

Stars in our Midst

A 30 Year Commitment to Our Community

Stars in our Midst

A 30 Year Commitment to Our Community

Stars in Our Midst - A 30 Year Commitment to our Community

ISBN 0-9803011-0-6

Published by Centacare Employment and Training 2006 ABN 14 678 096 405

3rd Floor; 641 - 643 Wellington Street Perth, Western Australia 6000.

Ph: (08) 9482 7000 • Fax: (08) 9322 2448 • Email: perth@centacarewa.com.au

Text and photography by Sally Burgess de Castillo, Centacare Employment and Training.

Design and layout by Sandbox • Printed by Quality Press, Perth

Proof read by Catherine Sanders and Lyn Hamlett, Centacare Employment and Training.

1.	Guido
2.	Pauline
3.	Thomas
4.	Bill
5.	Charles
6.	Doug
7.	Keith
8.	Eric
9.	Bevan
10.	Summit Storage
11.	Ken
12.	Stuart
13.	Carmel
14.	Aussie IT
15.	David
16.	Daniel
17.	Sohiela

18.	Jared
19.	Lyn
20.	Coral
21.	Huda
22.	Brian
23.	Maria
24.	Drew
25.	Marina
26.	Peter
27.	Zoe
28.	Michael
29.	Sophie
30.	Paul
31.	Marial
32.	Clare
33.	Jason

Foreword



As one of a growing number of socially powerful organisations in the nation, Centacare Employment and Training has made it their mission to provide quality, individualised employment, training, and support services to unemployed jobseekers, in a manner consistent with our Christian ethos, which encourages clients to regain and sustain their dignity and work towards building economic and social livelihoods for themselves.


At first glance, Centacare Employment and Training appears to be a straightforward not-for-profit organisation that works with the basic forces of supply and demand in the labour market. However, at second glance, the complex turn of events, that has led to the development of this reputable Archdiocesan agency become clear; as do their countless number of achievements over the past 30 years. Centacare Employment and Training is a complex organisation, made up of dedicated people, who work tirelessly to meet short term targets, which collectively ensure the attainment of long term goals.

To put this into context, the employment and training industry in Western Australia, has and continues to be the dominant catalyst for organisational development at Centacare Employment and Training.

Market trends function according to a complex set of mechanisms, which involve an infinite collection of interrelated variables. As a result, the constant changes inflicted upon the organisation are merely a response to the surrounding economic and political climate. As much as the organisation attempts to foresee the outcomes of external factors of change, issues related to unemployment remain complex and unpredictable.

Nevertheless, in an effort to reach some state of equilibrium, between external changes in social policy and the constant needs of the community, Centacare Employment and Training remains focused on their strong belief in the wide spread benefits of providing for the disadvantaged, irrespective of the current social climate. It seems fair then to state that market trends relating to employment and training have gone some way toward the development of both a flexible and dynamic organisation.

In retrospect, major shifts in government policy, priorities, funding and labour market realities have been a direct reflection of changes in social perspectives. Over the last 30 years, Centacare Employment and Training has understandably experienced significant changes in



operation and as the changing nature of society has revealed itself, the organisation has had to adapt as a Church community-based enterprise. Interestingly, disregard for the dynamic nature of society has proved to be damaging for many similar organisations over time. Centacare Employment and Training on the other hand, has managed to remain flexible and responsive, which has enabled the development of their comprehensive scope and a number of innovative strategies.

The strength of this foundation serves as a platform for the delivery of an unbeatable service. More specifically, what sets Centacare Employment and Training apart from the rest is their resilience to the effects of changes in government directives together with their ability to maintain outstanding service in an increasingly competitive market.

Centacare Employment and Training has met every challenge to date with the necessary strength and determination to succeed. Centacare Employment and Training sets a strong moral example for each of its clients, in that with great determination and constant work, barriers can be broken, obstacles can be overcome and success can be achieved.

The successful journey of the organisation, through both adversity and with the much-needed support of others, is a true reflection and a working example of the message it carries for each of its clients. It is in this way that Centacare Employment and Training's philosophy of operation is both supportive and relevant to those most in need.

The organisation, considered by many as a leader in its field, has always maintained its focus to meet the needs of a diverse range of disadvantaged clients. By improving the quality of people's lives and by assisting them to remove personal and vocational barriers, Centacare Employment and Training has uncovered a rich source of human wealth, whose positive contribution to society, over the past 30 years and into the future, is unmeasurable.

As the Auxiliary Bishop of Perth, I am delighted with Centacare Employment and Training as a Lifelink agency within the Perth Archdiocese, and wish them continued success into the future.



Bishop Don Sproxton
Auxiliary Bishop of Perth

Introduction

The curiosity we have regarding other people's lives is a natural social interest. Some of the more remarkable stories are those from people who have faced adversity or hardship, and against all odds, managed to succeed.

Moreover, what we take from other people's experiences, in self-reflection and personal evaluation, can be of great value and we are proud that *Stars in our Midst* allows our readers this opportunity.

★ Alone we can do so little - together we can do so much.

Helen Keller

Creating this publication is a challenge that Centacare Employment and Training has been honoured to undertake. This book is a celebration of all the work the organisation has done in the last 30 years, and more importantly the effect this work has had on the people who have been involved with the organisation at every level.

The biographical approach used in *Stars in our Midst* offers insights into key events, experiences and influences that have enabled positive change in people's lives. In today's climate of unpredictability and instability people are driven by the forces of change around them.

By showing people in the context of their lives, the era in which they have developed becomes particularly relevant to the level of achievement they experience.

★ More powerful than the will to win is the courage to begin.

Unknown

You may never have heard of any of the people in this book, but once you learn of them, you may never forget them.

Stars in our Midst aims to communicate the achievements of a number of people who have been involved with Centacare over the past 30 years.

The organisation wishes to showcase these stories in an effort to congratulate everyone who has been involved and inspire others into the future. It aims to reflect diversity within the group and reveal hidden talents within the individual.

For many readers this book may be a reflection of their own circumstances. Alternately, it could be an initial insight into the challenges faced by others. Either way, we hope it will be inspirational and a testimony of what a little help and a lot of hard work can lead to. If this book succeeds in conveying the strength, vibrancy and spirit of the people involved with Centacare, then we feel richly rewarded.

Centacare welcome you to share in some of the stories that have touched our hearts over the past 30 years.

A revelation in your understanding can occur in an instant.

Chin-Ning Chu

Centacare - A History

Centacare Employment and Training's 30 year history is best summarised by outlining its 8 phases of development. Each phase is characterised by significant milestones and changes in the organisations strategic approach, which have been influenced by both internal and external factors. The 8 phases include:

Phase I (1976) – Conception

Centrecare Youth Information Centre, sponsored by the Catholic Church, first opened its doors in 1976 at Aberdeen Street in Northbridge, Perth. Unstructured activities were offered for youth aged 15 – 24. Clients included jobless and homeless people who were often without family or social support. While statistics at the time clearly charted the growing problem of unemployment, its causes were far more complicated.

Experts talked about a range of reasons including lack of education, poor or absent parenting, substance abuse, language barriers, cultural intolerance, lack of relevant work experience; lack of job related training and, mental, physical or behavioural issues. But whichever combination of these causes was to blame in any particular case, the consensus was that

when it came to helping disadvantaged clients, Centrecare was able to deliver results. Over the ensuing years, finding the key to unlocking a person's potential became Centrecare's specialty.

Phase 2 (1976 – 1985) – Community Youth Support Scheme

Now known as Centrecare CYSS, the organisation was starting to establish its roots. Referrals from mental health fields, migrant services, church and welfare organisations and community employment schemes were becoming commonplace and the work came flooding in.

This initiated the move to 440 William Street, where clients included the homeless and those with physical and psychiatric problems. Issues related to substance abuse and other problems associated with unemployment were prevalent. At this stage, CYSS boasted a growing staff of 2 paid full time employees, several part time instructors and a few volunteers, who offered training to clients in woodworking, cooking, metalwork, yoga and music. Day-to-day operations were a challenge in the new environment, but the work was rewarding as results from their efforts began to show.

Meanwhile, planning was difficult and risky as funding was minimal and often paid in short periods. This was characteristic of the next decade however; there was a shift in these times, which led toward more structured training programmes, with an increased emphasis on vocational skills used to re-enter the workforce. Centrecare saw this as an opportunity and a conscious effort was made to develop initiatives that would harness clients into these programmes.

Phase 3 (1986 – 1988) – Expansion

Investigations by the government of the day led to questions being raised in regard to the viability of employment and training related initiatives that were funded under both a state and federal system. No doubt, in a reaction to growing public perception that CYSS type services were “a waste of time and money, for a bunch of dole bludgers” the CYSS programme was scrapped due to a perceived lack of results.

Fortunately, due to backlash from a broad and diverse group of CYSS supporters, the funding was later restored, at a higher level with stricter guidelines.

As a result of these political movements, vocational training and employment appeared as the new model. To deal with the changes, Centrecare required larger premises and a move was made to 22 Stirling Street to cope with the developing list of programmes, which continued expanding for the next 5 or so years.

Phase 4 (1989 – 1990) – Skillshare

Nothing could have prepared Centrecare for the next round of political activity, which presented enormous changes in the Employment and Training Industry. An expansive selection of Labour Market Programs were seen to be duplicative and with a lack of focus and as such, programmes were amalgamated with a focus on achieving better employment outcomes. Skill Share became known as the funding model for this Initiative.

In 1990, 243 James Street and 223 James Street became home to Centrecare, allowing flexibility in their approach to the delivery of programmes and more sophisticated resources. This approach left the organisation with a solid foundation, though they still faced a growing demand for their service, which continued to challenge planning for the future.

Centacare - A History

Phase 5 (1990 – 1994) – Enterprise and Employment

Once again, government policy fuelled the direction of the organisation. The provision of 'enterprise' funding gave Centcare an innovative edge, which resulted in the development of Heaven Sent Catering and Manners Training Restaurant, both of which were very important for the delivery of simulated industry training as well as being an alternative source of income.

The introduction of JobSkills funding was also a major event which shaped the organisation's development during this phase. It provided necessary training resources and made employment placement services available to the long-term unemployed.

Phase 6 (1994 – 1997) – Focus on Training

Another shift in government policy saw the introduction of CBT or Competency Based Training.

Training became more varied and included off-the-job training in close partnership with large retail organisations and involved case management of the long-term unemployed.

A combination of innovative strategies at this time proved to be successful in terms of the organisation's ability to deliver services that closely matched its mission, while simultaneously being recognised as a high performer according to government measures. Adaptations to CBT created the foundations for phase 7.

Phase 7 (1998 – 2001) – Privatisation

In 1998 the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) was privatised and Job Network and New Apprenticeship Support Services were born. Outcomes based, vocational employment and training became the focus.

Grant-based funding was replaced with a new accountable employment service and complex measurement tools and specific National Key Performance Indicators. Centcare continued to operate successfully in this era of change, with new networks emerging between the organisation, schools and businesses.

With a broadening of services and an expanding potential, Centcare, once again, not only survived but continued to thrive, through another period of significant change.

Phase 8 (2002 – Present) Restructuring

As services diversified the organisation needed clarity of focus. With the decision made to consolidate under one brand, Centrecare develop a wider community and corporate presence and became Centacare Employment and Training, or CET.

A new model for Employment Services was phased in and several other programmes were introduced including a Language Literacy Numeracy Programme, Personal Support Programme and Transition to Work Programme. Simultaneously, stronger strategic planning principles were introduced to improve the organisation's market capacity in employment and training.

Under this new operational environment the staff's drive and expertise ensured success. The government began reducing the number of agencies used to deliver programmes and Centacare were beginning to see fewer larger, target focused, organisations that operated under a national umbrella. With an eye to it's future, Centacare became strategically aligned to the national organisation, Catholic Welfare Australia.

Then in 2003, the government made a surprise move to introduce a new model known as the Active Participation Model (APM) for servicing unemployed clients.

This resulted in large-scale changes to organisational strategies for the delivery of programmes. It was met with complications and much frustration, however with persistence and dedication at all levels, Centacare surfaced as a successful, highly competitive and professional agency.

Changes in today's market are becoming increasingly difficult to predict and the challenges faced by Centacare are complex and multi faceted. The current climate of education and training demands that the organisation remains responsive to the changing expectations of the government and the wider community.

Flexible business strategies are a necessity, as the only constant is change.

Guido

1

*“Most look up and admire the stars.
A champion climbs a mountain and grabs one.”*

Anon

As the founding Chairman of Centrecare, Guido gave a great deal of time to a cause that was close to his heart and faith.

- ★ There was injustice and apathy in the Federal system. Centacare was working at raising the consciousness of our society. We believe that every young person is a living miracle, and has a divine purpose. We developed that trust in the community and saw the problems that needed to be addressed. We believe in the eternal dignity of every young person, the dignity of work, and access to just and creative employment.

A variety of people contributed during this crucial stage. The group was diverse, but they all shared the common mission and values of the organisation.

- ★ Often we learnt more from them - unemployed, and the kids on the street.

- ★ Management kept every one aware of the realities; they kept the flame alight and were instrumental in the committee that addressed all sorts of issues, from accommodation to legal and health issues.

We really had a lovely combination of good people who were advocating for people in need. The organisation attracted a lot of good will: nurses, lawyers and doctors. Dr John Thomasich had a clinic for the street kids and he was our GP.

The relationship we had with the church was extremely supportive and enabling. They were the mentors, especially Fr. Barry Hickey, now Archbishop of Perth; we were attached yet remained able to operate independently.

Guido is very aware of the significant periods of change that the organisation has dealt with.

★ *The reason why we started Centacare, some 30 years ago, is the same reason it is still in operation today. It's about reaching out to help the poor, the unemployed and marginalised - the people who have no voice.*

In his opinion, however, it has been the organisation's ability to remain steadfast to their mission, which has made all the difference.

