



2025 Annual Report

Hospitality Disability Network WA Inc.



Hospitality Disability Network WA Inc.

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HDNWA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land, paying respects to the Aboriginal communities of Western Australia and their Elders, past, present, and emerging. We honour the culture and contributions of First Nations People.

We also recognise the rights and dignity of all, including those with disabilities and in the LGBTQIA+ community. HDNWA is committed to inclusivity, respect and empowerment, celebrating diversity and striving for equal opportunities for all.



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INTRODUCING HOSPITALITY DISABILITY NETWORK WA INC.

Hospitality Disability Network WA Inc. (HDNWA) is proud to be the only industry-led initiative for employers in the WA tourism and hospitality industry who are open to disability employment.

A not-for-profit organisation, our volunteer board and committed team are tourism, hospitality and disability employment professionals with a hands-on approach to helping employers understand the benefits to their business that employees with disability can bring.

We work closely with select Disability Employment Providers to source suitable candidates, mentor them to become job ready for our members, and provide ongoing post-placement support to ensure sustainable and successful employment outcomes.

PURPOSE

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

VISION

To build disability confidence in the tourism and hospitality industry and become the leading sector 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.

BOARD CHAIR'S REVIEW

As we reflect on the past year at the Hospitality Disability Network WA, the team, our board and I have immense satisfaction about our successes in 2024/25 and we have renewed our commitment to our mission as we move ahead into 2026.

The hospitality and tourism industry in Western Australia has shown growth and a remarkable resilience, emerging stronger after the challenges of recent years. Hotels, restaurants, bars and tourism operators are still be challenged but positive signs of sustainable improvement are showing.

Notably, through this growth, we have witnessed significant strides in creating inclusive employment opportunities for people living with disabilities, which aligns with our vision of a truly accessible and disability confident hospitality sector.

This year, we celebrated new partnerships and members who joined our network, in particular the small to medium sized businesses that have embraced diverse hiring practices. These initiatives not only benefit the employees but also enrich the workplace culture, fostering a more inclusive and empathetic environment.

We have seen first hand how inclusive hiring practices can lead to improved customer satisfaction and other operational benefits.

This year, our work in supporting network members have empowered numerous individuals with disabilities to gain meaningful employment in hospitality and tourism, demonstrating that when barriers are removed, potential flourishes.

We remain committed to advocating for best practices in accessibility and inclusivity across all facets of our industry.

As we look to the future, we are excited about the possibilities ahead. Together, we can continue to champion equality and growth within the hospitality and tourism sectors, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to contribute and succeed.

Thank you for your unwavering support as we work towards a more inclusive future in 2026 and beyond.

Craig Menzies





OPERATIONAL REVIEW

Dear Members,

This year has been one of growth, recognition and real impact for HDNWA.

I'm incredibly proud of what our small team has achieved, continuing to adapt to industry needs while staying true to our mission of creating meaningful employment for people living with disability.

Sustainable employment remains at the heart of everything we do. Our team has supported members to build inclusive workplaces, match the right candidates to the right roles and provide ongoing support for long-term success.

It's been rewarding to see how these opportunities have transformed lives, fostering purpose, belonging, and independence.

Highlights from this year include:

- Conducted **166** interviews with candidates living with disabilities.
- Placed **86** candidates into employment.
- Secured a DSS ILC **Grant extension** to continue promoting inclusive employment across WA.
- Received a **Tourism WA** grant to launch the Passport to Your Career Toolkit.
- **Won** the CCIWA Small Business Award for leadership in inclusion.
- Were named **finalists** in the AHA (WA) Suppliers awards and NDS Awards for Innovation.
- Wrapped up the Tourism Navigators Pilot to help businesses embed **inclusive** practices.
- **Strengthened** partnerships with Tourism WA, AHA, schools, and providers.
- **Expanded** our network with more employers championing inclusion across the industry.

Looking Ahead

As we move into FY2025/2026, we do so with strong foundations, a clear strategy and an unwavering commitment to our purpose.

