

PPP: Existing Workers¹

2009 Skills Recognition Project Report

Incompro
Aboriginal Health Council of SA
TAFE SA Regional



Jason Bromley, Ben Stewart, Darrien Bromley at the 2009 SA Training Awards

Report ©

**Jason Bromley, Proponent. Darrien Bromley, Employer Representative. Heather Gordon, Mentor.
Klynton Wanganeen, Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement.**

April 2010



Australian Government

**Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations**



Government of South Australia

**Department of Further Education,
Employment, Science and Technology**



**Aboriginal Health Council
of South Australia Inc.**

'Our health, our choice, our way'

¹ The Productivity Places Program (PPP) is part of the Australian Government's *Skilling Australia for the Future* Initiative. The PPP for Existing Workers is funded by the Commonwealth (50%), State Government (40%) and Industry (10%).

“The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia is proud to be a leader in workplace learning programs and congratulates all the 2009 Skills Recognition Project participants on their achievements and thanks the supporters of the 2009 Skills Recognition Project particularly Klynton Wanganeen, Jason Bromley, Heather Gordon, Brenton Smith, Sharon Wollaston, Sandra Niblock and Angela Francisco.”

Darrien Bromley, Corporate Services Manager, Aboriginal Health Council of SA

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Background

During 2007-2008, 54 Aboriginal people achieved a management qualification by participating in an innovative mentored approach to Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)².

Klynton Wanganeen, Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement³, whose initiative sparked the 2007-2008 RPL Project instigated the building of relationships between Incompro, an Aboriginal owned business, and key staff within TAFE SA Regional, to promote and further develop opportunities for Aboriginal people to achieve higher education qualifications for professional development and to support State Strategic Plan⁴ targets.



Eileen Wanganeen and Klynton Wanganeen in Maggie Beer's Studio Kitchen, Barossa Valley

Klynton's recognition of Council of Australian Government (CoAG)⁵ imperatives, particularly in terms of Aboriginal leadership was a further consideration to the social justice and economic aspects of the Program. Klynton's commitment to Aboriginal leadership development is evidenced by his willingness to provide supporting documentation for the 2009 Skills Recognition Project submissions. While the PPP⁶ funding was not specifically categorized for Aboriginal people, 29 of the 2009 Skills Recognition Project participants identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Klynton's support of Aboriginal entrepreneurship is evidenced through his support of the creation, management and development of new ventures by Aboriginal people for the benefit of Aboriginal people. Klynton considers that the partnerships created connect the private, public and non-profit sectors. The desired and achieved outcomes of partnerships range from the narrow view of economic benefit for a single individual to the broad view of multiple, social and economic advantages for entire communities is possible. This moves the focus away from the not-for-profit role in community development to an Indigenous Entrepreneurial Model⁷.

² http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/pdf/RPL_Mentoring_Report.pdf p26, 27.

³ http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/dpc/departement_engagement.html

⁴ <http://www.saplan.org.au/>

⁵ <http://www.coag.gov.au/>

⁶ <http://www.dfeest.sa.gov.au/Programs/ProductivityPlacesProgram/tabid/96/Default.aspx>

⁷ <http://www.amsreview.org/articles/lindsay05-2005.pdf>

Darrien Bromley, a graduate of the Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management through the 2007-2008 RPL Mentoring Project and Corporate Services Manager at the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA)⁸, could see the benefits of AHCSA and their member services being able to up skill existing workers and access complete nationally endorsed qualifications issued by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) using a mentored approach to RPL.



Darrien Bromley

Through the network of relationships fostered by Klynton Wanganeen, a submission for Productivity Placement Program (PPP)⁹ funding tender for Existing Workers was developed and submitted by means of a collaborative approach with Incompro as the Proponent, AHCSA as the Employer and TAFE SA Regional as the RTO.

Darrien Bromley's leadership in managing the 2009 Skills Recognition Project for the Aboriginal Health Council for South Australia was instrumental in its success. Darrien was recognised for his individual learning achievements and contribution to adult learning during Adult Learners Week 2009 when he was awarded Adult Learner of the Year 2009.

Darrien has a strong commitment to lifelong learning, demonstrated by his own participation in both informal and formal learning. Darrien's view is, "I consider learning is important to improve social and economic benefits to individuals and to the general community. Having a higher level of education means being able to gain employment, earn an income, improve your living conditions, pay for medications, support your family and enjoy a healthier lifestyle. People with more schooling are likely to make more informed choices and to participate more actively in their communities through, for example, voluntary work."

⁸ <http://www.ahcsa.org.au/>

⁹ <http://www.dfeest.sa.gov.au/Programs/ProductivityPlacesProgram/tabid/96/Default.aspx>

Spreading the Word

AHCSA, as the peak body representing Aboriginal health and substance misuse services and Aboriginal health advisory committees in South Australia at a state and national level, determined that they would identify key AHCSA Aboriginal employees and link with their 13 member services in South Australia for employees of those services to access this RPL opportunity.

Additionally, AHCSA suggested that one male and one female AHCSA Board member would participate, as well as the CEO of AHCSA.



Jason Bromley
Advanced Diploma of Community Services
Management
Maggie Beer's Studio Kitchen, Barossa Valley

Darrien Bromley, Corporate Services Manager of AHCSA, and a graduate of the 2007 RPL Mentoring Project, was able to provide first hand information regarding the mentoring process. Darrien ensured that travel and accommodation costs for candidates travelling to Adelaide were effectively managed by co-ordinating interview times with Board Meetings. This process was maintained and communicated with Angela Franciso's efficient administrative support.

