



Training & Apprenticeship Employment
DIVISION OF MPA GROUP

APPRENTICE EMPLOYMENT NEWSLETTER October 2010



Building Successful Plumbers and Painters



“The MPA 2010 Apprentice of the Year is.....”

Stephen Mueller has won the MPA Apprentice of the Year for 2010 and I couldn't be more proud of him and all of our MPA Skills AE apprentices who participated. Luke Stephens and Troy Edwards very deserving came second and third and I'm sure their bosses are extremely proud of them too.

The awards night was great, lots of noise, lots of dancing and I'm sure a few sore heads the next day. This years comp again really showed what you lot are capable of and you continue to impress me no end. Every apprentice did so well and I guess that's what made Stephen's win so very awesome. Our apprentices have had so much good fortune in this comp, but this is the first time in my 7 years of working as your Field Officer that one of our apprentices has won first prize – very, very cool. Stephen has been kind enough to share his thoughts on the win.

So Stephen, how does it feel to be the 2010 MPA Apprentice of the Year?

Winning was great, but the next day? I was thinking, well that was the highlight of my career...now what do I do? Not being an apprentice anymore just doesn't work hahaha and I only get to be Apprentice of the Year 2010 for 2 more months.

No you don't, just because it says Apprentice of the Year 2010 doesn't mean it ends on Dec 31st. You are officially apprentice of the year until next Oct.

Then it should say 2010/2011.

Smart arse!

Has the win sunk in?

Yeah, just before the hangover did, so regret and pride at the same time, but mostly pride....at stealing beers from other tables because the waiters couldn't keep up.

Did you feel confident on the day of the comp?

No, my radio cut off every 5 mins from power shorts- why hairdryers why? Also having to redo my design because I drew it 20cm too high, I was kicking myself the whole day.

(article continued over page)

On a serious note mate, everyone's been asking me about your journey and it's not my story to tell. You've just finished your apprenticeship and I know that it hasn't been all beer and skittles. Let's start at the beginning?

Hey, the screensaver on my mobile is a picture of a beer and skittles!

That's so weird.

My childhood-hmm, not so much. Let's just say it was interesting if you're into bitchy soap operas and drama.

What or who made you get into this apprenticeship in the first place?

Well, my dad got me into painting to get rid of me when I wasn't going to school and something about me "being lazy". So I stuck with it to prove I'm not (always) lazy. The guy I worked for before MPA, took over a year to 'not' sign me up, so I went to the MPA. I remember the interview hahaha, you weren't used to brutal honesty.

Nice one.

Things kinda went to poop not long after you started your apprenticeship, what happened mate?

You know how they say "stuff doesn't just fall off the face of the earth?"

Yeah.

Well, that's all lies. Most of my family did...well my dad did and I guess the rest thought the other side of the planet was more fun. Vague, yeah, I know, but I'm working on it. End result, two weeks into my apprenticeship I only had my sister left. Amazing how quickly she grew up from that.

How do you get through that mate and keep going?

I rented with my sister, got another job working in a café and ate mee goreng noodles. I lived off that shit (are you censoring this, if not I got more). Oh and I stole food from the café, stealing is bad. It is, but I get it. The 'keep going part', I'm not sure? I've gotten a lot of help and support from Hosts, Steve, Drew and you. I'm just surprised you all offered to help.

That's crazy talk, the offer still stands for as long as I'm breathing Stephen, that I swear to you.

Whad'ya reckon your dad would say to you now 'Mr. Apprentice of the Year'?

I don't know, but I wish I could hear it.

Well, you just finished your apprenticeship and you've stuck with it for now. Other than painting, what are your plans for the future? Didn't you get me to sign your passport recently?

Going to Bali soon, haven't figured out the rest. I once worked with a guy who was backpacking as a painter, so I've got the idea floating around in the back of my head.

You should do it! Stephen, you'll also notice how I deleted the rest of your answer so that ASIO won't hunt you down should this go global.

Stephen, is there anything else that your non sarcastic side would like to share with your fellow painters? Words of wisdom perhaps?

- 1) Do your best not to let anyone misplace your front teeth, those things are pricey.
- 2) Putting a live mouse in someone's lunch box IS funny.
- 3) Hold your brush on the handle not the bristles; you'll get paint on your hands.
- 4) Laying off a door with a wide wallpaper brush when using gloss acrylic IS a good idea.

Stephen, I know I've told you over and over, but my words cannot express how proud I am of you. From the day you've started your apprenticeship to now, it feels like a lots happened and I for one am very grateful to have had you as an apprentice and to have gotten to know you. Congratulations on this massive achievement, you deserve it no matter how hard it is for you to accept. A huge congrats to Amanda Gizzi, Brooke Tate, Brett Wenzel, Matt Herbert, Peter Chapman and Ian Bassett for getting into the finals of the comp and performing so well. Finally to all of my apprentices, if it's a good thing and you want it, then go get it.....no matter how hard it might seem.....unless of course you're scared? Seeya on site!