With the support of our members, partners and funders, HDNWA will continue to champion inclusive employment, expand our reach across regional Western Australia and develop new initiatives that prepare the next generation for careers in tourism and hospitality.

Our achievements this year have only been possible because of the collaboration, trust and shared belief of our community from our board and members to our dedicated team and the incredible individuals we support.

Together, we are redefining what inclusive employment looks like in Western Australia.



Marnie Howell

FINANCIAL REPORT

The 2024–25 Financial Statements include four Profit & Loss reports, providing a snapshot of HDNWA's financial position over the 12-month period from July 2024 to June 2025.

Comparative figures are presented as “Last Year Actual” to show year-on-year performance.

ILC Grant

The ILC Grant continues to be HDNWA's primary source of operational funding.

- Funds received to date: \$292,127 (2023), \$228,188 (2024), and \$273,828 (2025).
- Major expenditure: staff salaries and wages, totaling \$358,000 in FY2025.
- Result: a (\$116,668) deficit, reflecting the use of prior-year surplus funds. Approximately \$44,000 remains available for use in 2025–26.

TLN Grant

The remaining TLN grant funds (\$15,090) were fully expended in July 2024. The grant has now been completed and formally closed.

Sundry Grants

A new “Sundry Grants” Profit & Loss was introduced during FY2025 to capture smaller projects and training income.

- DDWA Grant: \$1,000 received, with \$905 expended by year end.
- Training Revenue: \$4,000 earned through industry training and presentations.

Tourism WA Grant

During the year, HDNWA was awarded a \$40,000 grant from Tourism WA to support the development of a new youth-focused employment toolkit.

At 30 June 2025, \$39,309 remained unspent. These funds will be carried forward into the next financial year to complete the project's delivery.

Financial Summary

HDNWA remains primarily funded through grants, with modest additional revenue generated through training activity and bank interest.

- Bank Interest: \$27
- Training Income: \$4,000

At 30 June 2025, HDNWA held \$83,500 in cash reserves.

During the year, HDNWA also invested in essential IT and office equipment for staff. These items were expensed and therefore do not appear on the Balance Sheet as capital assets.

Subsequent Events

In June 2025, HDNWA entered into a new agreement with the Department of Social Services, extending the ILC Grant for a further 12 months.

- Additional funding: \$273,828 (FY2026)
- Total ILC funds to date: \$1,067,971
- First instalment of \$164,297 (ex GST) received in July 2025.

In July 2025, HDNWA also received \$250,000 (ex GST) from the Department of Communities to continue advancing inclusive employment initiatives across Western Australia.



Jayson Mehnert



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Our engaged Board meets regularly and are responsible for overseeing the operations of HDNWA, as well as a sounding board for the operational 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 Managing Director is well-supported in decision-making.

Craig Menzies

Board Chair



Craig has been the Chairperson of the Hospitality Disability Network WA since July 2021, acting in an advisory role on the board. Appointed to the Board at its inception in 2018, he played a key role in the six months leading up to the launch in May 2019. Craig is a highly regarded venue, events, and catering manager with extensive experience both in Australia and internationally. He currently holds the position of General Manager Catering at VenuesLive, overseeing operations at major venues like Optus Stadium. Craig's strong connections in the hospitality and tourism sectors make him a valuable advocate for HDNWA's vision of building disability confidence within the industry.

Owen Davies

Deputy Chair



Owen is the Chief Growth Officer at Edith Cowan University, responsible for marketing, communications, engagement and recruitment functions. Prior to this, Owen was the Chief Marketing Officer at The University of Western Australia for six years and spent more than a decade in senior marketing and strategy roles for Crown Resorts. Bringing commercially astute marketing and communications experience to the HDNWA, Owen advises HDNWA on methods to improve disability confidence across WA's hospitality sector.

Ian Tsolakis

Board Secretary



Ian is the Employment Pathways Manager at Interlife, a social enterprise based in Western Australia and the visionary behind HDNWA. Formerly Crown Resorts' Group Disability Employment Manager he developed the CROWNability program and the five-pillar model for sustainable disability employment. Ian's deep understanding of both corporate and government employment sectors drives HDNWA's industry-based approach to inclusive hiring.

