



2023 Annual Report

Hospitality Disability Network WA Inc.



Hospitality Disability Network WA Inc.

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Operational review from Disability Employment Manager

I am very proud of our team for enduring the changing landscape of post pandemic recovery in the hospitality and tourism industry, and adapting and responding to our members' needs as they arise.

We have worked hard to increase awareness of our brand within the community and within the hospitality and tourism industry through attending careers fairs and Tourism Council Events, creating strong links with the Australian Hotels Association, and promoting what we do with hospitality and tourism businesses in the Perth metro area and beyond.

Sustainable employment is a key focus for our team, and they work extremely hard to demonstrate our organisation's values and deliver on the promises to our members of finding the right candidate for their vacant roles.

To help extend the skills of our team, we all completed neurodiversity training in FY2023. I also completed accreditation as a Mental Health First Aider to gain further knowledge about how to support candidates should the need arise.

Growing our member base and supporting them in their pursuit of achieving a diverse workforce and a disability confident management team is what we strive to achieve.

This year we commenced a Department of Social Services (DSS) Information, Linkages and Capacity-building (ILC) project, which is giving us an opportunity to expand HDNWA's services to the greater WA region, with a particular focus on the Midwest and the Southwest regions. In June, we were thrilled to be awarded a new DSS grant for the Tourism Navigators Pilot which will see us work with small and medium sized hospitality and tourism businesses in the Perth metro area.

Seeing first-hand the positive impact this has for people placed in employment and their family by bringing a sense of meaning, purpose, belonging and independence to the lives of people with disability through open employment really highlights how life-changing the work we do is. Highlights include:

- Our team conducting 258 interviews of candidates with disability
- Successfully placing 51 candidates into roles with our employer members.

With a solid and committed team, we are excited to see what the possibilities and successes a larger geographical reach will have for our members and people with disability within those communities. I am very much looking forward to seeing what's in store for FY2024 with new challenges to overcome and new achievements to be celebrated.

Tracey Ward
Disability Employment Manager

Sustainable employment is a key focus for our team.

Board Chair's review

It has been another successful year for Hospitality Disability Network WA Inc. (HDNWA). FY2023 has been a challenging and sometimes difficult 12 months for our industry – a bounce back from the pandemic has seen a very tight labour market and significant increases to input costs putting pressure on small and large hospitality businesses. The team at HDNWA has been working hard to support the needs of our industry as well as supporting a large number of placements to play their role in helping look after and service the industry's valued customers.

of which are aimed at continuing the good work we have done so far. The grant funding will be directed toward a number of specific aims. Firstly, to continue to increase the number of successful placements both within the metropolitan Perth area and in regional areas of WA. Secondly, to provide better support to members to assist them in building confidence around disability employment with their teams and organisation. A further aim is the successful rollout and utilisation of the Build Ability program, aimed at supporting placements through positive mentorship from individuals and colleagues within their organisations. Finally, the team aims to act in a supportive way to both candidates and employers to ensure placements are successful and sustainable for both.

Led by Tracey Ward, the team have been using their hospitality expertise to work with members and Disability Employment Services providers to find great candidates suited to the available roles. The team's efforts have focused on role suitability, job readiness and post placement support.

HDNWA has welcomed many new members in FY2023 and another aim for FY2024 is to continue to grow our membership and our reach. The initiative to build an industry led model that promotes the successful and sustainable employment of people with disability can only succeed with the continuing support of the hospitality industry. I would like to thank all members for their support, and I look forward to warmly welcoming new members in the year ahead.

The 12 months past has seen HDNWA grow its membership to 33 members and connect 51 candidates to available roles within our member network. Over the year a great many have continued on in their new roles, growing and building exciting hospitality careers.

HDNWA has been fortunate to have been awarded two new grants in FY2023, each

Craig Menzies
Board Chair

Corporate governance

Our engaged Board meets regularly. They are responsible for overseeing the operations of HDNWA, and act as a sounding board for the team. All volunteers, our Board composition includes hospitality industry professionals who are leading advocates for disability employment in the sector.

HDNWA operate in a risk aware environment. Fulfilling this approach involves steering committees being established for project-specific work, which ensures our Disability Employment Manager is well-supported in decision-making. At the beginning of a project, project-specific risks are workshopped and documented. These are reviewed monthly during the project term for any new/changed risks. Significant risks are reviewed by the Board.

