

## empowerment through employment

WISE Mission Guiding and inspiring people to realise their potential to achieve fulfilling vocational goals

# welcome

*We are moving into a very special time at WISE as we welcome a number of like minded organisations into the WISE Employment fold: Work Force, Clean Force, Equity Intowork, Equity Labour Services and JobMatch.*



The year 2006 will be the year of the "merge" for WISE as we expand interstate and move towards becoming a national organisation.

In order for our organisations to remain competitive and provide quality services, we need to continue to grow. History has shown us that organisations that are not growing are actually shrinking in size. In recent years the number of Job Network providers has decreased from approximately 300 to 100 and it is predictable that the number of Disability Open Employment Services will follow the same pattern under the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

Growth is important not only for an organisation's long term survival but for our staff and job seekers. As a bigger organisation we can offer our staff greater career opportunities and greater program development opportunities under the now much larger organisation of WISE Employment. This growth also gives us greater credence and influence within the broader community and government.

Mergers with like-valued organisations who share a vision is a dynamic way of achieving growth. The possibilities for the future are infinite.

We look forward to sharing the journey with you as well. It is going to be an amazing ride.

John Bateup and  
Sue Ranking

# WISE launches the new Occupational Psychology Service

WISE Employment recently launched a new Occupational Psychology Service at the North Melbourne office on 23 November 2005. The Service, provided by Roslyn Martin and David Xuereb, both associate members of the Australian psychological society, includes two streams of counselling: the Counselling Service and the Vocational Counselling and Assessment Service



understanding of their career opportunities in today's workplace.

Roslyn Martin, believes that this new service will be very helpful to clients who have been out of the workforce for a long time or who have limited work experience.

"The service can explore in more detail what their work related interests and values are," she said.

"The service can also identify areas of strengths and possible barriers that may not have already been identified when looking for work."

Roslyn hopes the Service will assist clients to develop a better understanding of what jobs they may be suited to as well as providing feedback on areas that may need to be addressed prior to employment.

"This will hopefully provide the client and employment consultant with some realistic goals and increased job retention once the client is employed," she said



Do you know someone who finds everyday life a struggle? They are not alone...it is estimated that mental health problems and mental illness will affect more than 20% of the adult population in their lifetime (a statistic from 'Australia's mental health: an overview of the general population survey' 2000).

WISE Employment will now be offering a free service to its Victorian clients aimed at helping them to gain a better understanding and management of the difficulties faced when having to deal with mental health issues like anxiety and depression.

David Xuereb believes the Counselling Service can provide short-term interventions to job seekers to increase their ability to cope with particular issues such as anxiety or depression.

"The Service can assist to better cope with the demands of life and more specific situations such as preparing for job interviews and coping with job knock backs", he said.

The Vocational Counselling and Assessment Service is also a free service for WISE clients in Victoria. The Service can assist WISE clients to gain a better

## Mentor Profile

The Make It Work (MIW) Program continues to provide early intervention, specialist vocational and mentoring services to people on bail aged 25-40 who are at risk of a cycle of long-term unemployment.

Volunteer community mentors are a crucial part of the Make It Work Program. They can provide another perspective on life or simply a chance to socialise with another member of the community.

Judith Nicolson has been a committed volunteer worker for many years. With a counselling and coaching background, she thought that she would enjoy being a mentor and that it was something that she could schedule around her other commitments.

Judith has been mentoring a young woman for the last 12 months.

Over time they have developed an understanding and a relationship that

includes going out for coffee, visiting galleries, telephone calls and e-mails. "It's been really rewarding to see her open up," she said.

Judith hopes their relationship will provide her mentee with opportunities to develop other friendships in her life. Her mentee is extremely busy with a full time job and caring for her daughter so their time together is limited.

*"If you can give people something else in their lives then that is important," she said. "I believe in this Program and I think it works."*

Judith would encourage other people to consider mentoring and come along to a Make It Work information session.

*"Don't give up, even if it doesn't seem to work at first, you know you were there for them," she said. "They know that someone thought they were worth the effort."*

"You'll find your way and you will have all the support in the world from the Make It Work staff."

**For more information on becoming a MIW mentor, please contact Michael Dobric on 03 9372 1055.**



## Make it Work DVD

Make It Work (MIW) has released its promotional DVD which is aimed at potential clients and referrers. The DVD presents the key aspects of the Program and focusses on the mentoring and research schemes. Thank you to everyone who helped to create the production. If you would like a copy of the MIW DVD, please contact David Christian on 03 9372 1055.