Jayson Mehnert

Board Treasurer



A Chartered Accountant for more than 30 years, Jayson is a Director, 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.

Jai McNaughton

Board Member



Jai is a dynamic Talent & Culture Manager at Accor, she comes with an extensive background in the dynamic realms of hospitality and tourism. Her professional journey spans diverse sectors, including disability services and the food and agribusiness industry, crafting a narrative of versatile expertise. Jai's passion, commitment, and unwavering drive are not only evident in her professional pursuits but also in her role as a mentor and developer of others. In the realm of specialties, Jai's expertise encompasses Human Resources, Coaching, Learning & Development and Transformational Leadership.

Angela Beechey

Board Member



Angela is Government Relations and Communications Manager at the Australia Hotels Association WA. Angela champions advocacy and policy reform for the tourism, accommodation and hospitality industry. She has more than 10 years' experience strategically marketing Australia internationally as a place to study, live, work, visit or invest in. 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



Claire

Marnie

Kirra

MARNIE HOWELL **Managing Director**

As Managing Director of the Hospitality Disability Network WA (HDNWA), Marnie leads a passionate team dedicated to creating inclusive employment pathways across the tourism and hospitality industries in Western Australia.

Since joining HDNWA in 2021, Marnie has brought a wealth of experience from her time as a Venue Manager at The Merrywell, where she was proudly nominated for AHA's Venue Manager of the Year. Her background spans a variety of roles both locally and internationally, giving her a deep understanding of industry needs.

Marnie is committed to showcasing how customised employment can deliver powerful results strengthening businesses while changing lives. She brings strong leadership, operational expertise, and an unwavering passion for inclusion to every part of her work.

CLAIRE FRANCIS **Inclusive Employment Project Coordinator** *Schools, Industry Partnerships & Inclusive Training Engagement*

Claire joined HDNWA in October 2023 to support the Tourism Navigator Grant, bringing over 20 years of experience in Travel and Tourism across the UK and Europe.

As Inclusive Employment Project Coordinator, she leads school engagement, industry collaboration, and inclusive training programs to strengthen workforce pathways into tourism and hospitality. Claire previously owned a tourism business and understands the importance of accessibility, disability confidence, and sustainable employment in local communities.

With experience in the disability sector and a genuine commitment to inclusion, Claire is passionate about helping businesses build diverse, future-ready teams through practical support and meaningful connections.

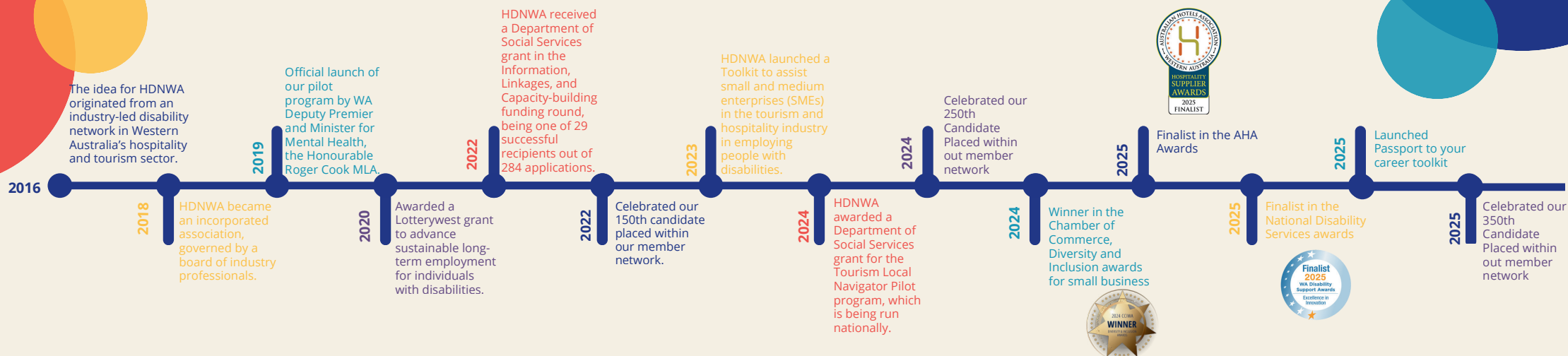
KIRRA DONNELLY **Inclusive Employment Project Coordinator** *Candidate/ Provider Engagement & Creative Communications*

Kirra joined HDNWA in 2024, bringing over a decade of experience in Employment Services, Community Services and Career Development. Her qualifications span Career Coaching, Community Services and Alcohol and Other Drug Counselling.