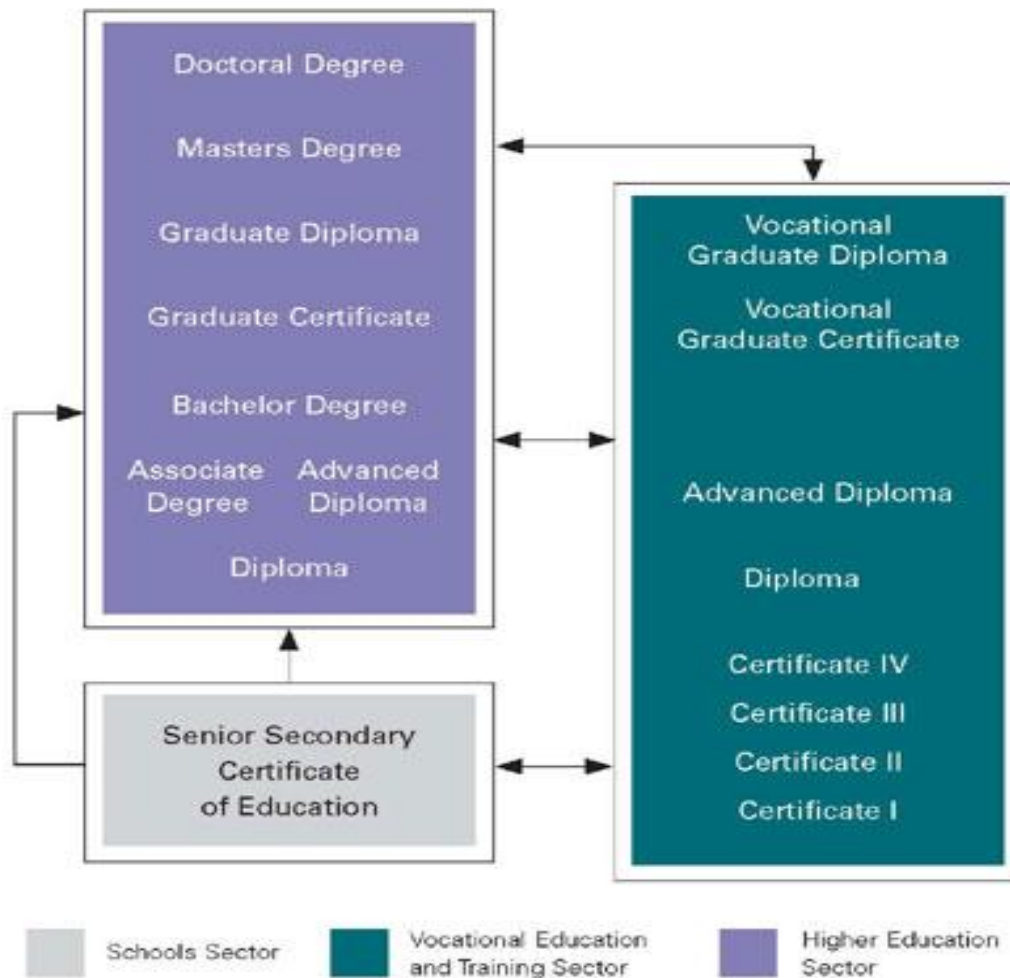
Jason Bromley, Director of Incompro managed the referral procedure. Intending participants were provided with information (see Appendix 1) regarding RPL and the mentoring support with a consistent message that the process was straightforward and the mentor had qualifications and experience for the role. Additionally, study pathways were explained, with a particular emphasis that studies at AHCSA or TAFE may be recognised at University level and may enable a shorter time for study at University level and enhancing career options.

The study pathways for graduates of the Community Services Management qualification to support further workforce development via a Vocational Graduate Diploma or Vocational Graduate Certificate through TAFE or Bachelor Degree level studies at University were explained to each candidate. The pathways to higher education are a key feature of the Project.

Pathways

Graduates from the Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management are eligible for entry to the Vocational Graduate Diploma in Community Sector Management scheduled to commence mid-year 2010 with TAFE SA Regional. The following chart¹⁰ explains the linkages:

CROSS-SECTORAL QUALIFICATION LINKAGES



¹⁰ http://www.aqf.edu.au/learn_employ.htm

Graduates of the Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management, or the Diploma of Community Services Management, are able to enrol with the University of South Australia or Flinders University with the following Agreements applying for Credit Transfer¹¹:

Advanced Diploma and Diploma of Community Services Management

Credit Transfer Agreements with SA state public universities

OVERVIEW OF AGREEMENTS:

TAFE SA		FLINDERS UNIVERSITY	
Qualification Title	National Code	Qualification Title	Credit Awarded
Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management	CHC60402	Bachelor of Social Work and Social Planning	16.5 units credit in total 4.5 units of specified credit plus 12 units of block credit against second year options topics
Diploma of Community Services Management	CHC51602	Bachelor of Social Work and Social Planning	4.5 units of specified credit
TAFE SA		UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA	
Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management	CHC60402	Bachelor of Social Science (Human Services)	36 units credit 9 units specified credit plus 27 units of unspecified credit to be negotiated on enrolment
Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management	CHC60402	Bachelor of Social Work	36 units credit 9 units specified credit plus 27 units of unspecified credit to be negotiated on enrolment
Diploma of Community Services Management	CHC51602	Bachelor of Social Science (Human Services)	18 units credit 9 units specified credit plus 9 units of unspecified credit to be negotiated on enrolment
Diploma of Community Services Management	CHC51602	Bachelor of Social Work	18 units credit 9 units specified credit plus 9 units of unspecified credit to be negotiated on enrolment

¹¹ http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/pdf/RPL_Mentoring_Report.pdf p15.

The Qualifications

Diploma of Community Services Management

National Code: CHC51602

Course Code: ERK

National Code	Core Unit of Competency
CHCCOM3C	Utilise specialist communication skills to build strong relationships
CHCOHS501A	Manage workplace OHS management system
CHCORG6B	Co-ordinate the work environment
CHCORG7B	Manage workplace issues
CHCORG23A	Co-ordinate work
CHCORG28A	Reflect & improve upon professional practice
PSPMNGT605A	Manage diversity
CHCADMIN4B	Manage the organisation's finances, accounts & resources
BSBMGT609A	Manage risk
National Code	Elective Competencies - Group 1
CHCCD19A	Establish & maintain community, government & business partnerships
CHCCS405A	Work effectively with culturally diverse clients & co-workers
CHCINF5B	Meet statutory and organisational information requirements
CHCOHS401A	Implement & monitor OHS policies & procedures for a workplace
CHCORG10B	Manage organisational change
CHCORG11B	Lead & develop others
CHCORG14B	Manage a service organisation
CHCORG25B	Recruit & co-ordinate volunteers
National Code	Elective Competencies - Group 2
CHCAD3A	Undertake systems advocacy
CHCAD4A	Provide advocacy and representation
CHCCD5C	Develop community resources
CHCCD9B	Support community leadership
CHCCS3C	Co-ordinate the provision of services & programs
CHCCS402A	Respond holistically to client issues
CHCNET3B	Develop new networks
CHCNET4A	Work with other services
CHCPOL4A	Develop & implement policy
CHCPOL5A	Manage research activities
CHCPOL6A	Co-ordinate policy development
SRCCRD005A	Apply the principles and issues of volunteering

To complete the whole qualification the student needs to successfully attain competency in:

Core	9
Electives	6
Total	15

Electives – Three (3) units must be selected from Group 1 and the remaining three (3) units may be selected from Group 1 or Group 2 or from any other Community Services training Package units available at this or higher level or from other relevant National Training Package units available at Diploma level and enterprise specific units. Where national enterprise units are included as options, these must be nationally endorsed.

Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management

National Code: CHC60402

Course Code: ERL

National Code	Core Unit of Competency
BSBMGT609A	Manage risk
CHCADMIN4B	Manage the organisation's finances, accounts & resources
CHCCOM4B	Develop, implement & promote effective communication techniques
CHCCD19A	Establish & maintain community, government & business partnerships
CHCCS4C	Manage the delivery of quality client service
CHCORG14B	Manage a service organisation
BSBMGT505A	Ensure a safe workplace
PSPMNGT605A	Manage diversity
CHCORG11B	Lead & develop others
National Code	Elective Competencies - Group 1
CHCORG7B	Manage workplace issues
CHCORG12B	Review organisational effectiveness
CHCORG15B	Promote the organisation
CHCORG8C	Establish & manage new programs or services
CHCORG9B	Manage projects & strategies
CHCPOL5A	Manage research activities
CHCPOL7A	Manage policy development
CHCORG10B	Manage organisational change
CHCINF4B	Manage the organisation's information systems OR
CHCINF6B	Manage information strategically
CHCORG13B	Manage organisational strategic & business planning
CHCORG25B	Recruit & co-ordinate volunteers
National Code	Elective Competencies - Group 2
CHCAD3A	Undertake systems advocacy
CHCCD6B	Establish & develop community organisations
CHCNET4A	Work with other services
CHCORG16B	Manage training
SRCCRD005A	Apply the principles and issues of volunteering

To complete the whole qualification the student needs to successfully attain competency in:

Core	9
Electives	11
Total	20

Electives – At least ten (10) electives must be chosen from Group 1, one (1) unit may be selected from Group 1 or Group 2 or from any other Community Services training Package units available at this level or from other relevant National Training Package units available at Advanced Diploma level and enterprise specific units. Where national enterprise units are included as options, these must be nationally endorsed.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

“...RPL may be defined in a number of ways, some more expansive than others. All definitions, however, include the key notion that RPL involves the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge that an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system. RPL assesses this unrecognised learning against the requirements of the qualification, in respect of both entry requirements and the outcomes to be achieved. By removing the need for duplication of learning, RPL encourages an individual to continue upgrading their skills and knowledge, through structured education and training, towards formal qualifications and improved employment outcomes.”¹²

The aim of RPL is to formally assess a person’s skills gained through life and work experience, in order to award credit towards nationally recognised qualifications. It is an integral part of access and equity strategies, which are designed to “improve access to and outcomes from vocational education and training for disadvantaged groups”¹³. However RPL has a dubious history with many Aboriginal people – it appears that the very life experience that is crucial to the participant’s job roles and maximising the impact of their work has often operated to encourage negative self descriptions and exclude them from formal education or professional acknowledgment.¹⁴

Recent research by Berwyn Clayton and Larry Smith¹⁵ reiterates common themes from over a decade of VET Recognition research. Namely that RPL is not well promoted; that in order to access it, learners need high levels of literacy and communication; and that evidence requirements can be overly bureaucratic and burdensome. What they found to be significant in enabling success within RPL included overt workplace support; high credibility of the assessor; and peer encouragement.

¹² http://www.aqf.edu.au/Portals/0/Documents/Handbook/AQF_Handbook_07.pdf p99

¹³ Smith, E. & Keating, J. (1997) *Making Sense of Training Reform and Competency Based Training*. Wentworth Falls. Social Science Press.p 38

¹⁴ Personal communication between potential RPL candidates and the writers

¹⁵ Smith, L. & Clayton, B. (2009). *Recognising non-formal and informal learning. Participant insights and perspectives*. NCVET. Australian Government

Brian Spencer illustrates the difficulties of RPL:

“The current process typically starts with a paperchase: collect a portfolio that will demonstrate that you have that competence. This can be a daunting task to those of us who do not have filing cabinet minds and remember along life’s journey to collect and document every achievement and learning skill that we have acquired. For many people, the request for recognition of current competency ends at this point. The task is not just too big, it is nebulous and protracted. How on earth do I find the proof I need? How do I know when I have collected enough?”¹⁶

The relationship with a workplace mentor assisting them to navigate the process is critical to many candidates.

Mentoring

The mentor for the 2009 Skills Recognition Project was determined because of previous success with the 2007-2008 RPL Mentoring Project.

“RPL assessment requires the application of advanced assessment skills, as well as excellent knowledge of the training package and industry along with confidence to apply the skills and knowledge required to the assessment process. Importantly, it demands cross cultural respect developed from an understanding of the leadership roles Aboriginal people have in their communities and the obligations that come from those roles. Heather Gordon’s academic and vocational qualifications, previous employment experience across the north of South Australia, supported by her professional and social networks with Aboriginal people and her willingness to participate in a two-way learning process makes her an outstanding mentor.”

Klynton Wanganeen, Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement

The combination of the mentoring component and the skills of the mentor for the 2009 Skills Recognition Project provided the foundation for achieving successful outcomes.

¹⁶ http://www.reframingthefuture.net/docs/2006/Goal3/3evp_Brian_Spencer_RPL_paper_Nov06.pdf p21

The mentoring process commences with a telephone call or e-mail to make contact with the candidate after referral from the employer. An explanation is given about what to bring to the interview – generally an up to date Resume and a copy of a current Job and Person Specification and copies of any qualifications and/or professional development activities.

“At the interview, the focus is on the candidate’s current competencies. Generally, direction is provided in expanding the Resume to provide a more comprehensive document which includes the candidate’s community participation and/or leadership. Just the process of ‘refreshing the resume’ builds confidence in the candidate towards the RPL process.”

Heather Gordon, Mentor

“The interview approach is a valid and appropriate way of establishing competence across all industries; for example, job interviews, referee reports are based on this methodology.”

**Sharon Wollaston, Specialist Lecturer, Organisational Renewal and Career Development,
TAFE SA Regional**

“The key to the success is that the process is based on a holistic approach to the assessment with a mentoring component to encourage candidates through coaching and learning facilitation, career development discussion, advocacy support, strategies and systems suggestions.”

Martina Buckley, Director, Education Programs and Services, TAFE SA Regional

The community services and health industry training package competencies are (generally) interpersonal and demonstrative, thus the holistic interview is observation driven and enables the mentor to negotiate with the candidate both the validation of the process and development of a pathway, allowing the candidate to bridge small gaps between partial and full competency before being assessed by the specialist lecturer employed by the RTO, in this instance TAFE SA Regional.

The advantage of this mentoring approach is that candidates not only gain an accredited qualification but also grow in confidence, giving them the personal boost they need to apply for another job or to negotiate for a pay increase based on a qualification requirement or to undertake further study.

