

# Inner Eastern Local learning & Employment Network Newsletter



November

Issue No. 1



## Making Education & Employment work for young people

VITAL LINKS, the inaugural IE LLEN breakfast, brought together a number of industry leaders. The breakfast gave IE LLEN THE opportunity to inform business and industry of the role of LLEN and to workshop ideas as to how industry could assist to improve lifelong opportunities for our young people simultaneously meeting the needs of local industry and business.

The guest speakers were Casey Sidebottom a student at the alternative school 'The Island' and Lisa Mihailovic, hospitality student from Swinburne TAFE. They were not leaders from industry or business but gave our guests a powerful message based on their own experiences.

Casey spoke of his experiences of his past homelessness, disengagement from school, and consequent problems. He also explained how the opportunity to re-engage via a program that was both supportive and practical turned his life around. He was able to see the relevance of learning practical skills that could then be applied to a 'real job.' Learning began to make sense to him, having a purpose and giving him opportunities for success, so unlike past experiences at school. He told the audience how he is now in full time training, managing life and is keen and ready to undertake an apprenticeship in Building and Construction.



Lisa compared the experience of traditional learning in school to that of the vocational learning she now undertakes. Studying a hospitality course meant she could become involved in practical learning and gain an opportunity to apply her practical skills to industry settings.

The breakfast discussion highlighted a number of ways that industry and IE LLEN could work together to both support our young people and also improve the quality of skilled young people entering the workforce. A range of suggestions were discussed and include the possibility of some local industries conducting industry specific learning programs i.e. VCAL, involvement in the Mentor/Tutor Skills Program, supported work placements and more.

*IE LLEN intends to conduct a range of breakfast forums throughout 2003. These forums will provide a great opportunity to exchange ideas as to how best IE LLEN can work with industry and the community to both improve opportunities for young people and respond to the identified needs of local businesses.*

**If you would like to attend a breakfast forum in the future or would like more information please email [cthompson@iellen.org.au](mailto:cthompson@iellen.org.au)**



## Message from *Cate Thompson*

*Executive Officer*

The concept of the LLEN fits strongly with my belief that 'it takes a community to educate our young people and that 'one size does not fit all'. From past experience, I know that given the right opportunities and support, even the most disengaged young people can achieve success - with the experience of success they can move more confidently towards a positive future.

Education is an important key to the future and needs to be accessible via a range of organizations and diverse approaches. IE LLEN is developing partnerships with industry; education and community to ensure education options are relevant and accessible to EVERY young person in IE LLEN.

IE LLEN is our community. Our community is now in a position to achieve better social and economic outcomes for all our young people. Young people will not be the only people to benefit – the positives will have a long-term effect on our local community, industry and business.

I encourage you all to become active members of your IE LLEN and make a positive difference to the future.

## Local Business Involvement in IELLEN

Brian McMaster joined the IE LLEN Committee of Management as he saw the opportunity to make a practical contribution to improving opportunities for young people, especially those young people who were experiencing failure at school.

As owner/operator of a McDonalds Balwyn and Camberwell, Brian has had first hand contact with youth for over 20 years. He believes young people, at risk of disengaging from school and or employment can be helped by employers.

Brian is involved in the IE LLEN pilot Tutor Mentor program where he works with a local young person giving them support and assistance with stabilizing a pathway through school and towards a career. He is very keen to involve other business people to participate and feels they too can gain personal satisfaction through helping young people to engage in education, training and employment

He would like to see the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) being supported by employers through part time work, including some school times and one to one mentoring/tutoring.

