

Maitland Connectivity Centre Breaks the Stereotype

In July we celebrated the inaugural Connectivity Centre Trainee of the Month Lisa Bevan, a 47 year old Mother of nine and Grandmother of 12 from Maitland.



LISA'S ENTHUSIASM AND COMMITMENT IS KNOWN TO EVERYONE AROUND HER, SO WHEN SHE WAS GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO A TRAINEESHIP THROUGH THE MAITLAND CONNECTIVITY CENTRE, SHE EMBRACED IT WHOLEHEARTEDLY.

"I said chuck me in at the deep end! I've been a mother all my life so to be given this opportunity to have a proper job, and to show my kids and get them to be proud of me, that's why I'm here," she said.

It's an attitude she has carried throughout her traineeship, a 12 month Certificate 2 in Construction Pathways supported by The Connectivity Centre, New Careers for Aboriginal People (NCAP), Hunter Valley Training Company (HVTTC) and Aboriginal Employment Strategy (AES).

The traineeship involves on-the-job training in a range of skills with subcontractors on the new Maitland Hospital project as well as offsite theory, including formwork subcontractor Oakdale with whom she's doing her current rotation.

"The minute I got accepted, I knew I had to put in 110 per cent to show that women can do what men do. I've been training, listening, doing everything they've asked me to do."

And Mark Gusse, Work Health and Safety Coordinator at Oakdale, couldn't be happier.

"Lisa is a great asset to the team. She has a great attitude, is always willing to learn and has come a long way in terms of the skills she has developed," he said.

"We are fully supportive of the opportunities the Connectivity Centre provides for local men and women like Lisa."

5 months in and Lisa is loving her job and looking forward to more challenges, both at work and at home.

"After my first week of working my daughter said to me, now that you've got a job can you build me a cubby house!"

"My experience is not over. There's still so much to learn. I want to take everything I've learned, and if I can just help one person to change their lives, I'll be happy."

"My main goal is I want to build my own home. I've got this far and I've just got to keep on kicking."

Lisa's success has inspired her friends and family too with her nephew and son-in-law both registering with the Connectivity Centre. She encourages anyone else considering becoming involved to just go for it.

"I couldn't praise everyone [at the Connectivity Centre] enough. It doesn't matter if you have a criminal record, where you've been in life, they don't judge you. Even if you can't read and write they're there to offer you support. You've just got to have a bit of faith in yourself."

"Get in and have a go. Don't be afraid. It can change your life, it's changed mine."