

## The growth of Disability Works Australia

**With the support of the Australian Government, DWA continued to attract National Companies to join the ever expanding number of employers making a commitment to providing job opportunities for people with disabilities.**

DWA is proud of the Companies that have committed through signing Memorandums of Understanding or Letters of Intent. Without them, it would not be possible to provide the ongoing stream of employment opportunities to Disability Employment Network (DEN) and Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) members across Australia.

Since commencing in 2004, DWA has negotiated 86 agreements with large employers at a National level. Once again, our thanks go to all of these companies.

DWA can also be justifiably proud of its contribution toward the objective of increasing the number of people with disabilities in the Australian workforce. Established in 2004, the Australian Government's National Disability Recruitment Coordination Service, through DWA has now achieved the following outcomes on behalf of people with disabilities across Australia:

- Recruited 86 large national employers to commit to agreements under the coordination model.
- Identified 11,008 job opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Pre-screened 12,207 people with disabilities for available jobs.
- Placed and supported 4,190 people with disabilities into employment.
- Conducted 16,367 contacts with Disability Employment Network and Vocational Rehabilitation Service staff.

DWA's role as an advocate for people with disability and employers working with DWA to increase opportunities for people with disability, has grown significantly through the years. DWA looks forward to the challenges and excitement yet to be experienced as it continues to evolve into one of the leading providers of disability employment services in Australia.

**Andrew Rogers,**  
*Chairman, Disability Works Australia*



Michael Lay, Apprentice Baker

## Woolworths is providing job opportunities for people with disability on a national scale

Employing over 190,000 team members nationwide, Woolworths Limited is a leading employer in the retail sector providing many Australians with rewarding work opportunities ranging from Night Fill Service Assistants and Checkout Operators to Managerial positions. The diverse range of employment opportunities on offer suit the workplace needs of people with disabilities.

Woolworths Limited has employed over 285 people with disability through the partnership with DWA signed in 2007. DWA is proud to be assisting Woolworths Limited and looks forward to the continuing relationship and developing further opportunities for people with disabilities. DWA's

work with Woolworths boasts many success stories across Australia, highlighting Woolworths commitment to assisting people with disabilities. Here are but a few examples of what can be done when an employer recognises the benefits of hiring a person with a disability.

### New South Wales

Doing an apprenticeship where you make donuts and cookies as well as pack bread and other bakery items sounds like a fun and delicious job. Michael Lay enjoys this role every day at the Woolworths

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From left to right: Racha Karnib Human Resources Specialist; Chris Davis, Store Manager; Steve Di Piazza, Bakery Manager; Brendan Manning, Bakery Specialist; Michael Lay, Apprentice Baker; Belinda McGill, Michael's Employment Consultant

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store in Wetherill Park. He has successfully gained an apprenticeship course in the Bakery at the store through the assistance of DWA, having completed a Pre-Apprenticeship in Bakery at TAFE.

Michael has a hearing impairment and wears hearing aids in both ears. Michael communicates best through written text and uses email or text messages on his mobile (SMS) to stay in touch with people. DWA worked with Michael, Woolworths and Michael's DEN agency Northcott Jobmatch Parramatta to accommodate supports to assist Michael in fulfilling the duties required. These supports and modifications include:

- An interpreter was provided for induction, training and ongoing support (funded by the Australian Government);
- Michael has a buddy staff member in case of an evacuation;
- Woolworths contacts Michael via SMS or email;
- Northcott Jobmatch visit the store and assist with any modifications as they arise;
- There has been an increase in visual awareness in the work place such as signs/posters; and
- Communication cards are being made up for Michael to show customers when he is asked a question.

