. The students enjoy using technology and by putting them in the role of teacher, it progresses their learning. The project is a safe place for both students and members of the public and has attracted such goodwill in the community, that a local internet service provider has supplied twelve months' internet usage free of charge.
Learn Local for Business		
KyValley Dairy	Kyabram Community and Learning Centre	KyValley Dairy is a Kyabram based company which incorporates two large working dairy farms and a fluid milk manufacturing plant. Operating in Kyabram for the past thirteen years, it employs more than 75 people on a full-time, part-time and casual basis. KyValley Dairy, working with the Kyabram Community and Learning Centre (KCLC), identified a number of staff training needs. After successfully securing funding under the ACFE Capacity and Innovation Grant, KCLC undertook research with KyValley Dairy to develop and customise programs that suited the needs identified by KyValley Dairy. Ongoing consultation and evaluation ensured that the low-cost, on-site training is meeting the needs of the company.

Learn Local Legend

Southern Grampians Adult Education	Barwon South West ACFE Regional Council	<p>Southern Grampians Adult Education (SGAE) serves Hamilton and the broader south east community. It has a strong focus on youth and disadvantaged learners. The region is not well serviced by Learn Local organisations and SGAE performs this critical role with dedication, imagination and a strong commitment to its primary client group. It has grown its service provision and demonstrated innovation and hard work, and has engaged with the wider Learn Local sector in a constructive way.</p>
Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre	Grampians ACFE Regional Council	<p>Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre (BNC) has a proud history of creating connections in the community and providing an affordable and supportive environment for adult learners. In partnership with the City of Ballarat Careers Development Program, BNC has designed and delivered a pre-accredited, pre-employment program to the CALD community, designed to create an employment pathway with Novotel Forest Resort Creswick. In partnership with Ballarat Community Health, a pre-accredited program was developed for people who have experienced drug and alcohol issues and are looking to develop their pre-employment skills further.</p>
Noweyung	Gippsland ACFE Regional Council	<p>Noweyung provides a range of quality disability support, learning and community options. It provides integrated and innovative services and programs that respond to individual needs. Noweyung was the leader in the Regional Council's 2013 project to bring a new entity into Bairnsdale. It put together an alliance of Learn Locals – Gippsland East Learn Local Alliance (GELLA), and brought partners together to deliver pre-accredited training in Bairnsdale, fulfilling a community need. Noweyung is always willing to participate in regional initiatives and help other Learn Local organisations.</p>
Sandybeach Centre	Southern Metropolitan ACFE Regional Council	<p>Sandringham's Sandybeach Centre prides itself on offering pathways for students into a number of accredited programs. Sandybeach has developed strong connections with local businesses and service clubs, such as the Lions Club and Rotary and these connections have resulted in volunteer recruitment and financial support. The contact with local business ensures that the training offered is relevant to local employers, particularly in community support industries such as aged care and childcare. Sandybeach is expanding its scope of delivery in this area even further in 2014. Outcomes have been particularly significant for the youth program. In 2013, 92% of graduates from the youth programs returned to study or gained employment. Given that these students were struggling in a mainstream environment, this is a remarkable outcome.</p>
Upper Yarra Community House	Eastern Metropolitan ACFE Regional Council	<p>Upper Yarra Community House (UYCH) provides a range of training options. Its pre-accredited courses include employment focussed programs such as writing skills, computer skills, book keeping and business administration programs. Accredited training ranges from Certificate II to diploma level qualifications. There is also a focus on disadvantaged youth, including offering all three levels of VCAL programs. UYCH has been the successful recipient of two ACFE Board Capacity and Innovation Grants. It is a busy, strong</p>

		organisation that continues to grow.
Shepparton Access	Hume ACFE Regional Council	Shepparton Access offers an innovative and dynamic boutique service. It promotes community inclusion for people with a broad range of disabilities, as well as their families and carers. It is passionate about empowering people to make a difference to their lives, changing community culture and breaking down the barriers to inclusion. It continues to build partnerships with local businesses and schools.
Campaspe College of Adult Education	Loddon Mallee ACFE Regional Council	Campaspe College of Adult Education provides fully-funded vocational training for unemployed/underprivileged people in the Campaspe Shire. It addresses skill shortages within the Loddon-Mallee region. CCAE offers a broad range of programs to the community, specialising in youth programs and Health and Community Services training. It offers community VCAL and training for Teacher Aides and has increased its student numbers every year over the past three years.
Kensington Neighbourhood House	North Western Metropolitan ACFE Regional Council	Kensington Neighbourhood House is a meeting place for the community and its various groups. It provides adult education, art and hobby classes, children's activities, childcare and health and well-being programs. The centre has seen a 14% increase in enrolments since 2011 and an 8% increase in program delivery. Kensington Neighbourhood House tailors its course development to meet the needs of its students.

Find out more about the Awards, including how to purchase tickets to the Presentation Dinner, at:

www.education.vic.gov.au/learnlocalawards