Case Study

Ben Stewart

Ben has strong ties to family across South Australia as a descendent of the Wirangu nation (Far West Coast of SA), and has also endeavoured to create friendship/relationships with the many other Aboriginal nations in South Australia.

The majority of Ben's career has been working in roles that support the Aboriginal community and he says having those experiences validated and recognised makes him extremely proud. Ben says studying the Diploma of Community Services Management has made him more capable and will help him achieve the goals of his current project as the Senior Project Officer for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Registered Training Organisation National Network. He strongly recommends to others to follow his lead and participate in further studies, which he says has made him confident in his abilities.

Ben was a finalist in the ***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year*** for the 2009 SA Training Awards.



Jason Bromley, Ben Stewart, Darrien Bromley at the 2009 South Australian Training Awards with Raylene Champion, Christine Clark, Josie Agius, Christel Hicks, Bill Wilson, Kelly Harrington

Darrien Bromley

Darrien is a direct descendent and active member of the Adnyamathanha, Narungga and Yarliyadi communities, with traditional ties spanning the Flinders Ranges, Yorke Peninsula, Simpson Desert and South West Queensland areas.

Darrien studied the Certificate in Information Technology during 1990. In 1996 he completed the Advanced Certificate in Accounting. While Darrien has long recognised the value of learning, he has found it difficult to juggle the demands of work, community participation and study as well as having work/life balance. For many years, while attending short courses essential to his work roles, he considered the attainment of further vocational qualifications out of reach due to time and financial constraints.

During 2007, Darrien was provided with the opportunity to participate in the Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) supported by a structured mentoring component. Building on this success, during 2008 Darrien completed the Diploma of Employment Services. Re-invigorated by these achievements, during 2009 he completed the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and the Diploma of Business Administration. Darrien was awarded **2009 Adult Learner of the Year**.



Darrien Bromley and his fan club at the 2009 Adult Learners Week Awards

Darrien has encouraged others to re-engage in the pursuit of formal qualifications; especially his family members, including his mother and two of his brothers. Darrien's greatest area of influence for vocational qualifications and workforce development has been his management of the relationships and outcomes of the PPP for Existing Workers collaborative arrangement between AHCSA, Incompro and TAFE SA Regional with 30 people gaining a nationally accredited management qualification.

Kalparrin

Kalparrin Community made it a priority for many of their management team to participate in the 2009 Skills Recognition Project to support their quality processes.

At Kalparrin, the management team wanted to work together on the 2009 Skills Recognition Project, so the mentor used an Appreciative Inquiry (AI)¹⁷ methodology which supported the group to achieve their stated outcomes.

The one to one interview approach became the secondary focus of the meetings at Kalparrin, with everyone contributing to Resumé development for individuals, using the collective memory of the group to identify key points and to openly discuss roles and responsibilities. The camaraderie developed from this approach gave quieter members of the group the opportunity to shine.

This was also an opportunity for the managers to share their success stories and through reflection on individual personal lives the group was able to validate experiences and share a vision for future achievements generated from the discussion about pathways for further study.

This collaborative approach had great team work outcomes facilitated by Eunice Aston, who had earlier in the year added to her considerable vocational qualifications, including the Diploma of Training and Assessment Systems, with the Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management through the 2009 Skills Recognition Project.



**Gilbert Long, Glenys Wilson, Roy Wilson, Mick Aston, Eunice Aston, Gilbert Rigney, Kym Schellen
Initial Kalparrin Community Management Team Appreciative Inquiry session**

¹⁷ http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_85.htm

"The 2009 Skills Recognition Project provided a wonderful opportunity for the Kalparrin Management Team to consolidate their educational and acquired life skills into a TAFE SA qualification. We would like to give AHCSA, Jason and Heather many thanks and deep appreciation for providing us with this wonderful opportunity."

Eunice Aston for the Kalparrin Management Team



**Sandra Wilson, Eunice Aston and Margeret Sumner
Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management
Murray Bridge**

Jason Bromley

“It was with much humility that Jason Bromley accepted the nomination for the Vocational Student of the Year for the 2009 SA Training Awards. Jason’s support of others in vocational education and training gave him the edge in winning this Award.

“Jason went on to win the National Vocational Student of the Year Award; the first time a South Australian candidate has won the National Award.

“At the Award Ceremony, Jason’s modesty was again demonstrated when in his acceptance speech he referred to the true heroes of Australia; those who volunteer and serve to protect our communities.”



Jason Bromley
2009 National Training Awards
Vocational Student of the Year
Canberra

Heather Gordon, Mentor



Jason Bromley
Sacred Fire, Canberra

<http://www.aboriginaltentembassy.net>

Jason has a personal philosophy about the foundation that sport plays in life,

“Sport teaches us big lessons for life. Most sports involve teamwork and teach us how to get along with others, how to work together to achieve a common goal, and about trust and responsibility.

“All sports teach us about dealing with success and failure. They also help people learn about coping with pressure and the need to stick with training in order to improve yourself. Training means learning new skills in all aspects of life.”

Geographical Participation

The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia¹⁸ (AHCSA) is the peak body representing Aboriginal health and substance misuse services, and Aboriginal health advisory committees in South Australia at a state and national level. AHCSA's primary role is to be the 'health voice' for all Aboriginal people in South Australia. This is achieved by advocating for the community and supporting workers with health training.

Member Services

- Aboriginal Sobriety Group
- Ceduna/Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service
- Kalparrin Community Inc
- Nganampa Health Council
- Nunkuwarrin Yunti of SA Inc
- Nunyara Wellbeing Centre Inc
- Oak Valley Health Service
- Pangula Mannamurna Inc
- Tullawon Health Service
- Umoona Tjutagku Health Service
- Pika Wiya Health Service
- Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service
- Murray Bridge Primary Health Care Unit