As Inclusive Employment Project Coordinator, Kirra leads candidate and provider engagement while managing HDNWA's creative communications. Her background includes working across mental health, disability, and justice settings supporting individuals to transition into inclusive, meaningful employment.

Kirra is driven by a deep belief in people's potential. She combines a strengths-based approach with strategic communication to ensure both individuals and businesses feel supported and inspired on their inclusion journey.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SO FAR



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.

Our unique service model for employers

We facilitate & connect

We identify candidates through carefully chosen service providers and conduct pre-screening to ensure you meet only the most qualified individuals for interviews. Acting as your sole point of contact in this area, we will connect you with a diverse range of candidates.

We build confidence

We offer bespoke training programs that increase the knowledge and capacity of managers and front line staff and break down barriers that prevent diversity and inclusion in the tourism and hospitality sector organisations.

We empower & advance

When a candidate joins your business, we provide support to help both the individual and the member implement any necessary reasonable adjustments in the workplace. Ultimately, our goal is to empower you to effectively support the candidates.



INCLUSIVE HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

Building Confidence in Disability Inclusion



Hospitality and Tourism are built on creating welcoming, memorable experiences. But for guests and team members with disability, inclusion isn't always guaranteed. That's why we have developed this interactive training.

WHATS COVERED KEY OUTCOMES



Increased Confidence

This interactive training equips your team with the skills, awareness, and confidence to create more of an inclusive workplace.



Stronger Culture

Create a workplace where every team member feels safe, valued, and empowered boosting morale, loyalty, and overall service quality.



Practical Tools

Give your team actionable strategies from inclusive communication techniques to accessible service approaches—that they can apply immediately in the workplace.



Myth-Busting Insights

Challenge outdated assumptions and uncover the facts about disability through real stories and practical education empowering your team to think differently.

- ✓ Increased confidence supporting guests and colleagues with disability.
- ✓ Improved team cohesion and service delivery.
- ✓ Practical actions to meet your organisation's Diversity and Inclusion goals.
- ✓ A more inclusive, welcoming brand reputation.

SESSION FORMAT

Duration: 2 hours
Includes: 1.5 hour interactive workshop + 30-minute networking/Q&A
Members and non member rate applied (includes facilitation, materials, and post-session insights)
* 6 to 25 people per session

Let's Create a Culture of Confidence and Inclusion.

Bring this training to your venue or group and start building a more inclusive future one team at a time.



manager@hdnwa.org.au



hdnwa.org.au



HDNWA REACHES 300 PLACEMENTS

HDNWA is excited to celebrate a major milestone, reaching 300 placements since our journey began in 2019.

This achievement is made even more special by sharing the story of Hector and his new role at Refresh Juice.

Liam, the owner of Refresh Juice, dreamed of creating a more inclusive workforce but found the disability employment system overwhelming.

That's where HDNWA came in. By taking the time to understand his business and team, we streamlined the process, connected him with the right providers, and supported him in finding the best fit.

That's when Hector came along. Living with vision impairment and facing ongoing health challenges, Hector had been out of work for some time. Determined to get back into the workforce, he was matched with Liam and the Refresh Juice team.

With a few workplace adjustments and plenty of support, Hector has settled into his role and is thriving. Liam shared, ***"Having Hector on the team has been fantastic. The camaraderie is high, and I hope he stays with us for a long time. He's now part of the Refresh family."***

For Hector, this job has been life-changing. He is now able to support his family again and be part of a workplace that values his strengths.

This placement is the **145th** under the ILC BEC Grant and marks HDNWA's **300th** overall.