Racha Karnib (Woolworths Human Resource Specialist) has commented on this successful job match saying, *"We are very excited to be a part of such a program that provides support and assistance that will be most beneficial to all parties involved."*

***Woolworths is pleased to be a part of a program that gives young Australian's an opportunity to participate in a Bakery Apprenticeship. This is a valuable opportunity as it provides Michael with personal growth and career opportunities, whilst networking at the supermarket and TAFE level.***

*Michael is a very keen and enthusiastic employee and he is an asset to have in the Bakery Department and as a member of the entire team at the Wetherill Park store."*

Michael's employment consultant at Northcott Jobmatch said, *"I have been so impressed with Woolworth's ability to see beyond Michael's disability to his potential. An apprenticeship like this is a very valuable way for Michael to learn a trade and launch his career, be financially independent and engaged in a positive working community."*

Before commencing his apprenticeship, Michael had spent several years keeping busy by participating in work experience with various employers and completing TAFE courses. Now he is able to enjoy a steady income doing what he loves to do – Baking!

Michael has said *"I am enjoying my Bakery Apprenticeship role as I am learning lots of new skills. The staff are very supportive and friendly."*

In the coming weeks, Woolworths will be teaching Michael how to make the bread and rolls to further develop his baking skills.



*From left to right: Glenn Chetham, Tim Clouston and Malcolm Jones, (second in charge at Woolworths Kelvin Grove)*

## Queensland

Since acquiring an IGA two years ago, Woolworths at Kelvin Grove has shown a real commitment to hiring staff with disabilities and supporting them in the workplace. One such example is Tim Clouston who has been employed at the store from the beginning and he works alongside Glenn Chetham, another employee with a disability who has been there since July 2009.

Tim works in the Face Up team which is a role that ensures stock is brought to the front of the shelves and faces the correct way, for a neater appearance. Face Up Team's are a reasonably new and innovative position created by DWA. When creating the position, DWA took parts of duties from Nightfill / Dayfill staff to create a new role for people with disabilities.

Tim has a learning disability and enjoys working full time hours and being able to assist the customers. This is a great example of a sustainable job and is reflective of the support provided by staff and management in the store.

Glenn had previous experience as a Trainee Boilermaker and worked in the Carpentry industry, but moved from that sector due to the effects of his disability. Glenn has bi-polar disorder which commonly causes him to have low periods that potentially disrupt his work and personal life.

Glenn's preference was to acquire a role where he was under less pressure and after remaining unemployed for 12 months, he was referred to the Face Up position by DWA. Glenn completed a one week work experience placement and gained his

current position in Woolworths Kelvin Grove. Glenn commented on his job saying, *"I'm really enjoying working at Woolworths. I'm learning the role and getting more confident each day and the managers are great."*

Tim has not required any modifications to the workplace and has gained independence and confidence. Glenn's only change to his employment was being employed on a Supported Wage Scheme (SWS). SWS is available to people who are unable to work at full wage rates due to the effect of disability on their workplace productivity. It enables people with disability to access a reliable process of productivity-based wage assessments to determine fair pay for fair work. Eligible employees undergo an independent productivity assessment to measure their productivity in comparison to other workers undertaking a similar job and then they may be paid a pro-rata amount of the applicable award.

Malcolm Jones who is second in charge to Jenny Berwick at the store is pleased to be working with DWA saying, ***"This is a golden opportunity for people with disabilities to enter or stay employed in the workforce in the capacity that suits them and their abilities. Woolworths offers an excellent platform and supportive environment for them to excel and gain self esteem, confidence, security and a sense of achievement."***

DWA would like to acknowledge both store managers for their constant support to people with disabilities.



From left to right: Eric Rogers, Robert Lloyd, Angelika Bray (second in charge at Woolworths Port Augusta), Michael Hayhoe and Aaron Snelgrove

## South Australia

In the regional town of Port Augusta, Woolworths is one of the largest and well known businesses. After receiving a call from Craig Boxall (Store Manager at Woolworths Port Augusta), DWA met with him to discuss opportunities. It was decided to arrange a Face Up team consisting of a mixture of people hired under the Supported Wage Scheme and people with the ability to produce at Full Award Rates, with a view of progressing to the Nightfill team once their production was at an appropriate level.

DWA received referrals from DEN agencies and pre-screened many appropriate applicants. DWA then referred six potential applicants for the positions to the store for a two week work experience. Craig commented on this saying, *"The work experiences are the best thing for both parties, giving the Woolworths team and the clients a chance to see if they will fit long term."* These trials were a success, Craig declaring "The proof is in the pudding" as the store hired four of the six applicants who completed work experience.