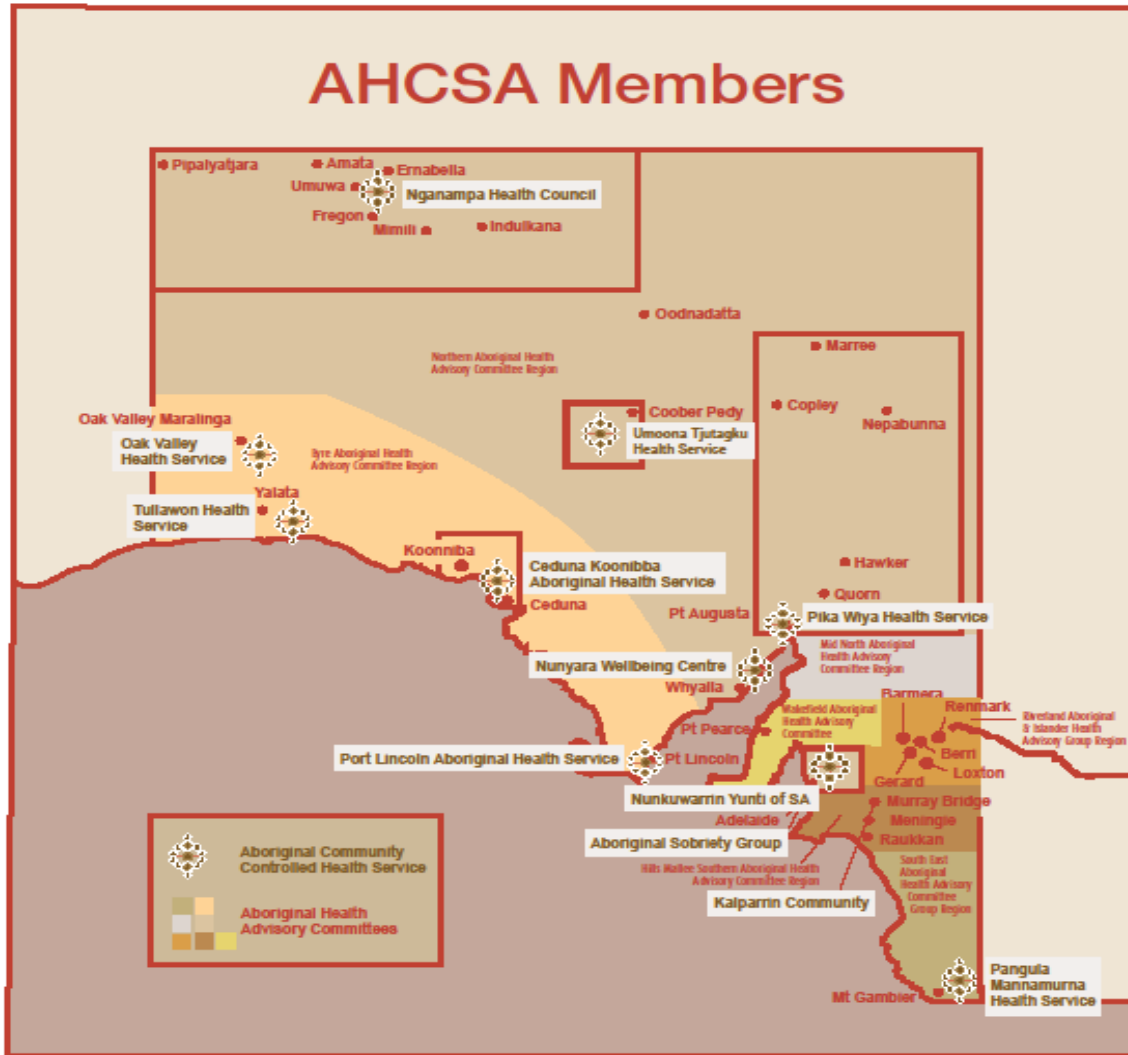
Advisory Committees:

- Eyre Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee
- Hills Mallee Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee
- Mid North Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee
- Northern Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee
- Riverland Aboriginal and Islander Health Advisory Group
- South East Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee
- Wakefield Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee

¹⁸ <http://www.ahcsa.org.au/>

The AHCSA Board Member participants in the 2009 Skills Recognition Project were

- Wilhelmine Lieberwirth Whyalla
- John Singer Umuwa



The following table illustrates the work locations of participants in the 2009 Skills Recognition Project:

Location	Member Service	Participants
Adelaide	AHCSA	9
Ceduna	Tullawon Health Service	1
Mt Gambier	Pangula Mannamurna	1
Murray Bridge	Kalparrin Community	6
Murray Bridge	Primary Health Care Unit	3
Port Augusta	Pika Wiya Health Service	3
Umuwa	Board Member	1
Whyalla	Nunyara Wellbeing Centre	2
Whyalla	Board Member	1
Whyalla	Community Member	1
Yalata	Tullawon Health Service	2

Initial meetings between individual participants and the mentor were conducted with options for a range of venues including work stations in their place of employment, conference room at AHCSA or Ivia Cafe (near AHCSA) or in negotiated spaces which provided the most suitable option for the candidate. Two candidates based at Yalata had their interviews conducted via extensive telephone discussions.

Timelines

The contract between PPP and Incompro (as the Proponent) stated the completion date as 30 June 2010. Continuous improvement to the Community Services Training Package meant the old Training Package could not be used after December 2009. It was determined that consistent qualification titles attained by employees for this Project were important enough to drive the Project to an early completion date. All enrolled candidates completed their RPL applications by early December 2009, six months ahead of schedule.

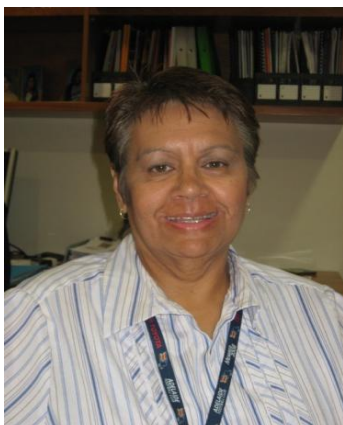
Outcomes

Last Name	First Name	Adv Diploma Community Services Management	Diploma Community Services Management
Aston	Eunice	1	
Brock	Darrell	1	
Bromley	Jason	1	
Buckskin	Mary	1	
Cameron	Darryl	1	
Caponi	Anna	1	
Carter	Brenda	1	
Chong	Alwin	1	
Dadleh	Carmen		1
Dadleh	Clinton		1
Ellis	Rhonda (Maree)		1
Laccos-Barrett	Trish		1
Lieberwirth	Wilhelmine	1	
Long	Gilbert		1
McKenzie	Janet		1
Miller	Leonard		1
Mundy	Darren		1
Newchurch	Ann	1	
Pilot	Shane		1
Rigney	Gilbert		1
Rigney	Gordon		1
Sansbury	Tauto	1	
Schellen	Kym	1	
Singer	John	1	
Stewart	Harold	1	
Stewart	Ben		1
Sumner	Margeret	1	
Warren	Marsha	1	
Wilson	Glenys	1	
Wilson	Sandra	1	
TOTAL		18	12

Training Outcome	Male Graduates	Female Graduates	Total Graduates
Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management	8	10	18
Diploma of Community Services Management	8	4	12
TOTALS	16	14	30

Other tangible outcomes resulting from the 2009 Skills Recognition Project was an Information Session presented at the 2009 Aboriginal Women’s Gathering during October. This session was facilitated by Eunice Aston, Chris Clark and Heather Gordon. There was very keen interest expressed in the Project by the women. The support of Jo Leonello and Mandy Ahmat at the Office for Women was instrumental in gaining funding for the 2010 delivery by Incompro of 10 places for the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (via workshop delivery) and 10 places for Diploma of Community Services Coordination/Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management using the mentoring approach to RPL.

