



Thérèse Rein and Tina Zeleznik



2009 National Disability Awards

The 2009 National Disability Awards were administered by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). They are part of the International Day of People with Disability (held on December 3rd) and celebrate and acknowledge the achievements and contributions that people with disability make to the community, and recognise individuals within our community who have contributed to the disability sector. Fifteen inspiring Australians were nominated across five categories with three people in each category.

International Day of People with Disability Patron Thérèse Rein, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs the Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services the Hon Bill Shorten MP, Minister for Ageing the Hon Justine Elliot MP, and the Minister for Employment Participation Senator the Hon Mark Arbib presented awards to winners.

Award recipients in the categories were: Dudley Afford won the Disability Rights Young Leader Award; Michael Taggart won the Local Government Award; Melissa Noonan won the Social Inclusion Award; and Sue Gordon and Robert Strike as joint winners won the Minister's Lifelong Achievement Award.

DWA's own Chief Executive Officer, Tina Zeleznik won the Business Award on the night for her tireless efforts through DWA to advocate on behalf of people with disability.

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Wah Cheung, David Hilder, Adrian Rancan and James Rodley – employees at All Leisure

Compass group employs a dedicated group

Compass Group (Australia) is the leading provider of catering and support services operating in more than 650 locations, employing over 10,000 dedicated staff across eight different business sectors throughout Australia (see logo at bottom of page two for business sector names).

The parent company, Compass Group PLC is a market leader in providing food and a range of selected support services to customers in the workplace, in schools and colleges, in hospitals, at leisure or in remote environments. Compass Group PLC operates in around 55 countries with more than 388,000 employees.

Compass Group is committed to providing exceptional opportunities for employees to develop their careers and realise their full potential. They aim to attract, develop and retain great people who are proud to work for Compass Group. They believe everyone has the power to make a difference.

DWA entered into a partnership in December 2008 and were instantly excited with the potential vacancies that Compass could provide to people with disability. DWA has seen great success through the partnership as many people with disabilities have gained valuable employment.

Four people with disabilities have been highlighted as exceptional employees after coming through DWA to gain employment in All Leisure Hospitality (one of the eight business sectors under Compass Group) at the Sydney Football Stadium. These employees are Wah Cheung, James Rodley, Adrian Rancan, and David Hilder.

Wah Cheung began as a Noodle Chef during game days and has recently asked to come on board in a full time capacity as he feels his capability has improved. Diagnosed with lung cancer in 2005, Wah had a quarter of his lung removed, affecting his ability to work for the last four years. He felt he was ready to get back into the workforce and aligned himself with CRS Australia (Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) provider) which he no longer requires assistance from.

Maggie Jenkins, HR Coordinator at All Leisure Hospitality is incredibly pleased with Wah's performance on the job saying, "Wah is truly a success. He has bloomed into one of our star Wok Chefs. He is always happy and keen to work. His skills are getting better each shift."

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Ms Zeleznik expressed her gratitude at winning the Business award saying, "I am so grateful to receive this award for something that is truly a passion of mine. Helping people with disabilities gain employment is such a rewarding job. It would not have been possible for me to win this award without having such committed employers, motivated job seekers and Commonwealth Government support."

Before founding DWA, Ms Zeleznik operated her own deli where many of her customers were people with disabilities, many of whom were unemployed.

"I began to understand how important simply having a job was – something that most of us take for granted," Ms Zeleznik said.

"From that early experience and the joy I found in helping out, I decided to do more to help people with disabilities to find and retain employment. My aim was and is to help employers to see people's ability not their disability."

Among Ms Zeleznik's achievements, she is most proud of how many large employers have come on board with DWA and made a commitment to improving employment of people with disabilities.

"When I set out to work in the disability field, I could see that employers wanted to hire people with disabilities but due to the multitude of organisations out there, found disability recruitment confusing and didn't know where to go for help."

"I trialled the business model in South Australia for a few years before the Commonwealth Government put out a tender for funding to launch the program in every State and Territory."

"By developing DWA's excellent business model, we now have over 85 large organisations that have taken a proactive step in employing people with disability."

On behalf of the board at DWA, I would like to congratulate Tina on her well deserved award.

Andrew Rogers,
Chairman, Disability Works Australia

The Hon Jenny Macklin MP, Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; Tina Zeleznik, CEO Disability Works Australia; and Bill Shorten MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children Services



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Wah commented, "I am very happy working here because the work is light and suits my condition."

James Rodley has Cerebral Palsy and assists with food preparation in the retail food outlets on game days. Working in two of the busiest outlets in the Sydney Football Stadium, he has required only a minimal amount of support and training to become a full member of the team.

