

The 2010 NAIDOC Week theme is 'Unsung Heroes – Closing the Gap by leading their way.' In celebration of this year's theme, we hear from two young Indigenous women, Mellissa Smith and Natalee Nagy who have recently found employment with the assistance of WISE Employment.

Mellissa Smith
Dunghutti Woman

Melbourne Museum

Mellissa Smith works at the Melbourne Museum and loves the fast pace of her new role in the IT Department. "I really enjoy being part of an efficient, helpful and friendly IT team," she says enthusiastically. Things were a bit different for Mellissa back in July 2009, when she was first referred to WISE Employment in Melton, Victoria. "I am not originally from Melbourne and moved here in June 2009 from a country town called Port Macquarie," she explains. "I moved to Melbourne because Port Macquarie didn't really have much to offer career-wise, especially in the IT industry, which I was hoping to enter."

To get her started with finding a job, her WISE consultant, Eloine Abude worked with Mellissa on her job applications and resume and organised some training - a Certificate III in Business Administration. "Eloine and I were totally committed to finding a suitable job for me," she explains. "She provided me with training to obtain interview skills and gave me feedback on my weak areas."

In November 2009, Mellissa secured a traineeship in IT, through 370 degrees and started working at Melbourne Museum. "370 degrees helped me by giving me the opportunity to begin my career within the IT industry and is providing excellent support when I have a million questions to ask," she says. "I find doing a traineeship a more helpful, practical, fun experience, as I think it shows what Information Technology is all about, rather than reading out of a textbook each night and forgetting half the stuff I've read."

Mellissa is six months into her traineeship and says that everyone in her team is really supportive. "Now I seem to be used to everything and I feel much more confident than I was at the beginning," she says. "Even getting used to using public transport has made me feel more confident and independent."



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Natalee Nagy
The Lighthouse Project

Natalee Nagy recently started working at the Lighthouse Project as an Administration Coordinator and is really excited about her new role. The Lighthouse Project is based in Rhodes, New South Wales and runs motivational and leadership programs. "My new job involves administrative tasks, like data entry and computer work," she explains. "I also worked at the Centrelink Jobs Expo, where we had a stall and I explained what we do and helped promote our programs to other young people."

Natalee finished school last year and was referred to WISE in Mt Druitt in February 2010. Her WISE Case Manager, Laura Bradburn, started working with Natalee to find jobs in the sports industry. In March, Natalee attended one of the Lighthouse Programs run at the WISE Mt Druitt office and says she is a changed person because of it. "I took part in a motivational program and it totally got me out of my comfort zone," she explains. "Before I did the program, I couldn't look people in the eye and I wouldn't shake people's hands, but now I am working full-time and dealing with people every day!"

When she finished the program in March, Natalee stayed in contact with some of the staff from Lighthouse. "A few weeks ago, I bumped into Paula from the Lighthouse Project and she offered me a two day work trial," she says. "After that she offered me the position of Administration Coordinator." The thing she is most looking forward to is running some of the boxing activities. She has a passion for sport and wants to help other young people achieve their goals. "This job is going to be a great way to learn administration skills," she says. "And at the same time, I will be running the fun activities, like boxing, that I'm passionate about."



Left to Right: Michael Barenji, WISE Employment Case Manager, Natalee Nagy and Paula Majstorovic, The Lighthouse Project

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WISE trax

WISE Employment aims to assist Indigenous job seekers to find and maintain employment. By working with other people in the community we are able to provide a better service to job seekers, through shared learning and experience.

WISE has been making tracks across the communities we work in, engaging with local Aboriginal people and supporting local projects and programs.

NAIDOC Week

WISE will be celebrating NAIDOC Week across our sites in New South Wales, Victoria, the Northern Territory and Tasmania. Find out more about the NAIDOC Week events in your local area by visiting the NAIDOC website at <http://www.naidoc.org.au/>.

Close the Gap Business Recognition Ceremony

On Friday 7 May 2010, the Northern Close the Gap in Indigenous Employment working group, held a Business Recognition Ceremony at the Kangan Institute's Indigenous Education Centre in Broadmeadows. Over 70 people attended the ceremony, which acknowledged local businesses who are dedicated to improving employment outcomes for Indigenous people in the Northern Region of Melbourne. The Traditional Welcome to Country was delivered by Colin Hunter, Wurundjeri Traditional Owner, City of Yarra Community Planner Aboriginal Partnerships and working group member.

Congratulations to Parks Victoria, High Rise Scaffolding, VicRoads, Data and Electrical Services Australia (DESA), Austin Health and North Yarra Community Health (NYCH), who were all recognised for their outstanding work in improving Indigenous employment outcomes. Each business received a personalised piece of artwork produced by art students from the Indigenous Education Centre. **Continued on page four.**



The Northern Close the Gap in Indigenous Employment working group



Kristine Olaris and Bo Barney from North Yarra Community Health



Nicole Findlay, WISE Community Liaison Officer and Linc Yow Yeh, Manager Indigenous Education Centre, Kangan Batman TAFE

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The working group was formed in mid-2008 in response to the Federal Government's Close the Gap campaign objective - to halve the gap in employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within a decade. WISE Community Liaison Officer, Nicole Findlay said that the ceremony was a resounding success. "It cemented the importance of Closing the Gap in Indigenous employment in Melbourne's North and provided extremely positive foundations for future businesses to build on."

As a proud supporter of the ceremony and the overall initiative, Reconciliation Australia said, "This type of local, cross sector, collaborative initiative that celebrates success is exactly what works to close the gap and realise reconciliation".

Are you looking for work?

Do you know someone in your community who is? WISE helps Indigenous job seekers find work you'll want to stick at.

Why is WISE different?

- We start by listening - to understand your needs
- We offer a flexible service to meet your needs
- We help you look for work you'll enjoy, not just any job
- We focus on what you're good at
- We're used to helping people with all sorts of barriers
- We're a not-for-profit organisation

Michael Anderson Wiradjeri Man and Aboriginal Artist



WISE would like to thank Michael Anderson for his artistic contribution to WISE Trax. Textures and images have been used from his artwork entitled 'Naamarkons'.

Visit one of our offices or call us on 1800 685 105.

New South Wales - Fairfield, Katoomba, Liverpool, Marrickville, Mt Druitt, Parramatta, Penrith and Windsor.

Victoria - Broadmeadows, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Frankston, Melton, Newport, Northcote, Pakenham, Prahran, Richmond, St Albans, Sunbury and Werribee.

Tasmania - Devonport, Hobart and Launceston.

Northern Territory - Darwin.