## See the World Challenge 2006

On the 9th February 2006  
WISE Employment's Disability Employment Service is  
hosting The Fred Hollows "See the World" Challenge auction.

*The 'See the World' Challenge is an annual event designed to raise money and awareness for The Fred Hollows Foundation in Nepal, Vietnam and the Northern Territory.*

As part of the Challenge, WISE Employment donates a percentage of our funding for every job seeker successfully placed into employment. Last year WISE raised \$5,000 and half of this money was donated directly to the Foundation to be used to help restore sight to people who are needlessly blind and to improve the health of Indigenous Australians. The remainder secured WISE a place on 'See the Northern Territory Challenge' and was drawn as a prize on our auction night to thank the employers who had supported our candidates last year. This trip is a once in a lifetime chance to see first hand, how the Foundation and its local partners are working with disadvantaged people.

**Last year we successfully raised \$9,798 for The Fred Hollows Foundation. With continued support from our generous donors, this year's auction is shaping up to be bigger and better.**

## Contact WISE

If you would like to get in touch with a WISE office, ring us on our Freecall number: 1800 685 105 and our receptionist will put you in touch with the office nearest you.

### WISE Employment

Level 3, 200 Arden Street  
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# Equity Intowork

Equity Intowork merged with WISE Employment in December 2005. They were formed when Intowork in Launceston and Equity Personnel in Ulverstone merged Service with 20 employees.

The Disability Employment Service is a great match with WISE as it aims to provide employment training and support to people with a disability which may involve intellectual, psychiatric, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of such impairments. This can result in significant barriers to their gaining employment. Equity Intowork provides ongoing support services after the client has been placed in employment.

Equity Intowork also operates Equity Labour Service (ELS). The Service was developed to provide more employment opportunities for clients. ELS searches out and secures contracts with local organisations and provides labour. There are currently 70 people employed by ELS with an annual turnover of \$1.5 million with offices in Launceston, Ulverstone and soon in Devonport.

Regional Manager, Billie Hicks, is a firm believer in encouraging employers to embrace a more diverse workplace.

*"Why employ a person with a disability? Well for a start it makes good business sense diversifying your workforce in this manner," she said.*

*"After all, customers come from all walks of life, so your staff should reflect that diversity."*

## Work Force Placement Services

Work Force Placement Services, another Disability Open Employment Service, merged with WISE Employment in November 2005. The Service was established in Northcote, Victoria by the Apostolic Church of Australia to build a locally based organisation that would service some of the most marginalised members of the community. It is primarily an employment program for people with a psychiatric disability and also provides Personal Support Program.

Manager of Work Force, Rick Kane, believes that people with a psychiatric illness can feel trapped.

*"When you come face to face with somebody who has schizophrenia, you realise what an impact it has on their lives," he said.*

"You may feel that you can't even turn to your closest friends to talk about what you are going through."

"What we are trying to do is to help the person make stepping stones into employment."

As Work Force developed, they soon realised there was an opportunity to grow and to incorporate a labour hire company into the business. Clean Force came into being in 2001. It is a contracting and sub-contracting business that secures regular and occasional cleaning contracts from sources including existing cleaning companies, community-based organisations, commercial and domestic markets. Clean Force developed into a productive business in a very short time.

The staff at Work Force and Clean Force are committed to finding their clients the right job for them.

"I think our staff get something rewarding out of working in this way," Rick said.

"We want people to get a job - a job that is in line with what they are interested in. A job that can provide them with support in how they manage their illness and well-being in their life."

Rick feels that this is an exciting time that is full of potential for Work Force and Clean Force.

*"I see the merger with WISE as a potential to grow in a way that we couldn't as a single entity," he said.*

*"I see it as a way to mix and match resources."*

*"The best ideas don't always come from one person - they come from a group of people working together towards a common purpose."*

# ELS Equity Labour Services

Equity Labour Services, based in Ulverstone, Tasmania, employs job seekers with and without a disability. Manager, Harvey Gardner, believes the service provides an opportunity for many of their clients to reintegrate into society.

*"You see a difference in a lot of clients where they have been introverted and they have come out of their shell and they will start to talk to other people," he said. "They start mixing with other people and trying to get back into society."*

Its core function is cutting grass on a commercial basis including all highway verges between Launceston and Burnie. They also spray roadside weeds and undertake commercial, domestic and government cleaning contracts.