"James we found is better suited to large motor skill jobs so we have placed him in the same outlet each shift where he stocks up levels of cardboard food containers and moves around stock. The supervisor says James sometimes does the work of two people!" Maggie said.

James' Case Manager at Disability Employment Network (DEN) provider, Nova Caringbah commented, "It has been a great pleasure working alongside DWA and All Leisure Hospitality. Without their support and hard work this would not have been possible. I congratulate the staff in the outlets that have taken James under their wings, shown him the ropes and given him the chance to succeed. Without their commitment this would not have been possible."

Adrian Rancan has a mild learning disability and Cerebral Palsy and works as a Food and Beverage Attendant. All Leisure has moved him around a few times to find the best spot for him to work. He is currently working at the bar which allows him to do simple tasks over and over which seems to be working exceedingly well for Adrian.

Alex is Adrian's Case Manager at DEN provider Catholic Care Sutherland and said, "Adrian is certainly one of my most reliable and hardworking young men. With Cerebral Palsy being the primary disability for Adrian, DWA has thoroughly assessed Adrian resulting in placing him in appropriate employment with Compass Group who understand his needs."

"Although Adrian is young he has a very mature outlook on both his work and social life. Adrian

has certainly become an asset to the Compass Group thanks to the professional support of DWA. It is not just the initial support that DWA provides in regards to employment; it is the personal and empathetic support that is tailor made to people with disabilities."

David Hilder is employed as a Food and Beverage Attendant through All Leisure. He said, "I enjoy coming to work; I like the events and the people I work with." With a mild learning disability, David has also been moved around to different outlets to trial where he is best suited to. He is now working in the hotdog/pie van which he is enjoying. Maggie (HR Coordinator) believes that delegating him a simple repetitive job has worked for David.

To accommodate for the four employees, there were several modifications made to the recruitment and induction process such as:

- Smaller numbers at the induction with individual support;
- Education and awareness sessions provided to Managers and Supervisors;
- Extra breaks for new employees as required; and
- A buddy system was implemented for all new employees.

All Leisure is amazed at the reaction of other staff as Maggie has noted, "Our regular staff became more motivated to complete their tasks. We are finding staff who come through DWA come to work keen, happy and motivated which rubs off on the other staff."

"The beauty of this workplace is we have such a diversity of roles available that we can usually accommodate what skills people have to a role."

"It is a humbling experience. For the staff hired it gives them a sense of belonging to a team and this has a ripple effect in the other parts of their life. Having a job gives people purpose and it is a key part of belonging."



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A new supermarket discovering new ways to recruit staff

DWA has achieved great success in the new Coles Northbridge supermarket in Western Australia by assisting four people with disabilities into employment at the new store since opening the doors on the 24th September 2009.

The agreement DWA signed with Coles Group in 2004 has led to the employment of more than 2,000 people with disabilities within the Coles Group brands. Coles Group are leading the way for other employers and showing how easy it can be to create a more diverse workforce.

DWA staff in the Joondalup office first contacted the newly appointed store manager John Leeder, back in June 2009 to enquire into the new store and if he would like DWA's assistance in recruiting staff.

John has been very supportive of DWA and employing people with disability and requested DWA forward resumes of appropriate candidates for a variety of roles within the store. Four of the five candidates forwarded were interviewed and John offered all four positions in the store.

Barry Sommers is employed as a Self Service Checkout Assistant. The role allows him to work directly with people which is highly suited to Barry who thoroughly enjoys building relationships with the regular customers.

Suffering from anxiety, Barry had recently completed a Certificate II in Retail Operations, organised by his Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) provider CRS Australia in Northbridge.

Beginning in September, Barry has already proved his high skill level by winning a Customer Service Excellence Award at work. Barry commented saying, "I have felt welcomed and supported by all my team members. I enjoy working in a forward thinking environment that embraces the modern protocols on Occupational Health and Safety. Working at Coles Northbridge has really given me a chance to improve my life."

Adam, Barry's Line Manager at the store said, "Barry has shown a genuine passion for building relationships with customers. He is reliable and hardworking and is a fantastic advocate for the self service checkout option that he promotes to our customers."

Working alongside Barry as a Self Service Checkout Assistant is Emma Toft who is registered with Disability Employment Network (DEN) provider Deafinite. Emma's friendly personality gave her the upper hand for the role as she takes pleasure in the daily interaction she has with customers. Emma, who suffers from partial hearing loss recently moved to Australia from the United Kingdom and she has felt socially isolated after the move to a new country. Her new employment has changed this.