Our finance system involves dual authorisation for payments and our accounts are independently compiled each year to ensure good governance.



Craig Menzies

Board Chair

Craig is a highly regarded venue, events and catering manager, with experience Australia-wide and internationally, playing a leading role in major F&B openings and events. He is currently General Manager Catering at VenuesLive, a leading Australian venue management company that operates the 60,000 seat Optus Stadium and its connected Sports Precinct, as well as Sydney's ANZ Stadium and Bankwest Stadium. Craig's deep links in the hospitality and tourism sectors means that he understands how to promote to his industry peers HDNWA's vision to build disability confidence.

Jayson Mehnert

Board Treasurer, CA BCom BEc(Hons) DipEd

A Chartered Accountant for more than 25 years, Jayson is Chief Financial Officer and Group General Manager of the Hospitality Group. Collectively he is responsible for 6 accommodation and restaurant venues across WA. He previously worked at listed companies and at an accountancy firm. This experience informs his contribution as HDNWA's Board Treasurer.



Owen Davies

Board Member, BCom(Marketing)

As Chief Marketing Officer at The University of Western Australia, Owen is responsible for its marketing, communications, student recruitment and admissions functions across all international and domestic markets. His more than 20 years' experience as a commercially astute marketing leader means he understands how to best position HDNWA to improve disability confidence across WA.



Ian Tsolakis

Board Member

Ian works at Synergy as the Graduate and Careers Program Lead. In this role, he is responsible for attracting and developing a diverse range of talented individuals, and training them into specialist roles across the organisation. Prior to working at Synergy, he worked at Crown Resorts as Group Disability Employment Manager where he was responsible for developing the CROWNability program. The five-pillar disability model was Ian's strategy to attract, develop, retain and achieve sustainable employment outcomes for people with disability into the workforce. The program's success led to building disability confidence amongst managers, which has changed the lives for people with disability across Perth, Melbourne and Sydney. Ian has also worked in government employment services and fully appreciates the intersection between service providers, candidates and employers.

With the success of the CROWNability framework, Ian realised there must be a better way for businesses requiring talent to access people with disability and spearheaded the development of HDNWA. Ian's experience in employment services gave him the insights and knowledge to design an industry based employment model, which sees HDNWA continue to develop relationships across the disability employment sector in WA.



Angela Beechey

Board Member, BHum

Currently Strategic Policy Manager Accommodation, Tourism and Workforce Development at the Australia Hotels Association WA, Angela champions advocacy and policy reform for accommodation, tourism and workforce development. Prior to this, she worked in various roles marketing Australian universities internationally. This experience, coupled with her contribution to other hospitality initiatives, means that she brings logical and creative thinking to her Board role.

Operational team profile



TRACEY WARD

MARNIE HOWELL

AMELIA MCBAIN

TRACEY WARD

**Disability Employment Manager
BSc (Hons) CertIV (Training & Assessment)**

Tracey is degree qualified in international hotel and tourism management and certified in workplace training and assessment. She has worked with award winning hospitality organisations internationally, most recently at Crown Perth where she undertook several roles before joining HDNWA, including Training Advisor across their Food and Beverage portfolio of 32 bars and restaurants. Leading our operational team, Tracey applies her practical experience in hospitality roles which enables her to establish and maintain strong relationships across the hospitality sector and highlight the benefits of employing people with disability. She also manages the funded projects to ensure that timelines are met and KPIs are achieved.

MARNIE HOWELL

**Disability Employment Advisor
CertIV (Disability) - currently studying**

Marnie has a strong background in hospitality roles, having most recently worked at Crown Perth as a venue manager of Merrywell and Minq Bar managing a team of 100 front of house staff, including staff with disability. Her previous role at Crown ignited her passion to advocate for diverse and inclusive workplaces which resulted in her being an inaugural member of Crown's Disability Committee.

At HDNWA, she works with a range of stakeholders to fulfil our commitments to funded projects.

AMELIA MCBAIN

**Disability Employment Advisor
DipCounselling CertIII (Financial Services)**

Amelia has more than 20 years' experience in customer service across a range of industries and most recently worked at a disability employment service provider managing employer accounts, so brings to HDNWA her strong understanding of how the sector operates. As Disability Employment Advisor, she works to build strong relationships with the disability employment service providers to meet talent for available roles and job match for sustainable employment outcomes.