Additionally, 10 places for Diploma of Community Services Coordination/Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management qualifications were also won by Incompro for delivery during 2010 to Aboriginal community organisations.



Mary Buckskin
Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management
Adelaide



Ann Newchurch
Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management
Adelaide



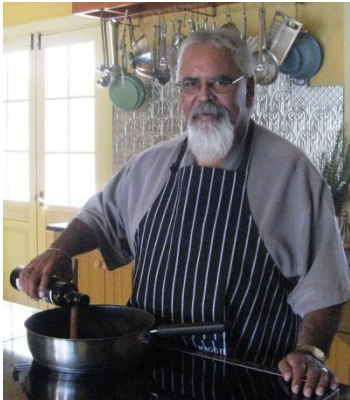
Clinton Dadleh
Diploma of Community Services
Management
Adelaide



Janet McKenzie
Diploma of Community Services
Management
Port Augusta



Carmen Dadleh
Diploma of Community Services
Management
Adelaide



Tauto Sansbury
Advanced Diploma of Community
Services Management
Ceduna



Marsha Warren
Advanced Diploma of Community
Services Management
Port Augusta



Darryl Cameron
Advanced Diploma of Community
Services Management
Murray Bridge



Wilhelmine Lieberwirth
Advanced Diploma of Community
Services Management
Whyalla



Gilbert Rigney
Diploma of Community Services
Management
Mt Gambier



Anna Caponi
Advanced Diploma of Community
Services Management
Port Augusta



Rhonda Maree Ellis
Diploma of Community Services Management

“My Mentor made it easy for me to understand and the great communication made things a lot easier also.

“I think AHCSA need to do something like this on a regular basis due to the fact in our positions as Health Workers we undertake a lot of different tasks within our roles, for example we’re not just in the Health Centre doing BSL’s and BP’s, we’re out in the community promoting and advocating and taking on tasks that is not in our job descriptions. Which is why RPL is so important, it recognises our work is not just ‘health’ related.

“I have big ideas for the future of our Centre and receiving my Diploma has given me the confidence to now take up those extra and more demanding jobs in and around Nunyara, which will strengthen our networks locally and abroad.”

Maree Ellis, Whyalla

“I gratefully appreciate the recognition received with Heather’s assistance in acquiring my Diploma in Community Services Management. I have worked in a number of Aboriginal organizations, in a variety of roles. I believe that the Diploma is entitled due to my capacity and performance in the positions held.

“With regards to the Project I felt it was a very beneficial and worthwhile Project as it gave me a feeling of being recognised for the direct and associated roles and positions currently and previously held in the regions of community management. The process was smooth and comfortable especially with Heather’s guidance and support.”



Trish Laccos-Barrett
Diploma of Community Services Management

Trish Laccos-Barrett, Yalata

"I found the process for acquiring my Advanced Diploma in Community Services Management was both streamlined and flexible.

It allowed me to work in around an already busy work schedule and be recognised for those skills attained over a number of years in management and working in Indigenous Health."



Darrell Brock
Advanced Diploma of Community
Services Management

Darrell Brock, Yalata



Brenda Carter
Advanced Diploma of Community
Services Management

"Heather, thank you very much for this great opportunity, I don't say that lightly.

"I had never sat and realised what my own personal achievements and accomplishments have been throughout my life, and honestly this was a surprise for me as I always just do things without thinking about them or the bigger impact they may have, because I am definitely not one to blow my own trumpet.

"You made what I thought would have been an unreachable goal for me and others reachable, and in a way that was so respectful to me as an Aboriginal person.

"This opportunity has given me the confidence to speak about my extensive experience and knowledge to a range of services and feel confident in doing so as now I have "THE PIECE OF PAPER" too.

"So once again, thank you for this wonderful opportunity."

Brenda Carter, Whyalla

“The 2009 Skills Recognition Project was a marvellous opportunity to sit down with a mentor and review my work activities over the last 10 years - my workload is so busy that I do not have time to contemplate any studies or formal training but more importantly, acknowledge the skills and expertise that I have gained in the workplace.

“I have always wanted to regularly update my CV but never quite got there – my work often interrupted good intentions.



Alwin Chong
Advanced Diploma of Community Services Management

“Being able to sit down with a mentor, in a safe, relaxed environment and talk about what I have achieved or completed over a period of time and then demonstrate that through some form of evidence is a great feeling – especially, the realisation that I have more skills and knowledge than I first gave myself credit for.

“Workforce development has always been a contentious issue within Aboriginal organisation mainly because of time and funding. However, this project has given Aboriginal Health Council of SA Inc., staff the opportunity to gain a formal qualification that may lead to further formal studies – I’m one of those people.

“My mentor was Heather Gordon, who I would like to thank very much for her generous assistance.

“I thought the project was excellent because it allowed me to gather evidence and understand the skills, knowledge and expertise that I had gained over a period of time, which is now recognised in a formal qualification - the benefits reach far beyond me and my organisation.”

Alwin Chong, Adelaide

Where to from here?

Workforce Development

A workforce development definition¹⁹:

“Those activities which increase the capacity of individuals to participate effectively in the workforce throughout their whole working life and which increase the capacity of firms to adopt high-performance work practices that support their employees to develop the full range of their potential skills and value.”

The four strategic priorities envisaged by Skills Australia²⁰ for workforce development are:

1. Identifying and meeting Australia’s skills and workforce needs into the future consistent with sustainable growth, but also adequately preparing for the risks of alternative economic, demographic and social scenarios.
2. Establishing a shared national agenda on a comprehensive strategy for Australia’s future workforce to support people to better connect with work, capitalise on our skills and position ourselves for future challenges in the global community.
3. Improving educational and workforce participation levels where barriers continue to exist – with a special focus on localities, or groups experiencing high levels of disadvantage.
4. Promoting demand for and the full use of high skills in workplaces to complement public investment in education and training.

The Council of Australian Governments’ (COAG) National Partnership Agreement for Indigenous Economic Participation²¹ was signed in February 2009. This National Partnership will contribute towards halving the gap in employment outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

The National Partnership involves complementary investment and effort by the Commonwealth, states and territory governments to significantly improve opportunities for Indigenous people to engage in private and public sector jobs through four key initiatives:

¹⁹ Schofield, K., *Skills for the Future, Final Report of the Ministerial Inquiry*: (May 2003).

