

Jazmine:

Hi, and welcome back to another episode of EPPP TV. I'm Jazmine Huggins, and it's awesome to be back.

A huge thanks to Liam for taking over the last couple of episodes of EPPP TV. He was up the North Coast in New South Wales, and we learnt so much about the opportunities available up there. Almost had me thinking that I want to move there.

In this episode, we are looking at healthcare and construction, two industries that keep on giving when it comes to jobs. They're also two industries that are going to play a key role in our economic recovery.

In this episode, we're heading to Lismore Base Hospital to meet nurse manager Jon, and nurse educator Charmaine, as well as trainee, Ava. We'll be chatting with Sienna who is currently working at St. Joseph's Nursing Home in East Lismore, and who's also been accepted to study a diploma in paramedical science next year. We'll meet SBAT mentors, Toni Bellos and Steve Montgomery, and find out how they're helping students, and we'll chat to apprentice Robert and his boss, Matt, and do a deep dive into all things construction.

First, let's head to Lismore.

Ava:

I'm Amy Jarrett. I just finished high school and I completed a Cert III in health through a school-based traineeship.

Ava:

Three years ago when I was in Year 10, my Aboriginal education officer got me in for a chat and was saying this was going to be a good idea if I wanted to have a career in health and so I applied straightaway. It was a really good opportunity that I just had to take.

Jon Magill:

Hi. My name is Jon Magill, Nurse Manager for Education and Professional Development. My role is looking after undergraduate students and post-graduate.

Jon Magill:

The Elsa Dixon Grant is important because it gives us an opportunity to bring Aboriginal kids in, in Year 11 and 12, into the traineeship. We've had grant money for five students since 2018, and this year we've been successful for 10. It gives us an opportunity to give these kids a pathway, a career pathway, which is fantastic.

Ava:

For this program I had to go to TAFE every Wednesday for theory and assessment tasks, and I worked twice a week, as well as the Wednesday at the Lismore Base Hospital.

Ava:

The most challenging aspect of the school-based traineeship is probably the struggle with school and balancing TAFE school and work, and maybe some of the things that happen in the hospital and the reality of life.

Ava:

In those hard times when it gets a bit challenging and we struggle with a couple of things, Charmaine's a really great mentor that we go to and will help us through anything and to make sure that we're okay.

Charmaine Murphy:

My name's Charmaine Murphy and I'm the Nurse Educator at Lismore Base Hospital. I've been in the position for a number of years, and my role encompasses many things to do with education across the whole of the Base Hospital.

Charmaine Murphy:

The cadets actually learn a whole raft of practical skills that you can take that are transportable anywhere in the world, essentially, so taking blood pressures, pulses, temperatures, pressure injury prevention, falls assessments. They can do all sorts of paperwork. They learn how to use a lot of the electronic medical record systems.

Charmaine Murphy:

They're very supported. They're not thrown in the deep end. We regularly check in on how they're going, and make sure that everything is just right, just right for them.

Ava:

I really enjoyed working in the hospital and seeing all behind-the-scenes of how everything runs, the things that the patients don't see. It's really made my experience worth it, and I really know what I want to do.

Ava:

My next step is that I have enrolled in university in Melbourne, Monash University, for a bachelor of nursing, and I'd love to complete that and, yeah, start my life as an RN.

Ava:

To the students looking to do this, I'd say definitely do it. It's a great leg-up, and everyone's really supportive about it. You learn so much, and it's really fun.

Jazmine:

A huge shout-out to the healthcare workers who've been keeping us safe and healthy throughout this whole pandemic.

Jazmine:

Last episode, we touched on the EPPP SBAT mentors and the work that they're doing in the community to connect schools with employers. Today, we'll be meeting two of the SBAT mentors up on the North Coast to find out more about what they do and how these mentors can help you.

Toni Bellos:

Hi, I'm Toni Bellos. I'm the school-based apprenticeship and traineeship mentor for the Ballina cluster.

Steve Montgomery:

I'm Steve Montgomery. I'm the school-based apprentice and trainee mentor for the Grafton cluster of schools.

Student:

Why would you recommend that students do an SBAT?

Toni Bellos:

It just means that the student can have it all. They get to finish Year 12, have their HSC, get another qualification and become financially independent. It's great.

Steve Montgomery:

And let's face it, they get a step ahead of their classmates. Recent research, Toni, has shown that young people who study VET while they're at school, or who do a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship, they're more likely to still be employed five to 10 years after school. It's a real headstart. It's such an advantage over their classmates.

Student:

How do you work with students?

Toni Bellos:

I just love getting to know what a young person's interests are and then, from there, we can talk about what sort of employment they could align with their interests and passions. We all know if you like what you do, you'll do well at it. So, I just like to encourage kids to think about what they like and where their interests lay.

Steve Montgomery:

It's great to be able to assist young people to connect with employers as part of the role. I don't know about you, but I find that a lot of young people have got their own networks, their families, their friends. So we're able to just give them some tips as to how to tap into those employers.