The employees commenced work in May 2009 and are working 15-28 hours per week. Robert Lloyd, Eric Rogers, Michael Hayhoe and Aaron Snelgrove were the four successful employees. Three months on, Aaron, Michael and Eric have

progressed to Nightfill as planned. Employee Robert Lloyd was trialed with the Nightfill team but was recommended Face Up duties which he is more suited to. Now, as new applicants begin work experience in the Face Up team, Craig has noticed Robert leading the way for the new employees.

Robert has a Musculoskeletal disability causing limited lifting capacity. Robert has held steady employment over the years, mostly in the transport industry driving trucks, buses and taxis and hopes to remain at Woolworths for a long time as his confidence steadily grows in the role.

Nightfill team member Eric Rogers has a learning disability and depression. He fulfils his job requirements easily with the support of his DEN agency and is excited about working in the retail industry which he thoroughly enjoys.

Another Nightfill employee Michael Hayhoe has had years of valuable experience as a labourer in various industries as well as great customer service knowledge from the hospitality and retail industry. Michael provides a great skill set and is happy he feels a part of the team and is maintaining stable employment. He has depression which is well managed and has no effect on his work.

The third Nightfill Team Member, Aaron Snelgrove said it's good to 'make ends meet' for his young family now that he has regular employment. Craig added, "What a great outcome this is for Aaron (and the other employees) personally, as well as the positive effect it has on the regional community."

Aaron has a musculoskeletal condition as well as depression. He manages this well but it is his disability that has brought on the change of career. Aaron has a 'green thumb', previously completing a Certificate III in Horticulture and working in plant nurseries. As well as this he has worked in the vehicle and hospitality industries.

Craig (Store Manager) believes some of the employees with disabilities have quickly matched his best Nightfillers, stating, *"Their disabilities do not impact on their job and they are so determined and dedicated, considering their circumstances previous to employment."*

Craig expressed he was very well supported throughout the process by DWA and the DEN's. He explained, *"as these clients continue to exceed expectations, it opens the doors to more opportunities for Disability Works Australia to assist us to employ more people with a disability, both in this store and eventually others."*



## 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.



Leslie Howlett at Safeway Rosebud West

## Victoria

Safeway (Woolworths subsidiary) in Rosebud West identified the need for a Trolley Collector / Shelf Filler in the store and requested a person with a disability to fill the role. A Woolworths Human Resource Officer in Victoria was familiar with DWA's services and contacted the DWA Brunswick office to request assistance in filling the position.

Leslie Howlett was identified by DWA as a suitable candidate for the role, having had three years experience in Trolley Collection and Night Fill at a local independent supermarket. After leaving his previous job due to a move interstate, he was looking for a new position in his local area. DWA worked with Safeway to provide this opportunity for Leslie.

Leslie has a hearing impairment but this has had no effect on his work and the Store Manager Derek Johnston has stated, "I couldn't be happier with how Leslie is going and how everything has worked out." At the outset an interpreter was used to provide AUSLAN (Australian Sign Language) for the initial contact and induction and will be used in the future for any further training or performance appraisal's. Leslie has also been provided with a badge stating that he is "hearing impaired" for customer awareness.

Simone Blake (Assistant Store Manager) stated, "We wanted to help someone with a disability in our local community. **Employing somebody with a disability gives the whole team a lift and helps to positively change the store culture.** Leslie is always looking for more work when the trolleys are full and all other tasks are complete. Customers have commended the store on employing a person with a disability."

Safeway is looking at converting Leslie's position to part time as he is currently working 20 hours per week on a casual basis but often works extra hours as required. Leslie said, "I am comfortable working at this store. My fellow workers are always willing to help when needed." He has fitted into the team quickly and all colleagues are enjoying working with Leslie.

Marnie Todaro (Safeway Human Resource Officer) has praised both DWA and Leslie's DEN agency saying, "I have dealt with both DWA and Senswide Services on previous occasions and I am comfortable and confident in the services they provide."

Due to this success, the store is now in the process of hiring another job seeker with a disability. This store is a seasonal store in a holiday location so the need for employment is increased during the warmer months.