Purpose, vision and values

Purpose

To support the hospitality and tourism industry in Western Australia to increase sustainable employment opportunities for people with a disability.

Vision

To build disability confidence in the hospitality and tourism industry and become the leading industry employing people with disability in Western Australia.

Values



Impact

We make a difference through the pursuit of meaningful employment for people living with disability.



Challenge

We are courageous. We challenge bias and advocate for positive change.



Integrity

We are honest and fair. We do what we say we will do.



Respect

Everyone is an individual and should be treated as such. Everyone deserves courtesy and empathy.



Business overview

Events and activities

Remaining visible in the WA hospitality sector is critically important to our role in building employer confidence for employing people with disability. It also ensures we show candidates and referrers that we are right by their side supporting their employment. Maintaining positive relationships with funders and other stakeholders also ensures that we advance our mission.

Team members are committed to upskilling, which is reflected in one completing Mental Health First Aid Accreditation and all participating in neurodiversity training.

Highlights of our FY2023 activities are shown here.



FY2023 highlights

11 August 2022

Participated in the University of WA's EMPLOY + ABLE Careers panel session

16 November 2022

Met with Department of Social Services (DSS) Strategic Policy representatives to discuss HDNWA's involvement in the local community

2 December 2022

Attended International Day of People with Disability Lunch

29 February 2023

Supported candidates being interviewed at The Ritz-Carlton Perth as part of its recruitment drive

8 March 2023

Celebrated International Women's Day at event organised by Marriott group at Aloft Hotel

13 March 2023

Participated in Optus Stadium seasonal recruitment drive and supported 22 candidates to interview

3 April 2023

Attended recruitment day for Marriott International's Western Australian Hotels (The Westin Perth, Aloft Perth, and Four Points by Sheraton Perth)

23 May 2023

Team Attended Neurodiversity Training

29 & 31 May 2023

Held co-design sessions across two dates with people with disability at Optus Stadium

14 - 16 June 2023

Visited Geraldton as part of DSS ILC contract

21 June 2023

Attend the Tourism Council Accessible Tourism Forum at Crown Ballroom

22 June 2023

Increased our profile with a stall at the City of Canning Job Expo

27 June 2023

Attended Tourism Council WA boardroom lunch on Disability Access with Minister Don Punch



CASE STUDY

Ideal candidate for Yardperson role at Coconut Grove

When a role became available at this busy Perth bar, HDNWA was ready to put forward one of our pre-screened candidates. Coconut Grove’s Venue Manager says of our work ‘They came and met with me to discuss the new role for the venue, and they quickly came back with John. They organised the initial interview, which involved them attending and also supporting John outside of work with feedback that we have provided.’

Consistent with HDNWA’s experience with other employers, it’s the employee’s attitude that trumps their initial skill level, which can be developed with the right guidance. John’s Yardperson duties

at this popular rooftop venue include resetting the venue from the weekending, receiving goods inward and storing stock in preparation for opening. It’s clear that John’s embraced his role at Coconut Grove. There’s often many other tasks to complete, including gardening, setting up or packing down functions, and additional cleaning.

John describes his autism ‘as less of a disability and more of a trait’ that he turns into a positive. Ricardo says: ‘John brings a refreshing attitude, is always happy to come to work and is reliable. He shows pride in his work and is very detail orientated. I know that when I give him a task it’s always finished to a high standard.’

Pictured left to right: Alex (Assistant Manager), John (Yardperson), Ricardo (Venue Manager)

Hospitality and tourism employer members

HDNWA’s membership represents a range of employer types from across WA, which allows candidates with disability to access meaningful employment opportunities and to forge genuine career paths.

We currently have 33 active employer members, ranging from small to large employers. This provides ample opportunities for our candidates to enjoy a choice of possible roles, along with career progression within the industry.

HDNWA is acutely aware of the important role that government employment service providers play, specifically Disability Employment Service contract holders. These relationships enable us to offer employer members access to talented and job-ready candidates.

Interviews and placements

In FY2023, our team interviewed 258 candidates with disability. 51 were successfully placed in roles with our hospitality and tourism members, which is an excellent result.

Funding update

FY2023 marked the evolution of HDNWA to a fully operational phase. We successfully completed a Lotterywest sector collaboration grant, which responded to the labour shortage impacting hospitality and tourism venues in WA following the Covid-19 response. Our project saw the labour shortage as providing an opportunity for the business and disability sectors to look at innovative ways to build employment pathways for people with disability, which satisfied the immediate need as well as reinforcing future labour supply resilience. We did this by embarking on a co-design process to inform the development of our tailored e-learning platform for employers to access. The platform offers tools and support for how to create disability confident workplaces. The grant has also resulted in an increase in our employer memberships and employment of candidates.