Toni Bellos:

I think that's the best part of the role. We get to help everyone. If the young person has any issues in the workplace, it's great that they've got someone else that they can talk to about their concerns. Then, that's our role to go in and try and sort it out so that they don't feel alone. For a successful outcome, they need to feel supported along the way.

Student:

How do you work with the employers?

Toni Bellos:

Another part of our role that Steve and I both really enjoy is employer engagement. Just having a chat to employees is so important just to get to know their business and to talk to them about their employment needs is really critical. Then from there, we can go back to the schools and talk to the students about what opportunities are out there.

Steve Montgomery:

It's also amazing how the students themselves have some incredible contacts with employers. Many of them are working part-time already, their family and friends have connections with employers. So, sometimes it's just a reminder of them prompting to connect with those employers to organize a work experience, or to discuss with their current employer who they're working part-time with why not consider taking them on as a school-based apprentice or trainee?

Toni Bellos:

I guess one of the messages we want to get out today is if you're a student not sure which direction you want to take, if we're in your schools, come and talk to us. We're here to help you, and we really want to help you challenge yourself and look at different options for a future career.

Steve Montgomery:

Give it a go. It's fantastic. Talk to your careers adviser, come and connect with us. We really want to make it happen.

Jazmine:

We've mentioned it in a few previous EPPP TV episodes, but construction is another great option for students. It's predicted that over the next decade, 300,000 more workers will be needed around Australia. There hasn't been a better time to get started on your career in construction.

Jazmine:

Today, we're taking a look at one of the EPPP initiatives that is supporting students in the construction industry. It's the Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway, which has been designed with the Master Builders Association.

Jazmine:

The Master Builders Association is the leading building and construction industry association in Australia. They've been around since 1873, so they know a thing or two about construction. Let's take a closer look at the Tertiary Apprenticeship Pathway.

Narrator:

A construction school-based apprenticeship or traineeship can lead to higher level VET and university qualifications. There are a number of construction related special... Students can begin their SBAT in Year 11 in a number of construction-related specialties. They then continue their apprenticeship after school. Once they finished their apprenticeship, they graduate to Certificate III or they can continue on as a tradesperson or a project manager in construction and be qualified to lead or they can continue on to complete a deployment [inaudible 00:09:12]. To find out more about the pathway, visit the Master Builders Association's Build Your Story website and talk to the careers advisor at your school.

Jazmine:

That sounds like a really interesting pathway. So let's hear from one apprentice who is doing just that.

Rob Bradley:

Hi, I'm Rob Bradley. I'm a third year carpenter's apprentice, and we're doing a big renovation on a house in Collaroy.

Rob Bradley:

I decided to do an apprenticeship because I've always been a hands-on sort of person, and I liked the idea of starting early and finishing early so you still have the rest of the day.

Rob Bradley:

I applied for my apprenticeship through TAFE, and then I found my boss Matt from a family friend who knew someone. Then we sort of met up and then both of us went to the Master Builders Association, and they set us up to start our apprenticeship going together.

Matt:

Hey, I'm Matt. I'm a builder, just mainly extensions and renovations on residential buildings. I take on apprentices, obviously, to do the smaller jobs at the start. But, hopefully, I can train them up to follow in my footsteps and do the jobs that I would do.

Matt:

The skills I would look for, I guess, dedicated, listening. I don't think you can be born a good carpenter. You can be born a hard worker or willing to learn and push through, but a good carpenter is something that everybody, or good electrician, or good plumber, you'll learn that at... It's just your willingness to learn and keep going and try again and not get frustrated.

Rob Bradley:

My typical workday, I get up at like 5:30, 5:45 to get to work on the beaches at 7:00. Then my boss Matt gives us a rundown at the start of the day of what we're going to do that day. Then he sort of just leaves us to do what we need to do and helps us when we need it.

Rob Bradley:

I have really enjoyed working in a different work environment from school. I'm working with more mature people, people that like my music taste, which is good, and, yeah, it's really nice just to be around different people that have different stories.

Matt:

Construction is definitely more than just hands-on. That would only be about half of it. You need to be able to get on with all the other trades and organize working with them when they're in your way, be happy to move on and do something else while they get their job done. Everybody's got to work together.

Rob Bradley:

My best thing about my apprenticeship is that I'm learning to do things at work that I can do at home, like hanging doors or building decks or pergolas. I can do that on weekends, or for friends, or for family. The fact that I work with team people and we're all working together as a team.

Rob Bradley:

Another great thing is that I'm getting paid while I'm learning, instead of paying to get taught.

Rob Bradley:

My dreams and goals for after I finished my apprenticeship is to eventually end up in a position like my boss, when I'm in charge. Before that happens, hopefully, go to uni and do a building degree or do extra study like that so, eventually, I am in his position.

Matt:

Look, the advice I'd give to students thinking to take on an apprenticeship if you wanted something more hands-on, bit different from school, less pen and paper, sitting in a class, more working in a team and groups of people and coordinating stuff, I'm sure, come and try an apprenticeship. It's less physical on the brain, more physical on the body, but yeah, it'd be a completely different experience to school.