²⁰ http://www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/PDFs_RTFS/AWF_Submissions/sub6_DFEESTSA.pdf p13

²¹ <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Indigenous/Employment/Pages/NatPartnershipAgreementOnIEP.aspx>

1. [Creating jobs in areas of government service delivery that have previously relied on subsidies through the Community Development Employment Projects \(CDEP\) program;](#)
2. [Strengthening government procurement policies to maximise Indigenous employment;](#)
3. [Incorporating Indigenous workforce strategies into implementation plans for all COAG reforms contributing to the closing the gap targets;](#)
4. [Increasing public sector employment to reflect Indigenous working age population share by 2015.](#)

Building on the strengths of the 2007-2008 RPL Mentoring Project Report²², and acknowledging that skill development is a lifelong learning process, workforce development for Aboriginal people should be based on a mentored approach to RPL.

“RPL is the first step in upskilling existing workers. Good recognition of prior learning processes involves not only the individual but also the whole of service (the employing agency). It sits within the context of the quality practices of the organisation. RPL underpins workforce development.”

**Chris McCann, Senior Training Manager, Community Services and Health,
TAFE SA Regional**

Demand for Upskilling

Jason Bromley summarises the demand for upskilling by Aboriginal people in South Australia:

“There is a huge demand by Aboriginal people for vocational qualifications not only in the community services and health sector in South Australia but also in the Business Administration and Financial Administration sectors. This is evidenced by employer support for submissions for funding to PPP during 2009.

“The Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) human resources staff have met with Incompro, requesting the support of Incompro to seek funding to upskill more than 50 Aboriginal employees of DPC.

²² http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/pdf/RPL_Mentoring_Report.pdf

“Approaches have also been made to Incompro about SAPOL Community Constables accessing the community services management training; Department of Family and Communities (DFC) for community services management and Tauondi for both community services management and employment services qualifications as well as frequent demands for Certificate IV and Diploma in Business Administration across both community and public sectors.

“The 30 places already delivered under PPP during 2009 is a small indicator of the need in both the public and community sectors for Aboriginal people to be recognised for the skills they already have through their work experience and community participation.

“It is difficult for Aboriginal organisations to fund the 10% gap in training costs to meet PPP demands; the organisations are already operating in tight budget situations and their capacity to pay is often compromised by lack of funding for workforce development. AHCSA’s contribution of “in kind” support for the 2009 Skills Recognition Project was substantially more than 10%.

“There is the question of how to gain funding for the graduates of the Advanced Diploma and Diploma of Community Services Management to access the Vocational Graduate Certificate of Management (Learning), one of the further study pathways from the community services management program and an opportunity for South Australia to lead the way in providing an innovative approach to ‘closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage’ as well as contributing to State Strategic Plan and CoAG imperatives.

“There is the intention to promote and host an event at AHCSA during May 2010 which supports and recognises Workforce Development as part of National Career Development Week to celebrate and share the success of the 2009 Skills Recognition graduates. This networking opportunity will also promote organisational renewal through workforce development.”

Jason Bromley, Director, Incompro

Supporting Leadership

Klynton Wanganeen's role as the Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement includes a focus on Aboriginal leadership. Klynton summarises key points relating to the mentoring approach being adopted to support positive and realistic vocational education outcomes for Aboriginal people already in employment in South Australia.

"The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia is well placed through its member services and advisory committees to connect candidates to a mentored RPL process. The success of the 2009 Skills Recognition Project with 30 places funded and 30 participants achieving a management qualification within the timelines is evidence not only of the excellent collaborative partnership arrangements between Incompro, AHCSA and TAFE SA Regional but also, the fundamental need to upskill more Aboriginal community services and health workers in South Australia.

"Incompro, as an Aboriginal owned business, is highly competent at managing projects and teamed with AHCSA, as the peak body representing Aboriginal health and substance misuse services and Aboriginal health advisory committees in South Australia at a state and national level, is ideally situated to support workforce development through the mentoring and support of Aboriginal employees and advisory committee members.

"Even if there were a minimum of 2 places identified for each member service and advisory committee that would mean 26 places for member services and 14 places for advisory committee members, totalling 40 places. This is a minimum starting number of candidates for a management qualification and would cost approximately \$352,000 to implement. This is a very small investment considering the benefits to the individual, the employing organisation and to South Australia's Aboriginal communities.

"The mentoring approach to RPL is an excellent methodology as is proven by the participant outcomes and the selection of the 2007-2008 RPL Mentoring Project as a finalist in the SA Training Awards for a training initiative. Further Mentoring Projects should be supported financially if the funding bodies are serious about 'closing the gap on indigenous disadvantage'.

“The 10% contribution by the employer for funding delivery through PPP is frequently unattainable for Aboriginal organisations. ‘In-kind support’ is achievable, however the cash contribution is much more difficult because many Aboriginal organisations are already underfunded or are funded by specific project funds which cannot be expended against workforce development or professional development for individual employees.”

“Although South Australia is leading the way with the mentored approach to RPL for Aboriginal people, it needs to do more. The demand by Aboriginal people, and their willingness to participate, is certainly there; as are the frameworks for management and delivery.”

Klynton Wanganeen, Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement

PPP Funding

During 2009, there was a flurry of media criticism of the PPP arrangements²³, particularly the funding arrangements²⁴ and the “in-kind” contribution was changed to a 10% cash contribution.

“The reason why PPP worked so well for AHCSA was because of the “in-kind” contribution provided by AHCSA to the PPP funding rather than the 10% cash funding. The ‘in-kind’ contribution included the candidates’ time to participate, some travel and accommodation, the administration time to co-ordinate appointments, printing, venue for meetings, management time for meetings; all was recognised as “in-kind” contribution under the first round PPP funding arrangements. AHCSA’s funding is not sufficient to pay a 10% cash contribution to the training costs. Participation by AHCSA in future PPP funded training programs will be limited by this change to the funding arrangements.

“The early identification of an appropriate RTO (TAFE SA Regional), with the RTO’s representatives, the proponent and the mentor all working together with AHCSA, was crucial for the success of the tender writing and submission process. The funding arrangements by using a proponent (the industry representative) worked for AHCSA.

²³ <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/kevin-rudds-2bn-skills-plan-in-disarray/story-e6frg6nf-1225772109657>

²⁴ <http://www.campusreview.com.au/pages/section/article.php?s=VET&idArticle=12958>

“Although there have been continued improvements in the educational attainment of Aboriginal Australians in recent years, levels of attainment remain below those of non-Aboriginal Australians. According to the Australian Human Rights Commission^[3] ‘Non-Indigenous people were twice as likely as Indigenous peoples to have a non-school qualification in 2006 (53% compared with 26%). Non-Indigenous people were more than four times as likely to have a Bachelor Degree or above (21% compared with 5%) and twice as likely to have an Advanced Diploma or Diploma (9% compared with 4%).”