Many organisations have come and gone over the years with a big fanfare and lots of funding. Even though Centacare had none of this, they had the expertise and held stakes in the community.

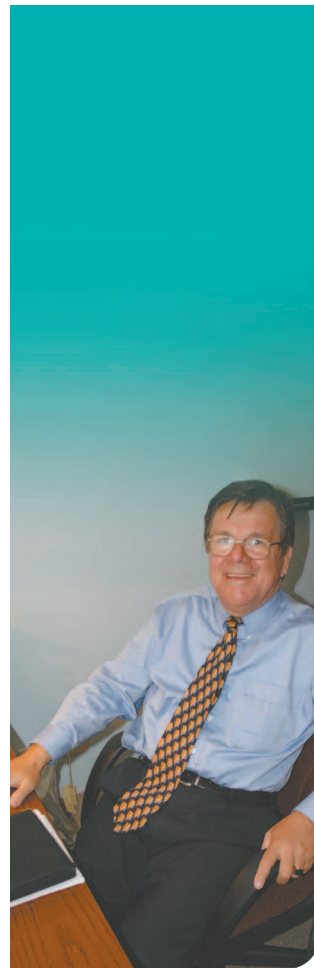
There is always a lot of forgiveness and understanding at Centacare; they look at the whole person, not just their behaviour. The organisation has been very supportive, innovative and cutting-edge; they haven't been afraid to take risks. It's a good check really, as an organisation and as people, that we are living by gospel values.

Centacare is a good model for the celebration of the Priesthood of the laity. It's about the 'people of god'; its about prayerful action, on the streets and amongst the realities of everyday life.

★ Centacare is the 'living' church, back then and now, I hope this will never change.

From the very beginning, Guido's vision and enthusiasm has been fundamental in laying the foundations for a powerful, yet compassionate and effective organisation.

Centacare congratulate Guido's outstanding contribution to the organisation, acknowledging his efforts as pivotal in making a positive influence on the lives of so many people.



Pauline

2

“ The best way to predict the future is to invent it.”

Alan Kay

As Executive Director of an organisation that has endured excessive change and periods of considerable turmoil at the hands of the government, Pauline can reflect back on 28 years of service to Centacare with fond memories.

- ★ It's a long time to spend in any one place, however, for me, my time with Centacare, through all its phases has filled me with the richness of walking the distance with so many people along their life's path. I am left with a feeling of privilege in seeing people move, often from a place of despair and darkness to a world of opportunity.

Pauline is a great leader, and although she is both modest and humble, her outstanding accomplishments run little risk of going unnoticed. Pauline's contribution to the organisation is incomprehensible. The magnitude of her influence is vast and encompasses every

corner of the organisation. Because of Pauline's leadership, Centacare is able to quote some dazzling statistics, which illustrates its significant impact in the employment and training industry in Western Australia over the past 30 years.

- ★ Centacare has always been a very special organisation. From its early days as Centrecare CYSS, we delivered a special kind of service to the young people. It was often open seven days a week, hosting activities that enabled so many young people to fill some of the empty spaces in their life's and to reach their potential to secure a place in the workforce.

Five youth hostels were set up across the Perth metropolitan area - this was the first of its kind in Western Australia. It operated without government funding, often supporting up to 30 people at any one time.

★ ***My personal journey has been a kaleidoscope of truly amazing experiences and the opportunity to fulfill a fabulous dream.***

- ★ In its 30 year history Centacare has assisted in excess of 47,000 individual job seekers return to the employment market.

In the late 1980's by the Federal Government shifted from people to employment outcomes, and Pauline directed a change in approach, which took them away from the 'whole-life approach' that, up until now, had proved so successful.

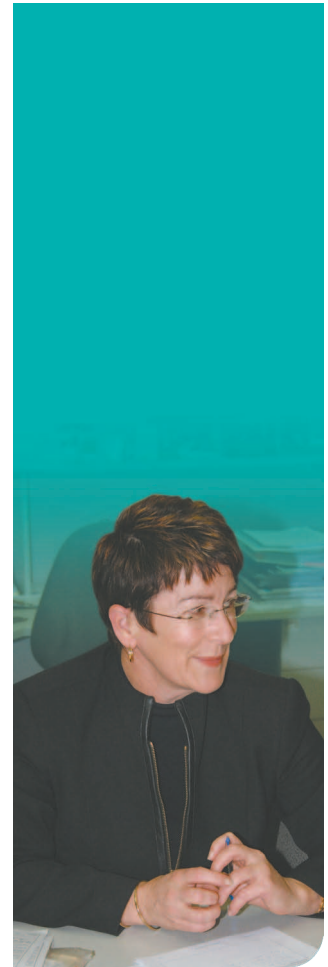
- ★ New thinking and some rational choices had to be made. The best way forward was to build stronger alliances with employers and industry. A multitude of new activities were developed and Centacare Employment & Training was in the business of providing of a multitude of labour market programmes.

Pauline's leadership is inspirational. Her passion and integrity, combined with her resilience and perseverance has held the organisation together.

- ★ You begin to realise that there has to be some magic intervening, and this magic is in the form of the staff who have worked and continue to work within the agency, in what is often a tough and challenging environment. I look back in awe at the unique gifts, the professionalism, and the caring that each member of staff has brought to their work.

Centacare's 30th Birthday is a celebration, and recognition of the significant contribution that the organisation has made to the community of Western Australia.

Pauline has been highly instrumental throughout each stage of Centacare's development. She is an inspiration, and Centacare wish to congratulate her for her achievements and unwavering commitment to the organisation's mission.



Thomas

3

“Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies.”

Mother Theresa

Despite having spent time at Longmore Juvenile Detention Centre, categorised by the CES as employable and struggling with weight issues, Thomas Bradman Ross managed to turn his life around - with a little help from Centacare Employment and Training. At 21 years of age, Thomas felt extremely unhappy. He had given up hope of getting anywhere in life and was at breaking point.

- ★ They (CES) told me I had no hope. This made me really angry so I grabbed a staff member around the neck and they ended up referring me to Centrecare CYSS. I remember walking in and the floorboards were creaking like mad as I went down the long passageway, not knowing what to expect. I was really nervous and as I saw Pauline Robertson's face, her expression said 'What have we copped here?' But you made me feel really welcome.

Thomas was involved with Centacare for several years and participated in many activities. He feels the step-by-step approach, combined with the nurturing and trusting environment of Centacare, was what enabled his progress. His goals were comparatively small, however collectively they were extremely powerful.

- ★ You cared for me and showed me how to make a life for myself. You took me swimming every morning and promised me a new outfit if I could get my weight down to 20 stone, which I did. Eventually I got down to 14 stone – half my original body weight.

Thomas' confidence was rising and he had a growing sense of purpose. The positive change of direction in his life was amplified when his efforts were rewarded with an offer to take the position of Houseleader at the Centacare CYSS Hostel.

★ *It took me several years to feel confident enough to find a job.*

★ I had never had a position of authority or responsibility in my life and now I had lots of friends who shared the house with me. My confidence and self-esteem were back and I felt like I belonged to a big happy family.

Centacare helped Thomas through the ground work that enabled him to make life-changing choices. He was no longer uncertain or embarrassed, angry or hesitant and realised he was now physically, mentally and emotionally ready for employment.

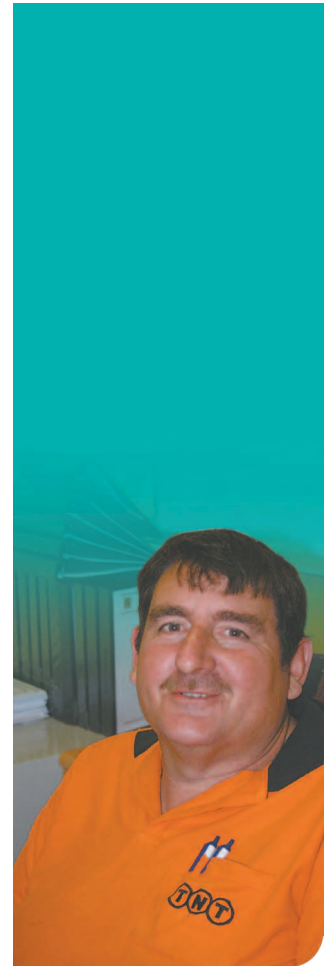
★ Centacare was my saviour and I know that if it wasn't for Centacare CYSS, I wouldn't be alive today. You gave me back my respect, my self-esteem and the ability to do things for myself.

Twenty-five years later, Thomas can look back with great satisfaction.

Initially, starting as Storeman at Aherns, some eight years later, he became a Truck Driver for TNT - a position he still holds today. Thomas' success in work has allowed him to experience similar accomplishments in his personal life.

★ Centacare found me my first job and I have never looked back. I got married and have a beautiful son who is 16 and he makes me so proud. I wouldn't change my life for quids. I'm so happy, I love my job at TNT.

Thomas recognised his barriers early on and took the initiative to find solutions. He surrounds himself with positive influences and has worked hard to make changes. He embraced assistance from Centacare and his high-spirited character prevailed, making him the person he is today. Centacare congratulates Thomas for all he has accomplished and wishes him similar success in the future.



*“Its kind of fun doing the impossible”**Walt Disney*

Previously, Bill had developed photographic equipment that was designed to capture images of the atomic testing, on the Monte Bello Islands, from the mainland. As a former Associate Professor of Physics at the University of Western Australia, Bill was well known for his expertise in optics.

From this highly academic background, Bill was attracted to Centacare, then known as because of CYSS, by his strong sense of social justice. He was one of the first trainers to work with the organisation, and one of the most highly qualified. He played an enormous role in vocational skills development, for many of thousands of young people.

- ★ I had experience in designing a number of teaching aids that helped students from primary to tertiary levels of education, varying across a broad range of subject areas.

Bill was a highly regarded scientist and educator amongst his peers and his contribution to the organisation was extremely valuable. Money couldn't buy what Bill was able to deliver. His humble nature and passion for the cause kept him grounded, and focused on the real issues.

- ★ From the Albertus Training Centre at Gidgegannup, I had designed a number of activities that were intended to firstly engage them in learning. Then we were looking at training them in basic manual and problem solving skills.

For example, woodworking activities ranged from making coffee tables, baby's cots, and dolls houses, to bookcases and five piece dining suites.

Bill's expertise in electronics was inspirational for many of the participants.

★ *I believe in what they're trying to do here.*

He had a unique ability to connect with his students and the outcomes were truly amazing. Bill's enthusiasm for learning was infectious, and to work under his guidance was an honour that was not to be taken for granted.

- ★ I helped the students build a radio telescope. We used it to listen to the planet Jupiter. Twice a week a bus would come from town with up to 20 young people.

On occasions some would stay with me for a while, sometimes for up to 6 months, while they rebuilt their lives.

Bill's dedication was reflected in his perception of education. He conducted himself with great integrity and made himself available to anyone in need. He empowered his students to embrace change and gave them the confidence to believe in themselves.

He was also a powerful mentor to many students, and his ability to empathise with their situation made it easier for them to overcome adversity.

- ★ We approached remedial education through a broad range of subjects from painting, wood turning, and photography in the arts and crafts, to basic plant and insect identification in biology.

If there were more people like Bill in this world then it would be a significantly less troubled place. Centacare are eternally indebted to him for his selfless commitment, which has proven to be inspirational.

Centacare congratulate Bill, on behalf of the many hearts he has touched, and for the unmeasurable influence he has had on so many lives.



“Troubles are often the tools by which God fashions us for better things”

Henry Ward Beecher

Charles Hansord, known to his friends as the 'Mars Bar Kid', first came across Centacare in 1978. Most of his childhood was spent in Homes and foster care. As Charles grew older he retained a lot of anger, which he now attributes to this time of instability.

★ I heard about Centacare CYSS, so I went to find it. It was in a little old house in William Street and it was really friendly. I loved it - I used to go every day.

After his 17th Birthday, Centacare assisted him fill a part-time position as Kitchenhand at Darby's Seafood Restaurant. Charles was living in the Centacare CYSS Hostel by then and is proud to have been one of the first residents.

At 24, with the help of Centacare, Charles was able to fill his first full-time position at Bunnings as a Machine Operator.

★ I used to eat six Mars Bars and drink six cans of Coke a day. We had lots of funny times there and for the first time I felt safe and like I was going somewhere. Centacare gave me great memories that I can laugh about now - I really miss those days.

At 24 years of age, Charles filled his first full time position at Bunnings. 11 years later Bunnings recognised his efforts by promoting him to 2nd Grade Machinist – after many years of dedication. Later, Charles became employed at Canning Weaving Mills as a Stockpicker, and then on to work in Engineering at St. John of God Hospital in Murdoch until his life took a different turn. Charles had been through extreme hardship already in his life and was again, faced with great adversity.

Surviving this required revisiting some of the 'life skills' he learnt at Centacare and reapplying them to his new set of circumstances.

★ *I was scared to get a job because I wasn't educated... I was really nervous about going to work in case I made mistakes.*

★ I had a nervous breakdown. Things were really bad for me for about a year. I am now recovering slowly and have since been back to work.

Charles credits the work of Centacare as a valuable influence in his life. Learning in a practical and relevant way helped motivate him to continue his education, which in turn built his confidence and changed his life.

★ I began my education, learning to read and write and do maths. I did woodwork, electronics and travelled to Gidgenannup twice a week where I built a telescope. I also learnt to play the guitar.

I made lots of friends and was elected to be the young person's representative on the Board of Centacare. For the first time in my life, I felt responsible and important. I had achieved something.

