

A time to celebrate ability



Bernie Davey, Sally Davis and Pip Stalley at My Little Café last week

With celebrations for the International Day of People with disability taking place last week, Bourke's acting manager for NOVA Employment says it is time more local employers recognised the achievements and contribution people with a disability can bring to the workplace.

NOVA is an Australian Government funded disability employment service that looks to help people with a disability find and maintain long-term employment.

"It is all about giving that opportunity to people with a disability, recognising their skills and abilities and working with those and the right employer to give those people the opportunity to participate in the community," said Mr Davey.

"There are a lot of benefits that go with that; obviously they learn new social interaction skills in the workplace, they become breadwinners, participate more in the community, have more disposable income so it's good for the community as well. So that is basically what we are about."

Mr Davey said one example in Bourke is the successful employment of Sally Davis with a local coffee shop owned by Pip Stalley.

"Sally was linked up with Pip through the previous manager here," said Mr Davey. "I think Pip was looking for someone to work in the café as a Kitchen hand. Sally had identified that as one of the job choices she would like to do, NOVA spoke to Pip about her disability and how it affected her and talked about how we could overcome that and still maintain an active role for Sally and gradually increase her work capacity over time."

Finding staff in the hospitality industry is always a challenge and Pip said having Sally come work for her has been very beneficial.

She said NOVA gave Sally on the job support through her initial training period, which meant a smooth transition into the

workplace.

"Sally is really flexible as well, so if I only need her for three hours or if I need to keep her for a couple more hours I can," said Pip. "And there is a small wage subsidy, which for small businesses any wage subsidy you can get is really handy."

Sally too says her experience has been very positive.

She said she hasn't always had a good response from employers or job agencies, but with the support she has been given and an understanding employer she has gained confidence in her abilities and feels it will help her progress to other work opportunities.

"I've always been interested in food and I wanted to gain confidence in a safe environment - prove to others and myself that I can do this," said Sally.

"I think this could be a stepping stone to move on to other things."



NEXT ISSUE

The Western Herald will be published on Wednesday next week. All Publicity Officers are asked to have their contributions to our office as early as possible Monday morning. This will be our last issue for 2010. Our first issue for 2011 will be Thursday 27th January.