

POLYTECHNIC WEST — VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT CENTRE

Statement by Minister for Training and Workforce Development

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Minister for Training and Workforce Development) [2.24 pm]: I wish to share with the house the recent success of state training provider Polytechnic West in securing Aboriginal employment outcomes through training. Last week I had the pleasure to tour Polytechnic West's Thornlie campus, where I met some remarkable students studying at the vocational training and employment centre. The vocational training and education program is an initiative developed by Andrew Forrest's GenerationOne, which guarantees employment for participants who complete a work readiness program tailored to the needs of employers. Polytechnic West's vocational training and employment centre students who successfully completed their training were guaranteed employment in hospitality, security and cleaning traineeships with the Sodexo group, a large international facilities company servicing both onshore and offshore sites in difficult and challenging environments. I am proud to inform the house that the first group of students have completed their training and are continuing their career path with Sodexo. The seven graduates were recognised at a ceremony on Friday, 20 February, which acknowledged the work that they have done both on the job and in the classroom to complete the initial work readiness program with Polytechnic West followed by a certificate II in hospitality customised to the skill sets required in their particular job roles. Each participant was supported through the learning process by Polytechnic West's lecturers, language, literacy and numeracy specialists and staff from the Aboriginal services support team.

As I said earlier, during my visit to the Thornlie campus last week, I had the pleasure of meeting the current crop of vocational training and employment centre students and the teaching and support staff who work with them. I was moved by the personal stories of students that reflected the challenges they had overcome to secure a position in the program. The students' sense of pride and accomplishment was infectious, and the teaching and support staff in the Aboriginal services support team deserve to be commended for their dedication.

Following the success of this first group of vocational training and employment centre participants, Polytechnic West is working with other employers, such as Australia Post, Princess Margaret Hospital for Children and Linfox, to guide the next group of students through their training to provide the foundation skills required for successful employment.

I congratulate the graduating students and look forward to updating the house again as this program continues to thrive and provide employment outcomes for Aboriginal people.