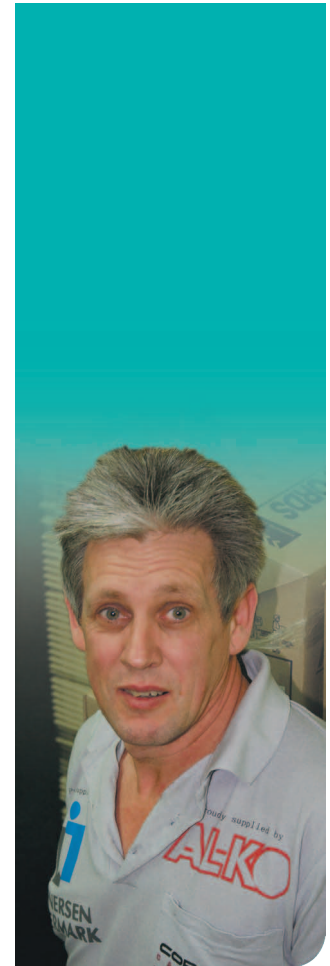
Today Charles works in Forrestfield for Coromal Caravans. For the past 8 months he has worked in production for the organisation and with the love of his job and a newfound stability in his life, he is once again getting back on his feet. Charles is grateful to Centacare for shaping his independence, self-sufficiency and general wellbeing. In his own words;

★ Centacare gave these things to me.

Charles is a strong individual, who, has had the resilience and motivation to work through adversity. Charles can be proud of his journey so far and look to the future with confidence.

It's extremely satisfying for Centacare to look at the influence it has had on Charles life.

Consequently, Centacare would like to congratulate Charles on all of his achievements.



“The target keeps moving and the really good people move with the target.”

Graham T. Henry

As a former employee and Chair of the Management Committee, Doug has a broad history of involvement with Centacare. In 1979, he was employed by Centacare in those early days to assist with the set up of services and general operation of the organisation.

Known as Centrecare CYSS, his time was occupied by the establishment of the Youthcare Accommodation Service between 1980 - 1984.

- ★ I would have said that my role in those early days of Centrecare Employment Services was as a part of the development of the organisation, but as I reflect on this it does not seem entirely accurate.

It seems that the 'employment' field is kept in a constant state of development through changing market forces and changing government policy.

The role I played involved supporting the organisation at the time - whether it was a time of development or not.

Doug brought a level of understanding to the organisation. With experience in working with youth and community groups and an employment background with the Department of Community Development, his approach was both relevant and balanced. But, whatever the exact cause may be, there has been significant change over the years and Doug's experiences are testament to this.

- ★ It was a different organisation then, with a greater emphasis on supporting people to become 'job ready' which included a lot of personal support, hence the establishment of Youthcare. Later the emphasis was on training specific to job market requirements at the time, with ties to the business sector.

★ ***Centacare is doing what it does best - responding to peoples' need to find work.***

★ Today, Centacare is so different to those earlier times. It is far more corporate, with a total focus on getting people into jobs. This is happening in a job market, where for the second time in my life, the market has been positive.

There are plenty of jobs to fit workers into. It happened first in the late sixties and now the current market; both sparked by the mining boom.

Throughout the mid eighties, Doug worked for Centrecare Family Services. He fulfilled his duties as Chairman of the board, and although his employment with the organisation came to a close in 1987, he continued as a Board Member until 1992. Doug has a deep understanding of Centacare's vision and empathy for their mission, which has been an asset to the organisation, particularly in the founding years.

★ By joining with industry, training bodies and the community they have been able to achieve their goals.

Centacare acknowledge the effect Doug's insight and are grateful for his influence and perseverance. In honour of his contribution, Centacare wish to congratulate Doug on his involvement as one of the founding members of the organisation.



“Ability is what you’re capable of doing. Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it.”

Lou Hotlz

In 1978, aged 19, Keith was unemployed and drifting fairly aimlessly, until a letter arrived in the mail. This letter changed the path of his life. It informed Keith of the services of Centacare CYSS, and his inquiring mind took him away from his home in Coolbellup and into the city.

★ I thought a trip to the city would do me good - so off I went.

With no time to waste, Keith became involved in many of the services offered by Centacare at the time. He arrived daily, and as a self motivated learner was partaking in a complete educational makeover. Little was he to realise that the education and training Centacare delivered was fast becoming a valuable lifelong learning experience.

★ I felt really welcome as soon as I walked in and I started to attend every day.

★ I was involved in lots of activities and learnt woodwork, welding, leatherwork, Maths and English skills. I also learnt lots of life skills, which have helped me over the years.

However, irrespective of his educational achievements to date, Keith had to deal with a number of complex personal issues before he would experience the greater success of taking complete control of his life.

Though, with his growing potential, it wasn't long before Keith found himself considering employment opportunities.

★ My first job was down at Rob's Jetty, in the abattoir, where I was responsible for crushing the sheep's heads and getting the brains out and putting the tripe in a shute and flushing gullies. It wasn't a very pleasant job but I was proud of the fact that I was now working.

★ ***Centacare helped me with my personal issues. I also learned many new skills, which enabled me to retrain and get further employment.***

The work experience Keith gained in this position was enough to lead him on further. Centacare worked closely by Keith's side during this time, and it wasn't long before he was placed in a new job with Elders, working in Skins and Hides. Keith's realisation of his own strengths and ability allowed him the confidence to progress even further.

Still under pressure from inescapable personal issues, Keith found himself in and out of jobs over the next few years. However, through pure determination and acceptance of the help Centacare had to offer, Keith managed to strengthen his wellbeing. This allowed him to partake in further education and training, enabling him to become more open to employment opportunity.

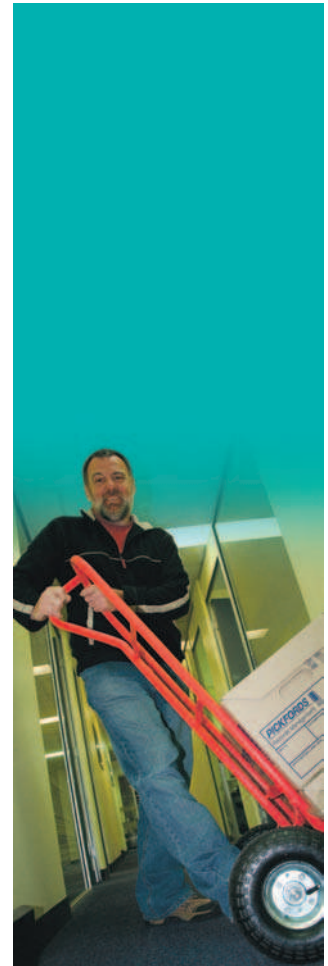
20 years later, Keith continues to work at the Health Department, where he has been since his last involvement with Centacare.

He has had two jobs with the department and is enjoying his position in General Maintenance. Keith believes strongly in self-improvement and values the independence of earning a living for himself.

★ I love what I am doing...through Centacare I met my wife and we have four lovely children. I own my own house and car and have a great job...life's pretty good.

Keith can be proud of the foundations he has built for himself and his ability to take himself into a bright future.

Centacare believes strongly in Keith's capacity to be a hardworking and self-motivated individual and congratulate him on all his efforts over the years.



*“Out of the chaos comes the chance to change
and to see the bigger picture”*

Brian Parker

As Chairman of the Board, Eric has had a considerable impact on the organisation since joining in 1982 as the TAFE representative on the Board. In July 1988, Eric became Chairman of the Board and has remained in this position since.

Eric has a passionate commitment to the community. It has been through his role on the board at Centacare Employment and Training that he has contributed so significantly in steering the agency through uncertain as well as very buoyant and successful times.

He has a wonderful sense of humour and he looks back with fond memories at Centacare's many achievements and finds joy in some of the more amusing situations associated with each new milestone.

★ The opening of Manners Training Restaurant in July 1993 was a momentous occasion.

★ We had both Archbishop Barry Hickey and The Governor, Sir Frances Burt, officiating. When the soup arrived, the trainee chef had made a pattern in the top with some cream. The Governor was so impressed that he requested our chef go to government house to teach his chef to make his soup the same way and hence, this trainee's career never looked back. Another night we were at the Subiaco Football Club for our 20th Anniversary celebrations.

I was making the closing address, when fortunately, Archbishop Robert Healy pointed out that I was not to close the celebrations yet, because dessert hadn't been served!

As the roller coaster ride continued within the labour market program area, Eric was charged with leading the agency, through the board,

★ *It's been a roller coaster ride, but over all it has been a very rewarding association.*

into the uncharted waters of competitive tendering. These were often uncertain times for Centacare Employment and Training, and adjustments had to be made to ensure that both high performance and financial viability were achieved in all areas of the agency.

★ I am the Chairman, but I have a board to keep things going, and the senior managers are the driving forces behind it. They always see the cup as half full. They are continually positive and after disappointments they continue to pick things up and start again.

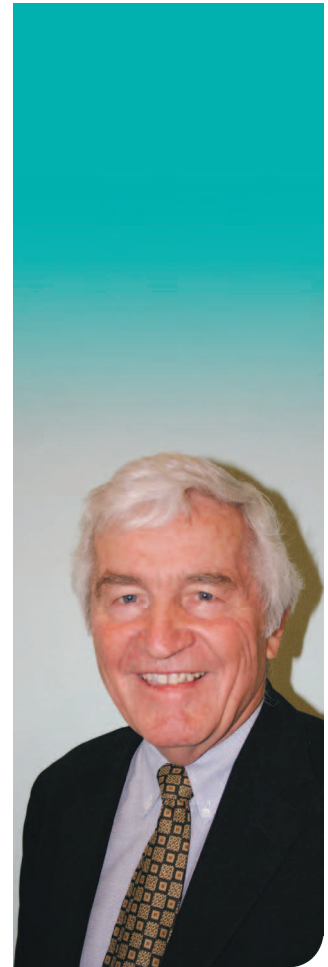
It's always a blow to loose a big contract, but they just seem to get on with it.

Today, Centacare Employment and Training is a thriving organisation delivering high quality employment, training and support services to many thousands of individuals each year.

★ It has been a very rewarding association with the organisation. Just being a part of it and getting the good news stories coming through is very uplifting - you are reassured that good things are really happening.

Eric's spirit is central to his success as a leader and a mentor. He has a wealth of knowledge and has contributed greatly over the years to the success of the organisation.

Centacare thank Eric for sharing his experience and congratulate him on having the dedication to support the organisation through significant times of change.



“If you treat an individual as if he were what he ought to be and could be, he will be what he ought to be and what he could be.”
John Wolfgang Goethe

Having recently left Centacare, after 24 years with the Board, Bevan now focuses on his position with Fonterra Company, working in the Human Resources Employee Development Centre. Similarities between the two roles have made Bevan's opinions and advice extremely valuable for the organisation.

- ★ The philosophy is the same for me now as it has been with Centacare - it's about developing people. Centacare do it as part of their mission, and we do here to achieve employee development, assisting participation in the workplace, which in turn assists us to maximise our opportunity to produce products renowned for their quality and value. The sustainability of the company relies on our employees and how they approach their jobs.

Bevan's association with Centacare goes back to 1980, when he was first involved with Centacare CYSS.

His professional background has always complemented the business scope of Centacare, particularly as it began to adopt a more corporate image.

- ★ As manager of Perth's Commonwealth Employment Service, I was involved with a number of agencies, including Centacare. Government funding arrangements required a nominated representative on the board to ensure conditions of the grant were met. I was so impressed with what Centacare had achieved that when I was no longer directly involved through my work, I joined as an elected member. My role has continued for all these years.

Bevan has always had a natural interest in people and their path of personal development. He believes that if an employer is supportive and understanding of this, then their employees will be loyal and productive. This has certainly been a message he has shared with Centacare.

★ ***You have to help people by elevating their capability, you change their life.***

★ If you can excite someone's curiosity for learning, with assistance, coaching & guidance, you can bring their strengths to the surface, to reach their potential. You have ignited their inspiration. If a person is informed and educated, about both the process and about the system, and is provided the support to excel, you have a motivated employee which in today's labour market, is a considerable advantage.

Currently, in his role as an Organisational Development Manager, Bevan can appreciate the challenges in trying to plan for a sustainable future. As a Member of the Board, he was able to support the decision making process, which proved vital for development of the organisation.

★ Centacare has always been in a position to work with people whose options are low. They have had to work through funding constraints, in a deregulated market, and in an environment of competitive tendering.

★ They have managed to comply with ever changing government targets and continue to stay aligned to their mission.

Management has an extremely challenging role; to be able to develop a long-term plan in this type of environment, it's almost impossible, and that makes it difficult to grow the organisation. But, Centacare still manages to bring it all together. Every person is an individual; each has their own strengths, and areas for further development. Centacare look at the person's needs and work with whatever resources they have.

Centacare are grateful for the contribution Bevan has made during his 24 years of service and congratulate him for making a difference. If the organisation continues to attract people of Bevan's credibility, then it can look forward to achieving similar levels of success in the future.



“ There’s an awful amount of satisfaction in making a difference”

Neville Roach

Summit Storage Products, a Bassendean based business, has recently been recognised by The 2006 Annual National Employment Services Awards for Excellence, for their commitment to employing people who have previously had difficulty finding work.

Mark Gallagher, the Operations Manager for the company, has lead the company through some challenging and rewarding times, which has contributed to their reputation as a leader in the industry.

- ★ We look at what their goals are and what they are capable of achieving in the future. Opportunities are available for everyone.

As part of their unique approach, Summit have developed a 3-Step induction and training program, to help employees reach their true potential in a safe and productive workplace.

This is supplemented with a 3 way communication process to help support the employee during the transition phase of commencing employment.

- ★ The first step involves the formal induction process. We take this opportunity to provide a full explanation of their task, the safety issues, and the importance we place on respect, communication, and training.

We make sure both of us are clear on these expectations. The second step involves training. We build their skills and experience by empowering our employees to train the new recruits.

In the 3rd step we review performance. Having clear goals and expectations helps our employees focus on results. Their confidence grows with their achievements.

★ *Everyone has a past – we don't dwell on that. For us it's all about now and what our employees deliver in the moment.*

- ★ With the help of Centacare we are able to offer a three way communication system which involves the new employee, Centacare and ourselves.