It highlights the power of collaboration and the success of our industry-led model in creating lasting employment opportunities for people with disability, while supporting businesses to become truly inclusive.

**CASE
STUDY**

TURNING OPPORTUNITIES INTO MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT

HDNWA's membership represents a diverse network of employers across Western Australia, spanning the hospitality and tourism sectors.

With 56 active employer members and connections extending to over 200 businesses statewide, our network includes small enterprises, large corporations, and everything in between.

This broad membership base creates meaningful employment opportunities for people with disability, enabling them to build sustainable careers within inclusive workplaces that value diversity.

HDNWA offers a strong value proposition for candidates seeking roles in hospitality and tourism. We take the time to understand each individual's skills, interests, and support needs, ensuring the right match between candidate and employer.

Working in partnership with employment service providers and referrers, we pre-screen candidates, guide them through the recruitment process, and provide post-placement support to help them settle in and succeed.



Placement breakdown into industries



CASE STUDY

TYLER'S INSPIRING JOURNEY

Tyler, featured on our front cover of the Passport to Your Career Toolkit, is a shining example of resilience, determination, and the power of opportunity.

We first met Tyler in mid-2024 through his service provider, and it was clear from the start that he was ready to return to work after taking time off to care for his mother during her cancer treatment.

His empathy, enthusiasm, and commitment to making a difference immediately stood out.

With HDNWA's support, Tyler secured a role as a kitchen steward at RAC Arena, one of Perth's premier event venues.

Over the past twelve months, he has flourished, embracing a dynamic team environment, building strong relationships, and contributing to the smooth running of the venue.

Tyler has shared how much he enjoys his work, values the team culture,

and feels proud to be part of such a respected organisation. Tyler's journey demonstrates the importance of providing support and opportunities to individuals ready to take the next step in their careers.

Despite significant personal challenges, he remained focused on his family while preparing to re-enter the workforce.

His positive attitude, dedication, and resilience have made him a valued team member and an inspiration to those around him.

At HDNWA, we are proud to support individuals like Tyler. His story highlights the impact that inclusive employment practices, the right guidance, and belief in a person's abilities can have on career success.

Tyler's achievements remind us that with encouragement and opportunity, incredible things are possible.

We look forward to watching him continue to grow and thrive in his career.

PASSPORT TO YOUR CAREER TOOLKIT

This year, the Hospitality Disability Network WA Inc. (HDNWA) launched the Passport to Your Career Toolkit in collaboration with **Tourism WA**.

This is a comprehensive resource designed to support young people living with disability in exploring career opportunities in tourism and hospitality.

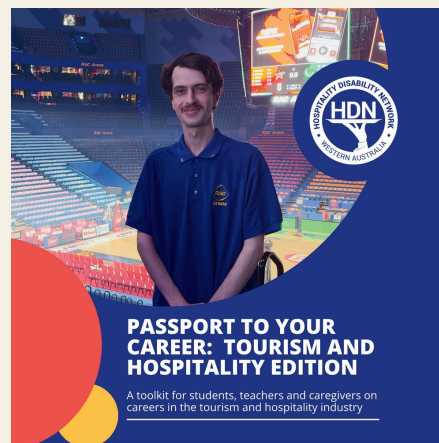
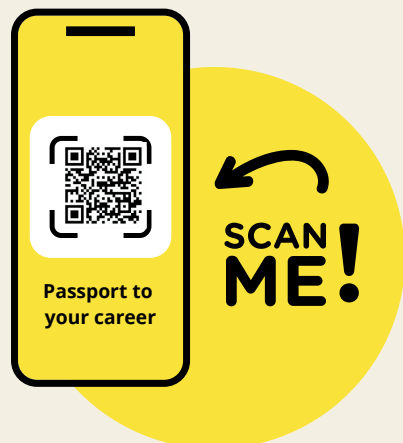
The toolkit equips school leavers with practical guidance, industry insights, and resources to help them identify potential roles, understand workplace expectations, and navigate pathways to meaningful employment.

Our aim is to empower participants to make informed career decisions and to build confidence in their ability to succeed in the hospitality and tourism industries.