“While AHCSA would prefer to implement a workforce development strategy that is wider than the core skills and for the longer term, current funding and budget arrangements make this very difficult.

“As an RTO, AHCSA delivers the following qualifications by the Education and Training team:

Certificate IV in Indigenous Research Capacity Building

Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Worker

Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Worker (Practice)

Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Worker (Community Care).

“These are AHCSA’s core qualifications. Given that the PPP funding is a ‘once-off’ opportunity, the funding is insufficient for AHCSA to implement and maintain the quality requirements for RTO status for additional ‘one-off’ nationally accredited course offerings such as those for management or business administration qualifications.

“It is only by maintaining good relationships with a range of experienced and passionate adult educators external to our organisation that funding opportunities such as PPP can be accessed and implemented.”

Darrien Bromley, Corporate Services Manager, Aboriginal Health Council of SA

^[3] http://www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/statistics/index.html#Heading18

Recommendations

The authors commend this report to those who participated in the Project, the funding providers, AHCSA, other Aboriginal people and agencies as well as the wider community as an example of how collaborative partnerships can enable the provision of productive vocational education and training to close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employment and training outcomes and to assist in utilising RPL processes. RPL is a fundamental strategy underpinning workforce planning in South Australia as well as providing a wider scope for resourcing delivery.

Key points

- 1. The mentoring approach to Recognition of Prior Learning be fostered and adapted to support positive and realistic vocational education outcomes for Aboriginal people employed in South Australia.**
- 2. Further PPP funding to be sought during 2010 and beyond for delivery of approved qualifications to existing workers; explore adding the Vocational Graduate Certificate in Management (Learning) to the Priority Occupations and Qualifications List²⁵.**
- 3. Explore capacity to access funding to enable Aboriginal graduates of the Community Services Management qualifications to participate in workshop delivery of the Vocational Graduate Certificate in Management (Learning) and Degree level courses for delivery in 2010.**

“AHCSA has a long history as an RTO. Our main focus has been on the provision of training for Aboriginal Health Workers. In doing this we are constantly reminded of the value of training and education for all Aboriginal people, that learning is a lifelong process and that positive benefits can be gained for our Communities. This project is a wonderful example of this and one that AHCSA was happy to support. I hope the project receives more funding so that more Aboriginal people can graduate.

“I would like to congratulate all the 2009 graduates and give special thanks to Klynton Wanganeen, Jason Bromley, Heather Gordon, Darrien Bromley and Angela Francisco.

Mary Buckskin, CEO, Aboriginal Health Council of SA

²⁵<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/Programs/SkillTraining/ProductivityPlaces/Resources/Documents/Resources/March%202009%20POPPPL.pdf>

Appendix 1

2009 Skills Recognition Project COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGEMENT

The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia is the peak body representing Aboriginal health and substance misuse services, and Aboriginal health advisory committees in South Australia at a state and national level. The primary role is to be the 'health voice' for all Aboriginal people in South Australia. This is achieved by advocating for the community and supporting workers with appropriate education and training programs.

A collaborative approach by the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia, Incompro (an Aboriginal owned business) and TAFE SA Regional aims to up skill existing workers in the Aboriginal community controlled health sector. The 2009 Skills Recognition Project is funded by the Productivity Places Program (PPP), as part of the Australian Government's Skilling Australia for the Future initiative. This PPP program is administered by the South Australian Government's Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST).

Could this be you?

- You have lots of skills and experience from jobs, courses and/or community work, but you don't have the 'piece of paper' to prove it.
- You want a qualification to help you get a promotion.
- You want to change jobs or careers but you're worried about how to prove your skills are valuable.

Is recognition for you?

Traditionally, you study for a qualification from beginning to end, regardless of whether you already know part of the material in the course. Skills recognition shortens that process by acknowledging the skills you already have. So, if you have experience in the area of Community Services Management, you are a likely candidate for skills recognition for this Project.

Experience counts

If you have already worked in the area of Community Services Management, either paid or as a volunteer, the skills you've developed are very valuable. You may have done other studies that include similar subject matter, here or interstate. Even some of your leisure activities and interests might include relevant skills. To be recognised, you need to prove you are already competent in that study area. If you have just left school, don't do part-time work or have many interests, you may not be a candidate for skills recognition. If you are an older person with a wide range of successful work and study experiences, you are probably a very strong candidate.

Are you competent?

To decide whether you are competent in something, start by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What tasks have I done at work or in community activities?
- How recently did I do them and would I still remember how?
- What training have I done that might be relevant, including informal on-the-job training?
- How can I prove I can do these things?

Types of evidence

Candidates provide evidence to support their claim to demonstrate they have acquired the knowledge, skills, depth of skills, and attitudes. Such evidence may include:

- • a resume
- • certificates of completed courses and qualifications
- • awards
- • references from employers outlining responsibilities
- • letters from clients
- • evaluations from supervisors
- • job descriptions

Your role in the recognition process

In traditional training, the trainer teaches and you study to pass assessments. With skills recognition, the responsibility is on you to find out what competencies are required and prove whether you have them. The RPL Assessor assesses you and determines what you need to fill in the gaps in your skills and knowledge. Although skills recognition saves you a lot of study time, you need to put a fair amount of work into your application.

What the mentor does

An overview of the mentor's role was provided last year with this statement from a successful skills recognition participant²⁶:

"Heather advised me to prepare for our meeting as if I was applying for a job; to get my resume up to date including committee work, contribution to communities, professional development, as well as three referees and to collect any other evidence such as job and person specifications or articles about my work in a portfolio. The conversation we had on the day covered a lot of topics, not just about what I do at work. Heather conducted the meeting so that the interview was straight forward. She made suggestions about ways to improve my resume and gave me ideas for further study. I left the meeting feeling confident about the process and the outcome."

²⁶ Bronwyn Milera, http://www.premcab.sa.gov.au/pdf/RPL_Mentoring_Report.pdf p20

Prefer to refresh your learning?

Skills recognition is not for everyone. Some people love to learn and don't mind refreshing existing skills. But if you don't want to revise your skills, because you have difficulty getting to classes or just don't have the time, fast-tracking through skills recognition is worthwhile for you.

Pathways to Further Study

Your completed studies with a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) such as AHCSA or TAFE may be recognised at University level and may enable a shorter time for study at University level and enhancing your career options.

The Next Step

Contact **Jason Bromley**

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