



**All together now:** Graduates of work skills programs celebrate at an open day held at Katoomba's Nova Employment office last month.

## Graduates celebrate at open day

By Shane Desiatnik

Participants of tailored work-seeking skills courses at Nova Employment in Katoomba celebrated their graduation at an open day held on August 25, demonstrating how accredited training and work experience stints can open many doors.

Nova Employment has experienced tremendous growth in recent years, paving the way for people with a disability to develop skills and experience in key areas towards a path of entering the workforce, finding and keeping satisfying jobs of their choice.

Katoomba manager Stuart Wilson said the open day was a way of celebrating the latest local graduates of Nova Employment's two-year Certificate I in Workplace Education course as part of its Transition To Work program.

"Trainees do a minimum of six work experience placements and learn the skills they need to find a job and enter the workforce," Mr Wilson said.

"They are then ready to enter award-wage employment in areas they are interested in pursuing."

"We've also recently run a four-month learn to drive pilot project that got a 100 per cent success rate in getting learner driver's licences for participants and we will soon be running a self-help mental health strategy program to assist people with identifying triggers of mental health symptoms

and illnesses and put things in place to address them early on."

More than 45 people attended the open day, including Transition To Work graduates Nadia Watt and Amanda Haron who said they gained a lot of confidence and enthusiasm for work by completing the course.

"I've done work experience placements at places including The Family Hotel, The Children's Cottage, an Anglicare shop and a local hairdresser and I still work at The Family Hotel on Mondays," Nadia said.

"I enjoyed the course and the best part of the work experience was getting to play music and talk to the kids. We also have job coaches at Nova Employment that are very helpful."

Amanda said she began the course after completing her HSC last year and gained a lot out of it, including doing research about looking for a job, producing an effective resume and how best to perform at a job interview.

"I particularly enjoyed my work placement at Wentworth Falls Animal Hospital because I love animals and I'm looking to work with animals," Amanda said.

Nova Employment recently relocated to an office at unit 8a, 197 Katoomba Street. For more information, phone 4782-6911 or visit [www.novacemployment.com.au](http://www.novacemployment.com.au).