



Speech by

DESLEY SCOTT

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

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KEY-EMPLOYMENT

Mrs DESLEY SCOTT (Woodridge—ALP) (11.58 p.m.): In our communities there are some organisations which are quietly engaged in activities which deserve our highest accolades, such is Key-Employment right in the heart of my Woodridge electorate. Key-Employment is a support organisation for people who may have varying degrees of physical or mental disabilities or acquired brain injuries. They concentrate on their clients' abilities and talents rather than their disabilities, groom them for employment in a selected area of the work force, seek an employer and then provide ongoing appropriate support and training as required.

This organisation is having fantastic results. It was recently my privilege to attend the opening of its new office, which gave me an opportunity to meet staff and clients and to hear some of the truly wonderful personal stories of what their clients are doing. Employers should note that these people are loyal, efficient, committed and long-term workers. They love to go to work and appreciate the opportunity to make a contribution to our work force and to know in return that they are valued for who they are and for their efforts.

Key-Employment was born out of Keystone, which was founded by Father Doug Kohn, when we called such places sheltered workshops. Keystone, as opposed to Key-Employment, is now a business service area where tasks such as the refurbishment of headsets for Ansett were carried out. This centre gives an opportunity for people with disabilities who may not be able to work in the open employment sector to make friends, develop a work ethic, socialise and offer respite.

Margaret Harvey has been with the service for eight years and is training and development officer as well as taking care of marketing. She was previously a manager at Endeavour and prior to that she worked here at Parliament House in our hospitality section. Margaret's inspiration is her son, Brian, who following an accident as a young police officer lay in a coma for six months. He is now one of our fine, highly decorated elite paralympians, gaining Australia's first gold medal at the Atlantic Paralympics in 1996 and a world record in Prague. He is the only paralympian to hold three world records simultaneously in javelin, shot-put and discus. He won a bronze medal in Sydney and was then inducted into the Sporting Hall of Fame. We salute Brian.

The workers at Key-Employment are dedicated and committed to doing all that they can to assist their clients. Workers such as Tim Kohn, Workplace Health and Safety Officer and Training Placement; John Davies, Entry Office; Peter Schilling, coordinator; and Robyn Burgess, who ensures a well-run office. Leanne Andrews, the new general manager and her management team of volunteers oversee the operations. Members will find clients of Key-Employment in many varied fields—from collecting supermarket trolleys to factory workers, crane drivers or storemen. I commend the employers who are willing to give these workers a chance and those who work so passionately for this great organisation.