

May 19 2008

Indigenous Youth face a skilled future

Two programs launched by Kwinana Industries Council are designed to make sure Kwinana's Indigenous Youth have a skilled future.

Called "Learning to Earning" and "IHLEP", both are designed to meet special community needs and provide pre-job training.

Learning to Earning is managed by Kwinana Industries Education Partnership in conjunction with Challenger TAFE, KIC member companies and operates in consultation with the Kwinana and Rockingham Indigenous Communities.

Students taking part receive fully integrated job-specific training which is tailored for the needs of the region's characteristics.

At the end of this skills specific training, KIC member companies BHP-Billiton Nickel West, BP Kwinana Refinery and the United Group will assist students who successfully complete their courses to find employment.

"Kwinana Industries Council has instigated what it believes to be an Australian first initiative: industry based job training followed by employment close to home for the region's Indigenous community," said director Chris Oughton.

The oddly-named IHLEP (the Indigenous Horticultural and Landscaping pre-Employment Program), aims to provide training, education, coaching and mentoring to provide ongoing employment.

It was instigated by KIC and is managed by national recruitment company IPA in conjunction with the Town of Kwinana and Challenger TAFE.

"Due to a 33 year low in unemployment, Australia is still battling a skills shortage in all industries around Australia with particular shortages being experienced in the West," said IPA Michelle Krueger.

"IHLEP aims to help both address these shortages as well as provide Indigenous youth with job skills training."

Developed with the Town of Kwinana, Kwinana Industries Council and IPA, the program will partner closely with industry and local businesses to facilitate the transition into these available roles.

"KIC reckons this is an absolute winner," said director Chris Oughton.

"Our member companies are keen to make it easier for local people to get local jobs and this program fits the bill."

IPA co-ordinates the program, helping to kick-start 100 candidates into employment in the local Horticulture and Agriculture industry, with each candidate obtaining accredited training once completing the pre-employment course.