

October 2013



### CEO Comment

*Martin Wren*

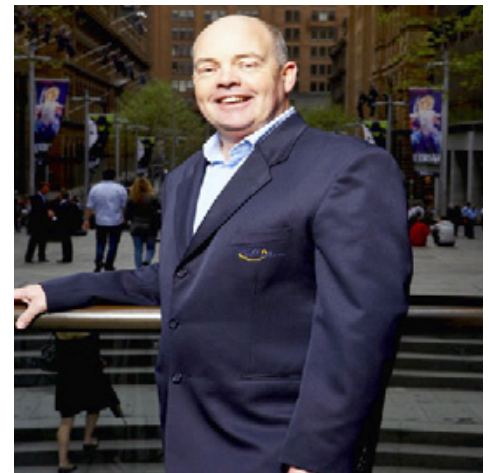
*What a dreadful month this has been for so many of our friends and their families in the Blue Mountains.*

The dreadful bushfires that are still burning in New South Wales have unfortunately been quite disastrous for some of our employers and staff with one of NOVA's Penrith team losing their home.

What has been very positive has been the wonderful community spirit that has shone brightly through the smoke. You may know that NOVA supports a number of other charities and amongst the many phone calls we received came some from these friends offering their financial and emotional support.

We very much appreciated the thoughts and expressions of support that we have received and you can be sure that we are working to look after both those workers and their employers affected by the fires.

Setting aside the bush fires October has



been a good month for us with many new job starts and a most encouraging rise in the number of Traineeships and Apprenticeships that our job seekers have started.

I personally think these forms of employment make a great start to any person's career and are particularly important for people with disability, providing a qualification and skills base that can last a lifetime.

My congratulations to those new workers beginning their careers this month.

### NOVA OFFICES

- Camden
- Campbelltown
- Caringbah
- Engadine
- Hurstville
- Ingleburn
- Katoomba
- Penrith
- Richmond
- Rockdale
- Rouse Hill
- Springwood
- St Marys
- Windsor

## NOVA Employment and Back Galley Cafe working with ability

*Local Camden resident Ben Hodalj had been unemployed for the last 3 years. Ben, like 225,000 other Australians, is living with epilepsy, forcing him out of his career in the automotive industry and into unemployment.*

Ben recalls how he felt in those 3 years, "It was really hard being out of work, I didn't have a lot of money to catch up with mates and it was a struggle with bills and paying rent."

Sarah and Ben Von Wartburg at the local Back Galley Cafe have been using disability employment specialists NOVA Employment for the last few years to fill some vacancies within their cafe. "NOVA has been fantastic. They have helped us if we have needed anything. Every person we have employed through NOVA, which has been 3 now, have picked the role up very quickly, it has been a great experience."



Back Galley Cafe has now employed Mr Hodalj as a kitchen hand, putting an end to his unemployment and finding the cafe a very valued employee. Sarah is very pleased with how he has seamlessly joined their team. "He has been great and has fitted in really well with all of our other staff. He has shown an enormous amount of initiative."

NOVA Employment Consultant Yvette Bucior was with Mr Hodalj every step of the way, through job seeking, to being there for the interview and ensuring he fitted into the workplace. "He gets on really well with all of his other colleagues, they give great feedback and Sara and Ben his managers just love him."

Ben Hodalj is now looking forward to a more prosperous future, "At the moment I am happy having a job, being an employee, getting out of the house and making new friends."

To view a video on Ben's journey visit  
<http://www.novaemployment.com.au/Multi-media/Webcasts/>

## TTW in Rockdale

*NOVA Employment is aiming high for 2014. They are opening the very first Transition to Work program in the Rockdale area, an essential service for young people with a disability.*

NOVA Transition is a two year post school program for school leavers with a disability who need support to make the transition from school to work.

Their program has one aim – to guide jobseekers into paid work of their choice. The many opportunities offered by NOVA Transition ensure that trainees understand that they can match their skills, interests and experience to a job.

Angela is a parent; her son Michael attends the NOVA Transition program in Sutherland Shire. "We have seen a huge change in Michael since starting NOVA's Transition to Work Program. Michael's communication skills and confidence has increased dramatically and he is able to follow directions much better than before. Michael is now travelling independently and is learning about different industries through work experience"



NOVA Transition has been running successfully since 2005. It began as it was a natural extension of what Nova Employment had been doing well since 1990, putting people with a disability into Open Employment. This was shown by Hurstville Transition last year, achieving 100% of their 2nd year trainees placed into Open Employment, in their Job choice, in their local area.

Megan Elliott, the Transition to Work Coordinator is looking forward to what lies ahead, "I am so excited about opening a Transition in Rockdale. We have already met some wonderful people in the area and I can't wait to start working with the employers, community services and of course the young people in the Rockdale area."

So whether they are into computers, animals, shopping, food or gardening NOVA have a proven track record of success in placing young people with disability into every industry. You can call their Program Coordinator Meg Elliott on 9833 2500 or 0414 322 911 or visit their website [www.transition.com.au](http://www.transition.com.au)

### Some NOVA links

Watch our latest video on NOVA's Youtube channel



Become a fan of NOVA on Facebook. Recommend us to your friends.



What's news at Can-Do-Ability?



Want some great employment tips?



# Deniz's Journal - Caringbah TTW

By Deniz

*This morning I woke up and I was very excited to go and see Australia compete in a physical game of Murder ball. As I got to my NOVA office in Caringbah, I was waiting for our group to show up.*

When we got to Caringbah station Heidi was put to the test of organising the ramp for me to transfer my wheelchair onto the train. But she did a marvelous job. As we got on the train Heidi was talking about her trip to the snow where she managed to meet Australia's Paralympian world record champion skier Michael Milton.



When we arrived at St James Station our group raced to Hyde Park to watch the Murder ball and we got there in time. I was feeling amused and shocked when we got to the venue because it was outdoors.

The weather was very warm and we were required to wear sunscreen to protect ourselves from the sun. The pre match entertainment was performed by Justice Crew.

The game was very interesting to watch as a spectator, it was like gladiator's fighting on wheelchairs, each player putting their body on the line while competing at their personal best, both teams displaying professionalism at the highest level you can ever imagine. While producing the most memorable match for the crowd to witness unfortunately Australia was defeated by USA. I would like to thank Lucas Kraus for not only risking his camera but for getting up close and personal taking good shots of the guys playing.

This is the final Wheels (leg) of my journey and we dashed against time to catch two trains as we got off at Town Hall, all the group hopping on one train except Dylan, Heidi and myself as we were going to Caringbah. Out of nowhere I saw another wheelchair user, a double amputee, who turned out to be Australian wheelchair tennis champion David Hall. In fact, he is not only a champion tennis player but also a great motivator for every person with and without a disability. He told me the things that he has achieved in life such as travelling overseas, working for a currency exchange with a massive company and he also has lived overseas. Unfortunately our chat came to an end when he got off at Rockdale Station.

It was a very awesome day and on behalf of Caringbah TTW I'd like to thank Heidi, Hurstville NOVA and the events volunteers Meg, Lucas and Terry.



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