Summit is an Australian owned organisation, that uses local products and local employees. With their vision to be a world leader in the design, manufacture, and distribution of world class storage systems, they have earned the reputation as a dynamic and innovative company.

Their list of achievements goes beyond the products they produce, and extends to their investment in human wealth.

- ★ We rely on our people, to stay successful in a very competitive environment.

We know the importance of fostering employee enthusiasm, competence and a 'can do' attitude.

- ★ Our philosophy of respect, communication, and training is instilled in everything we do and represents our commitment to being an employer of choice.

Summit recognise the pivotal role that Centacare has played in supporting them to bring their vision to life.

- ★ At Summit we believe it is important to support the community that supports us. This is why we employ local staff through Centacare. It has been a rewarding experience; and a formula that is working brilliantly for everyone involved.

Centacare congratulate Summit storage for having the integrity to find strategies to empower their workers while maximising their productivity. The partnership has been rewarding and the community is fortunate to have companies like Summit Storage Products setting new standards in industry and employment.



“ The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them. ”

Albert Einstein

Since starting with Centacare in 1994, Ken Jennings has witnessed an amazing transformation of both his role and the development of the organisation.

★ We would win some contracts and lose others and the organisation would expand and contract accordingly. These were times of enormous change. But one thing that was never affected was Centacare's constant and absolute dedication and commitment to their mission – to service the disadvantaged. They haven't changed this in the last 30 years of operation, and I don't think it will change in the next 30.

Starting out as a Sessional Trainer in Hospitality working with long-term unemployed clients at Centacare, Ken quickly achieved outstanding results. This soon became characteristic of his work performance and after 6 months he

was promoted to Coordinator of Food and Beverage and Catering Services.

★ We worked with young unemployed clients and were runner up three times for the State and National Student Waiter competitions. Also, the development of Heaven Sent Catering supported the unemployed through training, and as a self-sufficient enterprise is was a valuable training resource, and still is.

Ken's networks with the hospitality industry have been instrumental in creating a responsive and progressive training department for Centacare. From his background in hospitality and training, Ken has been able to combine innovative thinking with practical solutions, which is characteristic of his approach to strategic planning, and attributes greatly towards his success.

★ *It has certainly been a roller coaster ride over the past 12 years, with the expansion and contraction of programmes and services that is a feature of our industry.*

The only 'constant' in this world of change has been Centacare's adherence to its core mission of service to the disadvantaged.

He has been instrumental in developing a range of unique services and programmes, which focus on developing the talent within each unemployed client. One of his first was the 'Celebrity Chefs' evenings. Utilising his extensive hospitality networks, Ken was able to attract leading Perth chefs to give up their valuable time for free to prepare an evening meal in Manners Training restaurant.

This initiative allowed disadvantaged people to work alongside Perth's top chefs for a day in preparation of the evening meal. This exposure was invaluable to job seekers, many going on to become chefs in their own right.

★ Now, as Business Development & Operations Manager, I'm looking at developing a streamlined service, where we have an integrated approach to service delivery across all our current programmes.

★ This way, we can address clients who have multiple barriers and help them overcome them more effectively.

Ken shows a commitment and loyalty to the organisation, which makes him a valuable role model. His ability to work creatively, in an environment that is constrained by government policy and open to social criticism, makes him a leader in his field. His persistence and ability to work in an increasingly competitive market place is admired and Centacare congratulate him on all his achievements.



“ The artist is nothing without the gift but the gift is nothing without work .”

Emile Zola

England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Norway and Malta are a significant number of countries to have on your list of travel destinations however, when they are related to your work practice and experience, the list seems even more impressive.

8 years ago, Stuart came to Centacare in need of some vocational support. Centacare provided Stuart with the answers he was looking for. He was enrolled in Centacare's Certificate in Commercial Cooking, and it wasn't long before he started as a mature age apprentice chef.

His first placement was at the Surf Club Restaurant in Fremantle, where he finished the first year of his apprenticeship. He then moved to the Mandurah Quay Resort and Conference Centre, a four star restaurant, where he worked as a 2nd and 3rd year apprentice.

At the beginning of February 2003, Stuart was employed at the Parmelia Hilton in Perth for the Globe Restaurant, where he completed his fourth year and then worked as a trade qualified Demi Chef. As his confidence grew with the diverse experience he was gathering, Stuart faced the prospect of travelling overseas to follow some larger personal goals and to broaden his horizons.

In April 2003, Stuart arrived in the United Kingdom and found a job as Chef de Partie at Michael Cain's, two Michelin Star restaurant, in the Duke of Clarence Hotel. Later that year he was awarded the position of Senior Chef de Partie at the Sheraton Grand Hotel and Spa in Edinburgh, Scotland. Stuart's persistence and hard work was paying off. His career was taking him all over the globe and recognition of his talent had come from a number of reputable establishments and sources.

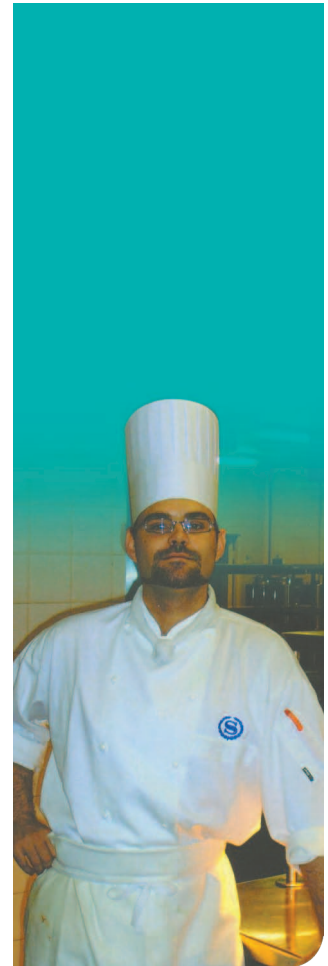
★ ***There is no prize for second and I don't like losing.***

★ I have received a number of awards over the years including,

- 2000 Bronze Medal - Salon Culinaire.
- 2002 Silver Medal - Salon Culinaire
- 2002 Quality Champion of the Month, September - Parmelia Hilton, Perth
- 2004 Star of the Month, May Sheraton, Edinburgh
- 2005 Star of the Month, February Sheraton, Edinburgh
- 2005 Gold Award - Best restaurant in Edinburgh. Edinburgh Restaurant Assoc.
- 2005 Nomination for Best Hotel Restaurant in Scotland. Edinburgh Restaurant Assoc.

As a runner up of the Employee of the Year Awards at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Edinburgh, Stuart maintains high expectations in managing the fine dining and banquet areas of the hotel. His competitive streak and desire to do well will ensure prize winning success in the future.

Centacare congratulate Stuart for his dedication and initiative in becoming a great chef. Centacare look forward to hearing of his achievements in the future.



“ The greatest good you can do for another is not to share your riches, but reveal to them their own .”

Disraeli

Ever had one of those moments when you're doing something so great, you stop and ask, "How did I get here?" Such was the case recently for Carmel, when she found herself in Sydney accepting the National award for Outstanding Contribution to Improving Literacy and Numeracy.

When looking back on her achievements, it becomes clear that there are a number of defining moments that have collectively contributed to her well-deserved accolades.

Such initiatives include, the publication of articles on adult literacy, her involvement with the Western Australian Adult Literacy Council (WAACAL), of which she is president, as well as numerous presentations at national adult literacy conferences and events, and her involvement with LLNP at Centacare.

★ LLNP gives adults the opportunity to return to education and brush up on their literacy and numeracy skills. This is sometimes referred to as 'second chance education', but in reality, it is the first real go some people have had to learn in an environment of mutual respect.

Carmel has been the coordinator of the LLNP programme for approximately 5 years. She oversees operations at 4 service areas including; Perth, Midland, Cannington and Gosnells and has been pivotal in reversing low literacy trends within the areas that the LLNP operates.

Carmel has had a substantial impact on improved outcomes in literacy and numeracy, which is reflected in Centacare's high participation rates for LLNP; coming in well above the national trend.

★ *While working with adults in literacy and numeracy is my passion, Centacare's trust and confidence in me has made my job a labour of love.*

- ★ All too often, the learning confidence they entered school with as a 4 or 5 year old is knocked out of them by the time they leave school, mostly from humiliation in the classroom. Generally, after such experiences, returning to adult education is a huge and courageous step.

Some 'new' Australians come to English language classes, and for them, it is the first time in their lives they have had the opportunity to go to 'school'. They need language to shop, catch trains and busses, deal with doctors, hospitals, children's schools, Centrelink, Job Network Providers, and Homes West ad infinitum.

They are also learning to read, write, add, and subtract for the first time in their lives. What courage!

Carmel is motivated by her ambition to make a difference to the lives of people who are facing barriers due to language, literacy and numeracy issues.

- ★ The level of reading, writing, numeracy and language skills becomes ever more demanding, not to mention managing technology. Assumptions are made about people's command of the English language and the complexity of literacy and numeracy skills needed to live our everyday lives as well as gain and maintain employment.

Carmel acknowledges Centacare for being a major catalyst in helping her to work towards her goals. Centacare congratulate Carmel on all her achievements and thank her for the enormous contribution she has made to the organisation. Her compassion and her understanding is highly commendable.



“Being effective is choosing the right things to do, being efficient is doing them well.”

Ian Penham

In 1991 Aussie I.T. was founded from an identified gap in the market. They went about providing a more customer focused service that dealt with the specific needs of small business.

Their innovative approach to business has carried through to today, proven by 15 very successful years of operation. In recent years, Centacare has noticed their unique attitudes in regard to recruitment and the management of staff. Innovative strategies, lead by Fintan the General Manager, has seen the development of a mutually beneficial business relationship between Aussie I.T. and Centacare.

- ★ We learn every time we employ someone. We learn a lot from the people. We communicate with the staff as much as possible to involve them.

Then they can see the value in what we are trying to achieve.

- ★ If we can't reach a decision that is advantageous to the business, then I have to take what I know about the situation and make it myself - but it's ideal if things can be amicable. We try to create a strong personal structure and keep things task orientated, it's beneficial to the business.

Fintan is appreciative of the competitive edge that Centacare has given them, and is the first to recognise that the organisation supports both the employer and employee.

- ★ I wouldn't have become aware of the opportunities that come with a traineeship if it wasn't for the help of Centacare. A friend recommended them to me and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend them to other employers. They do the preliminary work and help screen candidates, and we do the interview, but what they do helps our

★ ***We don't have preconceptions; I leave the emotion out of it. If they meet the requirements of the job description then we'll give anyone a go.***

decision process. We get quality candidates, which is something you can't be too sure of if you advertise vacancies elsewhere.

Centacare's relationship with Aussie I.T is unique, and their combined strategies are considered progressive in today's competitive employment market. Centacare work closely with Aussie I.T. to ensure the best scenario is achieved, for both the employee and for Aussie I.T.

★ The traineeship has not only helped our employees but it has also been beneficial for us. Our staff get structured training and are recognised for the learning they do. They get the training from Centacare, and we can help them learn by putting it into practice. The staff at Centacare are always very helpful and make themselves available. They act as a safety net for us.

★ The support and service is excellent. From an employer's perspective, it is well worth trying. It opened our eyes to the dual benefits of a traineeship, and as we look to growing the business in the near future, it is reassuring to know that Centacare is there for us too.

Under the guidance of Fintan, Centacare rate Aussie I.T as a leader in their field. Fintan's management style is empowering, encouraging his employers to achieve to their potential.

Centacare congratulate Fintan, and Aussie I.T, for having the openness and courage to investigate new initiatives in business, for the sake of their employees and for the benefit of the company.



David

15

*“ You don’t manage people. You manage things.
You lead people.”*

Grace Hopper

David set his career in motion when he commenced a course in Hospitality with Centacare. Certificate II in Food and Beverage Operation was the first of a number of successful career moves.

Having being directed to Centacare's James Street facility, he soon learnt the rigors of a fully operational kitchen and the complexities of customer service.

As part of his initial training requirements, David joined the wait staff at the Vines Resort and Country Club. His proven ability saw him continue with full-time employment. For the next 12 months, he worked as part of the team on the floor, before taking a management training opportunity with a fast food chain.

Seven years later, he returned to a position at the Vines Resort and Country Club, as Food and Beverage Supervisor.

This gave him the chance to put into practice some of the leadership skills he had acquired over the years.

★ I have a strong belief in combining team work and skills to create the best customer experience possible.

With a developing philosophy on best practice strategies for the Food and Beverage Industry, David was now able to share his thoughts with his team. His involvement with staff training provided him with the opportunity to offer guidance, with both a skills and a customer relationship focus. David valued the opportunity to have a positive influence on his team, in the same way that Centacare had done several years earlier. David understood the importance of quality training from his earlier days with Centacare and realised he was now in a position to offer a similar experience to his staff.

★ ***Centacare has taught me things
I can now pass onto others.***

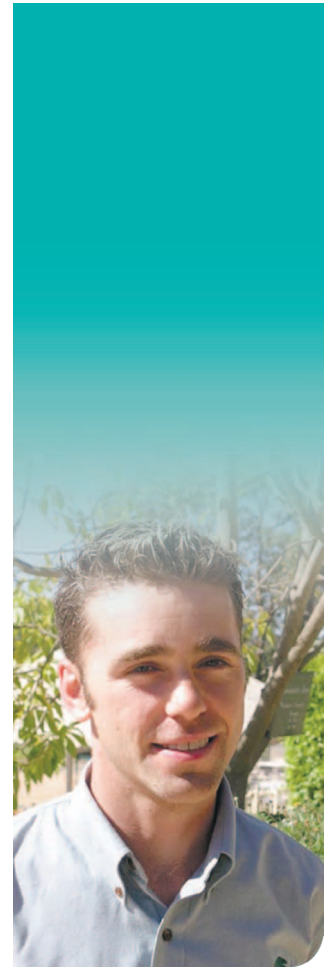
★ That's something I really remember from my training days with Centacare. It has helped me through the roles I have had. You can have all the technical skills, but if you listen to the customer, you are on the way to making their time with you enjoyable and just as they want. It's as much about teaching people to carry three plates as it is about talking to your customers and making sure they are comfortable and enjoying themselves.