The toolkit includes step-by-step guidance on different roles, tips for applying for positions and real-world examples of career pathways.

By providing this resource, HDNWA continues to promote inclusive employment practices and expand opportunities for people living with disability across Western Australia.

Since its launch, the toolkit has been delivered to over **160 high schools** within Western Australia and received positive feedback from participants and industry partners, reinforcing its value as a practical and empowering guide for both job seekers and employers.





ELIZA BAIN

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ATTENDANT,
VENUES LIVE, VENUES WEST AND
THE WAVERLEY BREWHOUSE

"I love the social aspect; I love that I can go out after work for drinks with my colleagues and people are accepting of me. I'm just like everyone else."

ELIZA WAS TOLD SHE'D NEVER GET MAINSTREAM EMPLOYMENT. NOW THE BUBBLY HOSPITALITY WORKER IS IN DEMAND AT THE WAVERLEY BREWHOUSE AND OPTUS STADIUM, WHERE SHE WON THE FANS FIRST AWARD FOR STAFF WHO GO ABOVE AND BEYOND.

HOW DID YOU GET INTO YOUR JOB?

I was always interested in school but I lacked self-confidence, I didn't really believe in myself. I moved from Melbourne to Perth and did a few TAFE courses. I really wanted to get into mainstream hospitality work. I met with a disability employment service that helped me to work on my resume and how to get job ready, as well as learning about good customer service.

I was put in touch with Hospitality Disability Network WA and they got me an interview to work at Optus Stadium. I was very nervous and didn't want to talk much but I did a tour of the stadium and I had a few buddies to help me with tasks and teach me new skills, like how to pour a beer.

I work across multiple venues and manage my own rosters, so every day looks different, which I love. Some days I'm in the kitchen prepping food, other times I'm out front serving guests.

WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR ANYONE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY?

I would say believe in yourself and you can do anything. I was told that I would never get into mainstream employment and here I am.

Don't give up. I went for a few interviews and didn't get the jobs and I felt really down, but I had support and I just kept trying. I became a supervisor at one of the bars, and that's supervising able-bodied people as well. I can see myself as a manager one day.

I just love interacting with customers and meeting new people. I've done a lot of public speaking and I want to advocate more for people with disabilities. I'm such a people person.



STEPPING STONES



THANK YOU

HDNWA would like to extend a big Thank You to everyone that supported us in 2024 - 2025.

Board & Operational Team

Craig Menzies
Owen Davies
Jayson Mehnert
Ian Tsolakis
Jai McNaughton
Angela Beechy

Marnie Howell
Claire Francis
Kirra Donnelly
Elli Trueman
Vicki Davies

Providers

Ability Action
Ability WA
APM
Autism Association
CoAct Visibility

Edge Employment
Maxima
Status
Workpower

Members

Accor
Adventure World
AHA
AHS
ALH
AVC
Byford Country Club
Cafe Mojo's
Clancy's Fish Pub City Beach
Comestibles
Country Comfort
Crown
Eagle Bay Brewing Co
Entertainment Enterprises
Esplanade Fremantle
Funlab
Green Door Wines
Healthy Mind Menu
Hilton

Hospitality Pty Ltd
Hospitality Group Training
Hyatt
IHG
Joondalup Resort
Joondalup Family Centre
L'talian
Landsdale Farm
Last Slice Group
Lawley Bakery
Lion Co
Loco General
Marriot
Mindarie Marina
Mondo Butcher
Oasis at Newman
Optus Stadium
Pan Pacific
PICA

Parker Group
Perth Convention Centre
Perth Racing
Perth Zoo
RAC Arena
Ramada Vetra Blu
Refresh Juice
Risq Small Bar
SKAL International
Silk Hospitality Pty Ltd
Sneakers and Jeans
SSP
SPL
Swan Care
TFE
The Old Synagogue
Venues West
Waverley Brew House

Special Mentions

Toursim WA
Edith Cowen University
Indigo Hamersley

Hospitality Ltd Pty office
David Fowler - Power Creations
Hyper IT

Greenwood Senior High School
Catholic Education WA
Artrage



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