

Careers Expo to support West Coast economic development

Strong attendance and great feedback have cemented plans to make the 2017 West Coast Careers Expo an annual event.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic (TPP) hosted the first-ever expo on Saturday (16 September 2017) with the aim of showcasing job opportunities and training options available across the West Coast. It signals a new approach being taken by the Polytechnic to partner with local industry and the community. Taking a region-wide approach to the expo aims to support wider economic development and training objectives on the West Coast.

TPP Council Chair Andrew Robb says the event was a great success for attendees as well as all of the organisations involved.

“This event was all about bringing West Coast employers, industry representatives, TPP and support agencies together in one place to talk to the community about the opportunities out there. The organisations involved on the day were saying it was a great opportunity to find out what other organisations were up to and what that means for the wider region.

“Visitors to the expo were also positive about the event, with many saying they had no idea the range and quality of programmes and opportunities on offer for students. There was plenty of information available about new Coast projects, like DOC’s Paparoa Track, and community organisations like the Defence Force, Police, St John and Workbridge were able to talk to people about opportunities for volunteering as well as future employment,” he says.

Nick Geary, of the NZ Defence Force, agreed with the feedback. “What a great event – I’ve had some really good enquiries and have even signed-up some people into our Armed Forces reserves,” he says.

West Coast Trades Academy Manager Tania Washer says: “Attendance was great. It was especially pleasing to talk with prospective trades academy students and their family members from Hokitika, Greymouth and Westport.”

Peter Elliot, of the Westport Deep Sea Fishing School says: “It was a great event for networking with other businesses and providers. We also received a few enquiries for future training so it was well worth the effort.”

Westland Recreation Centre’s Nelia Heersink says she enjoyed the event. “Really great for networking and also received a few enquiries for our business...I thought it was a great event for the first one of its kind.”

Mr Robb says the Polytechnic is surveying those who took part to get more in-depth feedback and will look to make some tweaks and changes to create an even bigger and better event next year.

The 2017 West Coast Careers Expo was created as an opportunity to bring together as many agencies, employers and education providers as possible to showcase job prospects across the region. As well

as targeting young people at the start of their careers, the expo had a strong focus on people in jobs and looking to change careers, or those out of work who want to know more about their options.

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