

## Trainees on the road to Civil success

NPC's CIVIL Construction course in Ipswich has been a remarkable success with all 16 Indigenous trainees graduating and now ready for work experience on the Ipswich Motorway.

If successfully employed on the motorway, most of the trainees will be able to complete their Certificate 3 in Civil Construction working on the Goodna to Dinmore motorway construction.

It's been a long wait for the trainees who had to wait more than six months for the course to begin because of problems arising with the construction of the motorway.

The course delivers a Certificate 1 and six units toward a Certificate 2 in Civil Construction as well as life and job skills to make sure people develop with careers. (cont. page 2)



Graduates from the Civil Construction course with NPC staff and mentors

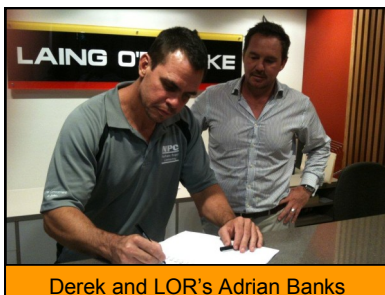
## New partner, new business

OVER THE past 12 months NPC has been negotiating with construction firms to build new housing in the Gulf area and are proud to announce the signing of a new partnership with construction company, Laing O'Rourke (LOR).

NPC and LOR signed a Memorandum of Understanding in March and hope to proceed to a full Joint Venture in the near future which will see NPC going into the construction business.

The first project targeted by the new venture is the construction of new homes in Doomadgee. This project is awaiting the final signing of leases by local Native Title groups and council before progressing.

The partnership is breaking new ground in the development of Indigenous communities as NPC and LOR will look to develop larger housing subdivisions with higher quality, more integrated infrastructure, rather than the piecemeal approach of the past.



Derek and LOR's Adrian Banks

NPC is also hoping the projects deliver more training and jobs to the communities and opportunities for local contractors.

The larger developments enable more people in communities to complete whole apprenticeships instead of the segmented apprenticeships of the past.

## NPC wins training award



Samara Jennings accepting MISC award

In September last year, NPC took home a prestigious Mining Industry Skills Centre (MISC) award for innovation in training at the Brisbane Convention Centre.

The gala event attended by some of Australia's largest mining companies was held to recognise the role of training in transforming an industry which has seen more than its fair share of change over the last decade.

NPC's Samara Jennings accepted the award for NPC, remembering to acknowledge the traditional custodians. (cont. page 3)

# Townsville and Brisbane office makeovers

DUE TO the expanding team, NPC south Queensland team relocated in September last year to a larger office in Capalaba.

"The move is a good step forward for the company. It boasts a professional work place while ensuring adequate room for the growth of NPC," said NPC's Business Manager, Mitchell Rimmer.

The office space houses the NPC Brisbane-based staff and a conference room.

Our north Queensland offices welcomed some fabulous new administration personnel from Doomadgee in February.

Cyantha Hookey, Crystalla Cairns and Hayley Cairns are studying a Certificate 2 and 3 in Business Administration while working in NPC's Townsville office with Director, Brad Foster.

Our Century Mine office will also welcome the arrival of Naressa Carlton to the team.

Naressa is a Doomadgee local who will bring great skills to the team. With work starting to ramp up on site Craig, Graeme and

Dave will have more than enough to keep her snowed under and get the know our operations inside out.

In Townsville, Cyantha, Crystalla and Hayley have made a solid start to their careers.

"I've just got the girls working part-time at the moment. They're doing really well and they'll begin college pretty soon," said Brad.

The three took the long flight in from Doomadgee to Townsville, have set up camp and are getting used to life in the big smoke. They begin at TAFE at the end of March and are excited by the big change in their lives.

NPC have been sponsoring the girls' flights and are helping out with accommodation while in Townsville, as well as providing the practical side of their training.

As part of the girls traineeship they're also doing a work placement at Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health. NPC are proud to be able to partner with such a great organisation to help the girls achieve their goals.



NPC's Brisbane staff

## Sports equipment donations for Gregory

STAFF AND students of the tiny Gregory Downs School near Century Mine were delighted to receive a hamper of sporting goods donated by NPC at a small ceremony in August.

The package included cricket bats, rugby balls and a soccer set that included netting for the school which previously had little to no sporting equipment.

"We heard the kids had almost no sports gear and thought the least we could do would be to have a whip-around and get something for them," said NPC's Craig Berridge.

"It's pretty tough growing up out here if you've got nothing to play with," he said.

The sports gear has been given a solid work out already. From soccer balls to cricket bats, Gregory Downs is non-stop sporting action every lunch time. However, the wet season has meant lunch times inside for the students.

"It means a lot to our kids to finally have enough equipment to play sport, and a variety of sports at that," said school teacher Meegan Brown.

Gregory Downs School is a branch of Doomadgee State School, it is located 45 minutes east of Century mine with five students.