We commenced a Department of Social Services (DSS) Information, Linkages and Capacity-building project which is enabling us to build connections and expand our reach to regional WA. We were delighted to win a further grant from DSS in June 2023 as part of the Tourism Local Navigators Pilot. These grant awards demonstrate the recognition of HDNWA’s status as the only industry-led initiative of its kind in WA.





Services provided to members

HDNWA offers a strong value proposition to hospitality and tourism industry employers. We work with individual members to understand their business so that when a role becomes available, our team can quickly identify a candidate we are confident will be suitable. We achieve this through working closely with employment services providers and other referrers so that we can pre-screen potential candidates.

Before an employer interview, we prepare and support the candidate so that they can put their best foot forward. Employers benefit from candidates who are prepared and enthusiastic about the role they are applying for. Should the employer offer them the role, we are there to support both the candidate and the employer with onboarding and ongoing employment. From the employer perspective, they know that our team is there to provide support in whatever way we can to ensure success.

Our model works because our team members are themselves hospitality and tourism industry professionals – they understand, for example, exactly what attributes are needed for a busy front of house role where it is important to be comfortable standing up for an entire shift and

interacting positively with customers. Our team members are able to quickly identify simple ways for an employer to help a candidate with disability flourish in their role. Employers also benefit by avoiding the need to interact with multiple employment agencies when sourcing a new hire – our team offers a single point of contact, and the reassurance that we are only ever a phone call away.

Employer members also benefit from the opportunity to interact with other employers within the network. This enables those who are more disability confident to share their experience with those that have just joined the network. It also provides internal referral pathways for candidates to progress their career in the industry.

Our unique service model for employers

We facilitate & connect

We find the best talent for available roles from Disability Employment Services providers, then match them to jobs, pre-screening so you get the best interview candidates.