Emma's Case Manager at Deafinite said, "Emma thinks they are a really friendly bunch of people at Coles and she loves her job."



From left to right: John Leeder (Store Manager), Peter Nardi (Fresh Produce Service Assistant) and Marty Dzenis (Fresh Produce Manager)

The agreement DWA has with Coles Group signed in 2004 has led to the employment of more than 2,000 people with disabilities within the Coles Group brands.

The third person employed through DWA at the store is Peter Nardi, a client of DEN provider Options Employment who works as a Fresh Produce Service Assistant. Peter has epilepsy which is well controlled by medication.

Peter was determined to work in a role where he could interact with other people. As a Fresh Produce Assistant, Peter gets to interact with the customers on a daily basis.

Peter's Case Manager assisted his transition into Coles by educating his team on disability, in particular epilepsy. Peter has recently been made permanent-full time.

"Working at Coles has been good for me," said Peter. "Coles have come through on all their promises and I feel Coles provided me with the right level of training and support."

Marty, the Fresh Produce Manager observed, "Since Peter has been working at Coles he has shown excellent customer service skills. Peter is very task focused and uses his initiative well. Peter has also shown strong leadership skills in the way he works."



Barry Sommers, Self Service Checkout Assistant

Recruitment Made Easy

Employer or preferred supplier notifies DWA of forthcoming job opportunities.

DWA broadcasts vacancies to attract applicants with disabilities.

DWA receives applications and pre-screens applicants.

DWA provides the employer or preferred supplier with details of suitable applicants and advises about any potential supports or modifications required.

Employer or preferred supplier keeps DWA informed of changes or delays in the recruitment process.

Employer or preferred supplier decides which applicants to interview.

DWA contacts and arranges interviews with suitable applicants.

DWA notifies any applicants the employer has decided not to interview.

DWA contacts the employer or preferred supplier to discuss interview results and gain feedback to provide to the applicant.

DWA provides the employer with continued support for employees with a disability.



Daniel Lutz and Diana Bickford of Bickleigh Vale Farm

Traineeship success in SA's south

South Australia's traineeship program has proven a huge success with smaller businesses, which have benefited from employing highly skilled staff who have disabilities through traineeship positions.

DWA's Traineeship Program commenced in May 2009, with the purpose of assisting employers to take on trainees with disabilities by providing support, information, and a financial incentive.

Bickleigh Vale Farm, located in beautiful McLaren Vale, is an organic nursery and market garden. Owned and operated by business partners Diana Bickford and Jen Harvey, Bickleigh Vale Farm grows certified organic vegetable and herb seedlings for sale at local farmers markets. Although facilitated by a small team, Bickleigh Vale Farm is located on 18 acres of land and produces 20 to 30 kilograms of lettuce each week in addition to rare organic seedlings and ready to eat salad bowls.

Job seeker Daniel Lutz first came to Diana's attention at a Farmer's Market, where Daniel would frequently talk with stallholders, displaying his extensive knowledge of plants and horticulture.

Daniel is a motivated young man with Autism who already had a part time job in retail – working in the fruit and vegetable section of his local supermarket – but an opportunity to undertake a Horticulture traineeship was too good to refuse. Diana offered Daniel a part time Horticulture traineeship and DWA became involved to assist Daniel's success.

Diana is thrilled with the arrangement. "Daniel seems to be thriving – he so loves the work and the involvement... and we have the bonus of a willing, enthusiastic and capable member of the

team here. Daniel's a natural and a great help to the business."

In addition to providing the employer with a financial incentive for employing Daniel, DWA was able to assist in linking Daniel to Finding Workable Solutions, a local DEN provider who provide on and off the job support.

"It's a chance for Daniel to put his passion into practice," said Carol Bradley, Daniel's Employment Coordinator. "This employer embraces diversity in a real way and is setting an example for other employers in the region."

Once Daniel began his traineeship, it became evident that more help was needed to support the theory component of Daniel's traineeship. Once again, DWA was able to assist, coordinating the application for the Federal Government's Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Support (DAAWS) tutoring and mentoring assistance. This support is available to every eligible trainee with a disability, to support the trainee's learning.

Daniel's enthusiasm is contagious. His face lights up as he speaks about his position. "The traineeship is going really well and the hands-on work is particularly peaceful", Daniel said. "They are wonderful people to work with, with the same interest in gardening... even the dog!"

DWA is excited at the opportunities being presented via the traineeship program to enable people with disabilities to gain qualifications. South Australian State Government funds the incentives through Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.