Children playing with the equipment at Gregory Downs

## Civil School sees 100 percent graduates

*Continued from front page...*

CIVIL SCHOOL manager, Hamish Townsend said the course had to be delayed until work could be guaranteed.

"We place work outcomes really highly. Many of our trainees have done lots of courses that delivered tickets for this and licences for that, but no jobs. We wanted to make sure our trainees got onsite and gave themselves the best chance for completing a full Cert 3," said Hamish.

The trainees showed great enthusiasm during the course, with all 16 attending every class.

Course mentor Chris Whitfield was impressed by their dedication.

"They're a great group, one of the best I've worked with, they really helped each other, worked hard and did everything they needed to do to give them a chance at a position on the motorway," he said.

The support among the students was very positive as they carpooled to and from the Bremer TAFE for their classes. Each



Graduates Sharron, Rosie and Amma

day a different student would bring lunch for everyone.

The course also included units on money management, job skills, communication and delivers trainees tickets in traffic management and an OH&S white card.

A two-week simulator-based component, run by our own Dave McMillan proved popular for those intent on heavy machinery use.

NPC have recently added the OH&S based "Canary" simulator program to the course which puts trainees in a virtual construction site and presents them with real situations to overcome.

The model for the course was the highly successful Mining School program which in August was made a finalist in the Mining Industry Skills Centre Awards (see story on page 1).

NPC and the motorway's contractors expect successful trainees to be notified about placements in April with Certificate 3 traineeships to continue 2011.

## NPC touch team top of the ladder

FEBRUARY SAW the formation of the first-ever NPC mixed touch football team.

Success has been swift with the team topping the table and sent up a division.

Things didn't start so rosey, the first trial game was full of non-stop action and not a lot of it good.

"I felt like a five-legged crab, constantly scuttling back and forth and looking sideways and getting in everyone's way, but this league thing isn't too bad," said Hamish Townsend.

The trial game came with a loss, but NPC did not lose hope.

Each week the team has advanced a little more with their skills and team work and after a number of successive wins have been moved into a higher grade.

"Touch has been a great way to socialise and build morale with the NPC team," said NPC newbie Kristen Keskinen.



NPC's scorching touch football team climbing the ladder

## NPC savings account for workers

NPC WORKERS are reminded that a special savings account exists to put money away for times when they might be sick, for holidays or have large bills such as funerals.

The NPC Savings Account was created by management at NPC because of the small number of people saving money from their job at the mine.

To encourage saving NPC regularly contributes money to the workers account as an incentive for ongoing contributions.

"A lot of NPC's workers are casual employees. Casuals don't have the same entitlements as full-time employees so they're not paid for holidays or sick days," said Mr Flucker.

"All casuals receive a higher pay rate to cover for not having sick or holiday leave, but very few employees are saving money for when they have time off."

The savings account is part of NPC's ongoing efforts to improve economic literacy among our staff and relieve the pressures that come from living day to day.

NPC are hoping the many new employees who have recently joined our team take up the savings account initiative to get them through the leaner times.

If you would like to find out more about the NPC savings account and the incentives that are on offer, contact NPC's head office and talk to Samara.

## Scholarships for Waanyi students to complete high school

TO KICK along NPC's learning programs, a scholarship is currently being planned for Waanyi youth living in remote and rural communities.

NPC is working closely with established scholarship programs offering high school opportunities for Indigenous children from communities throughout Australia.

The scheme will offer scholarships for Waanyi students to complete high school at a nominated boarding school. The scholarship will cover boarding fees, tuition, books, travel to and from school and uniforms.

## Mining school wins innovation award

*Continued from page 1...*

"We're an indigenous company in the mining and civil construction industry, it's nice to be recognised first and foremost. Winning an innovation award is great for us as well, it's what we're all about," she said.

NPC's training has been attracting increased attention over the last year as graduates from our courses continue to excel and retain jobs in a difficult industrial environment.

The mining industry has been in a 'no-hire' mode since the middle of 2008, but with the economic environment improving (especially in India and China), orders are back and the chances for jobs improving.

NPC's Century Site Manager, Craig Berridge also attended the awards and was quietly pleased with the result.

"These have been tough years for our industry and in the sector we operate in we

need to make sure everything we do is quality. I am so proud of NPC's success to date, winning a MISC award is added bonus to our success," he said.

It could be a big year on the training front as the mining and civil industries start to recover from the previous years economic doldrums.

New works are pushing through the pipeline right around the state and NPC is well placed to be part of them.

## New employees for NPC

IT HAS been a long period of employment hibernation since the financial crisis, but recently things at MMG Century Mine have picked up and NPC has welcomed a number of new employees to its team, both at the mine and in the office.

There are 14 new workers at the mine with NPC's Mine Site Manager, Craig Berridge ensuring their transition from the mining school to the mine site is running smoothly.