That's something I learnt right from the start with Centacare and it's something I can now pass on.

David has built a respectable reputation for himself. He is regarded by his peers as a dedicated team member and is quite often complimented on the high standard of service he brings to the job.

His committed approach combined with his impressive skills is what makes him stand out.

Centacare congratulate David on his many accomplishments and wish him every success in the future.



“A truly happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery on a detour”

Anon

You can never underestimate the power of making the perfect match between a client and an employer. The industry refers to it as reverse marketing; for Centacare it's a key part of the formula that ensures success for many clients. This has been especially true for Daniel.

- ★ They really helped me by placing my resume to the right people.

Having being on the road for sometime, Daniel found it difficult to return to work. He had been travelling around Australia, looking for various jobs, but the time had come for him to settle back and look for something permanent. He came to Centacare as a Job Network Member which was just the kick-start he needed.

- ★ I went all over the place, all around the country and then I got back here and got involved with Centacare.

Initially, Daniel participated in Job Search Training. He worked closely with consultants at Centacare to tailor his resume and perfect his interview techniques.

Daniel also refined his computer skills and worked tirelessly to ensure he was perceived as a competitive candidate for employment. There were also some more practical issues that had previously affected his chances of employment, which included punctuality and transportation. With a little help and the right information, Daniel's natural confidence was soon discovered. His understanding of the necessary changes, in relation to his approach to employment, became all the difference.

- ★ I was always here (at Centacare). I did lots of different things here and it all helped. They communicated with me and we did what had to be done.

★ *I've made myself more available
and I'm always on time.*

The understanding approach of Centacare meant that Daniel's qualities were presented to the right employer. The goal was to find Daniel long-term, permanent employment - Centacare understood that an immediate placement, in the first available position, would not necessarily be the right move. So, both Daniel and Centacare had to be sure that the employer, and the position, were a perfect match, and that Daniel had the continued support to guarantee his success.

★ I made the extra effort because I wanted to gain employment that I could actually do, which is what I have with my current employer at Decor Vent Products. It's a good job. I help them and get my work done. I'm not sure what the long-term prospects will be, but as long as there is the provision for an honest days work for actual pay, then I'm fine with it.

As a Storeperson at Décor Vent Products in Canningvale, Daniel couldn't be happier. He has the opportunity to become involved in various duties in the workplace and is eager to help out wherever his efforts are most needed.

A positive employment experience has understandably affected his general wellbeing, resulting in a well-balanced life-style overall.

Daniel has great enthusiasm for life and his presence in a room rarely goes unnoticed. He can be proud of his efforts, and Centacare wish to congratulate him on his achievements to date. Daniel's spirit for life and confidence is security enough that his future will be bright.



“A timber set for pillars should not be misused for chopsticks.”

Chinese Maxim

Twice in the last eleven years, Soheila has been back to Iran to visit family. She moved to Australia in the mid 1990's. With Persian as her native language and a background in the Middle East, Soheila recalls the constraints of having little English when first arriving. However, it was her experiences of racial stereotyping that proved a greater barrier.

★ I would read the paper on Saturdays to find jobs and then ring at nine in the morning on Monday. They would hear the accent and make assumptions about me. They would tell me 'sorry but the position has already been filled'. It was my accent. This happened often.

Initially it was Soheila's goal to sit for the TEE and attend University. However, rather than testing her competency of the subject, the exams were more a measure of her English skills.

★ I was a slow reader and writer. The exams had to be finished in a certain amount of time and I wasn't able to do this.

Consequently, Soheila worked in factories to support her family. This was a long way from her initial dreams of life in Australia, but she wasn't about to give up.

It wasn't until she was diagnosed with arthritis that Soheila was forced to make some life changing decisions. She visited Centrelink, who suggested she provide all necessary medical certification to allow her to collect a disability pension, however this was not a satisfactory solution for her.

★ All I needed was something less physical. I wanted to better my lifestyle and I knew I couldn't do this by staying at home. I had to get out and do something, for myself and my kids.

★ ***It doesn't matter just how unqualified or inexperienced you are – you can still make good things happen.***

★ I don't think I did a great deal – I think I just did the right thing for myself.

Soheila was referred to Centacare for assistance and here she volunteered her time to help out. She understood the importance of gaining work experience and was not prepared to leave without it.

Not long after this Centacare employed her to assist with administrative tasks and today she works full-time in Employment Services. She is very grateful for the opportunity Centacare has provided and her vibrancy and enthusiasm towards work is testimony to this.

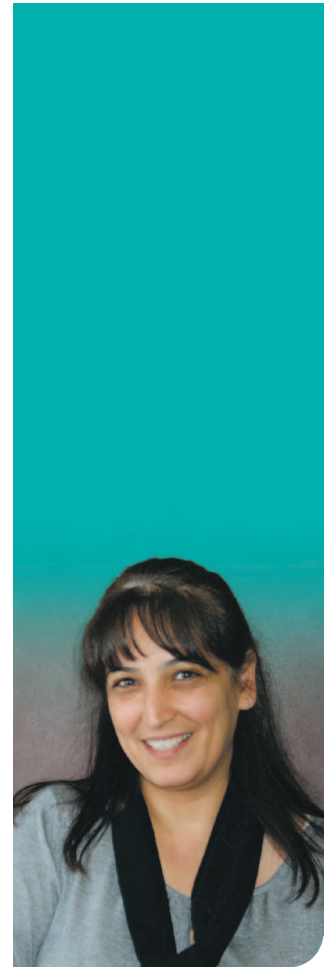
★ They took me on board despite everything. No one cared about my accent, background or lack of qualifications.

I am really appreciative of this for the rest of my life.

She acknowledges the difficulties in finding the confidence that was needed to move forward. Soheila credits her success to her positive attitude, enquiring approach and also the help of Centacare.

★ I realised I could only overcome the difficulties by being positive. Previously, I was suspicious of people. I didn't believe in them. Now I only surround myself with the positives and I am more conscious about what goes on around me. Sometimes I see they think I ask too much, but never mind, you have to ask till you find your way. I'm still asking.

Soheila has made such a contribution to the organisation, both through the daily work she performs, and by sharing her story. Centacare is grateful for her efforts and congratulate her on her courage and the example she has set for others.



“Ability is of little account without opportunity.”
Napoleon Bonaparte

Jared has been no exception to the pitfalls of substance abuse. The difference is, he made it out. With the help of Centacare, specifically the Personal Support Program, Jared can be credited as a successful individual, who currently works in the construction Industry, as a Bricklayer for Sheldon Homes.

★ I came into Centacare one day needing work. I spoke to a consultant who rang Martin Sheldon. He gave me the start. Julie (Centacare Consultant) drove me straight out there and I started work that day. I'm still working happily with Martin.

The road to success for Jared though, wasn't always this simple. When first introduced to Centacare, Jared had some significant barriers to deal with. He had been absent from the work force for approximately 220 weeks, and was particularly tentative.

On a more practical level, Jared was without transport and his communication skills needed improving. Centacare worked across all areas to help improve his wellbeing, realising that without a strong foundation, further assistance with employment would be ineffective.

Initially, Jared was involved with PSP, which prepared him for work. The real benefits came when he could be linked into other programmes offered by Centacare, which fast tracked his path to employment. In these early stages, Jared was more concerned with working on his personal issues rather than the financial gain of employment. It is this type of thinking, which characterises his unique spirit and illustrates the strength of his determination.

★ I have made many changes. Mostly from living a bad life, to now having a great lifestyle. I don't have to resort to crime; instead I work for an honest living. I changed to stay alive.

★ *Change is the greatest thing I have done.*

Centacare's Employment Services realised the importance of Jarred's placement with a supportive employer and with follow up support and guidance through the Post Placement Programme, Jarred has experienced significant changes in both his self-esteem and life style.

★ Working every day is just the best thing I can do to stay out of trouble and only good can come of it.

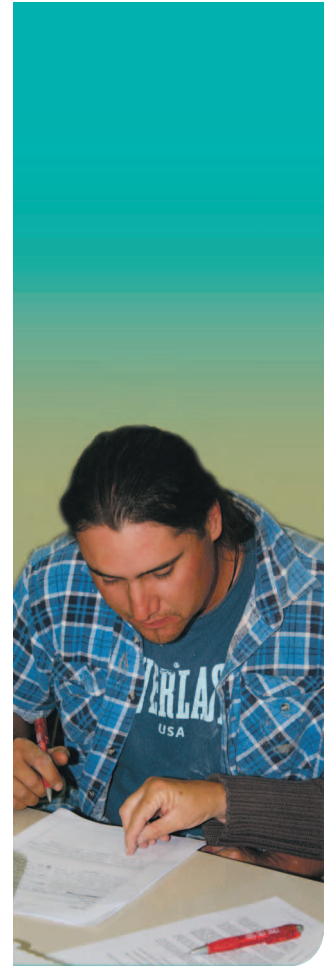
His employer is pleased with his work ethic and watching his confidence rise, as a side effect of gaining employment, is reward enough for Centacare. Jarred can now explore a whole new experience of life, which comes with fulltime employment and its related income.

★ I am still working hard which gives me self pride and keeps me healthy. I have even been to Melbourne on holidays.

★ All of which I would not have if Centacare didn't help me out. But also, my Boss is such a great bloke; we will probably be mates for a long time.

Jarred has been a great success story in the eyes of Centacare and when a car was generously donated to the organisation, he was the obvious recipient. Jarred is a self-motivated individual who has become a role model to others.

Centacare is pleased to share Jarred's story and wish him every success in the future.



“ If opportunity doesn’t knock, build it a door ”

Milton Berle

In educational circles it is common advice to try and find something you love doing and then go on to study in that field. However, this type of advice often finds graduates without the workplace relevant skills or essential experience required for competitive employment.

This was exactly the place Lyn found herself in 2002. Having successfully graduated from Edith Cowan University with a Bachelor of Arts in Creative and Screen Writing, Lyn was struggling to break into the very competitive field of novel writing and without the necessary skills and relevant experience needed to enter other areas of the workforce, she became unable to support herself.

★ I came straight out of school and into Uni. It was a disadvantage because at the end of it had no relevant work experience.

★ The study ended up being very limiting.

Lyn's first tactic was successfully complete the Cambridge English Language Teaching for Adults course in 2003, after being attracted by the perceived shortage of ESL teachers and the number of vacancies for such positions.

However, she soon realised that formal education was alone not enough. Links to workplace relevant issues in Australia were not fully addressed and she was faced with having to move overseas to teach. With little money to make such a move Lyn was forced to rethink her approach.

Following Centrelink's referral to Centacare, Lyn entered Job Search Training for 3 months and completed a business course at TAFE. After this she commenced several weeks temporary work at our Midland Office.

★ *I came to Centacare with little work experience and they were kind enough to forward me for a position at their Midland site.*

During this time Lyn worked as an Administration Assistant and Receptionist. Her willingness to accept further challenges gave her experience in areas such as Post Placement Support, Participation Reporting, Rapid Connect and also the Reconnect Systems.

★ I was focused on having a wage and on collecting the skills and experience that were necessary.

I knew I had to get this under my belt to make myself more employable for the future.

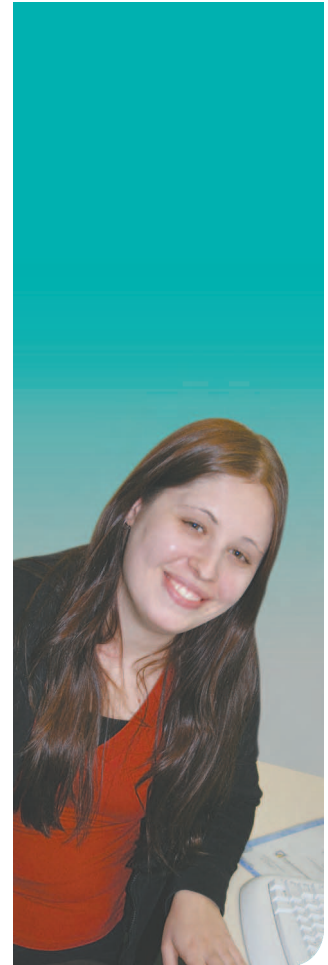
Her initial impressions of the organisation were lasting. Lyn was employed full time by Centacare and was moved from the Perth office to a position as Administration Assistant at James Street before moving on to our Midland office.

Lyn has been working at Centacare for two and a half years now. She retains her dream of becoming a novelist or screenwriter and hopes to travel sometime in the future.

Lyn's attitude and work ethic has been an asset to the organisation. She is always enthusiastic, is a flexible worker who often volunteers for tasks not required of her and is valued member of the team.

★ I want to continue being independent. It makes me feel better having a sense of helping out

Centacare would like to thank Lyn for her effort, and extend our sincere congratulations.



“I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.”

Christopher Reeve

The secret to Coral's success – according to her – was the realisation that her disability could be used to her advantage.

- ★ I use it to start conversations with people in the workplace. I discuss occupational health and safety issues that are very important to me.

Coral has been with Centacare for nearly two years. Her role has changed during this time, but she is pleased with all the experience that has come of it.

Currently, she works as a Functions Assistant for Heaven Sent Catering, and couldn't be happier.

- ★ I have learned a lot about computers and client liaison. I was never a big fan of driving, but here I am driving a delivery van through the Perth CBD on a daily basis.

Life can change with the determination to succeed on your own terms and this is certainly true for Coral. In a tragedy that has become all too familiar in the workplace, she became the victim of an industrial accident, only a week before her 20th Birthday.