Nicole-Maree Thackray
Painting Field Officer

SUNLIGHT AND UV LEVELS

UV radiation levels vary in strength across Australia on any given day. The sample below shows the UV radiation levels on Thursday 21 October 2010. Today is overcast and the UV levels are still very high.

When the UV index is at 3 and above, the level of UV radiation in sunlight is strong enough to damage the skin – again let me say: It's overcast today!

The sun doesn't have to be seen to damage your skin. Heat and high temperatures are not related to levels of UV radiation. Temperature relates to the amount of infrared present in sunlight, not UV radiation.



DON'T RISK SKIN CANCER - protect yourself by using sunscreen, wear a hat with a brim, wear protective clothing and sunnies and drink plenty of water.

Sheena Finlay
OS&H Coordinator

IMPORTANT: CHANGE OF DETAILS

Please remember if you change your mobile number, home number, address, or any other details – please contact the office or your field officer to advise of the changes as soon as possible. It is important that our database is kept up to date so we are able to contact you.

APPRENTICE COMPLETIONS

We would like to congratulate the following apprentices who successfully complete their apprenticeship in October:

Malcolm Clarke
Alex Southern
Sam Harbuz



Kym paints herself out of a corner

September 21

An apprenticeship in the building industry is not something every young woman considers but BMW's building industry apprenticeship scheme is producing outstanding results for female apprentices.

Several BMW female apprentices have received Master Builders Association Industry Training Program Awards in recent years and a number of employers have rated the girls as the best apprentices they have had.

Some of the female apprentices have overcome personal challenges to take part in the apprenticeship program, and none more so than mature age painting apprentice Kym Minoughan.

Kym started her painting pre-apprenticeship while at Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women after being interviewed by Industry Training Unit manager Imogen Wilmott, former manager Danny Ford and Nicole Thackray of Master Painters' Association (MPA) Skills – one of BMW's industry partners in the scheme.

MPA Skills employs and monitors painting apprentices under the Industry Training Program, which promotes and supports apprentice training in the building and construction, including funding part of their wages during their apprenticeship.

Danny and Imogen negotiated placement and day release for Kym after Nicole was satisfied that Kym would be suitable for the program and for ongoing employment in the painting trade, and she started her pre-apprenticeship program with MPA Skills in May 2008.

Kym says she has always enjoyed working with her hands and was doing maintenance work and manual work around the Centre "I knew I had to do something to start a new career," Kym said.

"I didn't want to go into retail or anything like that, I wanted something permanent."

Kym was escorted to the pre-apprenticeship course by Boronia staff and quickly won the trust and acceptance of the class of mainly young males, choosing to tell them of her background. She went on to assume something of a mentoring role with some of her young classmates, her depth of life experience enabling her to provide valuable advice to youngsters with issues of their own.

Nicole praised Kym's quality of work and attention to detail in the course as outstanding. Kym won early release from Boronia and finished the pre-apprenticeship program under her own supervision.

MPA Skills arranged her employment as an apprentice with Michelangelo Painting through the then Department of Housing and Works, working on the construction of high end new houses, with the prospect of permanent employment as a tradesperson.

"She's a lovely lady," Nicole said. "Her work ethic is fantastic."

Kym's life isn't yet without troubles. Kym has still to acquire her driver's licence to make travelling to work sites less difficult, and her children demand much of her time.

However, she is now in her second year of apprenticeship and should finish in June 2012 to enter the painting world as a tradeswoman.

Kym says that she is glad to be back in the workforce. [article continued over page](#)

“I’m enjoying it more than I thought I would,” Kym said. “It’s satisfying to see the work through to the end.”

Kym’s ambitions don’t stop with painting. In the future she hopes to have the opportunity to join Nicole in helping young apprentices into the trade, and guiding them into making good life choices along the way.

Nicole is enthusiastic about the Industry Training Program and its benefits not only to the industry, but to young apprentices, some of whom would find it difficult to find an opening in the trade by themselves.

“I think it’s fantastic,” Nicole said.

“I’m hoping we can do it all over again. The results have spoken for themselves, we’ve had great success.”



Kym Minoughan at work on a Sorrento construction site

WIN A PRIZE!

This Month’s Question

Schwarzenegger has a big one, Michael J. Fox has a small one, Madonna doesn’t have one, the Pope doesn’t use his, and Clinton uses his all the time. What is it?

Be the first person to call Meagan on 9471 6606 at **9:30am on Friday 5th November 2010** with the correct answer, and you will win a prize.

September’s Question

How could a cowboy ride into town on Friday, stay two days, and ride out on Friday?

The answer to September’s question was **The Horse’s Name is Friday**

The winners were Thomas Whittaker and Michael Fayomi. Congratulations guys!