The excellent relationship between MMG Century and NPC has been reinforced by the reliability and success of the new employees NPC brings to site.

Down in Brisbane, Managing Director Derek Flucker has put on three new staffers, to occupying our new Capalaba office.

Kristen Keskinen jumped into the role of Executive Assistant in January this year, followed by the Legal and Language Project Officer, Peki Ruska.

In late 2009, Hamish Townsend, came on board as the Projects and Communications Coordinator.

The retention rates of NPC graduates are double the industry standard, a statistic NPC is especially proud of.



Samara with MISC CEO Derek Hunter

## NPC NEWS IN BRIEF...

### Spreading the word

Directors Derek Flucker and Brad Foster have been busy on the conference trail, sharing NPC's business model with other Indigenous organisations around Australia. In October 2009, the pair presented a seminar on surviving the global financial crisis at a conference in Adelaide. Earlier, both had spoken at an Indigenous Economic Development conference in Alice Springs, forging links with a similar organisation in Canada. In February this year the pair ran business seminars for Indigenous groups in the Northern Territory wanting to expand and create joint ventures.



### International volunteers for NPC

Australian Internships is a new company looking to broaden the horizons of young people around the world by bringing them to Australia. NPC have formed a partnership with the company and hope to facilitate their involvement in projects from hairdressing to mechanical work in Doomadgee. The agreement brings about an exciting opportunity for cultural exchange and will be a boost for community programs in need of a helping hand.

### Language project

The Waanyi language revitalisation project is gaining momentum with new project officer Pakeri Ruska taking the reins and picking up some government funding along the way. NPC are very proud of this project and believe it will be something very special for the company. The production of videos and the Waanyi dictionary will soon commence with Pakeri heading out on a regular basis to the community to help design and create some momentum for an established course and base for resources in the community. NPC would like to thank the Australian Government through the Maintenance of Indigenous Language and Records program for their financial support of the language program.



### Rodeo and language festival

In collaboration with the Language project NPC is again proud to sponsor the Doomadgee Rodeo, this year with a new language and culture component. Language coordinator, Pakeri Ruska has begun coordinating resources in Brisbane and Doomadgee to get a stronger cultural component to the Rodeo which was a huge hit last year. This year the rodeo will be combined with the Waking Up Waanyi Language and Cultural Festival. The winners of the Waanyi Dictionary Cover Art competition will be announced at the festival.

### New slogan

You may have noticed a small change to NPC's marketing. A new slogan that reflects where we are and where we're going, *Bringing Culture to Business.*

### NPC at the Deadlys

In October last year, Brad Foster and Derek Flucker attended the 2009 Deadly Awards in Sydney. NPC were finalists in the Contribution to Employment category. Unfortunately, NPC did not take the award out, but will be endeavouring to be nominated again in the future.

### Alternative Energy

NPC's plans to move into the renewable energy sector have picked up pace with meetings at CEO level with Ergon Energy. NPC are close to creating a new Joint Venture with a multinational engineering firm and scoping out the best projects for the communities.

With oil prices continuing to soar (25% in the last year alone) the business case for replacing the old diesel generators with clean, green renewable energy gets better by the day. NPC's negotiations are moving toward putting communities like Doomadgee and Palm Island into positions of strength in controlling and owning their future power needs. We hope communities are able to get in on the ground and invest in owning their own power stations. Watch this space for more news in the coming months.



### Small Business



Long-term NPC employees and board members Kevin Cairns and Gerald Aplin have been the beneficiaries of NPC's latest round of business incubation. The two are looking to set up a trucking and small earthmoving firm with NPC providing opportunities for work and administration support. Good luck to these guys on breaking into the

business world and congratulations to Mr Cairns for receiving funding from ADBT.

### New Media

Some of you may have come across our new projects and communications bloke, Hamish Townsend. He's jumped in with both feet and produced some new videos for the company which you can watch on the website. Having video footage like this makes it easier to tell our story wherever we go, improving our marketing capabilities. View the NPC video at [www.northernprojectcontracting.com.au](http://www.northernprojectcontracting.com.au)

### NPC and AEC

NPC is proud to announce it has recently become a member of the Australian Employment Covenant (AEC). The covenant was drawn up by West Australian miner and head of Fortescue Minerals, Andrew Forrest with the aim of getting employment for 50,000 Indigenous people. Companies as large and diverse as CAT, Commonwealth Bank, Linfox and the Federal Police have made a commitment to Indigenous employment, which as we know is NPC's business. At a meeting between Mr Forrest and NPC Managing Director, Derek Flucker in February NPC was invited to become a member of AEC. We have leant our shoulder to the course and committed to its aims. Let's hope with the recent economic growth we can make a difference.

### And finally...

Good hearty cheers are extended to WNAC's Chairman, Kevin Cairns who has been unwell recently. Our best wishes from all the NPC staff & their families to Kevin for a quick recovery.

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