

HGT AND EDGE - A PARTNERSHIP FINDING SOLUTIONS

With many companies facing challenges in recruiting qualified staff and with Christmas just around the corner, one smart company has found a way to alleviate this problem.

Hospitality Group Training has formed a strategic partnership with EDGE Employment Solutions, an agency which assists people with disabilities to find and maintain employment. "This partnership has been a win-win for everyone," said Iain McDougal the General Manager of HGT. "EDGE provides us with staff who are keen, motivated and reliable as well as providing ongoing on-the-job support at no cost."

The partnership places people into Apprenticeships, including Commercial Cookery and traineeships including, Hospitality Operations. So far 12 people have been employed by HGT and placed with a variety of host employers. Jonathan Stannard, a third year apprentice chef has been one of those to benefit from the partnership and is currently completing his apprenticeship at Miss Maud.

"He is a great worker, who has fitted right into the team," said Russell Foster, Jonathan's supervisor at Miss Maud.

Susan Robertson, the Managing Director of EDGE said "Statistically it has been proven that with training, employees with disabilities have greater long-term productivity, greater longevity of employment and are loyal workers who take pride in the organisations for whom they work and this is exactly the type of employees businesses want."

If you would like to find out more information on recruiting someone please contact EDGE on 9286 6600.



Jonathan Stannard hard at work at Miss Maud in the City.

RHIANNA BACK ON DECK AT COLES KALAMUNDA



Rhianna Heal (left) and Bakery Manager, Connie Nattalotto (right) hard at work at Coles Kalamunda.

Rhianna Heal who works in the Bakery section at Coles Kalamunda has every reason to smile. Rhianna, has just returned to work after recovering from Cushing's disease, a rare and debilitating condition, which affects the pituitary gland.

Due to its rare nature, doctors were at first slow to diagnose the condition, but with the support of the Store Manager, Graham Bray, Rhianna was able to have the necessary time off. "Here at Coles we value the contribution made by all our staff," said Graham. "Rhianna has been a loyal staff member and we decided to show some of that loyalty back to her."

Rhianna required around seven months off work to have the operation, and enough time to fully recuperate. With determination, and knowing she had the support of friends, family and co-workers Rhianna always kept a positive outlook. "All I wanted to do was get better again and do every day things like get up and go to work, there is only so much day time television you can watch," said Rhianna.

Connie Nattalotto, the Bakery Manager, has been one Rhianna's most supportive co-workers "Rhianna has a specific job here in the bakery and that is to tray up the cookies. She is very reliable and brings to work a great attitude which, as a manager, I really appreciate."

PAUL LEHMANN AND TZU-FOUNDATIION

Sometimes the work of an EDGE Job Coordinator goes well beyond the day to day tasks associated with getting the job done. Many other crucial elements need to be taken into consideration in order to make for a successful job placement.

Paul Lehmann, who has been working as a Litter Control Officer at the Red Hill Waste Management Facility and who is being supported by Dave Reynolds highlights the extra work that the EDGE Job Co-ordinators often find themselves doing.

Paul was having challenges getting to and from work due to the unreliability of his "old bomb of a car", but with the help of Dave Reynolds and the Local Area Coordinator from Melville, Bev Gill, they applied for some funding through a little know charity called the, Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu-Chi Foundation.



Paul pictured with his new pride and joy.

The Foundation is a not-for-profit service, supported entirely through donations. Through the generosity of the Tzu-Chi Foundation, Dave was presented with a cheque for \$2500 and was able to assist Paul with the purchase of a reliable small car to get to and from work.

"This has helped me so much," said Paul. "I can get to work and not have to worry about my car starting or not."

There has been an immediate affect with Paul being given more shifts and gaining pernancy with the East Metropolitan Regional Council who is responsible for employing Paul. Peter Thompson, the Site Manager said that "Paul has really opened ours eyes to people with disabilities - things have gone that well we are looking to recruit someone else from EDGE."

THE 2005 PRIME MINISTER'S EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS



Pictured is Peter Salt who has worked at Bunnings Melville since 2001.

EDGE nominated two of its major employers, the Department of Housing and Works and Wesfarmers Bunnings for The 2005 Prime Minister's Employer of the Year Awards.

The Department of Housing and Works and EDGE Employment Solutions have been working collaboratively to increase the representation of people with disabilities in the State Public Sector since February 1992. The Department is leading the way when it comes to the employment of people with disabilities with around 4.13% of their total workforce having a disability compared to the rest of the State Public Sector only having 1.7% of the total workforce population indicating they have a disability.

Since February 1992, EDGE has directly supported 38 people into employment within the Department, across a variety of positions. Their flexible approach to recruitment, training and career development for people with disabilities has seen them become an employer of choice and a leading State Government agency.

The relationship between Wesfarmers Bunnings and EDGE began in 1985 when a young man with an intellectual disability who had previously worked in a sheltered workshop, was placed with Bunnings Forest Products (Sotico).

EDGE has since placed 42 other people into employment through the Wesfarmers Group of Companies including Air Liquide, Star Operations and Transport. However the major performer within the Wesfarmers group is Bunnings, where 34 workers have been placed since 1985. Of the people not working at Wesfarmers Bunnings now, many have gone onto other employment after getting their "start" at Wesfarmers Bunnings.

The Wesfarmers partnership was highlighted at the International Labour Organisation Conference in 2002 and reported in "Mutual Benefits: Community and Business Getting Together" published by the Department of Family and Community Services.

EDGE Employment Solutions would like to acknowledge and thank both the Department of Housing and Works and Wesfarmers Bunnings for the ongoing commitment and support for the employment of people with disabilities.

EDGE ANNOUNCES NEW CHAIRMAN

With the retirement of EDGE's Chairman of 12 years J Barrey Williams, we now welcome Mark Barnaba to the important role of Chairman.

Mark's credentials are world class: the University Medal at UWA, Harvard Business School Baker Scholar, Executive Assistant to Alan Bond, employment at Goldman Sachs in New York and McKinsey & Company in London, founding partner and Managing Director of Poynton & Partners and recently appointed Deputy Chairman on the West Coast Eagles board - all before turning 40.

Mark brings a wealth of corporate knowledge that will complement that, of the existing board members.



New Chairman - Mark Barnaba.

MENTORING CO-WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES COURSE 14TH OF FEBRUARY

Once again EDGE Employment Solutions is running its hugely successful, free, one day course for employers entitled "Mentoring Co-Workers with Disabilities" on the 14th of February. This short course provides participants with the skills and confidence to train and support co-workers with disabilities to become independent and productive members of their workforce.

Positions are filling fast so please call the office now on 9286 6600 to register your interest. If you are unable to attend on this day we run this course regularly throughout the year, so speak to our receptionist about this.



Best wishes for the
festive season
from Sue Robertson and all the staff
at EDGE Employment Solutions