- ★ I chopped off my first and second fingers on my left hand. It left me spiralling into a deep depression that I didn't recover from until I was in my 30's. I didn't work much because I was in and out of hospital getting my hand reconstructed.

Coral juggled child rearing and managing her disability for some years, but when her husband turned violent things became really difficult.

- ★ I decided to become a single mother – a big job in its self. I didn't work until I was 39 and when I started looking it seemed I was unqualified to do anything but cleaning.

★ *You never quite know where life will take you if you are open to change.*

★ So I went and got my manual drivers license. It was quite an ordeal because I had always been afraid to drive, but I got it on the first go.

Three years later, Coral felt that she needed a job that was more rewarding. Coincidentally, she came across a notice in the community paper for Centacare.

★ It said, 'Are you over 45? Do you have kids and want to return to work? Do you have a disability? You may be eligible for a free course.' I thought 2 out of 3 'aint bad, maybe this is for me.

Coral approached Centacare and soon found her self at James Street completing a sixteen week course for a Certificate III in Business Administration. Practical components of the course required placement in a business for a short period.

She approached the manager at Manners Training Restaurant and was accepted for two weeks work experience; and from there has never looked back.

★ I worked my two weeks and the Manager asked if I could come back. I entered the job with an open mind and I am always using new information to learn and improve. I have worked all over Centacare - Manners Training Restaurant, as an Employment Consultant, and at Heaven Sent Catering. Learning from Valli has been great, she has vast experience, you can't help learning from her:

Coral's amazing spirit is appreciated for the positive impact it has on the organisation. Centacare congratulate Coral for having the courage and conviction to follow her goals and are honoured to have been a catalyst for some of her life-changing achievements.



“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity - an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

Sir Winston Churchill

Life can change with the determination to succeed on your own terms. This was certainly the case for Huda.

Huda is no stranger to affluence. She has spent time abroad living in Abu Dhabi, where her husband worked as an engineer for many years. She is a mother of four and has a tertiary degree as a Statistician.

★ We met along time ago back home, but once we were married I moved to Abu Dhabi too. We had our first two sons there. I didn't need to work; you can have what ever you want in a place like that. But this wasn't the message I wanted my kids to grow up with.

They decided to move to Australia as a family. This was along way from their original home in Iraq and very different to the lifestyle they had become accustomed to in Abu Dhabi.

Regardless of the challenges, Huda always knew that it was the right decision.

★ We have family all over the world, so it wasn't such an unusual thing. The people in Abu Dhabi couldn't understand why we would give up our life there - it wasn't about the money for us though. When I arrived in Australia it was very hard. My language was poor and we had just had our twin girls here. Life was tough and at times I thought it was the end of the world, but you just have to give it some time.

Huda came to Centacare with a number of qualifications and a wide range of experience. However it was of little use in Australia, and she found herself having to start all over again.

★ I have qualifications from home and have even worked for the United Nations for 3 years, but it was different once I got here.

★ *It depends on what is inside you and what it is that you really want to do..*

- ★ I needed skills that were more relevant. I enrolled in a few different courses and wanted something with a customer service focus. I wanted to work for my own independence. I didn't have to go to work, because my husband has a great job, but I love to be independent. I wanted something just for me that would build my confidence.

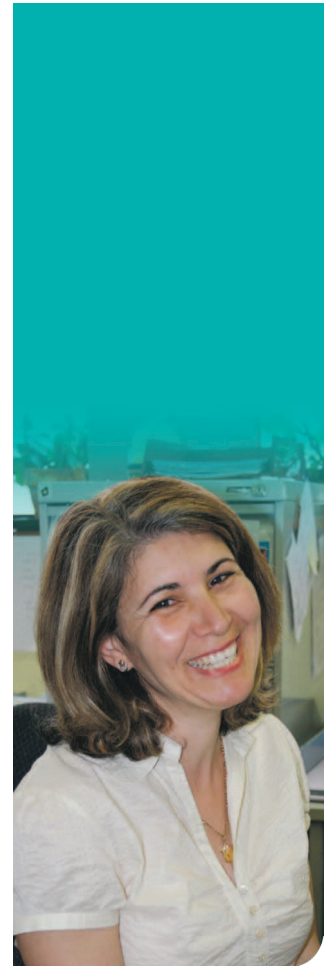
Centacare was able to help Huda with some training and support that encouraged her onto finding employment.

- ★ The first job I was looking at was with Centrelink and I was considering it until a job came up with LLNP at Centacare. I met Robyn and had an interview and that was all it took. I work part time, it is very flexible which is just what I need.

It's good for the kids and everything is going very well.

- ★ The kids now have an understanding about what's really important. It's not just about having things but building a life for yourself. This has all been about the message I want to give to my kids. They know that they can do what ever they want in Australia, even if they don't get there the first time, there are always plenty of other ways to do it – you just have to want to.

Centacare congratulate Huda for having the conviction to stand by her beliefs. She followed her heart and as a result has provided a strong and powerful message, not only to her own children, but to everyone who is touched by her story.



Brian

22

“Keep your eyes on the sun and you will not see the shadows”

Australian Aboriginal Proverb

Referred to Centacare as a Job Network member, Brian recalls his scepticism following his experience with Centrelink. He was glad to find that Centacare had a different approach; they were unique from the other employment services he had previously experienced.

★ The staff at Centacare never stopped trying to get me employment. They helped me in all sorts of ways and made me realise it's good to have a job.

Brian felt that one of the greatest barriers to employment was his experience of being stereotyped. He acknowledges that it wasn't until he became involved with Centacare, was he willing to make his own changes. A lack of previous experience in the workforce meant his concept of the true benefits of work was shaded but soon he began to understand that besides financial gain there was so much more.

★ I didn't want to change and I had never worked much. I didn't work enough to get the 'working bug'. They treated me just like everyone else. They gave me ultimatums and the chance to make decisions, but they were always there to help.

Regardless of the daily obstacles he faces, Brian is highly motivated by the influence he has on his son. He is extremely conscious of the effect of his decisions.

★ My son now wants to be a brickie too; he looks at my boots and plays with my trowel when I get home.

He says 'Dad, I want to be a brickie just like you'. I feel better where I am in life now and it's work that makes a difference.

Sheldon Homes have been supportive of Brian and his individual needs as an employee.

★ *A job changes everything.*

They value the contribution he makes to the company and are flexible and understanding when Brian needs the extra support.

★ My dog got locked in the pound and when I went to get her out they told me I was lucky she was still there. Then I found out it was going to cost me a couple-a-hundred bucks to bring her home. So I went to the boss and asked him for an advance. He gave me the money and now I can go and get my dog back.

It's such a great thing that I could never have done before. I've been working back, without being asked. I just want the boss to realise I really appreciate it because he never had to give me the money.

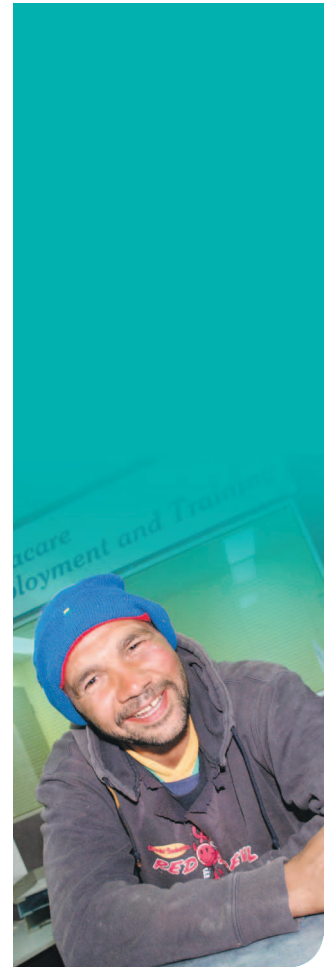
The success of employment has had multiple benefits for Brian and his family.

His self-esteem and confidence has developed alongside his growing sense of independence. Brian's life has changed positively and his high spirited personality is infectious.

★ I'm doing it because it makes me feel good about myself. I pass on a good work ethic to my son and I don't think I could go without the independence from having a job now. Work has made me invincible.

A job changes everything - the way you look at other people and yourself. For me it gives a sense of direction. Nothing is not worth it now!

Centacare is honoured to have been able to help Brian and congratulate him on his journey. Brian sets a great example for others and should be proud that his story is testimony to how the struggle can be won.



*“ Though no-one can go back and make a brand new start,
anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending ”*

Anon

Life can change with the courage to step out of your comfort zone. With a family to support, Maria had been working part-time at a medical facility. With a little extra help from Centrelink she was managing to pay the bills.

However, Maria could also see room for improvement so she investigated the idea of upgrading her qualifications and a visit to Centrelink soon found her at Centacare.

★ Because I was only working part-time I was looking for more hours. I thought I could do some more training in the medical field to help. I wasn't really looking for a new job, but once I got down there, to Centacare, it wasn't too much longer before they offered me one.

Centacare recognised Maria's ability instantly. Her professional approach and enthusiasm made a good first impression.

She was immediately assessed as an ideal candidate for a position as Receptionist at Centacare in Midland, and after a successful interview, she became Centacare's newest recruit.

★ I took it because the hours were a lot better than the old job. It worked out much better for my family commitments. It's not that I didn't like the other job, this one just worked out better.

Maria's positive approach to change has created more opportunity for her. She finds her new role more closely suited to her personality and the work more interesting.

★ I can see now that it's better here - I do more. It's a much better environment. It's like a family thing. You get to know all the clients and have a greater understanding. It's more involved and you have to know all the workings of the organisation.

★ *It's been an eye-opener. I have a lot to learn and things are constantly changing.*

★ I get involved with all the parts of the organisation and get to know everyone. It's all about helping people. I love people. Just being there to help them the best I can is enough for me.

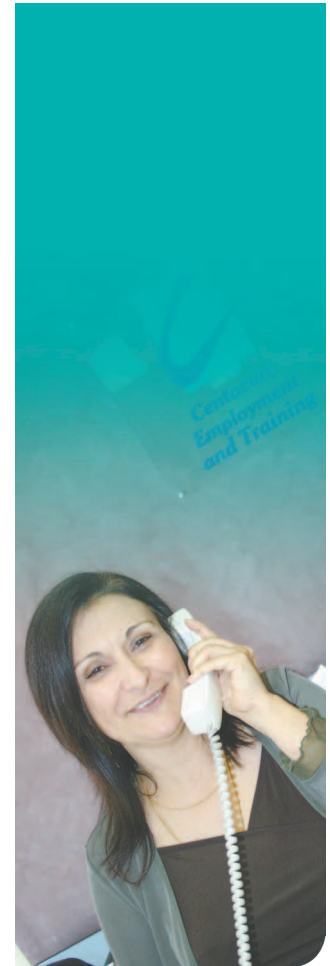
It's a great atmosphere here.

Aside the financial gain, Maria is appreciative of the flexibility that comes with her role. She is now better able to manage her family life and happy to have the security of a full-time job. She has also gained some personal rewards and is appreciative of the opportunity Centacare has given her.

★ It's very rewarding. The contact and the feedback you get from the people is what makes it. You just have to see the smiles on their faces. I'm a warm and welcoming person, but this job has given me more confidence.

★ It's very comforting and I couldn't be happier. I have learnt so much and things are constantly moving and changing. It keeps me interested, with no chance of ever becoming bored.

Centacare congratulate Maria for all her hard work and effort. She is a valuable employee and an integral part of the Midland team. Her dedication and enthusiasm, supported by her strong work ethic, will lead her into a successful future.



“A goal is a dream with a deadline.”

Napoleon Hill

Things are looking pretty good for Drew. On top of the fact that he is completing an apprenticeship in Carpentry and Joinery, he is settled in a happy relationship and pulls up to work each day in a blistering new Holden ute. But life hasn't always been so great.

Drew recalls how he found himself in a fair bit of trouble when he was younger. And more recently couldn't find a job that he liked and wanted to stick with. His background from these earlier days seemed to continue to follow him and Drew was faced with the difficult task of making a new start for himself.

★ I tried lots of things but I wasn't happy and I couldn't work out why.

Centacare saw great potential in Drew and worked with him closely to adapt and refine the skills he would need to make a successful move into employment.

Drew came to Centacare with the right attitude, he was eager to work and open to possibility. Consequently, it wasn't long before he was matched with an employer and negotiations were made for him to begin an apprenticeship.

★ One of the consultants hooked me up with an apprenticeship that I love. I take pride in my work. Now, I will one day own my own business within a few years and be my own boss. Centacare helped me to turn my life around and I am eternally grateful. They had the answers that nobody else knew.

Not only does Drew acknowledge Centacare, he also credits his own efforts and work ethic as a contributing factor to his success.

He is a highly self-motivated individual and has an emotional maturity, which allows him to value the benefits of not only employment, but more significantly, a career.

★ *My career has helped so many things fall into place.*

Interestingly, Drew's attitude is closely linked to his background and previous life experience, which in the past has often been a barrier to finding employment.

- ★ I work flat-out, sometimes too hard, to be the best carpenter I can be. That way I will never be out of work. I figured out that a major reason why I was having trouble sorting out my life before was due to a lack of balance in my life. Now I have that balance.

It would be wrong to assume that the last nine months of Drew's apprenticeship has been a smooth and predictable journey. Alongside the demanding task of learning a new trade, both in theory and practice, he was also exposed to the dynamic nature of business.

Then unforeseeable changes sparked a transformation in Drew's role with his first employer and resulted in him now working

with his previous supervisor as part of a new enterprise. Drew's personable character and flexible approach has been rewarded with an offer to work in partnership with his new boss some time in the near future.

- ★ One day I will put the tools down and slow down on flat-out work. Then I will focus on running my own business and my next project will be getting my business ticket and start developing.

Centacare has every reason to believe that Drew will be a leader in his field and is honoured to have been a part of his journey.

Drew's confidence is inspiring and his creative thinking and open mind will one day support him through the challenging goals he has set for himself.