Rob Bradley:

My advice for a student would be to, if you want to be a tradesman or go into that industry, then you'd have to go in with your heart and try really hard. The more you put in, the more you'll get out. But there are so many options out there that you really don't have to choose one thing. You can try four different things before you find something that you really enjoy.

Jazmine:

It sounds like Rob knows exactly what he wants to do, and he's taking the steps to get there. In case you're thinking construction is just an industry for men, we want to remind you that these opportunities are there for everyone.

Jazmine:

Back in episode one, we spoke to Fi Shewring, the president of SALT, which is Supporting And Linking Tradeswomen, about the lightning moment she sees so many people experience when they get on the tools. Let's hear it from Gemma, who's already started out on her journey in the construction industry and find out what led her to take this path and what she loves about it.

Gemma:

Hi, my name's Gemma. I'm a second-year carpenter apprentice on a commercial site.

Gemma:

The reason why I love carpentry is because I get to work with my hands, build stuff and create new things, and get a lot of joy out of doing it. I started in Year 7 woodwork class, and I loved it. I knew I wasn't going to go to uni, I knew it wasn't for me, so I just took a shot at it. I loved it and just kept going with it.

Gemma:

All my family and friends are very proud of me for taking a big step into a manly environment where there's not a lot of women. Probably my first day, I was a bit nervous and scared. But after that, it just was really natural and welcoming. They're easy to get along with. It's a great atmosphere. I love it.

Gemma:

Yeah, I want to complete my apprenticeship, be a carpenter then take small steps from there and build up to be a boss. The company I'm with, Greenlee, has supported me through now and they will back me up all the way through in my goals to achieve anything.

Gemma:

The reasons why I would choose a trade over anything else is because, one, it's good money at the end of it and you get a qualification. You can go overseas, you can do whatever you want.

Gemma:

This is one of the best decisions I've ever made, and I'm proud that I've chose this path.

Jazmine:

It sounds like Gemma is onto a great thing.

Jazmine:

Next up, I'll be talking to Sienna, a recent graduate of Alstonville High School, who's working in aged care on the North Coast. Let's see what Sienna has to say about what she's up to and how she got there.

Jazmine:

Hey, Sienna. Thanks so much for joining us today. You've got such an interesting story. Can you share a little bit about yourself, what you did at school, and when you got into the VET subjects?

Sienna:

Hi. I did in school just normal subjects, English, maths, things like that. At the beginning of Year 11, I found out about TVET courses and such, and I picked up a TVET courses, one of my subjects as well. So that was what I did in school.

Jazmine:

How did you find that? How'd you find the courses?

Sienna:

I did a taster course, I think it's called, and you do 10 weeks. Every Friday you go and do a different course, like a different taster course at TAFE, like just a introduction. After doing that, I was introduced to TVET and showed the different pathways that could be taken.

Jazmine:

What do you love about VET generally?

Sienna:

My favourite things about doing the VET course was probably independent study. We had a teacher, but it was more independent. You have to do everything yourself, and it wasn't as structured as school. Every school is so "This is how it is, this is how it's going to be." Whereas TAFE, it was very "This is how do you need to do it to get to where you need to be."

Jazmine:

Okay, awesome. What about the Cert III in health services specifically?

Sienna:

I guess it opened doors into other fields that I want to go into. So just being in health is really interesting, and you find out a lot of things. It never bored me. That was probably my favourite part was that I was always learning.

Jazmine:

What does a normal average day at work look like for you?

Sienna:

Usually, I will work an afternoon shift and I will get to work, do basic care rounds, set people up for dinner and things like that, just basic care you're giving. Also just talking to them and being there for them and offering support when they need it because some of them don't have that. Paperwork, lots of paperwork, cleaning, things like that. But basically it is a care job. You are on your feet a hundred percent of your shift.

Jazmine:

How have you find working in aged care this year with COVID?

Sienna:

It's been more difficult than normal with people not being able to visit and different things happening. But I have enjoyed it as it's my first year working in the industry as well. So I can't really compare it to anything else, but I do really enjoy it.

Jazmine:

Can you tell us a little bit about the opportunities for work in your local area?

Sienna:

There's lots of opportunity to work in the North Coast in aged care, lots of different employment options, and there are heaps of facilities always wanting work, so it's a booming industry.

Jazmine:

What's next for you? Do you think you'll be going to uni?

Sienna:

Yes. Hopefully, I'll be going to uni to do my bachelor in health sciences or paramedical science and go on to do paramedicine.

Jazmine:

Okay, cool. Can you tell us a little bit about what paramedical science actually is?

Sienna:

Just basically training to be a paramedic, to go and work in high-stress, first-response trauma situations.

Jazmine:

What advice could you give to students that are interested in working in the healthcare industry?

Sienna:

It's a really great industry, very rewarding, very hands-on, but if that's what you like, it's great. You've got to have patience, but if that's what you have, then go for it because it's honestly amazing.

Jazmine:

Nice one. Well, thanks so much for chatting with us.

Jazmine:

That brings us to the end of another episode of EPPP TV. Thanks so much for joining me, and I hope you've enjoyed this dive into these two industries, which will be playing such an important role in our economy over the coming years. I look forward to seeing you next time for the last episode of the year.