In the last 12-18 months ELS has also developed a labour hire business. Harvey enjoys working at ELS because of the opportunities it can provide its clients.

"The best part of working at ELS is seeing the smiles on their faces especially when you have helped them to find a job," he said. "I get pleasure out of coming into work and seeing them working and supporting themselves again."

Harvey hopes to see ELS continue to provide a quality service in the future.

"I want to see ELS get people jobs and keep them going...that's our aim...trying to get people with a disability jobs."

**For more information about Equity Labour Service, please contact the service on 03 6425 7846.**



Melbourne based, Clean Force Property Services, a contracting cleaning business is an initiative of Work Force and has been in operation since 2001. Clean Force is a contracting and sub-contracting business that secures regular and occasional cleaning contracts from sources including existing cleaning companies, community-based organisations, commercial and domestic markets.

Clean Force Manager, Jim Dinuccio, believes the success of Clean Force has been in the way the business has been structured and by focussing primarily on commercial cleaning contracts.

"The office environment is a more stable environment...our employees know they need to go to one place three times a week on an ongoing basis," he said. "They can build a routine and become more confident in that routine."

"If you change that routine two to three times a week, it's much harder for people to get comfortable, especially when they haven't been in work for such a long time."

David has been working at Clean Force for almost one year. He works as part of the team to clean offices, function rooms and auditoriums. He has learnt to use the steam cleaner, the buffer and other cleaning machinery. He is thrilled to be working again.

"I love the fact that I have a job, that someone took a chance on me and I was able to show

# JobMatch

JobMatch is a Hobart based Disability Open Employment Agency that has been operating since 1989. The Agency incorporates Deaf Link an employment service for people with hearing impairment. JobMatch merged with WISE Employment in December 2005.

Colleen Hooper, Manager of JobMatch, joined the Agency in 1996 as an Employment Coordinator and has seen the service grow from a team of four to a team of nine full time staff.

*"At JobMatch we have a number of novel ways to provide work experience to people with a disability including volunteering for event management at the Taste of Tasmania Festival," she said.*

The Taste of Tasmania is an annual event running from 28 December through to 3 January. Approximately 70 different food outlets are present to showcase the local produce of Tasmania. Over 200,000 people visit the event each year and it is one of Hobart's major tourist attractions. JobMatch won the tender to provide event assistants to help prepare for the event. Clients will help erect fencing, decorate the main hall and install the stall holder booths. During the event they will help each store holder by making sure they have adequate supplies, removing rubbish, assisting with parking and general maintenance.

Colleen sees the event as a good opportunity for their clients to gain some valuable work skills and to showcase their skills to potential employers.

*"Clients can gain valuable work experience like how to work in a team, customer service skills, and gaining an understanding of working with deadlines," she said.*

*"We are also hoping that they will gain a wide exposure to a large amount of employers who will see their potential and hopefully they may be offered ongoing work."*

"We are hoping that people will come to understand that people with a disability are able to work after all!" JobMatch will become an entity of WISE Employment but for the next 12 months will retain its name, eventually becoming WISE Employment.



them that I could do it," he said. "Because, before I knew about Clean Force, I tried everywhere to get a job but as soon as I told them I was ill they didn't want to know me."

David feels his life has changed for the better now that he is working.

"I'm a lot more confident now," he said. "I like what I'm doing, I'm doing it easier and there's a lot less pressure in my life."

Jim stresses the importance of the training that the employees receive.

"Bringing these life skills back into our employees' lives is a slow process," Jim said. "When they start they may spend a week with one of the supervisors training one on one and just slowly learning one skill at a time and eventually putting all those skills together."

Another employee, Rose, has been with Clean Force for three years. She appreciates the ongoing support she has received from the Clean Force team.

"I've had a couple of breakdowns and I've always been able to come back here," she said.

"I've got faith in being able to support myself...I've got a child...I can now support myself as a parent."

"I don't give up easily, but if there was no work prospect, no Clean Force...it would be quite difficult...the financial support makes a difference."

Jim stresses that although Clean Force is a supported employment service, it still has the same business objectives to provide its customers with a quality service. "We have a commitment to our customers and we put certain expectations on our employees," he said. "At the end of the day it's about treating our employees as real people." "The biggest thing is the social side of it...people getting to work alongside other people and giving back to their community."

Clean Force will become an entity of WISE Employment but retain its very successful name and brand.

**For more information on Clean Force services, please contact Clean Force on 03 9486 8517.**

our merger  
PARTNERS