*“Ability is of little account without opportunity.”
Napoleon Bonaparte*

Perth is a long way from home for Marina. Having started her career as a Language and Literacy teacher in her home country of Croatia, she found that without relevant experience, finding work in Australia would be difficult.

★ I lived in Sydney when I first came to Australia. I worked in customer service, in the call-centre and places like that to start. I was there for about 10 years before I moved to Perth. I came here to care for my Aunty and have been here 4 years now. It's been hard to get work. I had been for more than 20 interviews and I was finding that my lack of local experience was becoming a problem.

Marina was referred to Centacare as a Job Seeker. She had been unemployed for 3 years and was looking for work that would build on the skills she already had.

★ Centacare helped me with a traineeship. I was then referred to Carmel for an interview because there was a job opening with LLNP. I had one interview and got the job. I had the experience they were looking for, as I was experienced with Centrelink as a jobseeker and knew about that first hand, I had experience dealing with multicultural clients and my computer skills were good.

The traineeship was a good experience, I did everything well. They came from James Street every month to assess me and it all went well.

The supportive approach of Centacare, combined with the structured training and the linkage to an opening within LLNP proved to be a successful formula for Marina.

★ *I've got more skills now. I feel more confident and positive.*

★ I think I would be still unemployed if it wasn't for the traineeship and the help I got from Centacare. I finished in March this year and got my Certificate III in Business Administration. I have been working for 6 months in full time employment and enjoy being with LLNP. The Business Administration course gave me a broader range of skills.

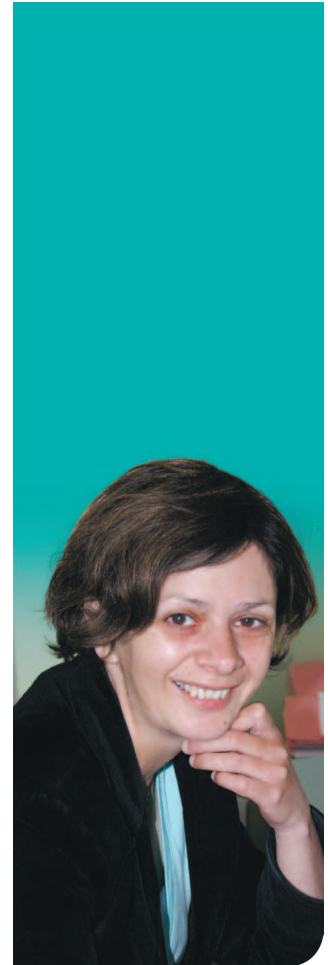
Marina has learnt many things from her employment experiences in Australia. She has formed valuable opinions and has a greater understanding of her personal journey.

★ You have to take opportunity whenever it presents itself to you. When the traineeship came up for me I wasn't so sure that it was the best thing. I was looking for work so I didn't think it was that excellent. But I had a try and it has all worked out.

★ I got a permanent position. Sometimes you have to just go for it; give things ago. You don't always know how it's going to turn out.

Marina is a valued staff member of the LLNP and Centacare are pleased to have her as part of the team.

Her positive attitude and commitment to the job are attributes she can be proud of and Centacare sincerely congratulate her for taking the opportunity.



“I find that the harder I work, the more luck I seem to have.”

Thomas Jefferson

Peter had been working voluntarily and had the occasion casual job, however what he was really after was the security of full time work.

He first came to Centacare as a Job Network Member with excellent computer skills and evidence of a high level of competency in administrative tasks and customer relations. His potential was evident immediately, and with a little support, there was never any doubt that Peter would find his way.

Centacare worked with Peter to alleviate some of the pressures associated with job searching and it wasn't long before a noticeable shift in his confidence became apparent.

★ We worked on refining my interview techniques and it really made a difference. It gave me the confidence to start looking for a professional position.

★ I became open to the idea that maybe I could work in a different field that I wouldn't have even attempted before.

Working closely with Centacare, Peter began investigating the possibility of finding work in the computer industry. Given that computers were his passion, it made sense, but would not have been possible without the groundwork that had been put in up until now.

A vacancy with Aussie I.T. was listed with Centacare a few days later, and things progressed quickly from here.

★ I went for the interview and got the job. Julie, my employment consultant, was just as excited as I was. It was a mad rush though; we had such a short time frame to get everything ready. I had to start work the next day and we had so much to do.

★ *They matched me up with a position I hadn't really thought of before - forcing me to think outside of the square.*

- ★ It was quite funny really - we got all the paperwork done, then my boots, and all my gear by quarter to 5 - just in time. Julie was so great.

Peter started with Aussie I.T. remanufacturing computer parts. It wasn't exactly what he had in mind, but given that he was working with like-minded people, it was worth a try to start. Peter's capabilities were soon discovered and he quickly progressed within the company.

- ★ My work has developed quite a bit since I commenced. I became the storeman and after I got a bit of in house training I was just about running the whole warehouse.

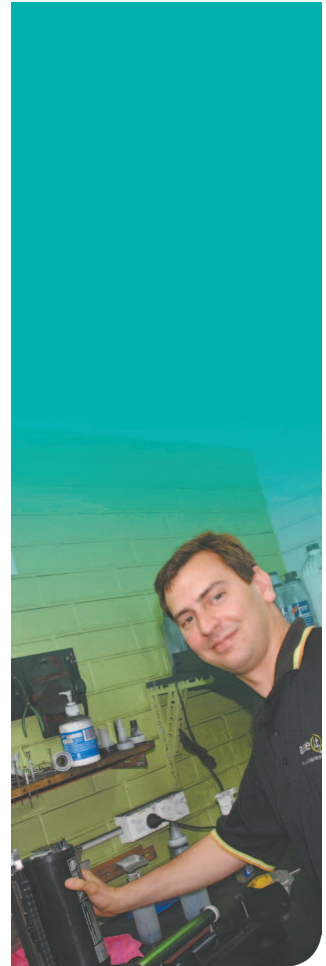
Now I have a more customer service focused role. You get more knowledge from starting in those other roles and it makes you a better employee.

- ★ Now that I'm in customer service I can address questions with real knowledge.

Peter approaches every day with an open mind and values the help he received to get there. He is grateful for the opportunity and considers his journey far from over.

- ★ This has all been so fantastic. It has taught me so much more than any other job. I now understand how a business operates. There is always a reason for something and consequences too, and now I have an idea why. Aussie I.T. seemed good right from the start, but it ended up being one of the best things I've ever done and I couldn't be happier here as a result.

Centacare is pleased to have been in a position to help Peter reach his goals and congratulate him on having the courage to do so.



“ While you’re breathing, there’s still opportunities.”
Graham Bristow

After Zoe finished studies in Community Services, she was eager to find employment. She had previous experience in office work however; she was actually after something more specific.

★ I wanted to work with people and try and make a difference in peoples lives on a day-to-day basis. I worked for Dr. George O’Neil at his naltrexone rehabilitation clinic.

I started volunteering and then got work. I only worked 2 days a week, it was fairly intense, but it taught me a lot about people. I used to talk to the families and support them and the clients, we would talk about what was going on.

Early 2006, Zoe was referred to Centacare as a Job Seeker. She was reluctant at first, but her opinion soon changed.

★ I was looking for work for a few weeks as a Job Network Member. I did a bit of Job Search Training too. An opening with Centacare came up and they offered me an interview, and I got the job.

I work as an Administration Assistant with Employment Services.

I thought it would be a good idea and they made it clear that if I started here then I could work my way up to something that matched my qualifications.

Her earlier experience with Dr O’Neil was valuable and influenced her decisions about what type of career she wanted to pursue. She also credits her time here, as having being instrumental in developing some of the skills that make her successful in her current role with Centacare.

★ *I never thought I'd find a job that I actually looked forward to going to each morning.*

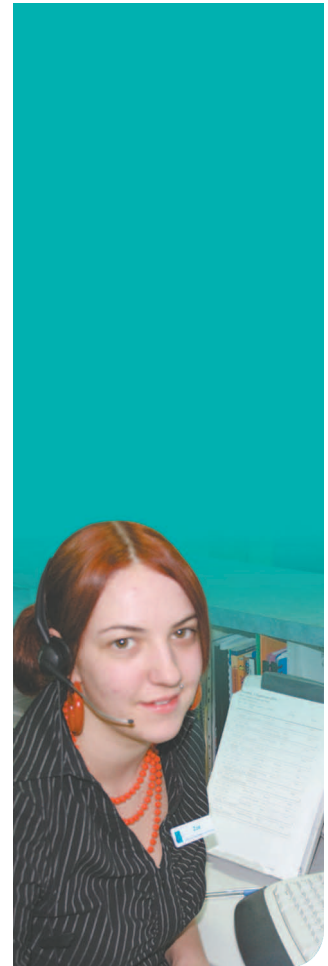
★ I learnt a great deal from working at the clinic. In comparison, the behaviours you have to deal with here are relatively minor.

When people come into Centacare and are agitated or aggressive I don't have a problem with dealing with it. It's not so hard here and people soon come around very quickly. It has given me insight into the types of problems that people live with everyday and people from all different walks of life. I understand that in a role like this you have the chance to really help people overcome their problems.

These days Zoe is open to opportunity. She sees the value in making herself available for various jobs and has built a solid reputation within the company. Zoe is a versatile and reliable worker who is a vital part of the team. Her attitude and work ethic are testimony to this.

★ I pay attention to what goes on in every department. I've taught myself a lot of the time. I help with random jobs and it teaches me to work in different departments and do different things. Everyone at Centacare is so supportive and welcoming. I've made friends here who I know I will be friends with for years to come.

Zoe is an asset to the organisation, and Centacare sincerely congratulate her for having the insight and the energy to work beyond her potential.



Michael

28

“ The divine guidance often comes when the horizon is the blackest.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Today, Michael works for Linfoot Cleaning Group. As a Carpark attendant, he is responsible for Night Security and deals with a range of customers, from high profile tenants to the general public. However, life hasn't always been this good. In previous years, dating back to his youth, Michael has dealt with his fair share of trouble, and just when things have started to look up, he would often find himself confronted with a new set of challenges.

★ I grew up as a street kid, but more recently in 2002, I suffered from a collapsed lung. It took me a year and a half to recover, both mentally and physically. After this I was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; you never know when your lung will go again. It's not been easy but I got on with it.

Michael has worked in community service type roles in the past.

He has volunteered and taken on permanent positions with organisations such as Outcare and Youth and Community Services. He also voluntarily cares for a person with Cerebral Palsy, as part of the Citizen Advocacy. In the mean time, Michael was referred to Centacare for more intensive assistance to secure full time employment. However, the timing was not ideal, as Michael found himself in the middle of a family crisis.

★ My partner's mother had just died and we were all very close. She was a great lady and I was having a hard time supporting my partner through this as well as dealing with my own grief.

I couldn't help but worry about my health conditions as well and while all this was going on Centrelink had conditioned me to find work.

★ ***I don't believe that being on the bottom of the ladder is nowhere because from there the only way is up.***

- ★ Thankfully they picked Centacare as my Job Network Provider. I had heard of them before and knew that a good Christian organisation would have compassion for me and my situation.

The multi-service approach of Centacare meant that Michael had opportunity to address his personal issues while simultaneously working on finding a job.

- ★ They made it easier to try and find work while dealing with the emotions and stress of the time. Their interpersonal skills were exceptional, they always listened and were an enormous support.

They gave me leeway - no other place would do this for me. They were so understanding - it is just the type of organisation they are.

- ★ This is why I have this job today. This is my job, I'm good to the customers and I love what I do. You can't let other people get in your way. You have to speak from your mind and get it across to the people who need to know.

It gets to the point where you can't let your personal choices of image, like tattoos and earrings, get in your way of commitment to the job - people eventually see past it. You have to be true to yourself.

The benefit of Michael's experience is that it has shaped his current attitude. He lives by his own values with confidence and has a social intelligence, which compliments the professional role he fulfils today. Centacare congratulate Michael for becoming a powerful role model and are grateful for having the opportunity to share his story.



Sophie

29

***“Attach yourself to your passion, but not to your pain.
Adversity is your best friend on the path to success.”***

Anon

There is no shortage of women in today's society, who are spending all their energy on supporting their family, often at their own expense. They go to extraordinary lengths to provide for their children and manage daily routines, frequently without the assist that many of us take for granted.

However, against adversity they rise to the occasion, becoming stronger individuals and important role models to their children. This has certainly being the case for Sophie.

★ I have had ongoing personal issues. I have to arrange my daughters schooling, care and other activities as well as dealing with my previous divorce settlement. It has been a very difficult stage in my life.

Sophie came to Centacare in need of assistance. She was helped by a number of Programmes offered by the organisation.

The holistic approach used to address Sophie's situation is what helped reveal her strengths.

★ I attended computer courses and participated in personal development. They arranged for me to attend training courses which all assisted me to gain a suitable job. It was soon after, in early 2006, that they told me to go for an interview with the coordinator of LLNP at Centacare. I wasn't really expecting anything but it has turned out to be an ongoing task. I am still working for Centacare - it's unbelievable how it has all turned out.

The work environment at LLNP has been supportive of Sophie. Her abilities have been fostered and as her confidence grows so does her performance.

★ I am employed at Centacare a team member. I have had a go and taken the opportunity.

★ *I have made the effort to improve myself.*

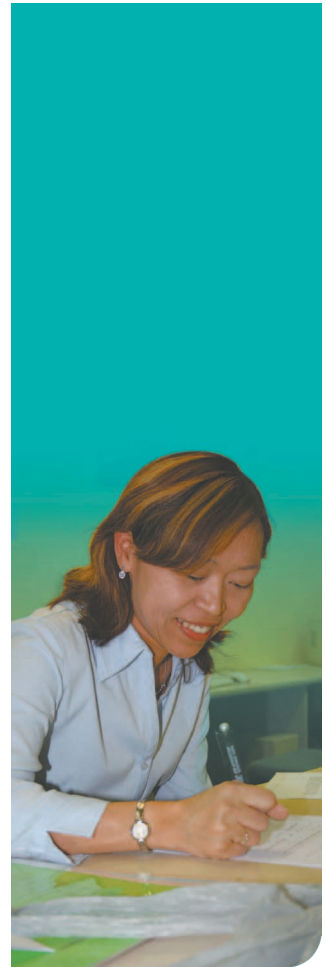
- ★ I can continue to follow what I believe in. Centacare has given me the chance to go further and it has turned out to have a positive outcome.

