

Learn Local achievements

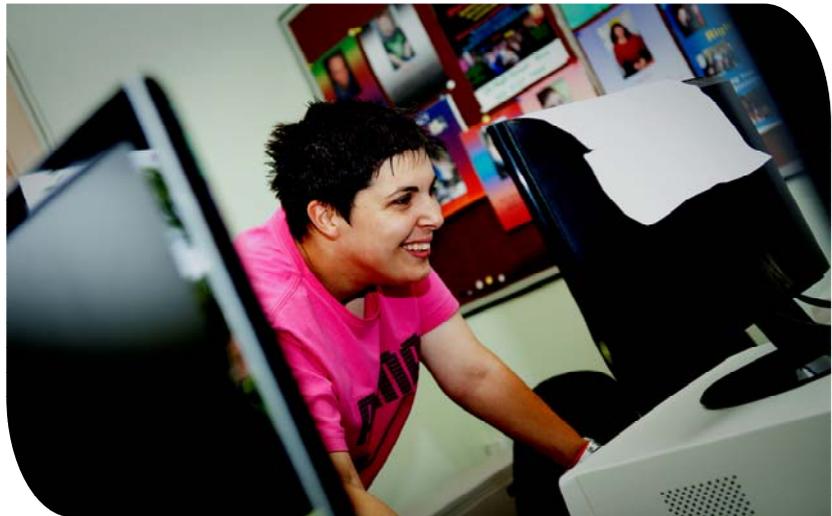
The Learn Local education and training sector has a network of organisations reaching across Victoria in metropolitan, regional and rural locations.

The learners who access education through Learn Local organisations come from different backgrounds and have varying levels of prior education. Each learner has a unique journey to reach their desired outcomes.

While many learners come to Learn Local for education and training, most take away a lot more than that.

The majority of our learners choose Learn Local for vocationally-oriented outcomes – employability skills, re-training and up-skilling. But what they also gain is confidence in their abilities and involvement with their local community.

The stories of each of our learners are worth sharing and celebrating – here are just a few...



Georgia – Reaching her full potential

Georgia is much like any other 22 year-old – she works in a café two days a week, likes to spend her spare time on the computer, chatting on the phone and going to the footy. What's different about Georgia is that she has an intellectual disability and, without the educational services of her Learn Local organisation, Moe Life Skills, she may never have had the chance of reaching her full potential.

Georgia and the other learners in her group often need to overcome additional barriers. For Georgia, it was a fear of travelling alone on public transport, which presented a huge stumbling block to taking up employment opportunities.

“We realised that this would greatly inhibit her dream of gaining employment in the hospitality industry and it became clear to Georgia that she would have to address this concern, which she well and truly has,” said Carole Burkett, General Manager of Moe Life Skills.

Through the Learn Local organisation, Moe Life Skills, Georgia is in the process of completing her Certificate III in Hospitality and travels by train to another town in the region where she spends two days each week working in a café. She also works another day each week in a local aged care facility.

Georgia's father, Ian, is just as thrilled as Georgia with the Moe Life Skills' services. “Her reading and writing have all improved steadily and her vocabulary is continuously increasing.” He now shares a dream with Georgia for her to continue to gain more independence and have even greater involvement in the wider community. “I believe centres like Moe Life Skills are vital to the community,” said Ian.

Andy – Re-training for success

When Andy migrated from Burma to Australia in 2009 to care for his mother, he never imagined that he would have to re-train in order to find work. Andy had a number of jobs over his working life in Burma, giving him a wide variety of skills, but after almost a year of job applications and unsuccessful interviews Andy was still unemployed and in despair.

Andy needed to gain vocational skills that would qualify him for employment in Australia but he couldn't afford the fees or time to study through TAFE or University. Fortunately, his mother saw an ad for Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE) in the local newspaper, and Andy's problems were on their way to being solved.



PRACE is a Learn Local organisation committed to meeting the language, literacy and numeracy, vocational training and further education needs of the local community.

Andy visited PRACE to find out more about the courses on offer and on-the-spot he enrolled in a Certificate II in Asset Maintenance (Cleaning Operations). He admits to being nervous about studying and was terrified in the lead-up to commencing his course, however, on arriving at his first class he was made to feel welcome and the education was clearly delivered so it was easy for the whole class to follow, regardless of their prior education level.

When Andy was only halfway through his Certificate he saw an ad for a cleaning role and, with the help of his PRACE instructor, he applied for the job. Initially he was hired for only one hour per week, but very quickly his employer realised his potential and Andy now works 30 (flex) hours per week which allows him to continue to care for his mother and carry out additional family responsibilities.

Andy's employer wishes he "had more Andys"!

Virginia – Returning to the workforce

Being a full-time single mum kept Virginia out of the workforce for over 11 years. As a mother of three boys she had previously had her hands very full, but now that they were all at school she had the opportunity to do something more. Through her sons' primary school, Yarrunga Primary, she found out about the Employability Passport training that Learn Local organisation, The Centre in Wangaratta, was running.

The Employability Passport helps learners realise they have skills that will transfer to a workplace and regardless of their previous level of study they can learn new skills and achieve skills in subjects they thought beyond them.

Before having children Virginia had worked in the manufacturing industry and never had a job which required the use of computers. After completing a pre-accredited unit as part of the Passport, Virginia's confidence was boosted and she went on to complete Certificate II in Information Technology.

Virginia was amazed that so many years since she'd finished school, she was easily able to return to study with the help of Learn Local organisations. "The pace is one that we set for ourselves, and there is no pressure to have things done or understood by a certain time. We are not made to feel silly if we don't get it first go," Virginia said.

"These courses help us develop our interpersonal skills, helping us deal with all types. It also shows us what is required of us in the work place, making it a not so scary place."

Since completing her studies at The Centre, Virginia has gone on to achieve two more major milestones: she has gained employment at Yarrunga Primary school (which her kids love!) as an administrative assistant, working in the front office and in the school library and; she has also gone on to study at TAFE – Certificate III in Business Administration.

Before studying at a Learn Local organisation, Virginia could have never dreamed she could achieve so much – and look at her now!