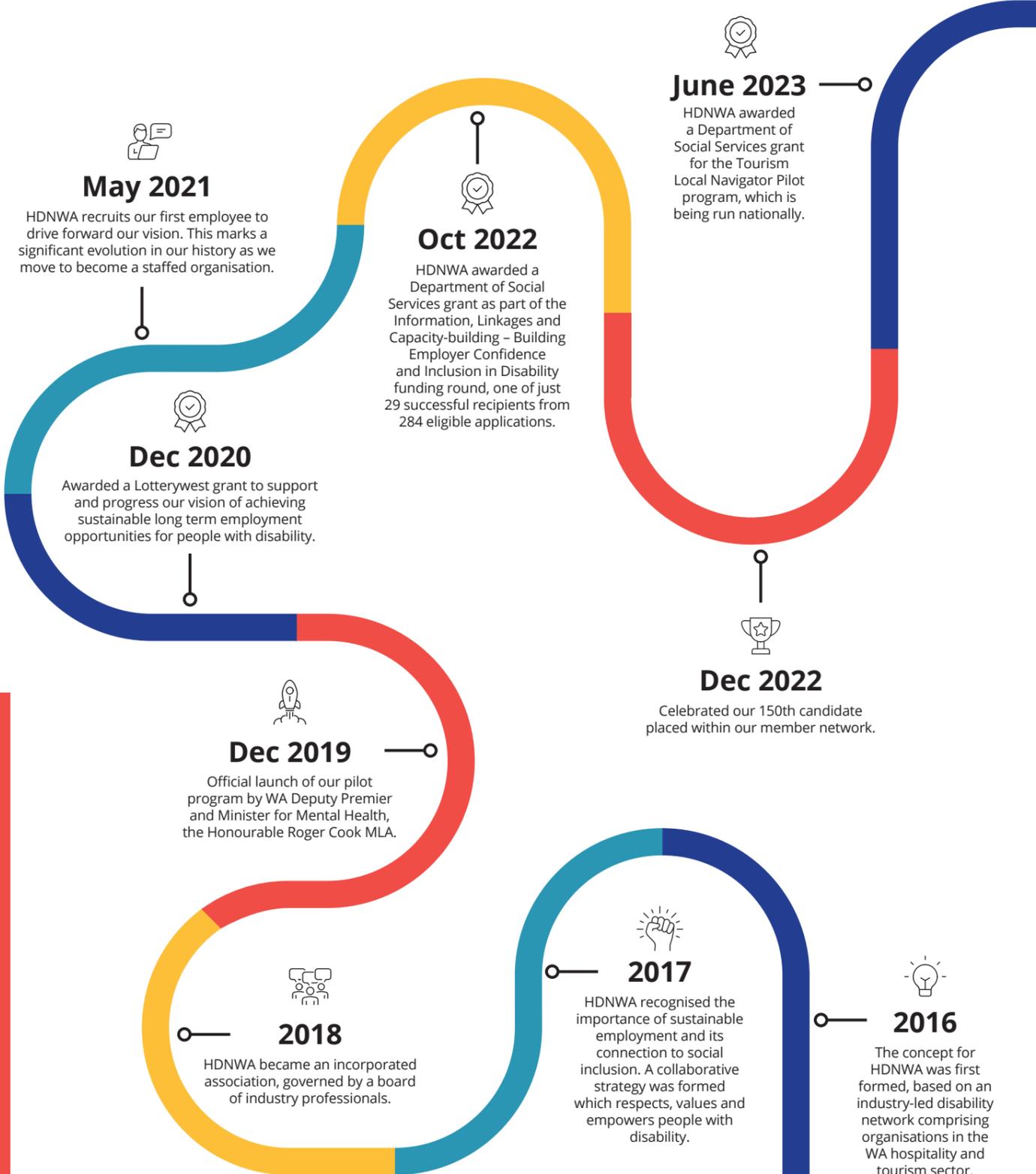
We build confidence

You'll be confident in your choice of candidates. We offer bespoke training programs that increase the knowledge and capacity of managers, and breaks down barriers that prevent diversity and inclusion in hospitality organisations.

We empower & advance

When a candidate is placed in your organisation, we offer support to assist the person and the business with reasonable adjustments required in the workplace.

What we have achieved so far



CASE STUDY



Perfect match for Food and Beverage Assistant at the Waverley Brewhouse

Tyler joined the Waverley Brewhouse in March 2022 as a Food and Beverage Assistant. He's a great example of how, with a positive mindset and the right support, a person with autism can thrive in a busy small business.

'Working with HDNWA has been great,' says Venue Manager Chris. 'They really took the time to get to know our business and what we needed in a new staff member. I simply just let them know that we had a vacancy, and they presented some great candidates for me to consider.' Chris noted that 'like any other staff member, Tyler needed some time to build up his confidence in the role, but with great support from the whole team he's really come out of his shell. I now get regular feedback from customers and my own team about how he's doing. Tyler is always here early and prepared for his shift.'

Reflecting on his first shift last year, he can see how Chris and HDNWA's support set him up to thrive in a fast-paced environment. 'The first day was a busy day in the restaurant. I mainly ran food out to guests – it was pretty full on, but it was a good opportunity for me to see how busy the Waverley can get.'

Now settled in his role, he's enjoying the training opportunities on offer: 'We recently had coffee and wine training and are having beer training upcoming with the brewer.' Tyler is delighted to have a supportive team, describing them as 'very great and very supportive of me and what I need and just great to work with.' He went on to say how he's learnt how to better interact with people and now has the confidence to speak to strangers, which is really helping in his personal life too. 'I've opened up a lot more and come out of my shell.'

Pictured: Tyler

Plans for the future

In FY2024, HDNWA aims to connect more employers in the WA hospitality and tourism sector with our pre-screened, enthusiastic candidates with disability.

We will continue our Department of Social Services (DSS) Information, Linkages and Capacity-building project, which is enabling us to expand our reach beyond metropolitan Perth, with a particular focus on WA's Midwest and Southwest regions.

The new year will also see us commence our recently awarded DSS grant for the Tourism Local Navigators Pilot in which we will work with small and medium-sized hospitality and tourism businesses in the Perth metro area.





“Before my first day at Four Points my biggest worry was, would they accept me for me, with all my quirks and peculiarities. Looking back on that worry now almost 9 months later I can’t help but feel lucky that I’ve found this hotel and its fantastic team who not only have accepted my quirks and autism but have helped me to learn how to use them to my advantage and in doing so have help me to accept them which isn’t always easy.