Sophie is among the first to acknowledge the valuable work of Centacare, and understands the head start it has given her. However, now that she is back on her feet, she has taken it upon herself to be accountable for her achievements from here.

- ★ I believe in myself now and Centacare has helped reinforce those values. I have learnt to reach for things that I wouldn't normally expect. It's amazing how things can be - you just have to keep on trying and not give up on what you have worked for. I'm going to keep working on what it is I have to do, though I am extremely grateful for having the opportunity to accomplish my goals.

- ★ I don't see this as the end, now that I have a job - this is just the beginning. I am building on the dream to take it towards whatever can achieve.

The future remains bright for Sophie and Centacare congratulate her on the hard work it has taken to get this far. She can be extremely proud of the example she sets for her daughter and the courage it has taken to share her story, for that is what can make all the difference.



*“ With what you get from others, you make a living for yourself.
What you give to others makes a life for yourself.”*

Hindu Maxim

Ever since Paul finished school, he has been career focused. However, it wasn't until he came across Centacare that he really found his way.

Paul left school and started work. He worked as a Storeman and later filled a position as Manager at a fast food restaurant. For some people, this would have been enough, but Paul felt that there were other things he needed to do.

★ I just wasn't everything that I wanted. I needed a degree.

For the next 3 years Paul studied Commerce at Curtin. He then decided to take some time out from study to travel.

★ I was planning to go on holidays and needed some money. The study allowance wasn't enough and I had to get off it if I was going to go away. So, I signed up for Job Network at Centacare in Midland.

An interesting turn of events saw Paul employed only a week later. His potential became immediately clear to the Employment Consultants at Centacare and they matched him to a position that was mutually beneficial.

★ I started my Job Search Training on the Monday and then I had an interview on the Wednesday. On Friday I was told I had a job to start as an Employment Consultant with Centacare in Perth.

I hadn't even finished my own Job Search Training and I was already employed to be doing the exact same thing as an employee of Centacare.

Paul didn't hesitate to take the opportunity and things started to progress relatively quickly. He completed some basic training and was soon employed the very organisation that helped prepare him for work.

★ *The opportunity presented itself and I saw I had the chance..*

★ I saw immediately that this was not just going to be a job, but potentially could be a great career move. I was only there, at uni, to get the career and get that start. But, I guess this all came along and Uni isn't so important now. Everything just kind of changed. I knew from other friends that were in the industry. I saw that it was a go opportunity so I jumped aboard.

Paul speaks fondly of his involvement with Centacare. He is grateful for being given the change and looks forward to his growing future with the organization.

★ The people are great. It's a great team to be a part of. Initially, coming in might seem like a bit of a hassle but you have to realise that they are all here to help you. There's another person helping you who has the experience to deal with this type of thing.

★ You have to give it a chance and take their opinions onboard. They saw the match and they gave me the chance. I'm thankful to them all.

Paul's efforts are commendable and his openness to change is refreshing. Centacare congratulate him on having the courage to open his mind to opportunity and thank him for the contribution he has made to the organisation.



“What’s the difference between exploring and being lost? The journey is the destination.”

Dan Eldon

What impression resonates in your mind when you think of a refugee?

For Centacare, the experiences of people like Marial are most inspirational.

Regardless of the difficulties Marial faced in East Africa before, surviving in Australia came with its own challenges. The language barrier meant that achieving his dreams would be a longer process than first expected.

★ When I first arrived in Perth I had to have a translator because I could barely speak a word of English. Understanding some basic words and being able to read some labels meant I was soon able to carry out daily tasks like shopping. However, I soon distinguished between the need to learn English to be able to perform daily tasks, and the need to learn English to allow me to get an education and a professional job.

Marial quickly realised that he wasn't just trying to get a handle on the English language, but he also had to master Australian slang.

★ For someone like me, learning a new language is a puzzle. It can be overwhelming and difficult to grasp quickly. Part of this is because of Australian colloquialism and slang. Trying to learn both normal English and local slang is challenging.

It can make it hard to fit into the community, as it can be difficult to communicate as effectively as I would like to. But I have been lucky to get help from many wonderful Australians who had the courage to help me.

The frustrations of grasping a new language confronted Marial on a daily basis. His determination to succeed, however, far outweighed the challenges he met.

★ *I never gave up - even when things were difficult and at times overwhelming.*

- ★ I was determined to fit in with my new community. I tried to never have a bad temper; but instead be happy for the help people gave me.

Marial values the assistance Centacare has offered, and is grateful for the help finding work.

- ★ It's the people behind the organisation who I now consider a part of my life. I know I will always have fond memories of these people who have supported me, no matter where I go or what I do in the future. Thanks to the help of Job Network and Centacare Consultants, I am currently working at a café in South Perth and have also worked at the Perth Convention Centre. Centacare helped place me in a good environment. They helped by placing me in jobs that gave me important skills for working in Australia and working with different people.

Marial's positive attitude and work ethic have contributed greatly to the success he has experienced. By not taking opportunity for granted, learning to accept help and working hard, he has achieved great things. Recently, he completed his TEE, and is the first in his family to receive a qualification at this level.

- ★ I came to Australia in 2001 as a refugee. I just want to have a better life in Australia. I am happy with what I am doing now – the study, having a job. You just have to do your thing, do the right things; work hard and study hard. I have always loved to do things for myself.

To overcome extreme hardship, and continue life with such vibrancy and spirit, is truly amazing. Centacare is delighted to have been of assistance to Marial and congratulate him for the strong moral example he sets for others.



“I have never let me schooling interfere with my education.”
Mark Twain

What does fifteen mean to you? To Clare it meant leaving school and finding a job - something that was more characteristic of the general youth population in the 1950's, than today. However, don't let this stereotype cause misunderstanding in Clare's situation.

Clare is a very reserved person, however she is unassumingly aware of social politics and is intellectually grounded by the real issues faced by young people today.

She believes the traditional school-based education system has failed her; by simply making the assumption that you should know what you want to do for the rest of your life by year ten, and that University is the only way to get there.

★ It's unreasonable; you could do 4 years at University to still not be sure of what you really want to do.

★ There has to be a better way, you just kind of get channelled in that direction. I know it's not for me.

By making such statements, Clare's confidence and capacity could be easily dismissed. Her potential, however, did not go unnoticed at Centacare Employment and Training.

★ I had never worked before, I wanted to earn some money and have some security and independence; I just went there and gave them my resume.

Referred to Centacare through the Education Department, who soon learnt of her leaving the school system, Clare was less than enthusiastic. When first coming to Centacare, she was hesitant in investing too much of her energy. She felt that it was just another irrelevant scheme being imposed on her.

★ *It was better that I had the security of a a job.*

Given that she had no other priorities at the time, her mind was open to opportunity and she soon found an interest in the New Apprenticeship Program. 16 weeks later, after having completed Certificate II in Hospitality, Clare was matched with an employer - Espresso Lane Café, who is continuing to support her through a traineeship.

- ★ It made me think a lot more about what it was I really wanted, instead of just thinking about what wasn't right for me. The more I thought about it, the more I wanted to work.

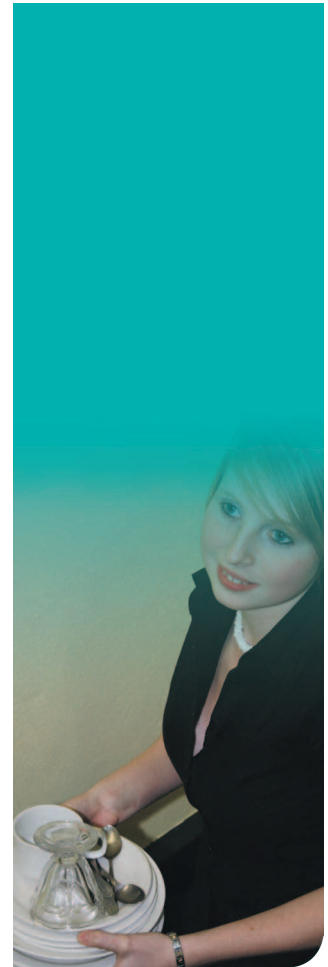
So, inevitably, Clare tends to prefer her new found ambitions, to still being fixed in the school system. She conducts her life with a sense of relevance and has a balanced perspective on the risks and rewards, and at the moment couldn't be happier with her choices.

She is appreciative of the contribution Centacare has made and also recognises the influence they have had on her ability to make sound decisions.

- ★ They're so good at Centacare. They are really nice, and that's what keeps you going back. It's the people that keep you there.

Centacare wish to congratulate Clare on having the emotional maturity to make some brave decisions.

By being honest about her true character and not letting social conformity control her, she has taken the responsibility upon herself, to be the leader of her own future.



“It’s your view of your own self-worth that gets you up and going again”

Brian Pink

Jason has lived through adversity, with his recent sickness acting as catalysts for many life-changing achievements.

- ★ I had bad neck pain. I was on sickness benefits for 2 years. I didn't really know how to go about getting back to work, and I didn't have the confidence. I wasn't really in a position to go out and find a job.

Meanwhile, in the back of his mind, Jason was quietly considering becoming chef. It wasn't until he came across Centacare that his dreams were looking like becoming a reality. After a quick introduction to the staff at James Street, Jason realised that this was just the start he had been hoping for.

- ★ I went down there to see if I had any chance of getting my Certificate II in Hospitality, and I just went for it. They gave me a chance and I didn't want to let anyone down.

- ★ The staff were very caring and wanted to help me. They make it possible for people of all ages and different races to gain skills and confidence.

Jason's enthusiasm to learn and commitment to self-improvement made him an exceptional student. His results were evidence of this and his achievements deserved.

Aside from the obvious rewards of gaining a qualification and been set up for employment, Jason found the added advantage of becoming an important role model for his children.

- ★ Just getting my chef's uniform on the first day was exciting enough. I was like a kid in a candy shop. I am following my dream and that's why I make the effort each day. Even my two boys are following me. They dream of one day becoming a chef or cook too.

★ *Change is the greatest thing that I have ever done.*

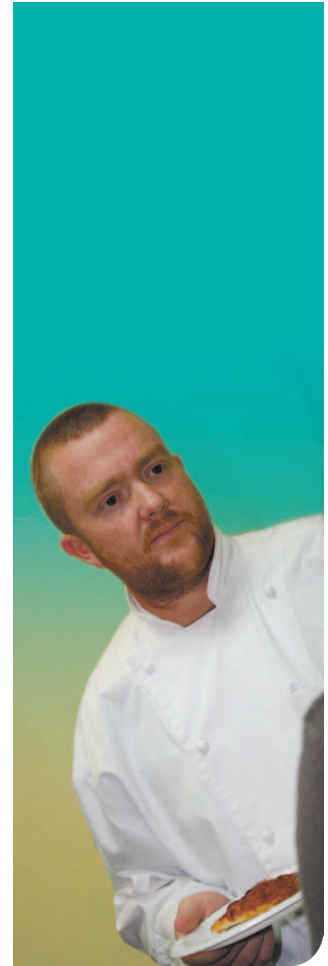
Understandably, Jason was thrilled to be given the opportunity to work at Jacaranda Café, for Houghton Valley Winery. The Swan Valley has a reputation in Western Australia for quality produce and fine food, making it a valuable source of experience for up and coming chefs.

★ I worked my first shift on Saturday. We were meant to have around 50 people in and 250 turned up.

There were only 3 of us in the kitchen and after service the Chef came up and told me I had a job.

As reward for all his hard work, Jason can now look forward to a prosperous future, working as a chef. He is gracious for the assistance he received from Centacare and cannot say enough good things about the people that helped him follow his dream.

Centacare congratulate Jason for having the courage to try something new. By having the initiative and taking the responsibility, Jason has been able to live the dream.



In Reflection

Centacare's formula for success can be summarised in four parts;

- Responsiveness to change.
- Resilience to obstacles.
- Flexibility in approach.
- Innovative strategic planning.


Collectively, this enables Centacare to offer security to its stakeholders in the continued delivery of an unbeatable service, however it is the attitude of the staff and clients that is key to the many outstanding achievements.

Attitude can mean the difference between success and failure, and having explored the many lives of a diverse range of people associated with the organisation, it seems to be true for both the individual and the organisation as a whole.

Centacare acknowledges that it is the people involved in the organisation, over the past 30 years, who have enabled success and that these people come from diverse backgrounds and represent a number of varied groups in the community including Centacare staff, board members, clients, representatives of the Catholic Church, volunteers, employers, government, funding bodies - both public and private - and other community agencies.

As the stories before us testify, Centacare's achievements would not have been possible without these people and as we chased the interview about what is happening in their lives, it soon became evident that the organisation has been dealing with some unique and outstanding individuals. Centacare is thankful and honoured to be associated with them.

For the clients in particular, it is common that behind the many vibrant personalities,



often lies a personal history mired in adversity. Their stories revealed that the education and training provided can be credited with going some way toward breaking the cycle of adversity and creating opportunities for a brighter future.

In relation to the staff and other affiliated individuals, their strength and commitment to fighting adversity, on behalf of all the clients, is remarkable and their effort has been wide felt.

This book not only portrays the stories of a few, who encapsulate the essence of the organisation, it also acts as a dedication to those who are not mentioned.

In doing so, Centacare wishes to congratulate everyone who has contributed to the organisation over the past 30 years.

The result? A journey, which has literally, changed the lives of thousands of people.