VCAL encourages young people who desire more practical hands on to continue studies in English, Maths and other subjects of their choice while gaining valuable work experience and, in some cases, completing relevant Certificate 2 in Training

The outcome may well present employers with excellent well-qualified motivated permanent employees who have also completed secondary school

*Brian Pictured with Minister Lynne Kosky at the Launch of VCAL*



**Website launch...**

**Visit our website for more  
information [www.iellen.org.au](http://www.iellen.org.au)**

# Youth Profile

**Hayley attends Swinburne TAFE CGEA  
Year 10 Youth Program**



*Hello, my name is Hayley.*

*I left secondary school at the end of year 9 School didn't suit me, and nothing motivated me to go. Now I attend the Youth Certificate(s) of General Education (CGEA) Youth Program at Swinburne TAFE and I've hardly missed a class.*

*Mainstream education did not accommodate my level of learning. It put me in a position where I felt like I was competing against my classmate all the time. It was as if you had to have the ability to learn at such high standards all the time- when not everyone learns at the same pace, Also not all subjects I studied were relevant to my needs.*

*Here at Swinburne, I feel like I have found home. It puts me an environment where I can be heard, respected and feel like I am someone who people are actually willing to teach, as well as help, and that makes a huge difference.*

*Looking back on my first year at Swinburne, I've seen that I have been able to express myself so much more than if I was still at a mainstream school. It's helped me gain confidence, skills, and that's helped me open up, which has had a big impact on me, not just in school, but in my social and life commitments as well.*

*I am so pleased that there are places where people can learn in a different way to mainstream school, because without it I surely don't believe that I would be learning here today and so happy to do so.*

## What is VCAL?

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is a new qualification that broadens the educational pathways available to young people. It is a post-compulsory education qualification and sits alongside the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). It requires students to undertake programs that are work related and have an industry-based component i.e. automotive, hospitality, multi media etc.

Partnerships with Industry, Education and Community. take education beyond the traditional classroom setting, giving students the opportunity to participate in hands-on, practical, industry relevant learning.

A number of VCAL programs will be conducted within Industry settings. In 2003 there will be approximately 80 IELLEN students undertaking VCAL, with many more expected to take up the option in 2004. These students will have the opportunity to develop skills in industry specific areas and will not only receive an accredited qualification but will be work ready and/or ready to move on to further vocational training

## VITAL LINK

Our young people need local industry, business, education, government and community to work together to create better employment and education opportunities for all young people.



# What's Happening at IELLEN....

**November 18<sup>th</sup>** IE LLEN Launch  
Kooyong Tennis Centre, 498,  
Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn.

**November 26<sup>th</sup>** Lunch Forum  
with school principals - looking at  
ways IE LLEN can contribute to the  
provision of effective education and  
training within Stonnington,  
Boroondara and Port Phillip

**December 3<sup>rd</sup>** Lunch Forum to  
discuss the implementation of VCAL  
with teachers who will conduct  
VCAL in 2003 and those who intend  
to conduct it in 2004

**December 10<sup>th</sup>** Lunch Forum to  
focus on Managed Individual  
Pathways (MIPS) - to discuss ways IE  
LLEN can move forward to support  
MIPS provision for our young  
people.

*If your school has not received an  
invitation and you are interested in  
attending one of the above forums  
please contact:*

[cthompson@iellen.org.au](mailto:cthompson@iellen.org.au)

## How to get involved with IELLEN

Complete an online application  
form [www.iellen.org.au](http://www.iellen.org.au)  
Email: [cthompson@iellen.org.au](mailto:cthompson@iellen.org.au)  
Or call: (03) 9279 3904  
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Vic 3141



## Message from the IE LLEN Chair Jack Melbourne

Over recent weeks the Committee of Management has concentrated on the development of our Strategic Plan, helped by input from many of you at our very successful community forum. This plan, which will guide our endeavours over the next two years, is essentially complete. However, before enlarging on this I would like to comment on cause and effect.

It has been my experience that confronted with a problem; there is always a tendency to tackle the effect and not the cause. The reason is simple, the effect is obvious the underlying cause may be more difficult to determine. To me, the main task of the LLEN is to address the underlying causes of why many of our young people drop out of Post Compulsory Education and Training and to establish measures to counter this.

In other words, the aim is prevention.

It seems this may be best achieved by introducing alternative pathways to our somewhat rigid formal academic education system providing that this is supported by the broader community.

Thus from our planning work two issues have emerged

The identification and support of those young people disadvantaged or 'at risk' of dropping out of the education and training system

The establishment of linkages between schools/training organizations, parent's industry/commerce and young people to build community support

Tackling these 4 issues will be our priorities

In many ways we have lost our sense of community. For our young people's sake it is time to restore this

I urge you to become involved