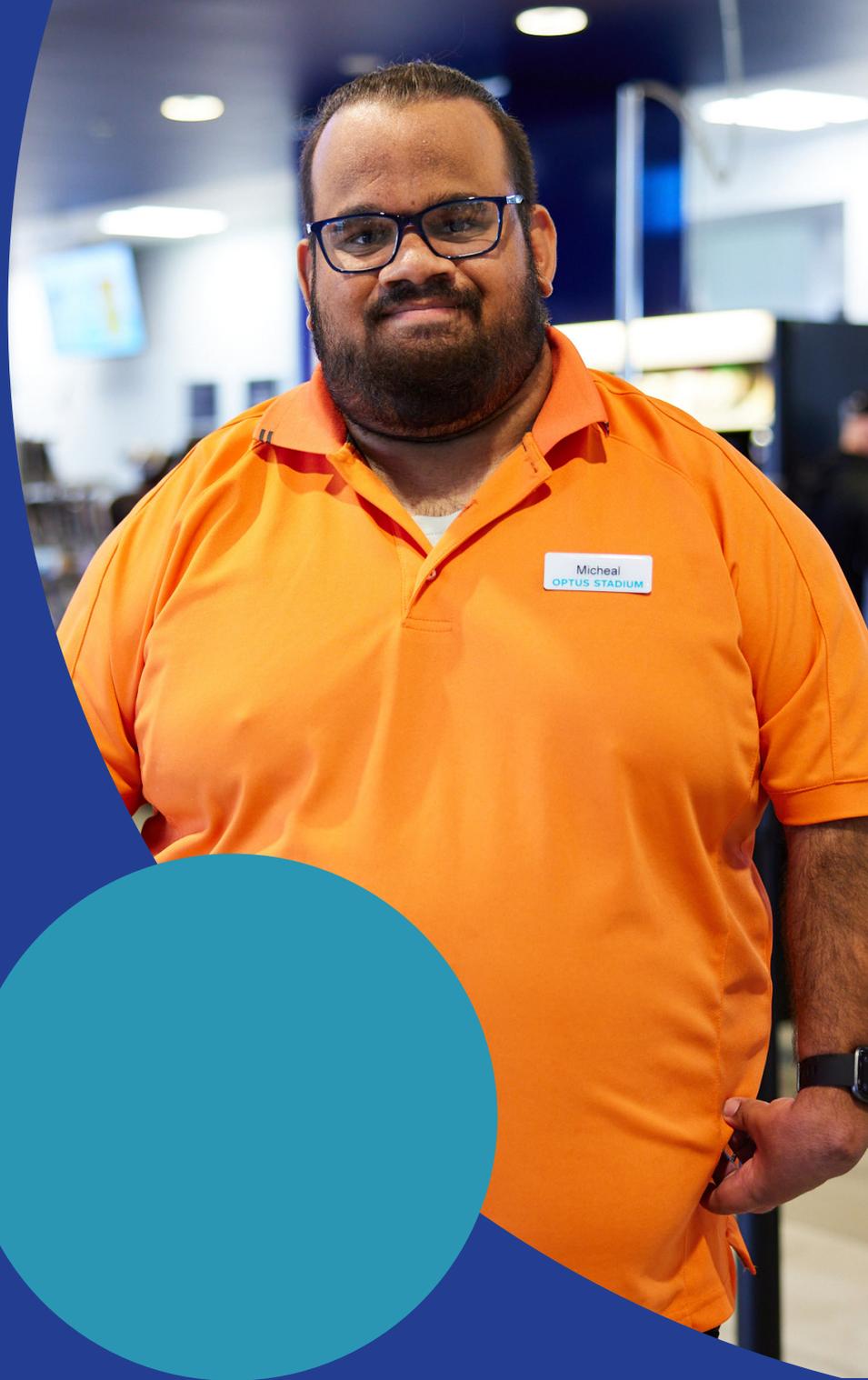
I would like to say a big thank you to HDNWA without their help I would not have been so lucky to find Four Points. I truly believe that HDNWA are working to help not only those with disabilities find a place where they can let their strengths show but helping employers to learn how to help unlock those strengths. I would also like to extend a big thank you to the Four Points team for all their support as well as all the fun times over these last months.”

Excerpt of reflections from Jessica (HDNWA candidate now working at Four Points by Sheraton) at 2022 International Day of People with Disability lunch event where she attended as our ambassador

Pictured: Jessica



Back cover image: HDNWA candidate Michael at Optus Stadium



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